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ELGPN¹ Co-ordinator Response to the Consultation on the Future “EU 2020” Strategy

This paper is based on a discussion at the ELGPN Task group 1 meeting held on 14-15 December 2009. The task group 1 monitors EU education & training and employment policy development from a lifelong guidance perspective and is supports the ELGPN members with policy briefings, produced by ELGPN contracted experts Ms. Francoise Divisia and Dr. John McCarthy.

As a response to **the Commission consultation on the future “EU 2020” strategy and in the role of the ELGPN Co-ordinator** I would like to pay attention to what the Member States have already agreed in the EU Council of ministers 2004 and 2008 Resolutions on Lifelong Guidance and 2008 Bordeaux Communiqué about the role of guidance in the achievement of public policy goals in education and training, labour market and social inclusion policies

When the Lisbon Strategy was launched in March 2000, the Heads of State or Government set 2010 as the deadline for achieving the objectives of the EU’s reform strategy over the last decade. Though these were not completely reached, the EU collective action has helped to prevent an economic meltdown.

Nevertheless, the crisis has underlined the necessity of a new approach and of a stronger cooperation. “EU 2020” is designed as the successor to the current Lisbon Strategy in that perspective. The purpose of the consultation paper is to seek the views of the other institutions and stakeholders on a new approach.

The Commission working document² sets out three key policy areas:

- creating value by basing growth on knowledge;
- empowering people in inclusive societies;
- creating a competitive, connected and greener economy.

¹ The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) aims to assist the European Union Member States and the Commission in developing European co-operation on lifelong guidance in both the education and the employment sectors. The purpose is to promote co-operation at Member State level on lifelong guidance and to propose appropriate structures and support mechanisms in implementing the priorities identified in the Resolutions on Lifelong Guidance (2004; 2008). The ELGPN was established by the Member States; the Commission is supporting its activities in 2007-10 under the Lifelong Learning Programme.

² Commission working document – Consultation on the future « EU 2020 » strategy – Brussels 24.11.2009 – COM(2009)647 final

These three priorities should constitute the policy framework of the European cooperation in the fields of economy, employment, education and training, research and social inclusion for the next ten years.

Besides, they should be the political basis for the further financial perspectives from 2013 to 2018 with effects on the Lifelong Learning programme and the cohesion policies (structural funds and, particularly, European Social Fund).

The analysis and the new approach put to the fore education and research and aim “at empowering people in inclusive societies”. Nevertheless, the **lifelong guidance**, which is a transversal key component of a knowledge-based economy and of social inclusion, is **not explicitly mentioned**.

The following short analysis tends to show that guidance is needed to reach the goals in each priority.

In the first priority, the triangle of knowledge is focused on education, research, innovation and creativity.

The following objectives require **both career management skills**, which play a decisive role in empowering people to become involved in shaping their learning, training and integration pathways, and **access to information about the skills needed by the professions and training opportunities** :

- Enhance the employability of young people and bring them into the world of work
- Preventing early school leaving
- Emphasis on vulnerable groups
- Greater mobility of students
- Innovation and creativity: entrepreneurship: autonomy, responsibility
- Digital inclusion and skills

The second priority: “**Empowering people in inclusive societies**” places the emphasis on five main elements:

- The acquisition of new skills for the new jobs created by a greener economy
- Better match of future skills to future needs
- Flexicurity allowing both flexibility of labour markets and security of workers;
- Management of transitions between jobs, between training and jobs
- Entrepreneurial culture

Each of them implies easy access to a clear range of guidance services and quality assurance in lifelong guidance provision, co-ordination of the various services and active role of the citizens through acquisition of Career Management skills.

The third Priority, “**Creating a competitive, connected and greener economy**” proposes a

new approach to industrial policy and puts the emphasis on innovation and **the human skills needed. It requires lifelong guidance in order to manage the transitions to new jobs.**

It clearly appears that lifelong guidance is a key condition of the success of the relevant EU 2020 priorities.

Underlining the key role of lifelong learning, the working paper should mention also the complementary and essential role of lifelong guidance.

Therefore I am suggesting that lifelong guidance could be inserted in the following sections of the document:

- Page 4, in the 2nd paragraph, last sentence: “As ‘first mover’ in building this society of the future, Europe can derive important benefits by developing competitive, innovative products, rolling out the infrastructures of the future, entering new markets and creating new, high-quality jobs **with the support of effective lifelong guidance systems**”
- Page 5, 1st priority, 2nd paragraph: “The high number of low achievers in basic skills (reading, mathematics and science) needs to be addressed urgently **through coherent lifelong guidance systems** to enhance the employability of young people”.
- Page 6, 1st priority, last paragraph: “The aim for 2020 is to achieve a genuine European Knowledge Area, underpinned by a world-class knowledge infrastructure, in which all actors (students, teachers, researchers, **guidance practitioners**, education and research institutions and enterprises) benefit from the free circulation of people, knowledge and technology (the 5th freedom)”.
- Page 6, 2nd priority, first paragraph, last sentence: “This requires a framework to organise these transitions and support them **through the development of their career management skills**, possibly building on some of the measures adopted during the crisis (e.g. short time work combined with training)”.
- Page 8, 3rd priority, 7th paragraph, first sentence: “Because of its important contribution to growth and jobs creation, and to the development of innovation, a fresh approach to **industrial policy** is necessary to support industry by putting the emphasis on sustainability, innovation and the human skills **and consequently efficient lifelong guidance services** needed to keep the EU industry competitive in world markets”.
- Page 11, “**Making it happen**”, item 3, paragraph 3, last sentence: “This includes prioritising investments in R&D and new technologies, in innovation, in high-quality education, **lifelong guidance** and skills development, and in ‘smart’ networks; this

*means combining investments with modernising existing structures, including enhancing the efficiency of public administration, **in particular Public Employment Services**, and by regulatory reform.*