

GUIDANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN POLAND

Background / context

For the public employment services of many CEE member States it is a new and difficult challenge working with the increasing number of unemployed in the transition from a planned to a market economy. CEE member States, more than other European countries, are experiencing rapid transformations of their economies, so that guidance services are called to assist in promoting new training and retraining pathways for both young and older workers, to encourage the latter to respond to new qualification requirements, and to develop appropriate skills profiles.

Specific initiative

The key goals of Polish national policies concerning information, guidance and career counselling services are defined in the **National Strategy for Employment Growth and Human Resources Development**⁽¹⁾.

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

- increased employability owing to development of quality human resources;
- promotion of entrepreneurship⁽²⁾;
- improved ability of enterprises and their employees to adapt to the changing market conditions;
- enforcing a policy of equal opportunities on the labour market.

Improvement of employability is of crucial importance with respect to career counselling 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 skill to cope with the labour market.

It is crucial therefore to **create a system of widely available career information** and to **improve the quality and availability of counselling services**. It is also indispensable to

⁽¹⁾ The **National Strategy for Employment Growth and Human Resources Development** was adopted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in January 2000 as one of the sector strategies creating the basis for the National Development Plan.

⁽²⁾ For the promotion of the entrepreneurship, see the **“Entrepreneurship First” program** and the **“First Job” program**. The “First Job” program is an integral part of the government’s social-economic program for 2003-2005. It is an essential supplement to the “Entrepreneurship First” program. These two programs are closely connected, as the best opportunity for vocational activation of alumni is the development of entrepreneurship and the creating of new jobs.

For further details see http://www.mpips.gov.pl/english/szukaj_wynik.php?dzial=46&nr=33&id_doc=33&dokument=33

integrate more fully all institutions and stakeholders involved. This will increase the effectiveness and complementarity of such services.

The assumptions of the National Strategy for Employment Growth and Human Resources Development include:

- adding career counselling 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 availability of career information for youth and adults;
- integrating career counselling systems for adults and for young people;
- ensuring high quality of individual services for career counselling by introducing uniform standards of services;
- ensuring ongoing improvement of career counselling methods and information materials facilitating career planning for individuals;
- creating a system of training and vocational development in the sphere of career counselling and teachers - school counsellors;
- raising social awareness of the importance of continuing, individual career planning aimed to improve employability on the changing labour market.

It will take time to achieve these objectives and substantial organisational and legal changes will be required.

The recent government document defining the goals and objectives of national policy in the sphere of career information and counselling services is the "**Sectoral Operational Programme - Human Resources Development 2004-2006**"⁽³⁾. It is one of the six sectoral operational programmes that are to serve as the vehicles for the implementation of the National Development Plan⁽⁴⁾.

The overriding goal of the *Sectoral Operational Programme - Human Resources Development* is the "creation of an open, knowledge based society through creating the

⁽³⁾ **Sectoral Operational Programme - Development of Human Resources** (SOP DHR) was adopted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in January 2004. The SOP identifies HRD priorities and measures to be implemented in the first period of Structural Funds. HRD priorities are focused on Active Labour Market Policy and Inclusion Policy, and the Development of Knowledge Based Society. For further details on the SOP DHR see http://www.mpips.gov.pl/english/szukaj_wynik.php?dzial=83&nr=67&id_doc=67&dokument=67.

For the text of the SOP DHR see http://www.fundusze-ue.menis.gov.pl/page/en/Programming_document/SOPs/

⁽⁴⁾ The **National Development Plan 2004-2006** (NDP) was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 14 January 2003. It is a comprehensive document defining Poland's socio-economic strategy in the first years of Poland's membership in the European Union. The activities Poland plans to undertake during the coming three-year period, in order to create favourable conditions for sustainable growth and improved standards of living, will encompass three main areas to which support will be granted: enterprises, infrastructure development, and human resources development. The strategic aim of the National Development Plan is to develop a competitive economy based on knowledge and entrepreneurship, capable of long-term and sustainable development, ensuring increased employment and improved social, economic and spatial cohesion with the European Union at the national and regional levels. The Polish National Development Plan 2004-2006 defines a number of development axes that are covered in detail in Sectoral Operational Programmes.

For the text of NDP see http://www.fundusze-ue.menis.gov.pl/page/en/Programming_document/NPR_2004_2006/

conditions for human resource development through education, training and employment".

In legislative terms, the goals and objectives of national policies for information and career counselling services are defined in the Act regarding the promotion of employment and labour market institutions passed by the Polish parliament in April 2004 and which came into force on 1 May 2004 - the date of Poland's accession to the EU⁽⁵⁾. The new legislation deals with the state's duties with respect to fostering employment, assuaging the impact of unemployment and 'activating' unemployed people. An important role in achieving these objectives is envisaged for the social partners. Adoption of the Act marks the latest step towards harmonisation of Polish legislation with EU law in this area.

For more information

REVIEW OF CAREER GUIDANCE POLICIES. Report commissioned by ETF using the OECD career guidance questionnaire - Poland, Włodzimierz Trzeciak and Wojciech Kreft - September 2002. (See Section 2 "Key goals, influences, issues and initiatives").

http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Upload/Projects_Networks/Guidance/Policy_review_survey/National_Responses/Poland_EN.pdf

ETF – Poland Resource Dossier, prepared by *H. Zelloth* in co-operation with the Polish National Observatory, February 2004.

[http://www.etf.eu.int/WebSite.nsf/Pages/4457694BB0C1D1B7C1256E8600563861/\\$FILE/NMS_PL_dossier_04_EN.pdf](http://www.etf.eu.int/WebSite.nsf/Pages/4457694BB0C1D1B7C1256E8600563861/$FILE/NMS_PL_dossier_04_EN.pdf)

Website of the Polish Ministry of Economy, Labour & Social Policy
<http://www.mpips.gov.pl/english/>

⁽⁵⁾ The Act comes into force in stages. Certain provisions have been in force since 1 May 2004, while the Act as a whole became law on 1 June, with isolated provisions coming into force on 1 September 2004 and on 1 January 2005. For further details see <http://www.eurofound.eu.int/2004/05/feature/pl0405105f.html>