

Careers Guidance in European Projects. A confused status¹

The European Parliament has set several programmes that promote cooperation between European organisations. The main programmes in the field of educational and vocational training are Socrates and Leonardo (see http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/programmes_en.html).

Both in Leonardo and Socrates the position of careers guidance is not clear. This makes the submission of careers guidance projects very uncertain and risky.

For example careers guidance fits properly only with point b of Leonardo objectives (see below), but only as long as the projects submitted are related to ‘improving the access to vocational training’. What about the many others?

- a “to improve the skills and competences of people, ...
- b “to improve the quality of, and access to, continuing vocational training ...
- c “to promote and reinforce the contribution of vocational training to the process of innovation ...”

So often the very busy evaluator (usually an expert of vocational training but not of careers guidance) immediately rejects careers guidance projects submitted on Leonardo after a fast reading. This year I wanted to submit a project for a transnational network about guidance. Then I read the point 1.2. Objectives of Transnational Networks of the explanatory note: ‘The objectives of a transnational network are to pool knowledge (...) in vocational training.’, so I quitted.

The same applies for Socrates.

Some personal evidence:

In 2002 I and others submitted a project about e-guidance on Grundtvig 4 (110247-CP-1-2003-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-G4) One of the comments of the evaluator was: ‘Although this application has many strength, it does not fit in the Grundtvig programme, as it focuses on vocational and careers guidance’.

In 2003 we submitted two different careers guidance projects again about e-guidance, with different focus. The first one, on Grundtvig 4 again, was rejected (also) because ‘The partners should have expertise in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning’ that we didn’t have, because the promoters were all guidance organisations. The second one, on Minerva, was rejected (also) because: ‘Minerva is the key action for the implementation of the eLearning initiative and there is no reference to eLearning in the proposal’ (right, the project focused on e-guidance).

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