Public Policies and Career Development: 
A Framework for the Design of Career Information, Guidance and Counseling Services 
in Developing and Transition Countries

COUNTRY REPORT ON POLAND

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and

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World Bank

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this report is to describe how Poland organizes, manages and provides career information, guidance and counseling services. The report is designed to contribute to the development of policies and practices in such services in Poland. In six other middle-income countries, similar reports are being prepared for a similar purpose: this report aims to complement these studies.

Using a format adapted from the OECD Career Guidance Policy Review, the information has been collected with the collaboration of Włodzimierz Trzeciak, former Director of the Methodological Centre for Career Information and Counseling in the National Labour Office. The report also draws from visits made by the authors to a number of career guidance services, and from meetings with policy-makers, administrators and guidance practitioners (see Annex 5). The views expressed in the report are those of the authors, based on the information and opinions supplied to them.

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1. CONTEXT

Please provide a brief (no more than two pages) outline of the main features of the education and training system in your country, and of the economy, social structure and culture, which are likely to influence (a) the way in which individuals’ career decisions are made and (b) the role of career information, guidance and counseling services.

Key statistics
Surface area: 312,685 square km.
Annual inflation: 2.9% (2002).
Unemployment: 18.1% (December 2002).
Education budget: 4.6% of GNP (2001).
Higher education budget: 0.8% of GNP (2001).

Education and training system
The Polish system of education is currently undergoing major reforms. A number of Acts and Regulations passed in 1999 introduced amendments to the existing legislation on all spheres of education in Poland. The new and old systems will co-exist during the transitional period (from 1999 until 2007).

The education reforms aim at:

- improving the quality, flexibility and diversification of education provision;
- preparing vocational school graduates for continuous change in their working environments and for job mobility;
- developing continuing education as a key measure to promote employment and develop human resources for a competitive economy;
- ensuring equal access to all levels of education;
- creating an efficient system of vocational orientation and guidance.

Since 1999 the school education has followed a 6+3+3 pattern (primary, gymnasium and lyceum respectively). Compulsory education lasts from age 7 to 18.

The first phase of the reform (1999-2002) has introduced a two-level comprehensive school system, with the former 8-year primary school being replaced by a 6-year primary school and 3-year lower secondary school (gymnasium).

The second phase of the reform is covering upper secondary (2002-05) and post-secondary education (2005-07). A new structure will be gradually implemented (starting in September 2002), comprising the following types of schools:
Higher vocational education

In recent years the scope of the studies offered by higher education institutions has been extended, with new specializations being added. At the same time, the forms of higher education provision have been diversified. Many state-run schools of higher education have introduced a two-tier education system. Parallel to five-year Master’s programs, schools also offer three-year vocational programs leading to a Bachelor’s degree or four-year courses leading to an Engineer degree. The Engineer and Bachelor courses can be complemented by two-year supplementary Master’s courses. Three-year Bachelor’s programs are offered, as a basic offer, in non-state universities. Since 1998, such programs have also been offered by state schools of higher vocational education.

The implementation of education reforms is still a major challenge facing Poland. These reforms will also need to be co-ordinated with employment policy and will require an integrated approach in rural areas. Moreover, a suitable vocational education and training system still has to be put in place.

Labor market

The Polish labor market has been radically transformed as a result of political changes introduced at the end of the eighties. Whereas under the Communist regime the majority of workers worked for state enterprises, by 1999 the private sector (comprising small businesses, privatized companies that were previously state-owned, and foreign-owned companies) employed nearly three times as many workers as the public sector. Employment is no longer one of the basic entitlements guaranteed by the Constitution. Unemployment accordingly grew rapidly in Poland in the 1990s and dramatically changed the nature of the labor market. In previous years, the Polish economy had experienced continuing problems with its lack of an adequate workforce, although at the same time there was also a large element of hidden unemployment. Since 1990 the size of the available workforce has exceeded demand and the unemployment rate has remained at historically high levels. More specific causal factors have included:

- Two or three-year basic vocational school – awarding a vocational diploma.
- Three-year general education lyceum – leading to the *matura* examination.
- Three-year ‘profiled’ lyceum – offering tuition in 14 broad vocational profiles, leading to the *matura* examination.
- Four-year technical school – awarding a vocational diploma and leading to the *matura* examination.
- Two-year supplementary lyceum – leading to the *matura* examination, for the graduates of basic vocational schools who wish to continue their education and obtain a complete secondary education.
- Three-year supplementary technical school (for the graduates of basic vocational schools) – giving the possibility of obtaining both a vocational diploma and the *matura*.
- Post-secondary school (6 months to 2.5 years) – awarding a vocational diploma, for graduates of upper secondary schools.
1. Macroeconomic factors:


- Lower growth rates of jobs, particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises, and the high mobility levels of employees in this sector, resulting in an increased influx of employees to the labor market.

- An accelerated process of economic restructuring, which resulted in job redundancy in non-efficient sectors of the economy and in particular enterprises (mainly mining, steel works, the defence industry and the Polish State Railways).

- Introduction of major social reforms resulting in redundancies in the health service, in education and in public administration.

- Expiry of privatization contracts, which included prohibition of redundancies and obligations for employers to stabilize the level of employment in their companies.

2. Demographic factors:

- The increased number of persons in the productive age-band (women aged 18-59 and men aged 18-65). Since 1990 the size of this group has increased by approximately 1.8 million persons; its proportion of the total population increased by 3.7% and at the end of 2001 reached 61.9%.

- A particularly high increase in the number of persons who are in the productive age-band but are not viewed as being mobile (i.e. aged 44 and above); this group represents 90% of the total increase in the number of persons in the productive age-band. At the beginning of the 1990s, a process of vocational ‘demobilisation’ of people in this age-group began through the provision of greater possibilities for earlier retirement for redundant workers and also through permissive requirements for granting disability pensions.

- A further growth in the number of persons over the retirement age (men aged 65 and above, women aged 60 and above). According to estimates provided by the Main Statistical Office, at the end of 2001 the proportion of persons in this age category in relation to the total population was approximately 14.8% (at the end of 1990 the figure was 12.8%); the proportion of the total population who were aged 65 and above (men and women) oscillated around 12.5% at the end of 2001 in comparison to 10.2% at the end of 1990. At present, for each 100 people in the productive age-band, there are 62 people who are not productive, i.e. 24 people over the retirement age and 38 young people under the age of 17 (in 1990 the comparable figure was 74 people – 22 over the retirement age and 52 young people). This results in increasing expenditure on social insurance benefits and increased non-wage labor costs.

3. Administrative factors, mainly an increase in the number of persons who are eligible for health-care contributions (as well as income benefits) covered by the state on the basis of having the status of unemployed – in many cases these are persons employed in the “grey sector” of the economy (a survey of managers of the 500 largest Polish companies found that over two-fifths of them claimed that the number of unregistered businesses exceeded 10% of their sector1).

Table 1. Unemployment according to age categories 1999-2001 (end-of-year data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>below 24</th>
<th>25-34</th>
<th>35-44</th>
<th>45-54</th>
<th>55 and above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thousands of persons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2,349.8</td>
<td>729.5</td>
<td>623.4</td>
<td>588.0</td>
<td>367.7</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,702.6</td>
<td>823.5</td>
<td>713.2</td>
<td>656.5</td>
<td>461.9</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3,115.1</td>
<td>918.0</td>
<td>836.7</td>
<td>724.4</td>
<td>572.4</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* The Main Statistical Office.

Diagram 1. Unemployment rate by age and place of residence in the fourth quarter of 2001

*Source:* The Main Statistical Office.
Diagram 2. Unemployment rate according to education and place of residence in the fourth quarter of 2001.

Source: The Main Statistical Office.

2. OVERVIEW

Please provide a brief (no more than two pages) overview of the national structure for career information, guidance and counseling services in your country.

- Briefly outline the history of career guidance services in your country: when they started, and major changes which have taken place since then.

The history of career guidance services in Poland has nearly 100 years of tradition. Specialized facilities to serve youth had their beginnings even before World War I. The activities of the guidance centres in the late 1930s were broad-minded and modern. As with France, Germany, USA, and other countries, Polish specialists had significant scientific support, particularly from the Psychotechnical Institute in Krakow, founded by Bronislaw Biegeleisen in 1928. Its work included pre-orientation and vocational counseling, psychological diagnosis and occupational qualification of mentally retarded youth. Its “Library of Vocational Counseling” was one of pillars of Polish counseling.

The destructive activities of World War II and the totalitarian system of the 1940s and 1950s severely damaged the network of services. The subsequent rebuilding process particularly focused on the work of the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers (see below).

It should be emphasized that in Poland people tend to use the term “vocational guidance” to describe the whole area of career information, guidance and counseling.
• Describe the principal current service providers, indicating the extent to which the provision of career information, guidance and counseling overlaps with or is integrated with other services.

• Indicate how responsibility both for managing and for funding information, guidance and counseling services is divided: between different Ministries (e.g. Education and Labor); between different levels of government; and between government and other providers.

Vocational guidance in Poland is based upon a theoretical perspective according to which the process of a human being’s career planning and development starts in early childhood and lasts the whole life period. Vocational life is a course of personal decisions, which should take into account several factors. Some of these factors are of an internal nature, comprising the individual characteristics of a human being; other factors relate to independent, objective external conditions – social, cultural and economic.

Career guidance and information services are provided mainly by two Departments of State: the Ministry of National Education and Sport; and the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy. Each of these ministries manages and finances its services independently. Within the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy, there is a special Division of Vocational Counseling with a monitoring and co-ordinating function; in the Ministry of National Education and Sport there is no separate organizational unit of this kind.

Within the Ministry of National Education and Sport, information and career guidance services are provided mainly by a network of 587 Psychological and Pedagogical Centers. These employ counselors based on the “Teacher's Charter” Act of 26 January 1982 (with amendments) regulates the status of teachers in the Polish educational system.

In line with their statutory tasks, the centers offer assistance to children and youth in the 0-19 age bracket. Around one in eight of the entire age-group receive direct specialist support from these institutions, in such areas as:

- early diagnosis and rehabilitation;
- counseling for teenagers (including preventing addictions);
- family counseling;
- help for disabled children and teenagers; and
- career counseling.

Thus in the school year 2000/01 the number of children and youth in the 0-19 age bracket was 10,629,745. The Psychological and Pedagogical Centers gave specialist support to 1,264,828 of these (11.9%): to 1,004,782 (9.45%) with a diagnosis, and to 260,046 (2.45%) without one.

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3 The “Teacher’s Charter” Act of 26 January 1982 (with amendments) regulates the status of teachers in the Polish educational system.
4 http://www.cmppp.edu.pl
Since 2000, the employment services provided by the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy have been largely devolved to provincial (voivodship) and area (powiat) levels. Information and career counseling services are now offered at both of these levels:

- At the first, basic level, all activities are carried out by approximately 460 career counselors working in the 373 powiat labor offices, which are supervised by higher local authorities called starostwa.

- The second level is composed of career counselors from 52 Centers for Career Information and Planning of the voivodship labor offices, supervised by voivodship Marshals (i.e. heads of provincial government: there are 16 voivodships). These centers offer comprehensive, professional services in career information and vocational counseling. Their staff provide individual counseling services as well as information related to career planning.

Career counselors employed in public employment services (approximately 700 counselors all over the country) offer assistance to the unemployed and other job-seekers in solving their career problems.

3. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- How important is legislation in steering information, guidance and counseling services in your country? Please briefly describe the main pieces of legislation that directly affect information, guidance and counseling services, quoting any short key extracts that are particularly important.

The basic legislation which defines the need for organization and support to career information and counseling services by public authorities is the Constitution of the Republic of Poland dated 2 April 1997. This guarantees the right of access to career counseling services to all Polish citizens. In Poland, as noted in Section 2, two different Ministries are responsible for career counseling:

- Ministry of National Education and Sport – counseling services for young people engaged in education and training, implemented via psychological and pedagogical centers and schools.
- Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy – counseling services for adults, provided by units of the public employment services.

The legislation regulating work of psychological and pedagogical centers and schools in the sphere of career information and counseling is the Educational System Act of 7 September 1991 (Journal of Laws 1996 as amended) and the accompanying Regulation of the Ministry of National Education and Sport of 7 January 2003 on the principles of organization and provision of psychological and pedagogical support in public kindergartens, schools and other educational institutions (Journal of Laws 11/2003 item 114).

Public schools and counseling centers provide free career information and counseling services to students and their parents, primarily in the spheres of further education, choice of occupation and career planning.
The functioning of labor offices in the sphere of career information and counseling is regulated by the Employment and Counteracting Unemployment Act of 14 December 1994 (Journal of Laws 25/1997 item 128 as amended) and the accompanying regulation of the Labor Minister of 9 February 2000 on the detailed principles of provision of career information and counseling services, organization of training courses for the unemployed, building of the methodological background for career counseling, and organization and financing of job clubs (Journal of Laws 12 item 146, art. 36).

- What are the key objectives and goals of national policies for information, guidance and counseling services in your country? Please indicate any differences in objectives and goals that might exist between Ministries.

The key goals of Polish national policies concerning information, guidance and career counseling services are defined in the National Strategy for Employment and Human Resource Development.\(^5\)

The main goal formulated in the Strategy is the wider involvement of citizens in the labor process. It is assumed that this will be achieved by:

- increased employability linked to the development of quality human resources;
- promotion of entrepreneurship;
- improved ability of enterprises and their employees to adapt to changing market conditions;
- enforcing a policy of equal opportunities in the labor market.

Improvement of employability is of crucial importance with respect to career counseling because in most cases it is directly connected with individual career planning and career management, the need to acquire additional vocational skills, continued vocational training, and equipping the individual with the ability to act effectively in the labor market. It is crucial therefore to create a system of widely available career information and to improve the quality and availability of counseling services. It is also indispensable to integrate more fully all of the institutions and stakeholders involved. This will increase the effectiveness and complementarity of such services.

The assumptions of the National Strategy for Employment and Human Resource Development include\(^6\):

- adding career counseling to the overall school goals at every level of education;
- introducing the principle of the continuity of services in the sphere of planning and career development;
- increasing the availability of career information for youth and adults;
- integrating career counseling systems for adults and for young people;
- ensuring high quality of individual services for career counseling by introducing uniform standards of services;

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\(^6\) Ibidem, pages 52 and 53.
- ensuring ongoing improvement of career counseling methods and information materials facilitating career planning for individuals;
- creating a system of training and vocational development for career counselors and teachers/school counselors;
- raising social awareness of the importance of continuous individual career planning aimed at improving employability within a changing labor market.

So far, however, the government has made little progress in fulfilling these objectives. In order for the objectives to be realized, substantial organizational and legal changes may be required. These may include the need for a bill on a co-ordinated career counseling system for youth and adults (see Section 10.3).

A recent government document defining the goals and objectives of national policy in the sphere of career information and counseling services is the “Sectoral Operational Program – Human Resource Development”\(^7\). It is one of six sectoral operational programs that are to serve as the vehicles for the implementation of the National Development Plan (this plan identifies the key structural operations which Poland, on becoming a member of the European Union, intends to launch in the years 2004-06 using EU support funds in order to create favorable conditions for sustainable growth and improved standards of living). The overriding goal of the program is to “build an open, knowledge-based society by ensuring favorable conditions for the development of human resources through education, training and work”\(^8\).

In legislative terms, the goals and objectives of national policies for information and career counseling services are defined in the Employment and Counteracting Unemployment Act of 14 December 1994 (Journal of Laws 6/2001 item 56 as amended). Article 17 (Career Counseling) stipulates that:

1. The aim of career counseling is to provide the unemployed and other job-seekers with career information in order to help them choose a suitable occupation and employment and to help the employers select suitable candidates for positions requiring a specific physical and mental disposition.

2. Career counseling should be organized according to the following principles:
   (a) availability of services for all unemployed people and other job-seekers as well as for employers;
   (b) non-compulsory character of career guidance services;
   (c) equality of access to career counseling services for all, regardless of their nationality, sex, religion, membership of any political, social organizations or other considerations;
   (d) freedom of choice regarding occupation and employment;
   (e) free-of-charge access to career counseling services;
   (f) confidentiality and protection of the personal data of unemployed people and other job-seekers who use counseling services.

3. Career counseling services are provided by the\(^7\) poviat labor offices and by the Centers for Career Information and Planning in the\(^7\) voivodship labor offices.

\(^8\) Ibidem, page 8.
4. Career counseling services are provided both for individuals and for groups.
5. Individual counseling may be preceded by a medical and psychological examination, at no cost for the unemployed or other job-seekers.
6. Such medical checks are carried out solely with the consent of the person concerned.

- Are services targeted at particular groups (e.g. school students; young people; tertiary education students; unemployed people; those receiving social welfare benefits; refugees; members of ethnic minorities)? What is the rationale for such targeting? How are such priorities or targets expressed? Give details, for example, of any legislation that provides rights or entitlements to services for particular groups; or of active strategies used to ensure access to services from the targeted groups.

Priorities for career information and guidance services are defined according to the current situation on the labor market. One of the priorities for the year 2002 was the implementation of a National School/University Graduate Career Stimulation Program called “The First Job”. The program is mainly targeted at recent graduates on all educational levels. In 2002, approximately 900,000 students completed school education. It was expected that around 520,000 of these would need help in the process of entering the labor market. The aim of “The First Job” is to counteract unemployment amongst this group of service users, reduce unemployment among school graduates, reduce the period of their professional inactivity to a minimum, and counteract the psycho-social effects of being unemployed. It includes provision for state-subsidized work placements of up to 12 months, as well as courses in job-seeking skills etc.

In addition to nationwide programs, career counselors employed at labor offices take part in initiatives at a regional (voivodship) level, where they provide services targeted at various groups, e.g. to the long-term unemployed, unemployed people in rural areas, disabled persons, employees who have been made redundant, etc.

Priorities are set by the government. Thus “The First Job” activities package is a result of the Economic Strategy “Enterprise – Development – Jobs”. In addition, “The First Job” program is one of the implementation tools of the “National Strategy for Employment and Human Resources Development in the Years 2000-06”, based on the European Employment Strategy. “The First Job” program is comprehensive in character and has been accompanied by various legal regulations, such as: amendments to the Privatization and Commercialization of Enterprises Act and the Public Welfare Organizations and Voluntary Organizations Act, a regulation of the Council of Ministers on the allocation formula for the Labor Fund, and guidelines for the development of voivodship programs for school/university graduate employment.

- What are the major social, educational and labour market influences that are currently shaping national policies for information, guidance and counseling services?

The factors influencing the shape of national policies for information and career counseling services include:
- high levels of unemployment resulting from such factors as insufficient education, skills and qualities ensuring employability;
- decentralization of the system of labor offices, as a result of which the offices have tended to function in isolation, to be underfinanced and to suffer from a high turnover of staff (in our estimate – rate ca. 40-50% in year 2002). The positive counter-signal is an increasing of financial resources for professional staff training in 2003 from the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy);
- a considerable influx of young graduates and school-leavers into the labor market (baby-boomers of the 1980s);
- a lack of support for career counseling from the academic sector and the resulting lack of papers, publications, reports and analyses which demonstrate the need for the development of career counseling services and lobby the issue among the frequently changing decision-makers;
- a shortage of private institutions providing career counseling services;
- a lack of consistent, co-ordinated activities in the field of career counseling on the part of the Education and Labor Ministries.

• What method(s) does the government use to fund information, guidance and counseling services?

Career information and guidance services provided by labor office counselors are financed at national level from the Labor Fund, though they are administered at provincial (województwo) and area (powiat) levels. According to the Employment and Counteracting Employment Act of 14 December 1994 (Journal of Laws No. 6/2001 item 56 as amended), the Labor Fund monies are used to finance the “preparation and dissemination of career information and equipment for provision of career guidance services in co-operation with institutions whose statutory tasks included career information and guidance” (Article 57, item 9).

• Are individuals required to meet some of the costs of government information, guidance and counseling services? If so, what sorts of clients are asked to pay, and what is the typical level of fees charged?

Clients of labor offices and of Psychological and Pedagogical Centres receive career information and guidance services free of charge.

• Describe what cost and expenditure data are available to government – for example, on the relative costs of different delivery methods, or the cost of achieving particular outcomes, or the costs of providing services to particular types of clients – when making policies for information, guidance and counseling services.

No data of these kinds are available.

• Provide the best available estimates of the cost (most recent year) to governments of providing information, guidance and counseling services. If possible, provide information on: the ways in which this cost is divided between different Ministries and between different levels of government; trends in costs over time; and costs broken down by type (for example: staff costs; information production costs; capital and equipment costs). If such data are not available, indicate why.

These kinds of data are not available.
• Describe any ways in which career information, guidance and counseling professionals are involved in the development of policy: for example, through formal roles for professional associations in policy formation; or through providing feedback to opportunity providers (e.g. educational planners) on unmet needs evident from the guidance process.

The Polish Association of School and Vocational Counselors (see Section 5) operates as an opinion-making body: it provides a forum for expressing members’ positions on various matters and for determining professional policies regarding desirable changes. It also issues statements in the field of career orientation and guidance, and sends them to appropriate government and local government institutions.

The National Forum for Vocational Guidance (see Section 9.2) provides a mechanism for identifying the needs and national priorities relating to vocational guidance and counseling, in line with government policies, and for representing the opinions of vocational counselors in policy matters relating to vocational guidance.

4. THE MAIN GUIDANCE SERVICES

4.1 Schools

• At what stages within schools are key decisions made between levels and fields of study? To what extent are these decisions made by schools on the basis of tests and other assessments, or by students and parents supported by guidance? Where the latter is the case, how is the guidance provided, and by whom?

Until September 1999, the 8-year primary school was the first stage of education in Poland. After primary school, students could apply for admission to general or vocational secondary schools.

As noted in Section 1, a reform of the education system is currently in progress. New types of schools are being introduced, at three levels: 6 years of primary education (primary school); followed by 3 years of general secondary education (gymnasium); and then by 3 years of more specialised secondary education (lyceum), or 2-4 years of various forms of vocational education (see Section 1). During the transitional period, both the old and the new systems will co-exist.

In principle, there is a free choice of school in the Polish education system. The main exceptions are primary schools, and since 1999/2000 gymnasium, in which “regionalization” (i.e. students going to their nearest school) is the rule, though not always strictly enforced.9

At primary school and gymnasium level, communities are divided into school districts in order to provide an even access to schools. Children are admitted to a school in their district. If there are places in a relevant class, children from another school district may be admitted to the school on the parents’ request.

9http://www.eurydice.org/
Both types of schools end with compulsory general examinations. At the end of first six years of primary education, students have to sit examinations set by the regional examination boards: these tests are meant to provide students, teachers and parents with information on student achievements (outcomes) and do not play any selective role. Completion of three years of gymnasium also leads to examinations: these serve as a pre-orientation tool and the results are taken into account as a selection criterion for admission to the lyceum.

Candidates applying for admission to higher education institutions need to have completed upper secondary school and to possess a *matura* certificate. Admission criteria differ a great deal between institutions, and may include entrance examinations and interviews. Since the entrance examinations are demanding and often take place on the same day, the tactics of choosing which institutions to apply to are complex and significant, and consume much time in lyceum guidance provision. The vast majority of non-public higher education institutions, however, do not have their own entrance examinations. It is anticipated that the *matura* examination will gradually replace universities’ own entrance examinations and will have an external character: in other words, it will be prepared and assessed outside the schools by special Examination Commissions, and will be more objective in nature. According to the legislation the external *matura* will be introduced in 2005.

- **Do schools have teachers or other staff with a specific responsibility for career education and guidance? What is their role? How much time do they have to carry out this role?**

Until January 2003 schools did not have teachers or other staff with a specific responsibility for career education and guidance. According to the legal regulations, career information and guidance services for all school students were to be provided by the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers. However, their staffing and equipment were not sufficient to provide adequate services for all who needed them.

Because of the needs in schools for career information and counseling services, these tasks have often been allocated to the school pedagogue. This is a separate non-teaching role which exists in a majority of schools. Their tasks vary, depending on internal arrangements within the school. Most of their work is concerned with students’ learning and behavioral problems. They act as consultants to teachers on appropriate intervention strategies, as well as working directly with the students. In the field of career information and counseling their tasks range from basic help with educational decisions to more systematic and comprehensive services, including working with tutors in delivering group guidance within tutor periods. In general, however, their guidance work is focused on immediate educational choices rather than on longer-term career planning. Sometimes the school pedagogue works in close co-operation with career counselors from the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers and/or the labor offices. The proportion of career information and counseling tasks among all the other duties of school pedagogues varies from 0% to 50%.

The Regulation of the Ministry of National Education and Sport of 7 January 2003 on the principles of organization and provision of psychological and pedagogical support in public kindergartens, schools and other educational institutions (Journal of Laws 11/2003 item 114) has now introduced a new role into Polish schools. At every level of education, each school may now employ a school career counselor. This position is not obligatory, so it may take some time for this new role to appear in schools all over the country. Initial priority is being given to schools closest to entry to the labor market. In smaller schools, the role may cover more than one school, or be combined with – for example – teaching of entrepreneurship (see below).
• Do any specialist career guidance professionals visit the school from outside? What services do they offer? How much time do they spend within the school?

Psychological and Pedagogical Centers disseminate, on a local (sometimes regional) scale, information concerning:

- types of schools at all levels of education, education profiles, criteria and conditions of recruitment;
- forms of education and training outside the school system;
- special institutions providing instruction to the disabled and the mentally handicapped and people at risk of social exclusion (for example, the Social Aid Centers or the Voluntary Labor Corps).

As part of their wider functions (see Section 2), the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers issue statements regarding special further education requirements for students suffering from various diseases and health problems. In the school year 2000/01, the centres issued 95,328 such statements.

In addition to diagnosis and individual counseling, the centers undertake increasing efforts directed at larger groups of young people – the so-called “activity workshops” are conducted by 65% of career counselors. According to data provided by the Information and Analysis Service of the Methodological Centre for Psychological and Pedagogical Counseling, in the year 2000/2001 166,618 school students took part in such workshops. The courses are addressed to students at every stage of education and those facing career and education choices. Most of the scenarios for meetings with young people deal with the acquisition of such skills as:

- self-knowledge;
- self-assessment;
- collecting relevant career information;
- decision-making;
- self-presentation in different situations;
- active search for work.

Nearly 84% of career counselors based in the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers offer lectures on career possibilities for school students and their parents. In the recruitment periods at the transition points between different levels of school, the centers, in co-operation with school inspectorates and secondary schools, operate school information desks. More than 30% of the career counselors in the centers carry out surveys relating to the choice of occupation and the choice of school, drawing on the results of their work with students. In addition, information and training sessions are organised for school pedagogues: 64% of the centers’ staff take part in organising such activities.

In at least one city (Walbrzych) a previous Psychological and Pedagogical Center has been extended into a more extensive center (the Upper-Silesia Center of Vocational Information and Teacher Training) which provides some teacher training in vocational subjects but also offers a wide range of career orientation activities, including an information resource center for visits by groups of students, and teacher-advisers who support career guidance programs in schools.
Services for schools are also provided by career counselors from the labor offices, particularly the 52 Centers for Career Information and Planning (see Section 4.3 below). They may visit schools to provide talks to students; in some cases, they may work together with the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers, with the latter focusing mainly on psychological issues and the labor office staff on labor market issues. In addition, groups of students may visit the Centers for Career Information and Planning to be introduced to their services and see their information resources.

- **Are separate career education lessons a normal part of the school curriculum? If so, for each school grade, please indicate whether or not such lessons are required and the usual number of hours per year**

In the Polish educational system, there is no separate subject embedded in the curriculum which deals specifically and exclusively with career education.

- **If separate career education lessons are not provided, are policies in place to integrate career education into other subjects?**

Currently, work is being carried out to integrate career orientation and vocational guidance into other subjects, including:

- “Preparation for taking an active part in economic life” as a part of the Introduction to Social Science module in middle schools (gymnasium).
- “Entrepreneurship” in secondary vocational schools and in the general lyceum.
- “Career activity issues” as an interdisciplinary module in general-profile secondary schools (lyceum).

Some career education may also be included in tutor periods and in “activity workshops” (see above).

- **Are periods of work experience required as part of the secondary school curriculum? For each school grade, please indicate whether or not such work experience is mandatory, and how many days per year are usual. If it is not mandatory, or is confined to certain types of schools, please indicate (or estimate) the proportion of students who undertake such work experience.**

There are no regulations or requirements for work experience periods (in order to help make a career decision and understand the world of work) in the Polish educational system. Some secondary schools organize short class visits to workplaces as a part of their vocational orientation activities. Health and safety legislation, however, inhibits students being permitted to handle machinery and carry out work tasks.

- **What is the extent of access for school students to other types of career information, guidance and counseling services (e.g. one-to-one counseling; careers fairs; career libraries; internet or computer-based programs).**

More and more frequently, career counselors initiate career fairs and education fairs organised in co-operation with school inspectorates, vocational schools, general secondary schools, post-secondary schools, crafts’ guilds and state administration institutions at the voivodship level.
Career libraries in schools tend to be limited, and integrated into the school library. They may include some access to the internet. The number of computers in schools increased significantly between 1990 and 2001 (Table 2), and 18,781 out of the total of 29,492 schools are now equipped with computer laboratories (a rate of 63.7%). But the number of students per computer is still high by European standards (Table 3).

### Table 2. Numbers of computers in schools in the period 1990-2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2001/1990 (w %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td>3,485</td>
<td>14,937</td>
<td>25,592</td>
<td>70,041</td>
<td>2009.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior secondary schools (gymnasia)*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60,975</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary schools</td>
<td>7,492</td>
<td>12,676</td>
<td>17,440</td>
<td>36,314</td>
<td>484.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational schools</td>
<td>10,259</td>
<td>19,551</td>
<td>28,029</td>
<td>44,378</td>
<td>432.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>21,236</td>
<td>47,164</td>
<td>71,061</td>
<td>211,708</td>
<td>989.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) Junior secondary schools (gymnasia) were created in 1999.

*Source:* MoNES.

### Table 3. IT in schools in 2002 (data for EU is for 2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specification</th>
<th>Specification</th>
<th>Poland</th>
<th>EU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of students per computer in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary schools (gymnasia, secondary and vocational schools)</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students per computer connected to the internet in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary schools (gymnasia, secondary and vocational schools)</td>
<td></td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* MoNES.

### 4.2 Tertiary education

- *Please describe information, guidance and counseling services that are provided within tertiary education: on entry, during courses, and on exit.*

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10 The data presented refer to public schools for children and youth, excluding special schools.
Some universities and colleges offer career counseling services to their students through Graduate Promotion and Recruitment Centers, popularly referred to as Career Bureaux. The most important of the many tasks of these Career Bureaux are job placement services offered to students and graduates. Other tasks may include:

- individual guidance (individual interviews with students in the fourth and fifth years of their tertiary studies);
- workshops (helping students to prepare for job interviews, self-presentation exercises, communication exercises, stress management, etc.);
- meetings and training sessions in various faculties;
- running “career libraries” (with databases on job vacancies, job descriptions, information on studies abroad, vocational courses, seasonal jobs, etc.);
- organizing placements, work practice periods, and voluntary and temporary work;
- other courses and ad hoc tasks.

Some bureaux, however, confine themselves to placement services, or cover only a limited range of these additional tasks.

Apart from the information and counseling services, Career Bureaux co-operate with employers in handling job offers, organizing companies’ presentations at universities, organizing job fairs for students and facilitating access of students to employers. They engage in the promotion of their own university, and communicate information on desirable graduate qualifications gathered from employers to the university authorities, so allowing them to consider modifying the curricula accordingly. Career Bureaux co-operate with voivodship labor offices, receiving free literature and assisting in the training of career counselors. They also get job offers from powiat labor offices. In addition, Career Bureaux also take part in the organization by others of such events as job fairs, student promotion fairs, education fairs, etc.

- Are they a normal and standard service within tertiary institutions or are they only provided in some institutions?

Until 2002 relatively few universities and colleges offered career counseling services to their students. Only around 45 institutions operated Career Bureaux. The first such center was set up in 1993 at the Mikolaj Kopernik University in Torun. Most of their staff are employed by the higher education institution where they work, but some may be employees of voivodship labor offices: the extent of such help depends on the voivodship. In Wroclaw, a single center services nine universities: this is, however, an unusual arrangement.

At the end of 2002 the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy set up a grant scheme for universities and colleges, offering set-up support for equipment, resources and staff training (though not salary costs) for establishing Career Bureaux. As a result of this and other initiatives, around 75 new Career Bureaux in higher education institutions all over the country will be open by spring 2003.

Many of the Career Bureaux belong to a Polish Network of Career Bureaux. Formed in 1998, its activities include information exchange, in-service training, co-operative arrangements for exchange of job-vacancy information and other services, and representing the bureaux in relevant policy fora.
• Are career guidance services normally provided separately from or together with personal and study counseling services?

The Career Bureaux focus mainly or totally on career guidance and placement provision.

• Are they normally provided separately from or together with job placement and graduate recruitment services?

Career Bureaux include job placement and graduate recruitment services – to get a job is the first wish of the majority of students.

4.3 The public employment service

• What information, guidance and counseling services are provided by the public employment service? Do they include career guidance services?

Career information and guidance services are provided in every of 373 powiat labor office by a special organizational unit staffed by career counselors. The services include:

- providing individual career guidance services;
- providing career guidance services for groups (mainly workshops on job-seeking skills);
- providing career information to individuals;
- providing career information to groups of clients;
- ensuring access to tests checking predispositions for specific occupations and medical examinations that are needed for issuing an opinion on aptitudes for particular employment, occupation or training profiles;
- assistance offered to employers in choosing candidates for jobs requiring special mental and physical characteristics;
- gathering and disseminating career information.

Most clients are referred to the career counselors by placement officers; some come direct. Much of the work of the labor offices is concerned with helping unemployed people to register for benefits as well as find jobs: the somewhat negative image that results may deter some potential employed clients from using the services.

This is less true of the Centers for Career Information and Planning of the Voivodship Labor Offices which, in addition to providing career information and guidance services, offer specialized services in the area of career planning using psychological methods. They also run courses on career planning and on job-seeking skills, and they gather, update, develop and disseminate regional career information. The 52 Centers, which are based in major cities, organize and co-ordinate the development of career information and guidance services on behalf of the other (satellite) services; they also support job clubs in their region. They have resource centers adapted from the German BIZ model.

The most common career problems include:

- choice or change of occupation;
- vocational training and development;
finding employment (lack of job-search skills) or self-employment (need for assistance in assessing the prospects of a given project) and difficulties with job adaptation.

The centers also provide services to schools, but these are not included in their statistics: they are encouraged to focus mainly on their services to adults.

- What types of clients typically seek/receive assistance from such services? To what extent are the services accessed by employed as well as unemployed people?

Most frequently the clients of career counselors in the Centers for Career Information and Planning are recruited from the following groups:

- unemployed youth;
- the unemployed;
- the rural unemployed;
- graduates.

The least numerous group of clients are the disabled.

- Are some clients required to take part in guidance and counseling activities in order to retain access to unemployment and/or social welfare benefits? If so, who?

It is not compulsory to use guidance services. Both in legislation and in practice the rule of the voluntary (i.e. non-compulsory) nature of career guidance services is observed.

- How are these services related to overall national labour market and employment policies? If possible, give examples of such links.

Career counselors, in addition to their direct work with clients, also prepare their own publications on various labor market issues; they develop guidebooks on educational and training institutions; and they publicize career counseling services through co-operation with the mass media. They also organize (along with other institutions) such events as career days, career fairs, educational fairs, enterprise fairs, etc. They co-operate with many social partners, such as the Voluntary Labor Corps, Social Welfare Centers, Municipal Centers for the Employment and Rehabilitation of the Disabled, penitentiaries, Career Bureaux at various universities and colleges, etc.

4.4 Employment-based guidance services

- To what extent do employers provide career development services for their employees? Which kinds of employers provide such services? What form do they take?

Employers provide some career development services for their employees within their personnel departments (human resource management). No systematic information is available about the extent and nature of such services. It seems likely, however, that they are stronger and more individual-oriented in foreign-owned companies than in Polish-owned companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. The voivodship Career Planning and
Information Centers provide some support to such enterprises in their selection and human resource development activities. A few universities (for example, the Jagiellonian University, the Górnico-Hutnicza Academy of Krakow, and the Academy of Economics of Krakow) have a Master’s degree in human resource management which includes career counseling: this may indicate a growing link between these two fields.

- To what extent are trade unions involved in providing career development services for their members, or in negotiating for such services in collective bargaining agreements?

In general, trade unions in Poland play only a limited role in the area of career information and counseling, and are not normally involved in providing career development services for their members. They have however been involved in at least one scheme involving training and support for peer counselors in a government-funded program for workers made redundant as a result of economic restructuring in the steel industry.

4.5 The private (for-profit) sector

- What is known about career guidance and counseling services provided by the private (for-profit) sector, e.g. outplacement services or private career guidance practitioners? How extensive are such services? To what extent have they grown in recent years?

- What are their client base, the level of their fees, and the sorts of services they provide?

Career information and counseling services offered by the private sector are only just beginning to enter the Polish market. The first such attempts include private career information offices and psychological and pedagogical centers. They are established mainly in the larger cities in Poland: Warsaw, Szczecin, Wrocław, Kraków and Poznan (http://www.czarneccy.prv.pl/). Usually they employ no more then 3-4 persons. Mostly they provide a much wider range of services, not limited to career counseling. A significant barrier to the development of private career counseling services is the lack of popularly available career information databases, methods and tools that can be used in the private career counselor’s work.

Employers’ needs are addressed by a number of consultancy organizations which conduct consultancy activities related to career development in large and medium-scale companies. Most of these are headhunting companies providing services in relation to career training and job placement. Recently there has been an increase in outplacement services as well. Many organizations make use of some private human resource development companies, especially in the placement of higher and medium-rank managers.

- Has government taken any steps to try to encourage private (for-profit) organizations to provide guidance and counseling services or to regulate the ways in which such services are provided (e.g. by providing vouchers that can be used to purchase services; by contracting out services; by setting staff qualification levels; by regulating fees that can be charged)?

There have been no such government initiatives.
• What is the relationship, if any, of such private guidance agencies to private employment agencies? How many of the latter are there? Are they licensed, and if so, by whom?

Private employment agencies are just starting to operate (the new regulation permitting them was signed by the Labor Minister in January 2003) so it is not yet possible to discuss the relationship between institutions providing guidance services and these agencies.

4.6 Other organizations

• What role do other organizations – e.g. church, charitable and other organizations in the community sector – play in providing information, guidance and counseling services?

• What types of clients do they serve? What types of needs do they attempt to meet?

In Poland there are few guidance activities in the community sector. In general, there have only been sporadic and limited attempts: pilot projects and studies. Although the outcomes were interesting, they were – regretfully – not widely disseminated. Examples of good practice include implementation of the program entitled “ViDI - a Virtual Internet Counselor” (www.telepraca.pl/v_d) by the Foundation for Social Policy Development with the participation of the Polish Association of School and Vocational Counselors.

An important state-funded organization (which works closely with the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy) is the Voluntary Labour Corps, which runs a variety of education, training and social-development activities for young people, especially those at risk of social exclusion. Its activities include:
- 298 labour corps;
- 26 educational and training centers;
- 49 educational and work centers and 64 branches;
- 9 training and “upbringing” centers;
- 22 professional training centers;
- 49 youth work offices and 67 branches;
- 126 job clubs;
- 11 youth travel offices;
- 34 “help farms”.

These activities currently cover around 32,000 young people aged 15-24 per year. Some have been involved in criminal activities, and may be referred by the police or the courts; some have educational and social needs, and may be referred by the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers for example. Many of the activities are guidance-related. These include job clubs (see Section 4.8 below) and various forms of work practice. In addition, the education and training centers include youth labor offices which organize job fairs and job placement services – especially placement into short-term jobs.

A more localized community-based initiative is that the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy, in co-operation with the voivodship labor offices, has recently provided funding for communities to set up “Gmina Information Centers”. In the initial period, this is a pilot program being implemented in up to 90 gminas (the most local of the three levels of
decentralized self-government) in areas with a particularly high risk of structural unemployment. These local information centers gather information in their travel area regarding jobs, training, setting up one’s own business, franchise opportunities, etc. They also offer a range of other community services. One of their main aims is to give local communities access to tele-computing services.

- **Has government attempted to increase their role (e.g. by contracting out services)? If so, why? Has it attempted to regulate the ways in which they provide services?**

Under three special programs – PHARE 2000 and PHARE 2001 financed by the European Union, and the Rural Development Project, financed by the World Bank – there are components where direct contracts are established with non-governmental organizations and private agencies to provide training, job placement and counseling services to the unemployed. The experience of these projects shows that at present there is lack of NGOs and private agencies which can deliver such services. In the Rural Development Project, for example, some regions had few if any bids for tenders.

### 4.7 Gaps

- **Please describe the major gaps, if any, in the provision of guidance services. Which groups are under-served, or not served at all?**

There is inadequate access for school students to career information and guidance services. Both in the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers and in the labor offices the demand for services is much higher than counselors’ ability to satisfy it. According to the legal regulations, career information and guidance services for all school students should be provided by the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers. However, their staffing and equipment are not sufficient to provide services for all who need them.

It seems likely that the disabled experience difficulties in obtaining access to this type of service since the counseling staff in labor offices are too few and an insufficient number of centers have been specially adapted to accommodate the needs of the disabled.

Further major gaps in the Polish system of career guidance provision include the lack of services for employed adults, and the lack of services provided by private institutions to supplement the public services.

### 4.8 Delivery methods

Within each of sub-sections 4.1-4.6 above, please include information where possible about the use made of various delivery methods. To help you here, a list of some of the ways in which information, guidance and counseling services can be delivered is given below.

- Batteries of psychological tests
- Telephone information, guidance and counseling
- CD-ROM-based self exploration and job-
- Group guidance and counseling sessions
- Individual face-to-face interviews
- The systematic use of community members

25
Counselors use a wide range of individual and group methods. The basic method in the counselor’s work with individual clients is the face-to-face interview. In the course of such an interview, the counselor obtains all the information that is relevant to assess the client’s situation, the course of their education or career, their state of health, and their interests and expectations concerning occupation or employment. The interview is the starting point for a discussion of the client’s future. For instance, in the case of school graduates, the interview usually ends with the formulation of an individual action plan identifying suitable vocational training.

Since 1998, career counselors have made wider use of self-assessment techniques, such as Holland’s Self Directed Search. Career counselors with a background in psychology use psychometric tools, such as:

- interests and occupational aptitude tests;
- the Holland Job Preferences Questionnaire;
- the General Aptitude Test Battery;
- IQ, EQ and personality tests;
- APIS-P tests of IQ and perception processes;
- Status Index and Fear Characteristics (ISCL);
- the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ-R);
- the Temperament Questionnaire – Formal Behavior Characteristics (FCZ-KT).

Since 1997, group counseling methods for solving the career problems of the unemployed have been used in labor offices:

- The French “Educational Method” places the client’s personal experience in the centre of counseling activity and improves their knowledge about the world of occupations. It also helps clients to define their own career situation in the context of the changing needs of the labor market and to prepare an individual plan of action.
- The Danish “Inspiration Course” is an effective method used in work with the long-term unemployed and people threatened with long-term unemployment. This method reinforces motivation and the active efforts of the unemployed in realistic planning of their career.

Starting from 1999, following co-operation with French experts, selected counselors have used methods for creating a bilan de compétence. This method enables the employed, the unemployed and those searching for a job to analyze their own career experience in terms of the competencies they have acquired and to review their future plans. The co-operation between the counselor and the client leads to identification of the client’s professional competencies which will help him or her cope better in the labor market.
Since 2000, career counselors working in the labor offices of the Malopolskie voivodship, in co-operation with Spanish experts, have used a method called: “Developing Individual Characteristics in Making it Easier to Find a Job”. This method enables the long-term unemployed to make the effort to search for a new job in spite of their lack of motivation resulting from psychological barriers.

Many counselors use other methods, such as “The Readiness for Change”, “Become a Rockefeller”, “Career Start”, and “Enterprise”, all of which take the form of workshop sessions.

Another very popular guidance activity in Poland, since the early 1990s, is job clubs. These try to help anyone who is experiencing some kind of career confusion – they may have been in industries that are failing, or they may have health issues, or they may be returning to the workplace after an extended absence. Job clubs support them in looking for work. Most offer their clients access to resources that may include faxing, copying and word processing facilities as well as computer access for online work and research\textsuperscript{11}. Job clubs are organized by:

- The \textit{poviat} labor offices,
- The Centers for Career Information and Planning of the voivodship labor offices,
- The Voluntary Labor Corps,
- The Career Bureaux in universities and colleges

A similar activity to job clubs is sometimes organized by the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers.

In every labor office, clients may use the computer career guidance support application, “Counselor 2000”. The program is updated every year and consists of four modules: “Client”, “Occupations”, “Education” and “Navigator”. It opens up new possibilities for analyzing the world of work, makes clients reflect about their own career, stimulates their activity and prepares them for making the right career choice (for a short description, see Annex 1).

Internet-based service include:

- \texttt{www.apraca.pl} - links to the webpages of governmental and non-profit organizations
- \texttt{www.inteligent.pl} - private provider
- \texttt{www.telepraca.pl/sdsiz} - the web pages of the Polish Association of School and Vocational Counselors

The counselors working for the Center for Career Information and Planning of the Voivodship Labor Office in Torun were the first to gain experience in career information and guidance using videoconferencing. In 1999-2000, they implemented the VOGUE project as part of the Leonardo da Vinci Program. The project was addressed to young people who were making career decisions. Using the videoconference method, career counselors communicated useful information to their clients. 50 guidance interviews were carried out using this approach.

Polish participation in the Leonardo da Vinci projects on “Transnational Vocational Counseling”, “National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance” and “Distance\textsuperscript{11} For more details, see the Regulation of the Minister of Labor and Social Policy of 9 February 2000 (Journal of Laws No. 12, item 146; amendments - Journal of Laws 2001, No. 134, item 1511).
Counseling”, initiated by the Methodological Center for Career Information and Guidance of the former National Labor Office, is proving very important for the development of career information and guidance services in the country, especially their European dimension:

- The “Transnational Vocational Counseling” project, part of an international program of training for Euro-counselors (in addition to the Polish participants, there are also German, Austrian and Hungarian partners taking part in the program), will make it possible to upgrade the professional qualifications of career counselors. Distance learning methods will be used during postgraduate schemes for Euro-counselors.
- The “National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance” project, including regular meetings with foreign partners and support from the “Euro-Guidance” website, provides access to reliable information on education and training in other European countries (http://www.euroguidance.org.uk/english/nrcvgcentres/poland/poland2.htm). The relevant Polish websites are: http://www.praca.gov.pl/nczpz/ (Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy) and http://www.nrcgkowez.edu.pl/ (Ministry of National Education and Sport). For more information on the centre, see Section 9.2.
- The project on “Distance Counseling”, including elaboration of theoretical assumptions in the form of a manual and training of Polish “multipliers” in Germany (the project promoter), will facilitate the launch of alternative communication and counseling methods.

It is hoped that these initiatives, run by teams in the Ministry of National Education and Sport and the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy, will help to fulfill clients’ needs for reliable information and professional career guidance.

5. STAFFING

In answering this section, please describe differences between staff in the different settings in which information, guidance and counseling services are provided: for example, schools, tertiary education, community organizations, public employment services.

- What types or categories of staff are employed to provide information, guidance and counseling services in your country (e.g. information librarian, careers teacher, school counselor, employment counselor)?

At the beginning of the 1990s, labor offices hired staff with secondary or tertiary education qualifications for career counselor positions. In 1993, the National Labor Office ruled that until professional university courses were offered for career counselors, only those who had an MA degree, preferably in psychology, pedagogy or sociology, could be employed as career counselors. In 1995, the profession of career counselor was added to the “Classification of Occupations and Trades”.

In 1997, a university curriculum for career counselors was introduced using a program developed by the University of Łódź (as part of the World Bank project TOR#8 implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy). The following courses are now being offered:
- A 3-year BA program in career counseling; its graduates will be licensed career counselors and will be able to continue their studies at MA level.
- A 5-year MA program in psychology, with a specialization in career counseling psychology.
- A 1-year postgraduate course in career guidance addressed to graduates in psychology.
- A 2-year postgraduate course in career guidance addressed to graduates from faculties other than psychology.

Programs following this curriculum are currently being offered at five institutions; a further five have developed curricula of their own.

The National Labor Office has also opened up possibilities in the sphere of short or long-term vocational training programs for counselors. These include in-service training programs. Moreover, career counselors employed in the poviat labor offices participate in training courses organized by the Centers for Career Information and Planning of the voivodship labor offices.

Some career counselors have taken part in training courses abroad (including study visits) and courses in Poland have included the participation of experts from Germany, France, the USA, Denmark and Sweden. In-service training courses have been conducted by experts from tertiary education institutions, ministries and the National Labor Office.

Career counselors are also provided with amenities for self-education, including information and methodological materials developed and disseminated by the National Labor Office.

The main group of staff in the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers (about 90%) are psychologists and pedagogues. Most of these (about 60%) systematically improve their qualifications through short training courses and other programs, which may include such issues as preparing students for the choice of occupation using active methods, diagnostic techniques, etc. Over 30% of the staff have trained as career counselors by completing postgraduate studies in vocational orientation and career guidance, and many of these have specialized degrees in this field. All of them are university graduates and hold at least a Master’s degree. 12

As from January 2003, provision is being made for the new role of school career counselor.

In general, career counselors receive low salaries in relation to their level of qualification.

- How many staff in each of these categories are employed to provide information, guidance and counseling services in your country (please provide precise data if possible; if not, provide estimates)? Please include information on their age, gender and equity group structure if this is available.

More then 700 career counselors are employed in the labor offices (including 460 employed by the poviat labour offices and over 240 in the Centers for Career Information and Planning). All career counselors are university graduates. 41.1% of counselors graduated from pedagogy faculties, 16.4% from sociology, 15.5% from psychology and 25% from other faculties. No detailed information is available concerning the age of these career counselors. About 95% are women. 13

In the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers, about 1,500 counselors provide career information and guidance services among other services. Most are women (90.2%). Over 60% of counselors have 10 years of work experience, and 74% are under 45. It is a young cadre, with good academic background and ambitions to enhance their professional qualifications. 14

What education and training qualifications are the different types or categories of career information, guidance and counseling staff required or preferred to have (e.g. teaching qualifications, university degrees in psychology, special diplomas in guidance and counseling, postgraduate qualifications, completion of in-service courses and so on: please describe the length of the education and training and the type of qualification that it leads to, as well as any differences in requirements between the different settings in which services are provided)?

Career counselors working in labor offices have higher education diplomas (BA or MA degrees); many of them completed postgraduate studies in career counseling. Short and long-term courses, successful completion of which is rewarded with certificates, play an important part in the vocational development of career counselors. Most frequently, the subject matter of such training courses includes methodologies and techniques of career guidance for individual clients and groups. For instance, career counselors with a background in psychology were trained in how to use Holland interests inventories and the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB).

In 2000, a team of experts developed a draft of “Descriptions and Standards of Professional Qualifications for Career Counselors”. It specifies requirements for career counselors working within the structures of the two Ministries. The levels of qualifications specified are outlined in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education and Training</th>
<th>Teaching qualification</th>
<th>University degrees in psychology</th>
<th>Special diplomas in guidance &amp; counseling</th>
<th>Postgraduate qualification</th>
<th>In-service courses</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School career counselor</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career counselor in Psychological and Pedagogical Center</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career counselor in public labor office</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career counselor in private guidance agency</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A substantial range of new training provision will be needed for the new school career counselors. Courses are likely to be on a part-time basis, extending over 12-18 months. An important policy issue is whether such courses should be separate from, or linked to, training for other kinds of career counselors. A more generic training would, for example, make it possible to set up pilot schemes in which the school career counselor could work with parents and other adults at gmina level.

15 Statement issued by the Director of the National Labor Office.
16 The draft was developed by H. Bednarczyk, D. Koprowska, M. Zurek and U. Jeruszka.
• Where qualifications are required, is it government or a professional association that requires them? Please describe the relevant professional licensing bodies.

There are currently no such bodies in Poland.

• What, typically, are the types of competencies (or knowledge and skills) that these different types or categories of workers are expected to have?

The requirements for career counselor positions in the labor offices are: communication skills, ability to conduct guidance interviews and to work with groups, job analysis, abilities in individual and group evaluation, knowledge of the labor market, knowledge of career development theory, negotiating skills, job brokerage skills, information technology skills, and – in the future – skills in transnational information management\textsuperscript{17}.

A more detailed model of competencies is to be found in the standards for “Career Counseling Services” developed by the National Labor Office (1999). A revised version of these standards has recently been prepared and is to be sent by the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy to all labor offices in Poland.

• How are the competencies or knowledge and skills required of those who provide information, guidance and counseling changing, and why? What is being done to meet these changing knowledge and skill needs?

Fundamental changes have recently been taking place in the patterns of young people’s transitions from education to the labor market. An increasing number of young people in Poland are currently experiencing a difficult career start due to the lack of job vacancies. Adaptation of the educational system to the changing realities of the labor market is a serious challenge. The nature of the labor market is also changing, and employers are setting higher and higher requirements for candidates.

All this necessitates continuous training for career counselors to enable them to acquire the new competencies they need to meet the requirements of their day-to-day work. In Poland, there are many possibilities for education and training of career counselors. Their offices have been equipped with computer hardware and software. Databases on resources have been created as a result of international co-operation and opening up of the Polish counseling and guidance system to the solutions adopted by countries with extensive experiences in this field. The establishment of the National Resource Center for Vocational Guidance (Leonardo da Vinci Program) is facilitating ongoing co-operation with a network of National Centers in the European Union countries and in the other pre-accession countries, supporting the development of career counseling systems with a European dimension.

In order to create favorable conditions for acquiring new competencies by career counselors under the Leonardo da Vinci Program, the “Transnational Vocational Counseling” project (see Section 4.8) is currently under way. The outcome of the project will be a curriculum for transnational postgraduate studies in career guidance. When it is launched, Polish, German, Austrian and Hungarian career counselors will acquire a certificate recognized in all of these countries.

\textsuperscript{17} OECD National Questionnaire- Policies for Information, Guidance and Counselling Services: Poland - Wl. Trzeciak & W. Kreft. Warsaw, 2002.
• What opportunities exist for information, guidance and counseling service staff to update their knowledge and skills? Do trade-union agreements allow time for recurrent education and skills upgrading? What time, and what programs, do government agencies provide for the purpose? What recurrent education and skills upgrading courses are provided by tertiary institutions and/or other bodies?

In order to systematically update the knowledge and skills of career counselors, a series entitled “Information and Methodological Bulletin for Career Counselors” has been published for the past 10 years (21 issues have been published so far by the National Labor Office, and the series is to be continued by the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy). The bulletins are distributed to all career counselors across the country. Additionally, other materials, papers, reports and other publications are published periodically. Career counselors also attend conferences organized by the Polish Association of School and Career Counselors and various seminars organized as part of the Leonardo da Vinci Program. A great deal of information that is useful in the work of the career counselor is available on the Internet (for example, at www.telepraca.pl/sdsiz). Career counselors can also improve their qualifications at postgraduate studies offered by several universities.

• Please provide details of any professional groups, bodies or associations of information, guidance and counseling services workers in your country. Indicate the extent to which such professional groups/bodies/associations: work to raise standards of professional practice (e.g. through the professional development and recurrent education of their members); are actively involved in lobbying governments on professional issues (e.g. relating to service quality); and have an industrial relations role to improve the employment conditions of their members.

The only association representing counselors is the Polish Association of School and Vocational Counselors. It is a non-governmental, nationwide organization set up in 1991 to bring together and represent professionals dealing with career counseling and career orientation. Members of the Association include psychologists, tutors, school counselors and teachers, career counselors, employment counselors, sociologists working for various institutions and departments (especially in education and career departments) as well as academic teachers and senior students of career counseling. Since 1999 it has been a member of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) which works in more than 80 countries all over the world.

The Association’s basic aims include:

- integration of people professionally involved in solving problems connected with school and career counseling in various departments;
- topical activities – enhancing members’ knowledge and raising their qualifications by discussing theoretical contexts for counseling, making available methods and techniques developed by various counselors, improving professional skills and qualifications, and exchanging experiences and information;
- development of new methods – inspiring, designing and developing new methods in the fields of career orientation and counseling aimed at secondary school students, university students, and the disabled, as well as adult in search of a job or wishing to change their profession/occupation;
- dissemination of information – distribution of career development information;
opinion-forming activities – working out common positions among counselors, indicating new directions with respect to desired changes;

making statements concerning the field of career orientation and guidance and sending them to the appropriate central and local government institutions.

Its activities include:

- Organizing annual training conferences for the members of the Association from all over the country.
- Organizing local conferences, where appropriate.
- Preparing methodological materials on career orientation and counseling.
- Issuing an information bulletin that has been published under the title “Career Counseling” for the last ten years.
- Participating in world congresses and seminars to be acquainted with the latest trends in career orientation and counseling all over the world.
- Obtaining grants and sponsors for the realization of various tasks undertaken by the Association.

Recent achievements of the Association include:

- Preparation of numerous methodological materials in the field of career orientation and counseling.
- Preparation of 300 “Vocational Information” folders for the State Employment Office as well as for numerous psychological centers.
- Co-operation in creating a training program “Career Visions” as well as the “Counselor 2000” system designed to facilitate the work of career counselors in the employment offices (see Annex 1).
- Realization of the Association’s own project “Career Paths: Systematic Preparation of Young People Entering the Job Market”, with distribution via the Internet.
- Participation in the activities of the Career Counseling Forum under the co-ordination of the Staff Training Office.
- Participation in IAEVG international conferences (Berlin, Vancouver, Paris).
- Realization of a project “VIDI - The Internet Virtual Career Counselor” in co-operation with the Social Policy Development Fund, as well as a project called MEN-TOR, helping high school teachers to share the knowledge and methods connected with career counseling.
- Contributing to the development of the “Nationwide Career Information System” – to be piloted in the Lower Silesia voivodship (see Section 6).
6. CAREER INFORMATION

• Is comprehensive information available on: (a) post-compulsory education and training opportunities; (b) occupations; (c) job vacancies; and (d) likely future labour market trends?

(a) Post-compulsory education and training opportunities

The main sources of information on higher education are produced by private-sector publishers. They include an official guide published under contract from the Ministry of Education and Sports. The Ministry currently also has a project to build an education internet server on post-compulsory educational opportunities. The “Counselor 2000” multimedia program includes a database of such opportunities, but it has not been updated. There are also other initiatives at voivodship level.

(b) Occupations

The available resources include:

- “Classification of Occupations and Trades”.
- 546 occupational profiles.
- 301 leaflets about various occupations (synopses of information taken from the profiles).
- A set of 546 job characteristics included in the “Guidebook to Occupations”.
- A series of 119 short films presenting various occupations on VHS tapes.
- A classification of 590 occupations by Holland code – included in the “Job Evaluation Manual”.

Career counselors also receive a multimedia application entitled “Counselor 2000” which is offered to clients of all labor offices on almost 540 computer workstations all over Poland. This represents the first time in Poland that a software package has been made available which opens new possibilities for multi-dimensional analysis of occupations, stimulates the client’s efforts and helps them to prepare for choosing the right job.

(c) Job vacancies

Apart from the work of job counselors in poviat labor offices, some links to job vacancies and statistical data can be obtained from www.praca.gov.pl or www.apraca.pl.

(d) Likely future labour market trends

As a first step towards making forecasts concerning the labor market, the Polish Government has established an Interdepartmental Team for Forecasting Labor Demand (see Annex 2 and the website www.rcss.gov.pl/mzppp/).

Some information about education/training opportunities, job opportunities etc. is developed at a local level, mainly for local needs. Such work is carried out by Centers for Career Information and Planning and poviat labor offices, and also by the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers. There is currently no mechanism to share the information between these institutions.
Some career information is also collected by the higher education Career Bureaux (see Section 4.2). This information does not, however, seem to be used in other organizations which could benefit from it.

- **Who is responsible for collecting and distributing this information?**

There are two ministries that are responsible for collecting and distributing career information in Poland: the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy; and the Ministry of National Education and Sport. Both carry out their own policies and activities. However, the role of the Ministry of National Education and Sport in this area is largely symbolic in nature. Its National Centre for Support of Vocational Education and Lifelong Learning (KOWEZiU) does not produce any career information but only issues methodological information for teachers (e.g. the career guidance and orientation package “School and Career Orientation in Secondary Schools”, and “My Future Job – Materials for Vocational School Students: A Guide for Vocational School Teachers”).

- **What is the public sector’s role in producing career information? Which Ministries are responsible for its production? How is it produced? Is it produced on a national level or at a regional/provincial level? Does government legislate to control how information is classified, distributed or stored?**

Some attempts have been made to co-ordinate the work of the two Ministries by the National Resource Center for Vocational Guidance. These efforts, however, mainly have a European dimension and produce materials related to this dimension.

Without question, the main achievements of the career information and counseling system in Poland in recent years have stemmed from the activities of the National Labor Office. In the period of the development of the Labor Office System (in the years 1993-2000), due to the involvement of the staff of the Methodological Center for Career Information and Counseling at the National Labor Office (originally the Department of Vocational Counseling and Training of the Unemployed), a significant development of career guidance services took place. Starting from a point of virtually no career information, a level has been attained where the fundamental resources required in career guidance are available. Very important in this respect was international assistance: use of funds made available under the World Bank Project (TOR # 8), and financial support and non-returnable funds granted by the German Federal Labor Office, as well as the help of other countries such as the Denmark, France and the USA.

As a result, all career counselors working in labor offices and in the 52 Centers for Career Information and Planning have at their disposal uniform, modern facilities, including – in addition to career information – other methods and tools that are indispensable in their work. These include a multimedia application entitled “Counselor 2000” (developed by the “Demon” company) that is offered to clients of all labor offices on almost 540 computer workstations all over Poland (see Annex 1) “Counselor 2000” is regularly updated on the basis of feedback from its users. The new, modified version is adapted to the needs of the disabled (in terms both of content and of access); it also offers possibilities for exchange of local information, data updating via the Internet and access to information about European Union countries.
In addition, career counselors receive various databases and publications, i.e. catalogues, guides and magazines containing information on occupations, the labor market, vocational training institutions, etc. Career information developed at a central, national level is supplemented with regional information developed at voivodship level, mainly by the Centers for Career Information and Planning.

Following the closing down of the National Labor Office (in March 2002), the task of developing career information is now one of the responsibilities of the Career Guidance Section of the Department of Labor Market Policy in the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy. It is hoped that this issue will be treated as a priority and that important solutions concerning career information and guidance services will be implemented in the coming years.

In the sphere of classification, production, dissemination and storage of career information, the Polish government has not created any systematic regulations. The only relevant classification that is functioning in Poland is the Classification of Occupations and Trades. It was adopted by legislation (developed by the Institute of Labor and Social Affairs) on the basis of the Regulation of the Minister of Labor and Social Policy of 10 December 2002 (Journal of Laws No. 222, item 1868). This classification contains a description of over 1,600 occupations and trades. It is addressed to people who seek information on the current job structure on the labor market in Poland and can serve as a basic tool for use in the education and labor-market systems.

- **What forms does career information take (e.g. comprehensive printed guides; individual leaflets or information sheets; CD-ROMs; Internet-based services)?**

Until recently, the majority of the available career information databases have been in printed form (separate career information files, occupation guides, occupation characteristics, leaflets, etc.). The first significant attempt to integrate all the information databases into an electronic form has been the “Counselor 2000” application bringing together all the existing forms of career information together with a database of educational institutions.

The first steps in developing Internet-based services have been made too – see:

- [www.apraca.pl](http://www.apraca.pl)
- [www.inteligent.pl](http://www.inteligent.pl)
- [www.telepraca.pl/sdsiz](http://www.telepraca.pl/sdsiz)

- **Which client groups is it aimed at (e.g. school students; tertiary education students; public employment service clients; the general public)?**

The career information databases which have been developed so far (mainly due to the character of the institutions that produced them) have been primarily targeted at the clients of the labor offices – in other words, adults. However, since many clients of the Centers for Career Information and Planning are young people, their needs too have been taken into account during the development of these databases.

Career information developed in the private sector is mainly targeted at the needs of school students and graduates, both from schools and from universities.
• **What methods are used to gather it?**

Three methods are worth mentioning, so far as gathering of information is concerned:

I. Methods used in collecting information about occupations:

1. During the development of job characteristics, the CIOP (Central Institute of Labour Protection – www.ciop.pl) created a methodology for collecting and analysing career information using two tools: a Job Description Questionnaire and an Occupation Analysis Questionnaire.

2. During the development of Occupation Information Files (by Demon), the Career Analysis Sheet (Part A – *Job Training*; Part B - *Work*) was used. It is a Polish adaptation of tools used by the Federal Labor Office in Germany.

II. Methods used in collecting information about educational institutions:

1. During the development of the database about educational institutions in Poland (vocational schools, secondary schools, universities and training companies) a methodology developed by the Demon company (author: Wojciech Kreft) was used. It employed both an information questionnaire about institutions and a special computer program enabling each of the 60 people working on the data-collection exercise to input the data, in line with the given instructions, to local **voivodship** databases.

III. Methods used in collecting information about the labor market:

1. Classical statistical methods are used here. They are based on GUS (Polish Central Statistical Office) reporting. These include, among others: national and **voivodship** statistics concerning the unemployed, the unemployment rate, active forms of fighting unemployment, job offers, etc. This information can be found on the Internet at [www.praca.gov.pl/stat/](http://www.praca.gov.pl/stat/).

2. The first attempts have been made to develop forecasts concerning the labor market. The Polish Government has established (as a support body of the Government) the Interdepartmental Team for Forecasting Labor Demand (see Annex 2 and the website [www.rcss.gov.pl/mzppp/](http://www.rcss.gov.pl/mzppp/)).

• **What steps are taken to ensure that it is accurate and timely?**

Career information databases very quickly become out-of-date. Without an updating system (with effective procedures, methods and standards) for collecting, classifying, processing, disseminating and updating career information, modern career information systems are not possible.

In the production of career information in the public sector, the accuracy and up-to-date quality of the data have been ensured only at the stage of collecting the information. The procedures included, for example: the need to reach sources of information and differentiate them, a multi-stage verification of the collected data, an analysis of the consistency of definitions adopted by experts, etc. Thus while collecting and putting together information...
about occupations during the development of the “Counselor 2000” computer program, two correction and verification procedures were used:

P1. Analysis of the uniformity of the criteria of variables describing an occupation:
   - Defining precise definitions of variables that describe an occupation.
   - Defining precise premises and criteria for attributing variables to occupations.
   - Defining value brackets for premises and criteria in attributing variables to occupations.
   - Analysis and evaluation of the differentiation of variables on various positions in a given occupation.
   - Printing of occupation lists by variables and analysis of subjective criteria used by experts.
   - Evaluation carried out by independent, competent evaluators of the appropriateness of attribution regarding each of the occupations.

P2. Consultations with experts, representatives of a given occupation, doctors, HES Inspectors and other competent persons.

However, the career information databases that have been produced in recent years are updated only with respect to occupational characteristics. This work was started by the Methodological Centre for Career Information and Counseling of the National Labor Office and currently rests with the Division of Vocational Counseling in the Labor Market Department of the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy.

Unfortunately, at present there is no genuine career information updating system in Poland. As a result, information tends to become outdated. To address this situation, in 2001 the Ministry of National Education and Sport established a team of experts in order to develop the principles of a modern and comprehensive education and career information system. Recently these principles have been integrated into the project entitled “The National Vocational Information System”, elaborated by three experts from the Polish Association of School and Vocational Counselors. 18 This project outlines the basic principles of a career information system and includes complex procedures, methods and standards for gathering, classifying, processing, disseminating and updating career information. Technologically, the project is based on recent solutions in computer-assisted knowledge management. It is based on the Multimedia Knowledge System containing all forms of career information in the form of text, photographs, graphics, grids, transparencies, animations, movies, audio files, independent computer programs, websites, etc. Computer presentation will make it possible to use elements of artificial intelligence (AI) and especially knowledge concerning expert systems and decision theories.

In the Upper Silesia Center of Vocational Information and Teacher Training in Walbrzych, a pilot web-based “Voivodship Career Information System” is being developed which will cover all levels of education as well as occupational information. It is hoped that it will be adapted on a partnership basis by other voivodships.

Career information that is produced in the private sector and sold on the market is systematically updated with new releases of the products.

18 www.ciz.walbrzych.pl/osiz.htm
• What steps are taken to ensure that it is user-friendly and oriented to user needs?

Public sector

The analysis of client needs concerning career information and the level of its “user-friendliness” is usually carried out when new databases are produced, when new product versions are prepared, or when the currently used products are checked for their effectiveness.

The needs of clients are analyzed through feedback from career counselors. On the basis of their work with clients, they define the type and scope of client needs.

Analysis of the user-friendliness of career information is a complex issue since it relies on a great number of factors, which can change depending on the form in which this information is provided.

During the development of the first Occupation Information File, all assumptions concerning the user-friendliness of the description were included in the methodology and suggestions for the authors. During the next phase (text editing) this aspect was also analyzed. Subsequently, in the implementation phase, clients’ opinions on the user-friendliness and clarity of the description were gathered and analyzed.

The development of computer programs requires a different kind of analysis. While designing the “Counselor 2000” application, a number of factors were taken into account, such as: type of interface, number of variables describing job characteristics and educational institutions, and number of options available on the screen. The first, draft versions of the program were tested in several Centers for Career Information and Planning for feedback both from career counselors and from clients themselves (in the form of questionnaires). This helped the authors of the program to develop it in line with client requirements. During work on the next two versions of the program, analysis of questionnaires from counselors resulted in relevant modifications being made.

In Poland, there has been no systematic research on these issues.

Private sector

Producers of career information developed in the private sector and sold on the market (see Section 9.8) have to systematically analyze client needs and ensure the user-friendliness of their products if they want to stay in the market. This is done primarily by analysis of feedback from clients (questionnaires, letters, etc.).

• How is it typically distributed (e.g. to schools and tertiary institutions; through career information centres; through public libraries; through community organizations)?

Products ordered or directly developed by the National Labor Office (or currently by the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy) are distributed only within the Ministry structure to counselors working for labor offices and Centers for Career Information and Planning.
Similarly, products commissioned by the Ministry of National Education and Sport are distributed only within the Ministry structure to counselors working for psychological and pedagogical centers and in some cases directly to schools.

Again, information collected by the higher education Career Bureaux is not widely distributed to other guidance providers.

In other words, the distribution of information at present is determined less by user needs than by provider needs. The result is duplication of effort, and failure to maximize usage of the publicly-funded resources that are developed.

- What role does the private (both for-profit and not-for-profit) sector play in providing career information? Please give examples, and an indication of the size and nature of such provision in relation to publicly-provided information.

The private sector in this field in Poland mainly comprises:

- Private publishing houses issuing educational guides (mainly on universities). An example of a large private educational company that produces a wide range of educational guides is the “Perspektywy” Publishing House (www.perspektywy.pl).
- Private companies developing computer software (multimedia guides, information and educational programs).

The lack of a more extensive private sector in career information is due to at least three factors:

- The inadequacies of career counseling in Polish schools – young people are not conscious of the need to seek career information on their own.
- “Social habits”, i.e. a popular belief that this kind of information should be available free of charge (at schools, information centres, labor offices, etc.).
- Lack of any government support for the private sector, or of an integrated career information and guidance system that would include mechanisms supporting the private sector.

Exemplary private website services include:
- www.telepraca.pl/sdiz - The Polish Association of School and Vocational Counselors
- www.perspektywy.pl – Perspektywy – Educational Publishing House
- www.twojakariera.pl – Foundation for the Promotion of Social Policy

Activities carried out by the mass media are limited to occasional events (television programs, radio broadcasts, press articles), especially in periods when education is the “topic of the day” (secondary school final examination period, beginning of the school year, etc.).

More systematic efforts have been made by “Perspektywy”, the largest magazine addressed to secondary school students. In response to demand, it publishes information concerning career information. One of its sections is “Career Step-by-Step”, which provides interesting descriptions of popular occupations.
• Has government sought to increase the role of the private sector in providing career information (e.g. by contracting out the production of material)? If so, how?

Until now, there have been only limited efforts on the part of the Polish Government to support the role of the private sector in the distribution of educational and career information. However, The National Strategy for Employment and Human Resources Development in the Years 2000-2006 mentions the “possibility of providing career information and guidance services by non-profit institutions, contracted by local authorities on the basis of public procurement”.

Parallel to the raising of social consciousness concerning the importance of career information, the demand for these services is increasing. There might now be opportunities for the private sector to boost its activity in this field. However, any rapid development of this kind is unlikely to be possible without government support to stimulate and support the efforts of the private sector. By supporting the private sector financially, public authorities could ensure the realization of many goals identified in the government’s social policy plans.

• What kinds of labor market data are included in career information (e.g. data on unemployment rates and earnings; data on regional variations in employment and unemployment for particular occupations; results of course satisfaction and graduate employment surveys)?

The first attempts at combining these kinds of information have been made in the “Counselor 2000” computer program. Information on job offers and on the number of the unemployed in given occupations has been included in the program. This information has involved statistical data from all over Poland. Local counselors can also input information on the local labor markets into the program (job offers and the number of the unemployed for various jobs, the situation on the local labor market, wages and salaries, employability, etc.).

Plans for more systematic labor market information are being developed by the Interdepartmental Team for Forecasting Labor Demand (see Annex 2).

7. ASSURING QUALITY

• Please describe the steps, if any, that the government has taken to maintain and increase the quality of information, guidance and counseling services.

The only significant step of this kind was the development of standards for “Career Counseling Services” by the National Labor Office (1999). A revised version of these standards has recently been prepared and is to be sent by the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy to all labor offices in Poland. They will not, however, have an obligatory status.

• Do standards exist for the delivery of information, guidance and counseling services? How and by who were these developed? What status do they have? Do they differ between providers?

See above.
• Do standards exist for the competencies required by information, guidance and counseling services staff? If so, how and by who were these developed? What status do they have? Do they differ between providers?

In 2000, a team of experts\(^9\) developed the “Description and Standards of Professional Qualifications for Career Counselors”, which defined the requirements for career counselors (see Section 5).

• Do any guidelines exist on information quality standards to help groups such as tertiary institutions, industry associations and individual enterprises in producing career information?

In Poland there are no guidelines concerning information quality standards to help non-governmental organizations to produce career information.

8. THE EVIDENCE BASE

• What information is available about the extent to which information, guidance and counseling services are used? What is known about differences in levels of use and access as a function of factors such as: socio-economic status or family background; geographical location; gender; age; educational level; and levels of disadvantage? Do regular national statistical collections monitor access? Have access and usage levels changed over time?

Provision of services in the sphere of career information and guidance in labor offices is recorded. According to the regulation of the Prime Minister of 6 September 2000, there is an obligation to report career information and guidance services through uniform statistical forms (see Annex 4 to MPiPS-01 report). At a central level, there are aggregate data concerning the number of people who have used career information and guidance services, broken down by sex, type of counseling (group or individual) and career information (individual clients and organized groups). These statistics apply to services that are provided in individual voivodships, and include data concerning poviats labor offices as well as separate data concerning the Centers for Career Information and Planning of the voivodship labor offices and their branches (see statistical information in Annex 3).

The reports provide data concerning services offered to:

- the unemployed, especially those living in the rural areas, graduates, long-term unemployed (over 12 months), and the disabled;
- job-seekers;
- other adults.

Additionally, they provide information referring to services provided to the unemployed, broken down by education level and time out of work.

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\(^9\) The project was elaborated by: H. Bednarczyk, D. Kowalska, M. Zurek and U. Jeruszka
The Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy analyzes the reports on access to career information and guidance services and takes actions in order to increase the availability of these services.

In the past, the National Labor Office was another institution that evaluated career information and guidance services. Quantity and quality evaluations were provided in such publications as: “Centers for Career Information and Planning in the 21st Century” (Bulletin No. 17, 2001). This publication presented the activity of all Centers for Career Information and Planning. Until 2000, during the period when the Labor Office System was in place, the number of people using career counseling services was steadily increasing.

- How is the level of community need and demand for information, guidance and counseling services established (e.g. by use of surveys, rates of service usage, waiting lists)? What is known about the expectations that clients have of services?

There are no Poland-wide studies on needs and demand for career information and guidance services. Counselors working in the Voivodship Labor Offices were trained in the years 1994 and 1995 in the evaluation of career information and guidance services provided in the labor offices.

- What criteria are normally used to judge the benefits or outcomes of information, guidance and counseling services?

The quality and effectiveness of services are evaluated on two different levels: on the basis of data available in reports, and on the basis of data and information available in the client guidance services charts. An important indicator of effectiveness is the number of people who have received counseling services, which is juxtaposed with the number of registered clients. This indicator makes it possible to define what share of clients has received these services.

Until 2000, voivodship career counseling co-ordinators evaluated career guidance interviews and contacts with clients. Additionally, indicators concerning service quality were included in the “Career Counseling” service standards.

- Please provide details of any recent (last five years) studies that have been conducted of:
  - The costs of providing information, guidance and counseling services.
  - How costs vary as a function of the type of service delivered and the characteristics of clients.
  - How the outcomes or benefits of information, guidance and counseling services relate to their costs.
  - How the benefits or outcomes of information, guidance and counseling services are related to the type of service provided and the characteristics of clients.

Only limited research on the costs of services has been carried out.

- Please provide details of any recent (last five years) studies or pilot projects that have been designed to provide insight into: the impact of careers services on individuals’
career choices; the ability to use career information; the impact of services upon the development of a learning society.

There have been no such initiatives.

- Do any national research centers specialise in career information, guidance and counseling services? Do they specialise in evaluative and policy studies; or do they mainly focus upon guidance techniques and methods?

In Poland there is at present no national research centre specialising in career information, guidance and counseling services. Some universities have however developed centers which have carried out several studies in this field. At the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, for example, there are plans to set up a Center for European Guidance and Research into Quality for such work.

- How useful has government found the work of research centers in developing policy for information, guidance and counseling services?

No such research has been carried out.

- Has government taken steps to increase the evidence base for information, guidance and counseling services through support for relevant research centers? Has such support been on the basis of individual commissioned studies, or have more on-going forms of support been used?

The Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy (co-financed by a World Bank loan) has commissioned the following activities from scientific institutions and universities:

- Central Institute of Labor Protection: development of sets of occupational characteristics.
- University of Łódź: development of an academic education program for counselors.
- Jagiellonian University: adaptation for Poland of the Holland interests test and the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB).

These activities relate to guidance methods and collection of information and are not studies evaluating career guidance services.

9. LEADERSHIP

9.1 Key stakeholders

Here we wish to know about the roles played some key stakeholders other than government Ministries in influencing the provision of information, guidance and counseling services.

Employer organizations

- What role do employer organizations play in articulating the need for improvements in, or in regulating/funding, information, guidance and counseling services (e.g. by issuing
reports on career guidance provision; by participating in advisory and co-ordination bodies; by contributing to common funds for information, guidance and counseling services; through providing employee leave to take part in career guidance; or through participation in program management committees)?

In Poland, no systematic practice related to the participation of employer organizations in the regulation or financing of career information and counseling services has yet emerged. These organizations are, however, sometimes represented on advisory bodies for particular initiatives – for example, the development of information systems.

They are also represented on the Employment Councils (cf. the Employment and Counteracting Unemployment Act of 14 December 1994). Other members of these councils include trade unions, government administration bodies and local governments. The Supreme Employment Council is an opinion-forming and advisory body assisting the Labor Minister; the Voivodship Employment Councils assist the marshals; and the Poviats Employment Councils assist the *starosts* (heads of *poviats* governments). Major activities relating to career information and counseling services development can be co-ordinated with the help of the relevant employment councils, depending on the level of the administration structure.

- **What initiatives do employer organizations take to help provide information, guidance and counseling services for students and other non-employees (e.g. involvement in career information programs in schools and tertiary education; participating in careers fairs and exhibitions; producing career information)?**

Employer organizations are involved in the organization of job fairs and in other forms of cooperation with, for example, Career Bureaux in universities.

During the gathering of career information, direct contacts with employers are established, with visits to institutions and enterprises to conduct job analyses, job descriptions, etc.

**Trade unions**

- **Do trade unions play a role in articulating the need for improvements in, or in regulating/funding, information, guidance and counseling services (e.g. by issuing reports on career guidance provision; or by participating in advisory and co-ordination bodies, or in program management committees)?**

- **What initiatives do trade unions take to help provide information, guidance and counseling services for people other than their members (e.g. involvement in career information programs in schools and tertiary education; participating in careers fairs and exhibitions; or producing career information)?**

Trade unions in Poland currently play only a limited role in influencing the area of career information, guidance and counseling. They are, however, represented on some advisory bodies, including the National Employment Board (see above).
Other stakeholders

- Please describe any ways in which policies encourage other stakeholders – such as parents, associations of students, alumni, church/community organizations, educational institutions or the end-users of services – to play a role in information, guidance and counseling services (e.g. through roles that are expressed in legislation; through policies to contract service provision to non-government organizations; through membership of advisory bodies; through membership of program management committees).

Both the existing and the currently emerging social policy strategies significantly encourage and promote other stakeholders’ participation in the production and provision of information, guidance and counseling services. Private non-profit organizations, such as foundations or associations, can be regarded as key stakeholders in this respect.

Encouragement and declarations, however, are not enough: they need to be accompanied by reinforcement and support – for example, by clear, transparent and consistent strategies for contracting tasks.

Due to the independent activities of some foundations and associations, interesting projects are sometimes successfully completed. These bodies also participate in preparing legislation or sit on advisory bodies. However, there is no structured system for involving the stakeholders in the planning of government activities.

9.2 Co-ordination

- What mechanisms, if any, exist for co-ordinating information, guidance and counseling services: between different Ministries; between different levels of government; between governments and other parties such as employers, trade unions, the private sector, and community groups; between services for youth and for adults; and between the different agencies that provide services?

Co-operation between the two ministers is carried out on an ad hoc basis. One example is the joint establishment of the National Resource Center for Vocational Guidance (Leonardo da Vinci Program), under an agreement between the Education Minister and the President of the National Labor Office dated 6 July 1999. The tasks of the National Resource Center for Vocational Guidance are performed by two teams: one at the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy; the other at the National Center for Support of Vocational Education and Lifelong Learning at the Ministry of National Education and Sport. The work of both teams is co-ordinated by the National Steering Committee. Both ministries nominate the members of the committee, selected from among non-governmental organizations, social partners, and representatives of universities. The committee identifies policies for the National Resource Center for Vocational Guidance in keeping with the strategy for the development of counseling services adopted at a central level. It also performs evaluation functions, and assesses both the progress and outcomes of the Center’s activities.

In 2000, the National Forum for Vocational Guidance was established by the Task Force for Training and Human Resources (BKKK), a non-governmental organization responsible for Poland’s links with relevant European Union training programs. The Forum is funded as part
of a program of activities supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its main goal is to work out consistent solutions in the field of vocational guidance in Poland.

It was intended by its founders to facilitate exchange of experiences and ideas between experts in this area. This is expected to result not only in improved knowledge and skills, but also to help develop the country’s vocational guidance system. Another important aspect of the Forum’s activities is expanding co-operation between vocational counselors from Poland and their colleagues from both EU member states and the other pre-accession countries.

It is planned that the Forum will have a Program Council and a Working Group. The Program Council will consist of representatives of the Ministry of National Education and Sport, the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy, employer organizations, trade unions, research organizations and labor offices. The Working Group will consist of specialists from the broad field of vocational guidance.

The main tasks of the Forum are:

- to identify the needs and national priorities relating to vocational guidance and counseling, in line with government policies;
- to present the opinions of vocational counselors in important matters relating to vocational guidance;
- to exchange experiences and allow integration of staff involved in vocational guidance;
- to expand co-operation of Polish vocational counselors with their European colleagues.

In pursuit of its goals, the Forum organises conferences and seminars on selected topics in the area of vocational counseling. During such events the Forum members have an opportunity to exchange views and integrate in specific interest groups. The proceedings from these meetings are available to all interested persons.

So far, four conferences and three meetings have been organised (international and national):

- Participants in an international conference entitled “An Integrated Model of Vocational Guidance in Poland”, held on 5-6 April 2000, developed an analysis of the existing vocational guidance system in Poland and worked towards developing an integrated model, drawing on EU experiences.

- A follow-up to these efforts was the national conference “An Integrated Model of Vocational Guidance – New Challenges and Problems” (5-6 December 2001). In addition to the matters discussed at the previous conference, issues arising from the recent administrative reform were part of the agenda. One of the topics was Euro-counseling: that is, Europe-wide vocational counseling targeted at people wishing to take up employment in a different country.

- During an international conference held on 7-8 December 2000, including international experts and entitled “Bilan de Competence - A New Tool for Career Planning and Management”, the participants were acquainted with French tools for assessing competencies.

- On 18-19 September 2002, a national conference on the development of private-sector vocational guidance was organised, titled “Private vocational guidance – indispensable need or following the fashion?”. The conference was a forerunner of possible future
developments, since currently non-public vocational guidance is practically non-existent in Poland.

The topics discussed at the Forum meetings have included issues such as: the role of the school in planning student careers (9-10 November 2000); training and development of vocational counselors in view of Poland's accession to the EU (29-30 March 2001); and use of IT in the work of vocational counselors (19-20 September 2002).

The activities of the National Forum for Vocational Guidance not only help to upgrade the professional qualifications of vocational counselors and to integrate the professional community, but are also playing a role in adapting the Polish system to modern European standards.

- What barriers exist to co-ordination of services and to networking among providers?

The need for co-ordination of services and networking between providers of career guidance services and their social partners is expressed in the project entitled “An Integrated Model of Career Counseling in Poland”. 20

The key existing barriers to co-ordination of these services include:

- the lack of understanding of the role and unique character of career guidance services among potential policy makers (the decision makers change far too frequently at the local and central levels alike);
- the low priority of career guidance issues in the Ministry of National Education and Sport as compared to the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy;
- the lack of favorable conditions (supported by legal regulations) for the development of non-public providers of career guidance services.

9.3 Strategic leadership

- Which bodies currently exert most influence over the development of career information, guidance and counseling provision?

There is no single body on the central level of government that is responsible for this sphere. The Ministry of National Education and Sport is responsible for the development of career information for young people at school, whereas the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy is responsible for counseling services targeted at adults, especially the unemployed and job-seekers.

A very visible gap currently is the lack of a Methodological Centre for Career Information and Counseling, such as existed previously in the structures of the National Labor Office. This Methodological Centre was really the first effective institution to expand and develop the career information, guidance and counseling system in Poland.

The National Forum for Vocational Guidance, established by the Task Force for Training and Human Resources (BKKK), has the potential to exert significant influence over the development of career information, guidance and counseling provision (see Section 9.2 above).

- If such provision is to develop further in the future, from which bodies might leadership be expected to come?

The first and most effective way to improve these services is likely to be through improved co-operation and co-ordination between all institutions involved. The major institutions that need to provide co-ordination in improving the development of career information, guidance and counseling services are the two ministries with responsibilities in this area.

The second way is for all relevant partners to support the National Forum for Vocational Guidance and realize its potential. It seems to be very worthwhile to assemble the best experts, specialists and practitioners from the whole country and offer content-related leadership to the field. The lack of systematic research in Poland in the field of career information, guidance and counseling is unfortunately very visible in this report!

- Is any new body/mechanism needed within your country to provide strategic leadership in this field?

See above.

10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Policy context

The enhanced attention currently being given to career guidance in Poland is being driven by two main policy forces, both at national and at voivodship level.

The first views career guidance as an active measure designed to combat unemployment. The high levels of unemployment have resulted in recognition of the need to prepare young people more effectively for entering the labor market, ensuring that their educational choices are informed by the needs of the labor market, and to develop improved career guidance services for unemployed youth and adults as part of the range of modern labor market instruments and institutions.

The second is more positive in nature, linked to the development of a knowledge-based society. There is now a growing recognition of the need, especially as Poland enters the European Union, to address the role of career guidance in encouraging all individuals to engage in career planning throughout life, viewing lifelong learning as a way of enabling them to respond more flexibly to the opportunities offered by a more dynamic labor market. In other words, career guidance is seen as an important part of a national strategy for lifelong learning and sustained employability, driven significantly by individuals themselves. It is
recognized that this strategy will require a major cultural shift on the part of both individuals and employers (levels of on-the-job training, for example, are much lower in Poland than in EU member-states), with government providing support within resource constraints. In this context, career guidance could be seen as a high-priority government investment.

10.2 SWOT analysis

In responding to these challenges, the current strengths of the career guidance in Poland include:

1. A strong core cadre of professional career counselors, especially in the labor offices and in the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers.
2. Improved career information resources, including web-based resources.
3. Active leadership from the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy, building upon the pioneering work of the former National Labor Office.
4. The existence of a National Forum for Vocational Guidance.

Weaknesses include:

1. Lack of career education and guidance expertise within schools.
2. Weak links between schools and the world of work.
3. The tradition that career information has to be mediated by professional staff rather than being directly available on open access.
4. Lack of services for employed adults to encourage them to review and develop their career on a regular basis.
5. Limited involvement of employers and trade unions in the development of career guidance provision.

Opportunities include:

1. The potential of the National Strategy for Employment and Human Resource Development to provide an overarching strategy within which the development of stronger and more co-ordinated career guidance provision can be set.
2. The potential of the National Forum for Vocational Guidance to provide a catalyst for co-ordinated strategic development across the career guidance field, on a lifelong basis.
3. Recent initiatives to establish career education provision within the school curriculum.
4. The new initiative to appoint school career counselors in all lower and upper secondary schools.
5. The new career bureaux being set up in many higher education institutions.

The main threat is that the lack of effective co-ordination both horizontally between the Ministry of National Education and Sports and the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy, and vertically between the different levels of administration and self-government at
national, voivodship, powiat and gmina levels, together with a failure to use the potential of the National Forum for Vocational Guidance, could result in:

- fragmented development;
- ineffective use of public resources;
- unproductive duplication of effort;
- failure to attend to gaps in provision.

10.3 Recommendations

1. The Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Models of Lifelong Learning should be encouraged to review the role of career guidance in relation to Poland’s lifelong learning strategy, and the need for stronger collaborative structures to co-ordinate the work of the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy in this area. This might include new legislation on a co-ordinated career guidance system for youth and adults.

2. A clear timetable should be established for the introduction of career counselors into all gymnasias and lyceas. Additional encouragement should be considered, for example in the form of a grant scheme (similar to that set up at the end of 2002 by the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy for establishing Career Bureaux) offering set-up support for equipment, resources and staff training.

3. As part of this new policy, clear measures should be taken:
   
   (a) to ensure that school career counselors are in close contact with the labor market, both in their initial and in-service training and through ongoing links with the labor offices;
   
   (b) to clarify the relationship between the work of the school career counselors and the career education provision within the school curriculum;
   
   (c) to clarify the support structures for the work of the school career counselors, and the respective roles here of the Centers for Career Information and Planning within the voivodship labor offices and of the Psychological and Pedagogical Centers – possibilities for merging these two forms of support should be explored, by encouraging pilots in areas where there are close relationships between the two organizations.

4. Linked to 3(c) above, a clear agreement should be established between the Ministry of National Education and Sports and the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy in relation to their respective roles in the delivery of career guidance services in schools. This agreement should include the development and distribution of career information, ensuring that this information is as accessible as possible to school students, and integrated into activation strategies designed to encourage students to use the information.
5. Consideration should be given within the Ministry of National Education and Sports to the most appropriate structure for supporting career education and guidance within the school system. At present, responsibility appears to reside largely with the National Center for Support of Vocational Education and Lifelong Learning. This risks career education and guidance being viewed as being confined to certain types of school. If the aim is to deliver career education and guidance to all students in all types of school, the support structure for it should reflect this aim, with appropriate links to the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy.

6. Pilot schemes should be established to enable school students within general education to experience the world of work, through work shadowing and internships as well as school visits. If current health and safety legislation is regarded as preventing such schemes, consideration should be given to amending the legislation.

7. The National Forum for Vocational Guidance should be encouraged as a catalyst for strategic development and co-operation within the career guidance field in Poland. Encouragement should be given to the establishment of similar Fora at voivodship level.

8. Alongside its strategic catalytic role, the National Forum for Vocational Guidance should be given government funding to carry out operational tasks on issues which cross-cut various sectors of provision. Two early such tasks should be:

   (a) A review of current provision for collecting and disseminating information on education and training opportunities at all levels, on occupations, on jobs, and on likely future supply and demand in the labor market, in order to reduce overlap, and to ensure that the information available is disseminated as widely as possible, in printed as well as web-based form. This should include consideration of legislative changes that may be necessary to ensure more co-ordinated provision in this area, including the possibility of establishing a small multi-agency co-ordinating unit responsible for ensuring that schools and the wider public have access to comprehensive and up-to-date career information.

   (b) The development of a competence framework defining the competences required of all practitioners involved in providing career information, career education and career counseling in all sectors, enabling all training courses courses to be mapped against this framework, and making it easier for career counselors to move across sectors. This work should build upon the work already carried out on “Descriptions and Standards of Professional Qualifications for Career Counselors” (see Section 5).

9. As part of the National Strategy for Employment and Human Resource Development, encouragement should be given to employers, trade unions and other bodies in the private and public sectors to develop pilot projects for developing guidance services to help employees review their present competences and identify the new competences they need to enhance their career progression and their career flexibility.
10. One or more national research centers should be supported within universities to carry out research and development work in career guidance, including evaluation studies, and the development of new tools and methods.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


“Counselor 2000” is a multimedia program supporting the work of career counselors in the labour office system. It is used in all labor offices (over 500) in Poland.

The program has been prepared by PPHU “Demon” on contract to the National Labor Office following an open bid announced in 1999 as part of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy project “Promotion of Employment and Development of Labor Office Services” (component TOR#8 – Employment Services, co-financed by a World Bank loan).

The program was created between July 1997 and July 1998. In November 2001 the third (3.0) version of the program was completed.

“Counselor 2000” is a complex system designed for use by counselors but also directly by clients. It contains four basic modules: Navigator, Client, Occupations, and Education.

The Navigator Module
This is an information and training module. It shows how to steer oneself through the elements of the program. In addition, it provides information on institutions supporting career counseling, frequently asked questions, and a dictionary.

The Client Module
The aim of this module is to gather data based on the client’s self-descriptions. The data covers:
- the client’s interests, skills, and other characteristics;
- the client’s preferences concerning jobs and work.
They can be inserted by the counselor or directly by the client. Clients then have the possibility to receive a list of the occupations that meets their criteria:
- occupations strongly contraindicated for them due to their state of health,
- occupations related to their hobbies, skills, abilities and other characteristics;
- occupations requiring professional/vocational qualifications that the client already has (from the same occupational group);
- occupations related to their client’s job/work preferences.
The list covers a number of occupations suitable for a given client. It is then possible to go directly to the Occupations module from any occupation on the list.

The Occupations Module
This module contains a multi-dimensional database based on the Classification of Occupations and Specialties. It:
- makes available information on particular occupations and on the labor market, with descriptions, graphic representations and multimedia presentations;
- enables the user to search for occupations according to occupational characteristics;
- enables the user to search for a similar occupation to the entered one according to given criteria.

The Education Module
The Education module contains a database of educational institutions:
- it makes it possible to define the type of educational institution that is being sought (educational institution parameters);
it makes it possible to define the type of course that is being sought (Education
Direction Parameters);
- it makes available information about institutions and courses that meet the selected
criteria.
This module indicates educational routes to particular careers, with information about:
- the entry requirements to particular courses;
- educational process (type of school, length of course, any work practice).
It is also possible to find detailed information on:
- the place of work practice in the course;
- possibilities for getting scholarships;
- accommodation facilities.

The advantages of the program
These include:
- a huge database – the information included, if in print form, would consume around
  30,000 pages;
- the analysis of “the world of jobs”;
- activating people and giving them chance to think thoroughly about their careers,
  broadening their awareness of possible fields (in terms of career information);
- a widened client dossier (scope of data), with the capacity to filter data and develop a
  wide range of automatically generated reports that can contribute to statistics on the
  counselor’s work;
- the open character of the program – with added possibilities for editing of the data by
  the users (mainly in the Education database);
- a new informational/educational tool;
- mechanisms for exchanges of data and development of the program in the future.

Even the best computer program is not capable of replacing the role of the career counselor in
direct contact with clients. It can, however:
- release the counselor from boring and repetitive tasks;
- quickly provide the counselor or client with appropriate and comprehensive career
  information;
- support the counselor in the process of “diagnosing” the client (through tests and
  questionnaires);
- create and maintain standard documentation on the client;
- generate various statistics and reports;
- replace the counselor in providing standard basic information to clients.
ANNEX 2: INTERDEPARTMENTAL TEAM
FOR FORECASTING LABOR DEMAND

List of publications

Volume I – Labor market and the demand for work in national economics models

Volume II – Forecasting of demand for work and methodological elements

Volume III – Calculation of demand for major job groups in year 2010

Volume IV – Multi-optional middle-range forecast of demand for labor force in Poland in 369 occupational groups

Volume V – Forecasting of demand for work according to qualifications and need for educating and counseling in the given direction

Volume VI - Emergence of new occupations and flexible forms of employment

Volume VII – Emergence of new occupations and labor demand forecasting/synthesis

Table of contents of Volume III – Calculation of demand for major job groups in year 2010

I. The methodological aims of the document
II. Characteristics of the 1996 database
III. Evaluation of demand for major jobs until year 2010
   1. The way of interpreting the results for year 2010
   2. General evaluation of results
   3. Jobs for which demand increases most until year 2010
   4. Jobs for which demand decreases most until year 2010
   5. The disproportion between the educational process and the demand for work/labor
IV. Conclusions concerning strategy and organization

Table of contents of Volume IV – Multi-optional middle-range forecast of demand for labor force in Poland in 369 occupational groups

I. Discussion on general assumptions and results of the forecast
II. Methodology of studies
   1. General scheme of methodology
   2. Macro-economics structure model (CGE)
   3. Macro-economics structure model (demand)
   4. Analysis of structural changes in the economy (the shape of a method)
III. Suggestions concerning organization, monitoring and computerization of forecasting of labor force demand
IV. Information on using the model and the database
V. Supplements
   1 - Characteristics of job classification (within the range of jobs included in the study)
   2 – The list of jobs and industry branches along with their codes presented in the forecasts
   3 – Aggregate juxtaposition of various forecasts

Table of contents of Volume VII – Emergence of new occupations and labor demand forecasting/synthesis

PART I: NEW OCCUPATIONS IN THE MOST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

1. Justification of the need for the study
2. Research questions; research method
3. Terminological issues
4. The fields of intense development of new occupations
   4.1. Information, telecommunication, Internet and information technology
   4.2. Biotechnology and its applications
   4.3. Environment protection
   4.4. Sea and seabed exploitation
   4.5. Servicing regional integration process
   4.6. Modern financial operations and E-banking, E-trade
   4.7. Health care and social assistance
   4.8. New occupations in information, popular culture and entertainment industry
   4.9. Education
   4.10. Other new occupations

5. Proposals for further studies

PART II: THE FUTURE OF NEW OCCUPATIONS IN POLAND

1. An estimate of demand in 2010 for identified new occupations
2. A method of considering new occupations in labor demand forecasting

PART III: CONCLUSIONS
## ANNEX 3: STATISTICS

### Table 1

**Clients (excluding students) who used information, guidance and counseling services in the Labor Offices and Centers for Career Information and Planning in 2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Career counseling</th>
<th>Vocational-educational information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. who used the service</td>
<td>No. of persons who used individual counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td>301,580</td>
<td>171,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>individual counseling</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of counseling interviews</td>
<td>271,569</td>
<td>155,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of persons who used individual counseling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td>271,569</td>
<td>155,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>employment status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>271,569</td>
<td>155,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job-seekers</td>
<td>6,142</td>
<td>3,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>23,869</td>
<td>12,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>some of the categories of unemployed people:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country residents</td>
<td>98,628</td>
<td>56,183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youths – up to 24</td>
<td>153,205</td>
<td>88,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/university graduates</td>
<td>155,668</td>
<td>92,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term unemployed (more than 12 months)</td>
<td>50,307</td>
<td>30,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicapped</td>
<td>8,511</td>
<td>4,147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Details:

- Details such as “total” and “women” are included for each category.
- The table is divided into columns for different categories of unemployment.
- The data is presented in a tabular format, with values for each category and subcategory.
- The table also includes some details about counseling interviews and test assessments.
ANNEX 4: ADDRESSES

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Ministry of National Education and Sport
Al. Szucha 25
00-918 Warszawa
tel.: (+48 22) 622-36-91
ponczek@menis.gov.pl
www.menis.gov.pl

All addresses of Psychological and Pedagogic Centers in Poland:
www.nrcgkowez.edu.pl/adr_ppp.htm

Upper Silesia Center of Vocational Information and Teacher Training in Walbrzych
http://www.ciz.walbrzych.pl

Internet:
www.kowez.edu.pl - The National Centre for Supporting Vocational Education
www.rcss.gov.pl/mzppp - Interdepartmental Team for Forecasting Labor Demand
www.telepraca.pl/sdziz - The Polish Association of School and Vocational Counselors
www.perspektywy.pl - Perspektywy – Educational Publishing House
www.twojakariera.pl - Foundation of Social Policy Development
www.telepraca.pl/v_d/ - Project ViDI - Virtual Internet Counselor
www.cofund.org.pl/bkkk - The Task Force for Training and Human Resources (BKKK)
ANNEX 5: VISIT PROGRAM

17 February: Warsaw

11.00-15.00 – meeting with middle-level civil servants
   • From Ministry of Economy, Labor and Social Policy
   • From Ministry of Education and Sport

18 February: Kraków

Meetings at:
   • Voivodship Labour Office
   • Center for Career Information and Planning
   • Jagiellonian University

19 February: Wroclaw and Walbrzych

Meetings at:
   • Mayor of the Wroclaw
   • Marshal of Dolnoslaskie Voivodship
   • University Career Bureau
Psychological and Pedagogical Center (in town on the way to Walbrzych)
Upper-Silesia Center of Vocational Information and Teacher Training in Walbrzych

20 February: Warsaw

10.00-12.00 – meeting with the Vice-Minister of Labor, plus middle-level civil servants from both ministries

12.00-13.00 – visit to poviat labor office

15.00-17.00 – meeting with the social partners:
   • Trade unions (OPZZ, Solidarnosc)
   • Employer organizations (PKPP, KPP)
   • Craftsmen union
   • Voluntary Labor Corps

21 February: Warsaw

09.00-10.30 – National Forum for Vocational Guidance
10:30-15:00 – visits to schools – gymnasium and lyceum
16.00-16.30 – short press briefing