

Cross-national reviews of career guidance systems: Overview and reflections

A. G. Watts

This article presents the main findings from a major series of cross-national reviews of lifelong career guidance systems and policies conducted between 2001 and 2010. While there were some precursors, these reviews represent the most extensive international database ever assembled on such systems. The extent and nature of the reviews are outlined, with some comments on their methodology. Some of the main lessons from the reviews are summarised, and their impact is assessed.

Precursors

Prior to 2001, a number of cross-national studies of career guidance systems had been produced by various international organisations, especially within Europe.

In 1966, the European Commission committed to publishing a regular report on 'the function of vocational guidance, its progress and experience gained' (OJ No.154, 24/8/66). Such reports were published in 1967, 1968, 1969, 1971 and 1975 (e.g. CEC, 1975). Each consisted in the main of separate statements by respective government authorities in each member-state, presented in a common format but with little attempt at comparative evaluation or synthesis. Subsequently, further reports were commissioned from independent experts. The first, by Walter Jaide (Germany), covered the period from 1975 to 1980; the second, by Jean Drevillon (France), from 1975 to 1983 (Drevillon, 1985).

From the mid-1980s, however, a series of comparative reviews were carried out, with a more strongly analytical approach. These comprised a review of services for young people covering the then ten member-states (Watts, Dartois & Plant, 1987); an extension of this review to include the new member-states of Portugal and Spain (Watts, Dartois & Plant, 1988); and a subsequent review of all-age services (Watts, Guichard, Plant & Rodriguez, 1994). They were complemented by more specific studies of guidance services for adults (Ködtitz, 1989), of transnational guidance activities (Plant, 1990), of the occupational profiles of vocational counsellors (Watts, 1992), of career guidance services for disadvantaged young people (Chisholm, 1994) and of guidance and counselling services in higher education (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998). Most of these studies included country studies that were published alongside the synthesis reports.

Alongside these European studies, a number of more widely-spread reviews of career guidance systems were produced by other international organisations. For example, UNESCO commissioned a six-country study of the relationship between guidance and the school curriculum that included Brazil, India, Kenya and Malaysia (Watts & Ferreira Marques, 1978); while OECD carried out a seven-country study of career guidance for young people that included Canada, Japan and Mexico (OECD/CERI, 1996).

Most of these studies were confined to particular age-groups and/or sectors and/or themes. Only the 1994 EU study (Watts, Guichard, Plant & Rodriguez, 1994) was a true precursor, in the sense that it covered all career guidance services within the countries reviewed, on an all-age basis.

The reviews

The much more substantial series of cross-national reviews conducted between 2001 and 2010 were carried out by a number of influential international organisations. They can be described as comprising four overlapping phases, with three annexes.

The first phase was the Career Guidance Policy Review carried out by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. OECD is based in Paris, and includes most of the wealthier countries in the world. It is widely respected for the intellectual quality of its work, much of which has a strong base in economics. One of its activities is to conduct cross-national reviews in a wide range of policy areas, to which its member countries can opt in. These reviews enable the participating countries to benchmark their progress in the relevant policy area against other comparable countries, and to share good practice, promoting their successes and learning from practices elsewhere.

OECD's agenda is set by its member countries, so the fact that the Career Guidance Policy Review took place is itself significant. OECD had paid some attention to career guidance issues previously, but mainly as part of examining policy issues relating to initial transitions from school to work (OECD/CERI, 1996; OECD, 2000). The review conducted in 2001-02 was the first occasion on which it had launched a full formal policy review devoted specifically to career guidance issues, and the first occasion on which it had looked at such issues on a lifelong basis. The review was endorsed by both the OECD Education Committee and its Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee: their joint support was linked to the lifelong learning and active labour market policy objectives then being pursued more broadly by OECD. Fourteen countries took part: 11 European countries, plus Australia, Canada and Korea.

The review process adopted by OECD included completion of a questionnaire, followed (except in the case of Finland) by a country visit of a week or a little more. This resulted in what in OECD parlance is referred to as a Country Note, containing an analysis of the guidance system and its strengths and weaknesses, plus some recommendations for improvement. Each of these visits was carried out by a

member of the OECD team (Richard Sweet or myself), plus an expert from another country. A number of thematic papers were also commissioned. Based on this extensive data, a synthesis report was then prepared and published (OECD, 2004).

As the second phase, the World Bank decided to use an adapted form of the OECD process to conduct a parallel review in 7 middle-income countries: Chile, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Africa and Turkey. Here an expert was commissioned to produce a draft report based on the structure of the OECD questionnaire. One of the World Bank team (David Fretwell or myself) then visited the country for a week, following which we rewrote the country report in collaboration with the national expert, and then synthesised the results (Watts & Fretwell, 2004).

Thirdly, the European Commission, as part of its policy work on lifelong learning, decided to use the OECD questionnaire to collect information through its agencies the European Training Foundation (ETF) and Cedefop respectively to enable it to report first on the 11 'accessing and candidate countries' of the time (Sultana, 2003) and then to cover the 29 countries that were members either of the European Union or of the European Economic Area (Sultana, 2004). These reviews were based on questionnaire data alone, except in the case of those countries that had been involved in the OECD or World Bank reviews. In other words, there was no visit process.

At this point, a 'megasyntesis' was prepared on the 37 countries covered in these three studies (Watts & Sultana, 2004). This was used as the core document for a major conference held in October 2003 by OECD and the Canadian Government in Toronto, Canada, in association with the European Commission, the World Bank and the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance.

Subsequently, as a fourth phase, two further reviews were conducted by ETF, which has responsibility for linking EU policies and programmes with candidate countries and with other neighbouring countries. Both were carried out in regions experiencing high levels of political turbulence and conflict.

One was the Western Balkans, covering seven countries: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia,

Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. This included questionnaire responses prepared internally within each country, followed by visits from the ETF co-ordinator (Helmut Zelloth) and one other international expert, but no formal Country Note. A synthesis report was prepared (Sweet, 2006) but not formally published.

The other was the Mediterranean region, covering ten countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine (West Bank and Gaza Strip), Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. This included only two country visits, but also two meetings of the national experts who were responsible for preparing the country reports, plus strong editing of these reports. Particular attention was paid to the distinctive socio-cultural contexts of the participating countries, and the extent to which these required adaptation of career guidance concepts drawn largely from Western practice. The resulting synthesis report (Sultana & Watts, 2007; 2008) paid stronger attention to these issues than the earlier reports in the series.

Finally, there were three annexes to the series, two of which focused primarily on particular services. The first was a study undertaken for the European Commission of career guidance in Europe's public employment services (Sultana & Watts, 2006a; 2006b). This covered a questionnaire survey of 28 countries (including Switzerland, which had not been covered in the other European studies) plus visits to seven. This study was significant because the relationship between career guidance and public employment services is often complex and contested, but crucial to the design of lifelong guidance systems.

Second, I carried out three further single-country reviews which drew heavily from the OECD review but differed from the others in a number of key respects. All were in countries which had an all-age career guidance service: New Zealand, Scotland and Wales. In each case I was commissioned to conduct a review of the service, against the benchmarks provided by the OECD review. My reports (Watts, 2005; 2007; 2009a) thus focused on one particular service, but paid detailed attention to its relationship with other career guidance providers within the country concerned. Since the model provided by an all-age service of this kind was one of the strongest identified in the

OECD review, but was exemplified there by a single example (Wales), these reports represented significant additions to the evidence base. A summary paper (Watts, 2010a) synthesised their main findings.

Finally, in 2010, I conducted a similar review using the OECD benchmarks of the lifelong guidance system that had been developed in Hungary with the aid of major funding from the European Social Fund (Watts & Borbély-Pecze, 2011). The review concluded that this represented one of the most systematic efforts in any country to implement the principles outlined by OECD and the EU, drawing upon the previous reviews. An important issue identified by the review was the sustainability of donor-funded work: major difficulties have subsequently been experienced in Hungary in this respect. Nonetheless, this review provided a valuable case-study of what can be achieved with a systematic approach which is not based ab initio on an all-age service.

Bearing in mind the overlaps between these studies, the reviews have in total covered 55 countries (see Annex). More recently, the ETF has extended elements of them further, into some of the former Soviet countries (e.g. Georgia, Ukraine) (Zelloth, 2009). Meanwhile, the existing reviews represent the most extensive database ever developed on national career guidance systems and policies across the world. There are important gaps, including the three countries with the largest populations in the world: China, India and the USA. Moreover, much of Asia, Africa and South America are thinly represented. Nonetheless, it represents a very substantial achievement. In addition, the reviews have been used as data sources for two handbooks for policy-makers: one published jointly by OECD and the European Commission (2004); the other – addressed particularly to low- and middle-income countries – by the International Labour Organisation (2006).

Methodology

The methodology adopted for the reviews was broadly similar, but – as already indicated – with some variations. In principle, there were four stages: questionnaire; visit; country report; and synthesis report.

The *questionnaire* adopted for the OECD review was used as the basis for all the subsequent reviews. It was very detailed: some responses were up to a hundred pages long. The OECD version was designed to be completed by participating governments, but most contracted out its completion to external consultants. In the case of the World Bank review, the World Bank contracted directly with a consultant, who thereafter took part in the visit and co-authored the country report. With the reviews that included visits, other sources were also scrutinised in advance; with the single-country ‘annexes’ to the series, the delivery in advance of large boxes of relevant documents effectively replaced the questionnaire.

The *visits* were, in my view, a crucial part of the process. I took part in 23 of the 43 country visits conducted as part of the reviews (as already noted, some did not involve visits). In the case of the OECD review, the review team comprised either Richard Sweet or myself, plus an invited expert from another country; in the case of the World Bank review, it comprised either David Fretwell or myself, plus the internal consultant from the country being visited. The visits typically lasted a week (Australia and Canada were a little longer, because of the complexities of devolution and the time required for internal travel), and involved meetings with policy-makers, with researchers and with practitioners, plus first-hand visits to some services (where we usually tried to include a group discussion with ‘clients’). The process was essentially one of triangulation: asking probing questions (based largely on the preceding documentary evidence), and then weighing the extent to which the answers from different informants supported or contradicted each other plus other evidence. The final meeting was usually with senior policy-makers, providing an opportunity to present draft recommendations orally and receive feedback before committing them to paper.

The *country report* was essentially linked to the visit, and was only produced in countries that had been visited. Drafts were always sent to the host country for comment, particularly on factual inaccuracies. In the case of the OECD review, the fact that the report was co-authored by brief visitors, with the imprimatur of OECD, meant that it had a certain status as an external view of the country’s provision:

effectively holding up a mirror though which the country could view its career guidance provision as a whole, as seen through the bird’s-eye lens of informed external observers. In the case of the World Bank, the report had less status, unless it was perceived to be a potential influence on future donor possibilities; on the other hand, the fact that it was effectively a co-authored redraft of the initial consultancy report made it easier and quicker to complete, and produced a sense of co-ownership between internal and external perspectives.

The final stage, the *synthesis report*, involved an analytical process in which the evidence from different countries was analysed in relation to a standard framework, enabling generalisations to be drawn and different models to be identified and contrasted. In the case of the OECD review, the framework was produced in collaboration with an advisory group including representatives of all the participating countries. This was then used by Ronald Sultana as the model for the subsequent EU report (Sultana, 2004), to enable links to be readily established between the two documents. The other synthesis reports adopted somewhat different frameworks adapted to their distinctive contexts.

Key lessons

What were the main lessons from the reviews? An initial analysis was included in the 37-country ‘megasyntesis’ (Watts & Sultana, 2004). This section seeks to update this analysis.

1 First, the definition of career guidance adopted for the reviews was very similar. It covered services intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. These might include services in schools, in universities and colleges, in training institutions, in public employment services, in companies, in the voluntary/community sector and in the private sector. The services might be on an individual or group basis; they might be face-to-face or at a distance (including helplines and web-based services). They included career information (in print, ICT-based and other forms), assessment and self-assessment tools, counselling interviews, career education and career

management programmes, taster programmes, work search programmes, and transition services. This definition, partly because of its OECD endorsement, has subsequently been widely adopted both within countries and internationally.

2 Second, the reviews were based on viewing this range of services as a coherent system. In reality, of course, they are not a single system. Rather, they are a collection of disparate sub-systems, most of which are a minor part of some wider system, with its own rationale and driving forces, some of which can limit or distort the nature of what is offered. But in the reviews these different parts were brought together, and viewed as parts of a whole. The implicit underlying principle was that, from the lifelong perspective of the individual, they should be as seamless as possible.

3 Third, the nature of what is offered is strongly influenced by the political structure of the country, by its level of economic development, and by socio-cultural factors (Watts, 1996b). The dynamics are, for example, very different in countries which are strongly centralised from those where important administrative powers are devolved to regions, states or provinces; in post-industrial economies from less developed economies; in countries where western values predominate from those with different value systems; in countries with extensive and well-developed guidance services to others with few if any such services. For instance, in Arabic countries there is no word equivalent to 'career' or 'career guidance'; family influences and patronage tend to be very powerful (which can reinforce social inequities but can also mitigate job loss and facilitate the search for new employment); and there are cultural tendencies towards directiveness and towards fatalism (Sultana & Watts, 2007; 2008). While the pressures of globalisation produce pressures towards homogenisation, it is very important that careful account is taken of such factors in designing appropriate services (see Sultana, 2009; 2011).

4 Fourth, the reviews focused particularly on the interface between career guidance and public policy. Since in all countries most services are publicly funded and free to the user, they are effectively dependent on public policy. The fundamental underlying argument is that they represent a public

good as well as a private good. The public-policy goals which policy-makers expect career guidance services to address fall into three main categories. The first are *learning* goals, including improving the efficiency of the education and training system and managing its interface with the labour market. The second are *labour market* goals, including improving the match between supply and demand and managing adjustments to change. The third are *social equity* goals, including supporting equal opportunities and promoting social inclusion. These goals have been reframed in the light of policies relating to lifelong learning, linked to active labour market policies and the concept of sustaining employability. The result is that countries have increasingly begun to recognise the need to expand access to career guidance so that – in principle, at least – it is available not just to selected groups like school-leavers and the unemployed, but to everyone throughout their lives, as epitomised in the EU concept of 'lifelong guidance' (ELGPN, 2010; 2012). This is supported by OECD work on human capital (OECD, 2002) which suggests that the career management skills which are now a growing focus of career guidance policies and practices may play an important role in economic growth.

5 Fifth, while governments have an interest in the provision of services to all on a lifelong basis, this does not necessarily mean that they should pay for all such services. In most countries, services for young people and for unemployed adults are publicly provided. But for employed adults this is not necessarily the case. Some may be provided by their employers, though this is likely to be patchy and unlikely to be wholly impartial. Others may be left to the market, usually financed by employers (especially in the case of outplacement counselling) or – more rarely – by the individual. If career guidance is viewed as a public as well as a private good, the roles of government in relation to a mixed-economy model of provision can be defined as being three-fold: to compensate for market failure by addressing needs which the market cannot meet, where this is viewed as being in the public interest; but also to stimulate the market (through contracts, incentives or social marketing) in order to build its capacity; and to ensure that it is quality-assured, both to protect the public interest and to build consumer confidence.

6 Sixth, the reviews demonstrate that no country has yet developed an adequate lifelong career guidance system. But most countries have examples of good practice, and across the range of countries these indicate what such a system might look like – recognising that in terms of its detail it will take different forms in different countries. My own view, based on my involvement in these reviews, is that the strongest model is that built around an all-age career guidance service, as in New Zealand, Scotland and Wales. The only one of these covered in the original OECD review was Wales, but the review commented on the organisational and resource-use advantages of providing a range of services throughout the lifespan within a single organisational framework dedicated wholly and specifically to career guidance provision (OECD, 2004, p.144). My reviews in New Zealand, Scotland and Wales strongly reinforced these conclusions. In all three cases, the all-age services emerged very strongly in relation to the benchmarks provided by the OECD review. In effect, an all-age service of this kind provides a strong professional spine for a lifelong guidance system. So long as it recognises that it cannot provide all the career guidance that it needed, and devotes significant attention to supporting embedded career guidance support in schools, workplaces, and elsewhere, it provides a particularly robust base for a lifelong career guidance system (Watts, 2010a).

7 Seventh, there is a need for strong co-ordination and leadership mechanisms in order to articulate a vision and develop a strategy for delivering lifelong access to guidance. This is the case even where there is an all-age service, but even more where there is not (e.g. Hungary – see Watts & Borbély-Pecze, 2011). Such mechanisms are required within government, where responsibility for guidance services is often fragmented across a number of ministries and branches. Co-ordination mechanisms are also needed more broadly at national level, to bring together the relevant stakeholder groups and the various guidance professional bodies (which in some countries are very fragmented). Parallel mechanisms are then required at regional and/or local levels, closer to the point of delivery. In some countries, seminars set up for the OECD and World Bank reviews provided an unusual opportunity for the relevant groups to come together, and led to proposals to develop a more sustainable

infrastructure for joint action. Subsequently, the European Commission encouraged member-states to establish national lifelong guidance forums, and almost all European countries have done so, building on the experience of countries like Denmark and the UK which had such forums in the past. A manual published by Cedefop (2008a) drew from the experience to date and outlined some of the issues that needed to be addressed in establishing and sustaining these mechanisms. Continuing support has been provided by the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (see ELGPN, 2010; 2012).

8 Eighth, an important focus for such collaborative action is the development of strategic instruments which can be operationally useful across the whole range of the career guidance field and hold it together. One is competence frameworks for career guidance practitioners of the kind developed in Canada. Another is organisational quality standards of the kind developed in the UK, covering how individuals are helped and how services are managed: these can be voluntary in nature, but can also be made mandatory for organisations in receipt of public funding. A third type of instrument, developed in Canada and subsequently also in Australia, drawing from earlier work in the USA, is the Blueprint of competencies which career education and guidance programmes aim to develop among clients at different stages of their lives, with accompanying performance indicators (for a recent cross-country analysis, see Hooley, Watts, Sultana & Neary, 2013). Together, these three instruments can help to harmonise a lifelong guidance system, particularly if they can be linked to common branding and marketing of services.

9 Ninth, the issue of marketing is being given greater recognition. In the EU, a Resolution of the Council of Education Ministers on guidance, passed in 2004, stated that: 'Services need to be available at times and in forms which will encourage all citizens to continue to develop their skills and competences throughout their lives, linked to changing needs in the labour market.' It added: 'Such services need to be viewed as an active tool, and individuals should be positively encouraged to use them.' If this important statement is to be followed through, careful attention needs to be paid to how to market the services, including how to brand them. In the UK, the

Learndirect helpline, established in 1998, took around one million calls annually in its early years, while its website attracted many million web sessions. Usage was stimulated by a marketing campaign, including prime-time advertising on television, which was in effect a form of publicly-funded social marketing, encouraging people to consider change in their lives and advancing their careers (Watts & Dent, 2008). My review of the New Zealand all-age service (Watts, 2007) indicated that the level of take-up of the New Zealand helpline had been under a quarter of that for Learndirect. This seemed clearly related to the level of brand recognition among the general public, which had been around 30% for Career Services, in contrast to figures of over 80% for Learndirect. Such differences in turn seemed linked to the size of marketing budgets: the Learndirect marketing budget as a percentage of total turnover (its budget had been set at one-third of total advice turnover) was nearly five times larger than that in New Zealand. I mention this specific example partly because of its intrinsic interest, but partly because it demonstrates in a simple and concrete way the benefits of international comparisons.

Impact

The direct impact of the country review process depends a great deal on the willingness and capacity of the relevant policy-makers to learn and to change. It may also be helped by the authority of the external organisation. OECD, in particular, tends to be widely respected and its views to carry some weight. In the end, however, it can achieve little unless there is a will for change within the country itself. Where there is such a will, the review can help to reinforce and to some extent to channel it. In the countries for which I was responsible, my sense was that the OECD review had considerable impact in Denmark, where it helped to shape subsequent legislation, and in Australia, where it contributed to a significant raising of the profile of career guidance, reflected in a range of subsequent initiatives; in the Netherlands and UK, on the other hand, it had little visible impact. In the World Bank study, the reviews had greater impact where there was a development programme funded by the Bank to which they were linked (Romania and Turkey). In the ETF studies, the impact was linked to the extent

of follow-up work by ETF staff, sometimes linked to donor-supported activities: in some cases these were substantial, including a number of countries where few formal guidance services had existed previously (see Zelloth, 2009). In all cases, the reviews – and particularly the country reports – had the potential to foster informed strategic debate within the countries concerned.

More broadly, the studies had impact on the adoption by the EU Council of Education Ministers of its 2004 Resolution on lifelong guidance (Resolution 9286/04 EDUC 109 SOC 234, 18 May 2004): this referred to the reviews as showing that ‘in many countries, policies, systems and practices for guidance in Europe do not match the demands of knowledge-based economies and societies’, and as calling ‘for a reform of policies and a rethinking of practices in this area’. The studies subsequently influenced the formation of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN, 2010; 2012; see also Watts, Sultana & McCarthy, 2010) and in particular the identification of the four policy themes which have provided the framework for its work: career management skills; access; quality and evidence; and co-operation and co-ordination. These themes have also provided the framework for European lifelong guidance policy reviews by Cedefop (2008b; 2011), though the fact that these reviews were based solely on existing data sources (including more broadly-based Cedefop questionnaires) has limited their quality.

Alongside this, the studies have helped to ensure that career guidance is now more integrated into the general work of OECD, most notably in its reviews on vocational education and training (OECD, 2010; Watts, 2009b; 2010b), and also of other bodies like Cedefop, ETF and international donor organisations.

The studies also influenced the series of International Symposia on Career Development and Public Policy which have taken place biennially in recent years, co-ordinated through the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP). The first two of these – in Canada in 1999 (Hiebert & Bezanson, 2000) and 2001 – preceded the studies and to a significant extent helped to pave the way for them, by building the relationships between the OECD, the European Commission and the World Bank (all

represented at the 2001 symposium) which provided the basis for the series.

Alongside these developments there has grown a critical literature examining lifelong guidance policy contexts from a Foucauldian perspective as part of a neoliberal policy narrative (Bengtsson, 2011; Darmon & Perez, 2010) – a somewhat limited perspective, excluding other possible political-philosophical positions (Watts, 1996a). More subtly and constructively, Ronald Sultana – who has worked with me on many of these studies – has explored some of the ethical dilemmas of such work, which effectively involves operating as a ‘boundary person’ between global and local influences (Sultana, 2009; 2011).

It is important that these reviews are not considered a one-off exercise. The descriptive data in the reports is now somewhat out-of-date. If they are to have a sustained impact, they need to be repeated every decade or so, to be extended to other geographical areas and other countries not covered to date, and preferably to include the country visits which are so crucial to their quality. The existence of such bodies as ELGPN and ICCDPP could facilitate the formation of review teams for such visits, linked to country-to-country peer learning and other developmental processes. This would also provide an opportunity to evaluate in more depth the impact of the studies reviewed here.

References

- Bengtsson, A. (2011). European policy of career guidance: the interrelationship between career self-management and production of human capital in the knowledge economy. *Policy Futures in Education*, 9(5), 616-627.
- Cedefop (2008a). *Establishing and Developing National Lifelong Guidance Policy Forums: a Manual for Policy-Makers and Stakeholders*. Thessaloniki: Cedefop.
- Cedefop (2008b). *From Policy to Practice: a Systematic Change to Lifelong Guidance in Europe*. Panorama Series 149. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Cedefop (2011). *Lifelong Guidance across Europe: Reviewing Policy Progress and Future Prospects*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Chisholm, L. (1994). *Determining the Need for Vocational Counselling among Different Target Groups of Young People under 28 Years of Age in the European Community – Young Europeans and Vocational Counselling: What Do Which Young People Need and Want?* Berlin: Cedefop.
- Commission of the European Communities (1975). *Report on Vocational Guidance in the Community*. Brussels: CEC.
- Darmon, I. & Perez, C. (2010). ‘Conduct of conduct’ or the shaping of ‘adequate dispositions’?: labour market and career guidance in four European countries. *Critical Social Policy*, 31(1), 77-101.
- Drevillon, J. (1985). *Vocational Guidance in the European Community*. *Social Europe*, Supplement.
- European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (2010). *Lifelong Guidance Policies: Work in Progress: a Report of the Work of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2008-10*. Jyväskylä, Finland: ELGPN.
- European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (2012). *European Lifelong Guidance Policies: Progress Report 2011-12*. Jyväskylä, Finland: ELGPN.
- Hiebert, B. & Bezanson, L. (eds.) (2000). *Making Waves:*

Cross-national reviews of career guidance systems

Career Development and Public Policy: International Symposium 1999: Papers, Proceedings and Strategies. Ottawa: Canadian Career Development Foundation.

Hooley, T., Watts, A.G., Sultana, R.G. & Neary, S. (2013). The 'Blueprint' framework for career management skills: a critical exploration. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 41(2), 117-131.

International Labour Organization (2006). *Career Guidance: an International Resource Handbook*. Geneva: ILO.

Köditz, V. (1989). *Vocational Guidance and Counselling for Adults*. Berlin: Cedefop.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2000). *From Initial Education to Working Life: Making Transitions Work*. Paris: OECD.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2002). Rethinking human capital. In *Education Policy Analysis*. Paris: OECD.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*. Paris: OECD.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (1996). *Mapping the Future: Young People and Career Guidance*. Paris: OECD.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development & European Commission (2004). *Career Guidance: a Handbook for Policy Makers*. Paris: OECD.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010). *Learning for Jobs*. Paris: OECD.

Plant, P. (1990). *Transnational Vocational Guidance and Training for Young People and Adults*. Berlin: Cedefop.

Sultana, R.G. (2003). *Review of Career Guidance Policies in 11 Acceding and Candidate Countries: Synthesis Report*. Turin: European Training Foundation.

Sultana, R.G. (2004). *Guidance Policies in the Knowledge Society: Trends, Challenges and Responses across Europe*. Thessaloniki: Cedefop.

Sultana, R.G. (2009). *Career Guidance Policies: Global Dynamics, Local Resonances*. Derby: International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

Sultana, R.G. (2011). On being a 'boundary person': mediating between the local and the global in career guidance policy learning. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 9(2), 265-283.

Sultana, R.G. & Watts, A.G. (2006a). *Career Guidance in Europe's Public Employment Services: Trends and Challenges*. Brussels: Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission.

Sultana, R.G. & Watts, A.G. (2006b). Career guidance in public employment services across Europe. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 6(1), 29-46.

Sultana, R.G. & Watts, A.G. (2007). *Career Guidance in the Mediterranean Region*. Turin: European Training Foundation.

Sultana, R.G. & Watts, A.G. (2008). Career guidance in the Middle East and North Africa. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 8(1), 19-34.

Sweet, R. (2006). *Career Guidance in the Western Balkans Region*. Turin: European Training Foundation (mimeo).

Watts, A.G. (1992). *Occupational Profiles of Vocational Counsellors in the European Community*. Berlin: Cedefop.

Watts, A.G. (1996a). Socio-political ideologies in guidance. In Watts, A.G., Law, B., Killeen, J., Kidd, J.M. & Hawthorn, R.: *Rethinking Careers Education and Guidance: Theory, Policy and Practice*, 351-365. London: Routledge.

Watts, A.G. (1996b). International perspectives. In Watts, A.G., Law, B., Killeen, J., Kidd, J.M. & Hawthorn, R.: *Rethinking Careers Education and Guidance: Theory, Policy and Practice*, 366-379. London: Routledge.

Watts, A.G. (2005). *Progress and Potential*. Glasgow: Careers Scotland.

Watts, A.G. (2007). *Career Services: a Review in an International Perspective*. Wellington, New Zealand: Career Services.

Watts, A.G. (2009a). *Careers Wales: a Review in an International Perspective*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government.

Watts, A.G. (2009b). *Learning for Jobs: the Relationship of Career Guidance to VET*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Watts, A.G. (2010a). National all-age career guidance services: evidence and issues. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 38(1), 31-44.

Watts, A.G. (2010b). *Career Guidance and Post-Secondary Vocational Education and Training*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Watts, A.G. & Borbély-Pecze, B.T. (2011). The development of a lifelong guidance system in Hungary. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 11(1), 17-28.

Watts, A.G. & Dent, G. (2008). The evolution of a national distance guidance service: trends and challenges. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 36(4), 455-465.

Watts, A.G. & Ferreira Marques, J.H. (1978). *Guidance and the School Curriculum*. Paris: UNESCO.

Watts, A.G. & Fretwell, D. (2004). *Public Policies for Career Development: Policy Strategies for Designing Career Information and Guidance Systems in Middle-Income and Transition Economies*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Watts, A.G. & Sultana, R.G. (2004). Career guidance policies in 37 countries: contrasts and common themes. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 4(2-3), 105-122.

Watts, A.G. & Van Esbroeck, R. (1998). *New Skills for New Futures: Higher Education Guidance and Counselling Services in the European Union*. Brussels: VUB University Press.

Watts, A.G., Dartois, C. & Plant, P. (1987). *Educational and Vocational Guidance Services for the 14-25 Age Group in the European Community*. Social Europe, Supplement 4/87. Luxembourg, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Watts, A.G., Dartois, C. & Plant, P. (1988). *Educational*

and Vocational Guidance Services for the 14-25 Age Group in the European Community. Maastricht: Presses Interuniversitaires Européennes.

Watts, A.G., Guichard, J., Plant, P. & Rodríguez, M.L. (1994). *Educational and Vocational Guidance in the European Community*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Watts, A.G., Sultana, R.G. & McCarthy, J. (2010). The involvement of the European Union in career guidance policy: a brief history. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 10(2), 89-107.

Zelloth, H. (2009). *In Demand: Career Guidance in EU Neighbouring Countries*. European Training Foundation. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

For correspondence

A. G. Watts

tony.watts@zen.co.uk

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to David Fretwell, John McCarthy, Ronald Sultana, Richard Sweet and Helmut Zelloth for their helpful comments on drafts of this article.

Annex: Participating countries

Country	OECD	World Bank	EC	ETF	Other
Albania				2	
Algeria					
Australia	x			3	
Austria	x		x		a
Belgium			x		a
Bosnia-Herzegovina				2	
Bulgaria			x	1	
Canada	x				
Chile		x			
Croatia				2	
Cyprus			x	1	a
Czech Republic	x		x		a
Denmark	x		x		a
Egypt				3	
Estonia			x	1	a
Finland	x		x		a
France			x		a
Germany	x		x		a
Greece			x		a
Hungary			x	1	a; b
Iceland			x		a
Ireland	x		x		a
Israel				3	
Italy			x		a
Jordan				3	
Korea	x				
Kosovo				2	
Latvia			x	1	a
Lebanon				3	
Lithuania			x	1	a
Luxembourg	x		x		a
Macedonia (Former Yugoslav Republic of)				2	
Malta			x	1	a
Montenegro				2	
Morocco				3	
Netherlands	x		x		a
New Zealand					b
Norway	x		x		a

Country	OECD	World Bank	EC	ETF	Other
Palestine (West Bank and Gaza Strip)				3	
Philippines		x			
Poland		x	x	1	a
Portugal			x		a
Romania		x	x	1	
Russia		x			
Serbia				2	
Slovakia			x	1	a
Slovenia			x	1	a
South Africa		x			
Spain			x		a
Sweden			x		a
Switzerland					a
Syria				3	
Tunisia				3	
Turkey		x		3	
United Kingdom			x		a; b*

*(Scotland, Wales)

In the ETF column, '1' refers to the review of EU acceding and candidate countries (Sultana, 2003), '2' to the review of the Western Balkans (Sweet, 2006), and '3' to the review of the MEDA region (Sultana & Watts, 2007; 2008).

In the 'Other' column, 'a' refers to the review of career guidance in Europe's public employment services (Sultana & Watts, 2006a; 2006b); 'b' to single-country reviews of all-age career guidance services (Watts, 2005; 2007; 2009a; Watts & Borbély-Pecze, 2011).