



## Networking at a European level

The first thing to say is that as any human being we have been networking since our very first years, as long as we have been starting a social life at schools.

So we are all big networkers from the beginning.

The point is that, in our contemporary societies where we have to deal with a huge amount of information, and where our clients are more and more demanding for precise and detailed advice we can't memorize all so we have to rely on others.

Regarding guidance, our professional context is changing because we have to take into account new perspectives:

- From a cultural, social and economic perspective , we are dealing with life long learning and life long guidance
- From a geographic point of view, we are facing more and more the mobility expectations of our clients from a national area, to a European one and international one.
- Answers and enquiries have to be satisfied quickly, we have to reduce more and more the delays.
- In a recent past, our clients were facing only two or even three choices in their schooling or professional career, now they were supposed to adapt themselves to new jobs, to undertake several training periods and to overcome unemployment as well so to manage a number of transition periods. So the counsellors are supposed to accompany their clients through these different steps
- All information on learning opportunities, career paths could be available through the net but what our clients need is to sort out this information and to find one's way though it.

So it means that the guidance practitioners have to face new challenges.

In other words, we can't find the "rare breed" who will be able to face all situations of counselling and guidance in a life long guidance process.

So it implies that guidance professionals have to be in close connexion with a number of professional networks they have clearly identified which can be trustful and to which they can refer their clients. Belonging to an identified network could be a guarantee both for the client and for the practitioner. This phenomenon is emphasized when we are dealing with counselling at a European level of course. This is the basic principle on which the project Ergoinnet lies, Ergoinnet means the European Guidance Counsellor Integrated Networks so we couldn't have produce all the outputs of Ergoinnet without the help of our networks.

So to work efficiently in an international perspective, networking is a key competence.

We will point out the key competences of a guidance practitioner at a European level, considering the benefits of networking. We see what could be the outstanding features for a good European network, and give examples of European guidance networks. And in the end, we produce some kind of identity cards for national guidance networks in each partner country which have a frontdesk service.

As a conclusion, we have to remain modest, keeping in mind , first, that a network is depending on the strength or weakness of each of its members and secondly that unformal networks with fora, and peer to peer experiences are also a very important source of information and an excellent stimulus for mobility projects.