Quality of guidance provision in Finnish education

Raimo Vuorinen, Ph.D.
ELGPN Co-ordinator
University of Jyväskylä, Finland

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Consultation on Quality Standards in Lifelong Career Guidance
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Themes for discussions

- Educational and vocational guidance as change agent in Finnish school reforms 1970-2012
- Current guidance provision in Finland
- Examples of promising practice
Features of the Finnish education system

- Equal opportunities for education irrespective of age, domicile, sex, economic situation or mother tongue
- Instruction free of charge
- Centralised steering of the whole - local implementation
- Education system almost entirely publicly funded
1) An additional 10\textsuperscript{th} year is voluntary giving pupils an opportunity to improve their grades and clarify their career plans.

2) Vocational upper secondary education and training is arranged in vocational schools (including at least six months of on-the-job learning) and in the form of apprenticeship training. Adults can obtain vocational upper secondary qualifications also in competence tests.

3) The Ministry of Education has granted permission for post-graduate degree programmes for some universities of applied sciences.

4) “Vocational start” is an optional year after comprehensive education since 2007.
Educational and vocational guidance as change agent in Finnish school reforms

- Comprehensive education 1970’s
  - Careers education was integrated to the new national curricula as a compulsory subject for students
  - Training of the first full time school counsellors
  - Support for the implementation of the new system
  - Interpretation of the new system to students, parents and also to other teachers
  - Information to the about the new opportunities in the labour market
  - A strong political consensus on the added value of school counselling
Educational and vocational guidance as change agent in Finnish school reforms (2)

- Secondary level education 1980’s
  - Careers education integrated in the national curricula both in the upper secondary general education and secondary level vocational education
  - Training of the school counsellors in accordance with the implementation of the reforms 1980-1990
    - Support for the implementation of the new system
    - Interpretation of the new system to students, parents and also to other teachers
    - Information to the about the new opportunities in the labour market
Educational and vocational guidance as change agent in Finnish school reforms (3)

- Shift to individual learning programmes in the 1990’s
  - Shift from centralised administration to regional administration
  - National core curriculum – local adaptations
  - More optional learning paths for students
  - More co-operation between secondary level institutes
  - Establishment of the universities of applied sciences

- Economic recession 1990’s – cuts in educational budgets

- Increased demand for guidance service
  -> the previous paradigm of could not anymore be the solution
Key features of the current guidance provision in Finland

- Careers information, guidance and counselling services are provided mainly by two established public service systems:
  - Student counselling within the public educational system,
  - Information, guidance and counselling services run by the public labour administration and complementing school-based services.

- PES services are mainly targeted at clients outside the education and training institutions.

- Practitioner competences are defined in legislation.
Finnish guidance and counselling system

**Ministry of Education**

- Comprehensive Schools
- Upper Secondary Schools
- Vocational Colleges
- Universities of Applied Sciences
- Universities

**Ministry of Employment and the Economy**

- Employment Offices
  - Vocational guidance and career planning
- Educational and vocational information services
- Employment exchange services
- Centre for International Mobility CIMO
  - Euroguidance Finland
GUIDANCE IN EDUCATIONAL SECTOR
(Kasurinen 2008)

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES:
- psycho-social support and student welfare services
- counselling of study skills and learning
- career counselling

FOLLOW-UP

TRANSITION

Flexible options

1 6 9

Comprehensive education

Individual study path

Class teachers

Guidance counsellors

Group advisers

Upper secondary school

Vocational school

TO FURTHER EDUCATION

TO WORK LIFE OR FURTHER EDUCATION

Choices. decision making

COOPERATION WITH WORKING LIFE
Guidance in legislation

Acts for comprehensive, upper secondary and vocational education:

Pupils and students are entitled to have educational and vocational guidance during every working day at school
Guidance in legislation (2)

Decrees for comprehensive education, upper secondary and vocational education:

- student counsellors take care of vocational and educational guidance
- cooperation with working life – possibility to have time for work experience
- guidance and counselling in classrooms, possibility to have personal counselling
Distribution of hours to career education classes

- **COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION**
  lessons 2,5 hours during 7-9 grades

- **UPPER SECONDARY GENERAL EDUCATION**
  1 obligatory and 1 specialization course during 3 years

- **VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**
  min. 1,5 study weeks
National guidelines for guidance provision and career education 2003 – 2004

- comprehensive and secondary education

- A strategic and operational plan for the guidance provision
- Regular evaluation of produced services
- A holistic approach
- Student counsellor, every teacher and principal are delivering counselling services (responsibilities)
- Multi-professional cooperation – expert groups (pastoral care, etc.)
- New goals of the curriculum guidelines
  - support personal growth and development
  - promote the development of study skills and to help in learning difficulties
  - counsel and guide students in educational and occupational orientation
Goals of the current curriculum guidelines

- Guidance and counselling activities are to constitute a continuum lasting the duration of basic education.
- It is the task of all teachers.
- The parent or other guardian must be given opportunities to confer (discuss) about issues related to pupil’s studies and choices by meeting collectively with the teacher, study counsellor, and pupil.
- In addition to preventive activities, guidance and counselling implemented at the school should especially support those pupils who have difficulties with studies or who are in danger of dropping out.
Goals of the curriculum guidelines

- The principles and division of labour among the different players in guidance and counselling activities are to be defined in the local curriculum.
- The curriculum must include a description of how cooperation with the local labour market and business community is implemented at the level of the entire school’s activity.
- Classroom visits by labour market representatives, visits to workplaces, project work, the use of different sectors’ informational materials, and an introduction-to-working-life periods make up the central part of this cooperation.
- The instruction in the different subjects is to include modules that connect the knowledge and skills provided the subject to the demands and possibilities of working life.
Basic goals of the curriculum guidelines

- support personal growth and development
- promote the development of study skills and to help in learning difficulties
- counsel and guide students in educational and vocational and professional orientation
Support on personal and social issues

Psycho-social support
- life situation and life history of the student
- self knowledge and self-esteem of the student
- life management experiences
- student welfare services
- multi-professional cooperation
Educational guidance

- learning and study process
- individual study plans
- counselling and support when planning studies and choosing courses
- learning methods and strategies
- students are aware of their strengths and weaknesses as students
Career guidance

- educational and occupational plans
- career development
- plans for the future
- knowledge of working life
- studying and working abroad
- promote students’ skills for planning and realising life long learning
- skills to use different tools to search information
Guidance provision at universities of applied sciences

- **COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SYSTEM** e.g. planning of studies, international exchange opportunities, student financial aid issues,

- **CAREER SERVICES** in all universities of applied sciences offering services to students and employers

- **INFORMATION** about careers, recruitment and job exchange at [http://www.jobstep.net](http://www.jobstep.net)
Guidance provision at universities

- GENERAL GUIDANCE for students at universities and for those seeking admittance to them
- SPECIAL OFFICE FOR STUDENT GUIDANCE: information about studies, practical training, open university courses, …
- FACULTIES/INSTITUTES: student affairs secretary, academic and other staff members responsible for tutoring and advising
- CAREER AND RECRUITMENT SERVICES: meeting point for students and employers -> job opportunities after graduation
- MORE INFORMATION at http://www.aarresaari.net
Recent examples of quality development
National evaluation of guidance services in Finland 2002


- Parents
  - School-parent interaction in educational guidance
  - Pupil counselling in basic education
  - Add. 10th form
  - Educational guidance in general upper secondary school
  - Educational guidance in vocational upper secondary education

- Working life
  - Universities
  - Polytechnics
  - Working life

- Guidance services of labour administration
- Vocational 10th form
- Career and recruitment services of schools and labour administration

Working life orientation periods, nationwide joint application procedures
Efficacy of educational guidance and counselling

**Efficiency**
- Access to educational guidance and counselling
- Up-to-dateness and responsiveness
- Organisation and quality of guidance and counselling
- Guidance and counselling networks
- Prolongation of studies and dropping out
- Functioning of credit transfer
- Qualification of pupil/student counsellors
- Physical facilities
- Regulations and agreements
- Status of educational guidance within educational establishments, management culture

**Effectiveness**
- How effectively educational guidance is used to promote the achievement of the objectives of education
- Individual-level effectiveness
  - How does educational guidance foster the pupil’s/student’s growth and and development, the emergence of their study skills and their career choice?
- Educational system-level effectiveness
  - How well does educational guidance contribute to the smooth functioning of the educational system?

**Financial accountability**
- Quantity and targeting of the resources used for educational guidance and how effectively they are utilised
Internet-based tools to support the institutional evaluation of guidance

- Tools derived from the national evaluation 2001-2002
- Separate questionnaires for
  - Comprehensive education, upper secondary level general education and 2. level vocational education
- Questionnaires for students, parents, school counsellors & principals
- On-line profile based on the responses from different audiences
Indicators used in the institutional evaluation

- **Access for guidance**
  - Student/counsellor ratio
  - The index of necessity of career guidance (Student)
  - The access index (Student/Counsellor/Principal)
  - The clarity/distinctness of the guidance system in the school (S/C/P)
Indicators used in the evaluation 2

- The facilities and resources for guidance
  - The time allocated to career guidance (C/P)
  - Physical facilities for career guidance (C/P)
  - The tools and materials for career guidance (C/P)
  - Funding of career guidance (C/P)
  - Other resources (Human Resources) (P)
Indicators used in the evaluation 3

- The goals and aims of career guidance
  - Meeting the goals ©

- Coherence of guidance services within the school
  - Coherence of guidance services within the school (C/P)

- Individual learning programme
  - Implementation and realisation of individual learning programmes (C/R)

- Study skills of the students
  - Study skills (S)
Indicators used in the evaluation 4

- **Ability for further educational and career plans**
  - Ability for further educational and career plans (S)

- **Client satisfaction of career guidance services**
  - Client satisfaction of career guidance services (S)

- **Prevention of social exclusion**
  - Means to prevent social exclusion (P)
An example of the questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Option 3</th>
<th>Option 4</th>
<th>Option 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1 = not at all suitable
2 = little suitable
3 = somewhat suitable
4 = highly suitable
5 = very suitable

Q40: 1 2 3 4 5

Q41: 1 2 3 4 5

Q42: 1 2 3 4 5

Q43: 1 2 3 4 5

Q44: 1 2 3 4 5

Q45: 1 2 3 4 5

Q46: 1 2 3 4 5

Q47: 1 2 3 4 5

Q48: 1 2 3 4 5

Q49: 1 2 3 4 5

Q50: 1 2 3 4 5

Q51: 1 2 3 4 5

Q52: 1 2 3 4 5

Q53: 1 2 3 4 5

Q54: 1 2 3 4 5

Q55: 1 2 3 4 5

Q56: 1 2 3 4 5

Q57: 1 2 3 4 5

Q58: 1 2 3 4 5

Q59: 1 2 3 4 5

Q60: 1 2 3 4 5

Q61: 1 2 3 4 5

Q62: 1 2 3 4 5

Q63: 1 2 3 4 5

Q64: 1 2 3 4 5

Q65: 1 2 3 4 5

Q66: 1 2 3 4 5

Q67: 1 2 3 4 5

Q68: 1 2 3 4 5

Q69: 1 2 3 4 5

Q70: 1 2 3 4 5

Q71: 1 2 3 4 5

Q72: 1 2 3 4 5

Q73: 1 2 3 4 5

Q74: 1 2 3 4 5

Q75: 1 2 3 4 5

Q76: 1 2 3 4 5

Q77: 1 2 3 4 5

Q78: 1 2 3 4 5

Q79: 1 2 3 4 5

Q80: 1 2 3 4 5

Q81: 1 2 3 4 5

Q82: 1 2 3 4 5

Q83: 1 2 3 4 5

Q84: 1 2 3 4 5

Q85: 1 2 3 4 5

Q86: 1 2 3 4 5

Q87: 1 2 3 4 5

Q88: 1 2 3 4 5

Q89: 1 2 3 4 5

Q90: 1 2 3 4 5

Q91: 1 2 3 4 5

Q92: 1 2 3 4 5

Q93: 1 2 3 4 5

Q94: 1 2 3 4 5

Q95: 1 2 3 4 5

Q96: 1 2 3 4 5

Q97: 1 2 3 4 5

Q98: 1 2 3 4 5

Q99: 1 2 3 4 5

Q100: 1 2 3 4 5
Example of the on line graphics generated by the tool/Perceived necessity and access for guidance/comparison
Development and implementation of interdisciplinary guidance practice and policies

- Need for transparency
- Analysis of the services visible for citizens and the mechanisms behind the planning and managing the services not visible for the users
- Shift from cocooned and isolated guidance providers to interdisciplinary partnerships
- Need for a model that identifies the components and features of interdisciplinary approach in practical, organisational, regional and national policy levels
- Need for a tool to enhance common language and to bridge the gap between the practice and guidance policy development
Strategic design of guidance practice & policy
(Kasurinen 2006, Vuorinen, Kasurinen & Sampson 2006)

Policy
- Legislation
- Instructions
- Resources
- Educational settings
- Economic and work life structures
- Networks

Context
- Leadership and management
- Action culture
- Human resources
- Arrangement of education and support systems

Organization
- Career and future planning
- Guidance in study process and skills
- Psychosocial support and health care services

Contents
- Objectives
- Responsibilities
- Division of labor

Action plans
- Information and advice services
- ICT services in counseling
- Group counseling sessions
- Individual counseling sessions

Methods
- Strategic design & policy development

Time
- Services visible for clients

Citizen’s life & career management and implementation, Lifelong Guidance
Recent quality features in guidance policy development in Finland

- As a result of the national and international evaluations, lifelong guidance has been included in the key documents of educational and labour market policies.

- National cross-sectoral initiatives based on the evaluation recommendations

- Cross-sectoral working groups feed the national policy development – still need for a sustainable national lifelong guidance forum
Conclusions:

- Finland has not solved the problem yet.
- However, the recent joint ministerial working groups have provided an opportunity to invest on sustainable research and development of the evidence base while redesigning the service delivery modes in co-operation with research & training units.
- The implementation of the strategy provides opportunities and potentials for transnational co-operation.
Further reading:

- Lifelong guidance in Finland


- Nykänen (2012). Towards leadership and management in guidance and counselling networks in Finland
Kiitos, Thank you!
For further information, please contact:

Raimo Vuorinen, Senior researcher, Ph.D.
Co-ordinator of the ELGPN
Finnish Institute for Educational Research
P.O. Box 35
FI-40014 University of Jyväskylä
tel. +358-14-2603271, Mobile +358-50-3611909
Fax +358-14-2603201
email: raimo.vuorinen@jyu.fi
www: http://elgpn.eu/
Skype: vuorai