

# European Summit on Developing the Career Workforce of the Future

Canterbury  
3rd - 4th September 2014



Lifelong  
Learning  
Programme



NETWORK FOR INNOVATION IN  
CAREER GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING IN EUROPE



Canterbury  
Christ Church  
University

# Introduction

Dear Guests,

On behalf of the Canterbury Christ Church University and the Network for Innovation in Career Guidance and Counselling in Europe (NICE), I am happy to welcome you to a special event, the European Summit on Developing the Career Workforce of the Future.

At a time of economic and political change around Europe and beyond, enabling citizens to engage successfully with the world of work has never been more important for the economies of nation states and for individuals. The education and training of those who will guide individuals and who will advise the process of policy-making is therefore also crucial.

On September 3rd and 4th 2014, we look forward to engaging you and roughly 200 other delegates from 30 European countries in the discussion of central issues around the education and training of people in the practice of career guidance and counselling. We are very happy that you, as a key representative of career guidance and counselling in your country (or internationally) have accepted our invitation – whether you are a career counsellor yourself, manage public employment, HR or career services, or shape policies in the fields of education, employment and lifelong learning.

After keynote speakers Dr Gideon Arulmani and Professor AG (Tony) Watts have opened the summit illustrating the challenges that lie ahead of us and pointing to some changes, which might be necessary in the future, we will want to discuss some concrete proposals on the future of education and training for the career workforce with you. Central questions will relate to the competences that different types of career professionals need, to the cooperation between practice, policy and academia, and to major research questions which we need to concentrate on in the future.

In this conference digest, you will find the main texts, which we have prepared as a basis for these discussions. All of the concepts will also be presented shortly at the summit. However, particularly for the discussion of our proposal for European Competence Standards, we would recommend for you to read the text in advance of the summit.



Sincerely,  
Dr Hazel Reid, Chair of the Summit,  
Canterbury Christ Church University

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# The NICE Network

The Network for Innovation in Careers Guidance and Counselling in Europe (NICE) is supporting the European effort to foster lifelong learning and lifelong guidance, as well as to develop quality and professionalism in career guidance and counselling.

The NICE Network currently includes 45 higher education institutions from almost all European countries, particularly universities that offer study programs in vocational and career guidance and counselling (Bachelor and Master degrees and other post-graduate degrees).

Within the network our aim is to sustain and strengthen the cooperative efforts in research and education that have developed over the past decade.

The NICE network is funded by the EU Commission.



## The European Summit in Canterbury

# Keynote Speakers

Dr Gideon Arulmani



Dr Gideon Arulmani, is a clinical psychologist with an M.Phil in Medical and Social Psychology from the National Institute for Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (India) and a doctoral degree in Career Psychology from the University of Portsmouth (UK). He also holds advanced diplomas in Counselling, Philosophy and Theology. He is the Founder and Managing Trustee of The Promise Foundation, headquartered in Bangalore, India.

Gideon has published widely and his book, *Career Counselling: A Handbook* published in 2004 by McGraw Hill is today prescribed as a text book for career counselling courses in India. Gideon's interest in the interface between culture and counselling led to the development of the Cultural Preparation Process Model of Career Development that describes the

interaction between culture and orientations to work and career. In 2010, he was the chair of the IAEVG-Jiva Conference held in India that drew upon the wisdom of different cultures to consider both universal and specific principles for guidance and counselling in the contemporary situation. In 2011, he was the lead editor of a special issue of the *International Journal of Educational and Vocational Guidance* that focussed on: East and West: New Concepts for Career Guidance. In 2013, Gideon worked with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to develop a course to orient policy makers to career guidance services in ILO member countries.

Gideon is the lead editor of the *Handbook of Career Development: International Perspectives* recently published by Springer, New York. In the early part of 2014, he worked with the ILO to develop a national career guidance system for Vietnam. Gideon has been involved in understanding migration, both of labour forces as well as the migration of jobs. He has attempted to articulate the impact of international trade, the emergence of a global workforce and the new international division of labour, from the perspective of cultural preparedness. An interesting application he has developed, is storytelling as a counselling technique.

Gideon is an international consultant to a few UN and other multilateral agencies, for whom he has executed assignments on guidance and counselling in Sub Saharan Africa and South Asia. He is a board member of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance, an International Fellow of the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling, UK, an International Fellow of Consortium for Multicultural Psychology Research, USA, Visiting Senior Lecturer at the University of Canterbury Christ Church, UK and Visiting Professor at the Martin Luther University, India. He is the president of the Indian Association for Career and Livelihood Planning.

He is presently working on a novel in the historical fiction genre set in South Asia. Gideon's strongest passion is making wine! He has a small vine yard, where he grows an Indian version of Shiraz.

Professor Tony Watts



Professor Tony Watts is a self-employed international policy consultant on career guidance and career development, based in Cambridge, England. He is a Founding Fellow and Life President of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling (NICEC); Visiting Professor of Career Development at the University of Derby; Visiting Professor at Canterbury Christ Church University.

Tony Watts holds degrees in history (Cambridge) and in sociology (York), and honorary degrees from The Open University, the University of Derby, and Edinburgh Napier University; he is a Fellow Commoner of St Catharine's College, Cambridge, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. A joint-founder of the Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC), he was Director of its off-shoot NICEC

from 1975 to 2001. He has published a large number of books and articles in a period spanning over 40 years. He has until recently been a member of the Editorial Board of the *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling* (which he founded and edited or co-edited from 1973 to 1999) and the *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*; and a member of the advisory boards of several other national and international journals.

Tony Watts has lectured in over sixty countries, and has carried out a number of comparative studies of career guidance systems around the world, as well as acting as consultant to several transnational action projects. He has also been a consultant to various international organisations including the Council of Europe, the European Commission, OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank. From October 2001 to October 2002 he was a member of the OECD staff, working on a 14-country Career Guidance Policy Review; this was then extended through other bodies to cover 55 countries. His subsequent work has included reviews of careers services in New Zealand, Wales, Cyprus and Hungary. He is a consultant to the European Commission's European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, and was until recently a member of the Board of the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy.

Tony Watts has long been at the forefront of the profession's response to and critique of government policy in Career Guidance and Development. His forensic ability to interpret policy documents and legislation for practitioners and other proponents of the profession has been vital in developing an appropriate, challenging and measured response. He was awarded an OBE in the 1994 Queen's Birthday Honours List for his services to education.

Always with the best interests of clients and of social justice at heart, Tony Watts has provided the profession with a spokesperson of the highest order and he will be sorely missed when he retires later this year. His passions include his family, cricket, and early music.



# NICE Steering Committee

## Professor Jean-Pierre Dauwalder



From 1975 to 1978 he was clinical psychologist and researcher at the Psychiatric Hospital of the University of Lausanne. From 1979 to 1991 he was Head of the Department of research and teaching in Social Psychiatry at the University of Bern. He also was an Associate professor for counselling and behaviour modification at the University of Lausanne from 1987 to 1991. Since 1991 he was Full professor for counselling and vocational psychology at the University of Lausanne. As Head of the Department of counselling psychology, Vice-Dean of the Faculty, President of the Committee of the Swiss National Fund and finally as President of the University Council, he was called to many different executive functions.

He organized international conferences in behaviour modification, health psychology, vocational guidance and interdisciplinary meetings on self-organisation. He also was member of editorial boards of many scientific journals. His publication list includes more than 130 articles, books and chapters.

## Professor Bernd Joachim Ertelt



Professor Ertelt is a senior lecturer/professor for consulting science at the Jan Dlugosz University, at the Faculty of Education/Educational Science in Czestochowa, Poland. Previously he was a university lecturer at several renowned universities, such as University of Applied Labour Studies of the Federal Employment Agency, Heidelberg University (Faculty of Education), Mannheim University (Faculty of Social Sciences), and was an honorary professor at the University of National and World Economy, Sofia, Bulgaria. Since 1985 he has been active as a professional consultant and expert for international projects, and in a variety of countries for the areas Career Development and Vocational guidance, Organisational development of advisory and agency services and Qualification and training of counselling staff. In this role he was working –amongst others - in collaboration with the ILO, CEDEFOP, World Bank, EU Commission and OECD.

## Professor Andreas Frey



Professor Frey is a senior lecturer/professor for pedagogy at the Hochschule der Bundesagentur für Arbeit (University of Applied Labour Studies of the Federal Employment Agency) in Mannheim since September 2008. His main focus is on adult education, vocational and economic teaching. He studied education sciences at the Universität Koblenz-Landau and graduated with his PhD in education sciences with his thesis “General educational research with a focus on empirical educational research” at the same university. He is currently Educational Dean for the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training SFIVET in Zollikofen (Switzerland) and in 2004 won the Annual Incentive Award from Hogrefe Ltd publishers for his work “Innovative diagnostics in childhood and adolescence”.

## Professor Laura Nota



She is professor of Career construction and career counselling and Psychological Counselling for the Inclusion of Social Disadvantage at the Department of Philosophy, Sociology, Education and Applied Psychology, University of Padova. She is the Director of the Larios Laboratory (Laboratory for Research and Intervention in Vocational Designing and Career Counselling) and of the University Centre for Research and Services on Disability, Rehabilitation and Inclusion, at University of Padova, and of the post-graduate Master Course in ‘Life Design and Career Counselling’.

## Dr Hazel Reid



Hazel is Reader in Career Guidance and Counselling and Director of the Centre for Career and Personal Development at Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. She teaches in the areas of career and guidance theory and research methods. She also supervises students undertaking Doctoral research and coordinates the Auto/biography and Narrative Research Theme Group in the Faculty of Education.

Hazel is a Fellow of the Career Development Institute, was the chair of the Institute’s Research Committee for several years and editor of their biennial publication of research papers. Hazel also edited the Occasional Papers produced at the Centre for Career and Personal Development from 2005 – 2012. She is a member of the International Association of Educational & Vocational Guidance, a NICEC Fellow (National Institute of Careers Education & Counselling) and co-edits the NICEC journal.

## Professor Christiane Schiersmann



Full Professor for Adult Education and Counselling at the Institute of Educational Science, University of Heidelberg. Founding member and vice president of the European Society for Vocational Designing and Career Counseling since 2011. Founding member and vice president of the German national guidance forum (nfb) since 2006. Expert member of the innovation circle for further education of the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (since 2006). Fields of research and teaching: Counselling related to the working world, basic research on counselling theories, organizational development and counselling, continuing education.

## Professor Salvatore Soresi



Full professor at the Department of Philosophy, Sociology, Education and Applied Psychology, University of Padova. He has founded the Larios Laboratory (Laboratory for Research and Intervention in Vocational Designing and Career Counselling) and the University Centre for Research and Services on Disability, Rehabilitation and Inclusion of the University of Padova. He is also a founder member of the Italian Society of Vocational Guidance (SIO), of which he was the President for 8 years (and now member of the Executive Board), and of the European Society of Vocational Designing and Career Counselling.

## Dr Rie Thomsen



Dr Rie Thomsen is director of the research programme Lifelong Learning at the Department of Education at Aarhus University in Denmark. She researches the role of communities and in the organisational aspects of career guidance and has a strong interest in creating an inspiring environment for interdisciplinary research in Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance. In 2012 she published the book Career Guidance in Communities. Her goals for the future are to guide and lead young researchers nationally and internationally in developing prosperous research cooperation’s in the field of career guidance.

## Dr Raimo Vuorinen



Dr Raimo Vuorinen works as a Project Manager in the Finnish Institute for Educational Research at the University of Jyväskylä Finland. He is the Co-ordinator of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, ELGPN which aims to assist the European Union Member States and the Commission in moving European cooperation on lifelong guidance forward in both the education and the employment sectors.

## Network Co-Ordinators

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Johannes Katsarov



Johannes Katsarov is a self-employed researcher, trainer and network coordinator. He has been coordinating NICE since 2009, together with Professor Christiane Schiersmann and Dr Peter Weber from the Heidelberg University. Since 2013, Johannes has additionally been coordinating the European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance & Counselling (ECADOC) project together with Professor Laura Nota from the University of Padua. Next to his activities at the European level, Johannes Katsarov has been supporting the National Guidance Forum of Germany (*nfb*) in the development of national quality standards for career guidance and counselling since 2012.

Dr Peter Weber



Dr Peter Weber is researcher and lecturer at the Heidelberg University, Institute for educational science in the work group adult education/further education and counselling. His main work-issues are aside the development and maintenance of different study programs (career counselling and organizational development) research projects (national and international) e.g. on competence & quality in the field of adult learning and counselling. He received his doctor's degree at Heidelberg University (PhD) on the topic of Quality development in Guidance & Counselling.

## Summit Organising Committee

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Anne Chant



Anne Chant is a senior lecturer in the Centre for Career and Personal Development at Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. She teaches in the area of career learning and development and is currently studying for a PhD. Anne's areas of research interest are the psychosocial influences on career direction, in particular with those of mixed heritage.

Rebecca Tee



Rebecca Tee, (who has written several best-selling careers titles as Rebecca Corfield) is a senior lecturer in the Centre for Career & Personal Development at Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. She teaches in the area of labour markets and is currently studying for a Ph.D. into the motivation of school governors. Rebecca's areas of research interest are community engagement, identity and auto/biographical narrative.

## NICE Memorandum

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## Introduction

In May 2013, the Network for Innovation in Career Guidance and Counselling in Europe (NICE) started to formulate a memorandum, describing its mission and identity. The draft memorandum (next page) is the result of diverse communication within the NICE network over the last 14 months. The Canterbury Summit 2014 aims to discuss, finalize and publish this text as an important source for the future of our field.

The Memorandum on the Future of Academic Training and Research in Career Guidance and Counselling articulates three central needs for the professionalization of career guidance and counselling, which need to be tackled in the near future:

- the need for high quality, competence-based academic training of career guidance and counselling professionals;
- the need for interdisciplinary research on career guidance and counselling, the training of excellent researchers and setting up a research community;
- the need for bridging the gaps between research, theory, practice and policy, and to enhance existing cooperation between the different actors in the field.

The development of the NICE Memorandum follows two strategic goals:

1. **Fostering the development an academic discipline of career guidance and counselling in Europe, and a community, which fills this discipline with life.** In this sense, it addresses individuals and organisations involved in research and scientifically based training related to career guidance and counselling. The memorandum calls for this community to act as an organized movement for excellence, innovation and quality in research and training related to career guidance and counselling.
2. **Enhancing the cooperation between the academic community and its stakeholders.** In order to contribute to the professionalization of career guidance and counselling, the academic community needs to work together with practitioners and their professional associations, relevant policy-makers, career services, higher education institutions, research institutions, connected academic disciplines and professions need to work together.

For both of these purposes, the memorandum shall articulate a common understanding of how academic training and research in the field of career guidance and counselling should develop, which challenges need to be overcome, and how we can work together to be successful. The memorandum shall give stakeholders additional orientation in thinking about how they can collaborate with the academic career guidance and counselling community to achieve common goals. Furthermore, the Memorandum aims at providing suggestions on how the academic community can contribute to the development of our field.

## Memorandum on the Future of Academic Training and Research in Career Guidance and Counselling

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NICE calls upon all scholars and representatives of higher education institutions, all practitioners, associations and policy makers working in the field of Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) to contribute actively to three fields of action for the future development of CGC in Europe.

### High quality competence-based academic training

CGC practice requires substantial training combining theory, practice and research. To attract motivated students we want to offer high quality academic training, which opens good career perspectives. To promote the quality of academic training in CGC, NICE provides common reference points for all types of training. We aim to establish a European competence standard for academic training in CGC programs, mirroring the current challenges in societies, labour market needs and the latest knowledge from different academic disciplines that underpin CGC. Competence-based training programs offer learning opportunities where future practitioners as active learners develop knowledge and skills, but also more general competences, values and attitudes. Training programs must be based on coherent concepts that integrate the acquisition of research-based knowledge, practical training and innovative teaching and learning methods. In line with the relevant UN declarations, training programs should promote the inclusion of all citizens to participate fully in society, education and work. To strengthen the scientific basis of training, universities offering study programs in CGC should aim to establish a chair for CGC. Cross border mobility should be an integral part of such training programs in order to facilitate new cultural perspectives and the acquisition of innovative approaches for academic staff, students, practitioners and scholars.

### Innovative research and excellent doctoral training

To live up to its full potential, research in CGC needs to increase its scope, and become acknowledged as a distinct discipline. As an emerging discipline, CGC is based on established disciplines and informed by an interdisciplinary understanding of research. To achieve substantial progress in our research, we propose to form and foster lively research clusters through which we exchange appropriate research methodologies for CGC, and develop and test new and effective models for career counselling. Towards this objective, actual research needs and themes related



to CGC ought to be described in a broad interdisciplinary research agenda. Particular attention should be given to the reduction of the gap that exists between research and practice and to the provision of accessible, effective and high quality input for practice. We call upon the scientific community in our field to establish and develop further scientific formats of knowledge and information sharing. To achieve sustainable progress in research we need to ensure high quality doctoral training specialized on CGC supporting novice scholars, especially through collaboration across higher education institutions from different countries and disciplines.

## Joint ventures of research, practise and policy

We invite all actors involved in CGC, practitioners, policy makers, professional associations, research and training organisations to engage in intensive collaboration and exchange. To improve the quality of CGC and to make its potential more visible, we call for concrete actions: The practices and policies related to CGC need to be based on evidence from research. Such a research-based practice needs to be matched by practice-oriented research. We strive to engage practice in research by involving practitioners, users and organizations as co-researchers in the research processes. All scholars in our field are asked to engage in a strong and positive contact with the community of practice, organisations and networks. In particular we will seek to establish opportunities for practitioners and groups of citizens to share their knowledge and to feed it into future practice, policy and research. Last but not least, we will promote the professionalization of CGC through high quality academic training, innovative research and active collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, especially those who represent vulnerable and marginalized groups. We view the relationship between theory, research, policy and practice as central in the development of effective career guidance and counselling.

# European Competence Standards

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# European Competence Standards – A Brief Introduction

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## 1. Goals and Call for Feedback<sup>1</sup>

With the concept described on the following pages, we aim at establishing common “European Competence Standards” (competence standards) for the professional field of career guidance and counselling. There are numerous reasons for developing such competence standards, as a special form of occupational standards:

First of all, we hope that the standards will help to **establish career guidance and counselling as a recognized profession around Europe**, by offering the basis for a common professional identity of career professionals around Europe. Only when citizens, institutions and career professionals themselves have a common idea about “what career professionals do”, will our profession really be recognized and appreciated. For this reason, our framework begins with the question, what people should be able to expect from career professionals? Our starting point needs to be a clear picture of the professional roles and functions, which career professionals perform for society, particularly for the wellbeing of individuals.

Secondly, our ambition is to define competence standards which will help to **assure the quality of training for career professionals around Europe and which can support the mutual recognition of qualifications and prior learning in the field of career guidance and counselling**. The fundamental question that needs to be addressed in securing the quality of training for any profession is whether people are ready to tackle the challenges of the particular roles and functions, which are associated to the profession. In other words, people need to be competent to perform in their job. For this purpose, it is necessary to have particular skills, particular knowledge and particular values and attitudes, which together constitute the basis for a particular competence. However, on their own, certain skills or pieces of knowledge will be insufficient to really qualify someone for filling out a role or function competently. For this reason, the concept of competence is particularly important: It focuses on the roles and functions, which professionals shall perform, and links questions of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to their overall meaning for the performance of professionals.

Whereas many “competence frameworks” already exist for the field of career guidance and counselling (and related fields), most of them lack precision. Useful competence definitions are rigid and measurable, and they relate directly to the successful performance of a particular role or function. While existing competence models contribute a great value in offering our profession a shared identity, many of them still use vague and ambiguous concepts of competence, which are not suitable for competence-based training or the competence-based recognition of prior learning. Common defaults are missing distinctions between competence and knowledge, the lack of measurable indicators, or a questionable relevance of particular competences for addressing actual vocational challenges.

With this initiative, NICE wants to fill an existing gap. Our goal is to **develop measurable competence standards**, the validity and relevance of which are widely acknowledged around Europe – not only in academic circles, but also by career professionals, policy-makers and citizen representatives. We want the competence standards to be useful for developing the practice and policy of career guidance and counselling, and we hope that they will help us in working together more strongly in Europe. Finally, we need common competence standards as a basis for future developments, e.g. the formulation of joint guidelines for the training of career professionals around Europe, and as a basis for a harmonized recognition of prior learning in our field.

It is important for us to stress that the competence standards we propose build on the achievements of prior work done in this field internationally, and in various countries at the national level. In our first study from 2012, we have already drawn heavily on the work of the IAEVG, Cedefop and MEVOC at international level, as well as numerous national competence frameworks, in the definition of the “NICE Core Competences”. We would like to express our gratitude to all people and organizations, who have contributed to the discussion, which competences are needed in the field of career guidance and counselling: You have set the field for this endeavour. Without these prior achievements, the work we are doing now would be impossible. We see it as our task to take up these accomplishments, and to move yet a step further on the path already begun by others.

We hope that you will support our initiative for the sake of professionalizing career guidance and counselling in Europe and assuring the quality of career services for citizens in the future!

**Please review this working document and share your feedback with us** at the European Summit on Developing the Career Workforce of the Future, which will be taking place in Canterbury (UK) from September 3-4, 2014. At the Canterbury Summit we wish to discuss this document with key stakeholders from all around Europe, with career professionals, managers from public employment services (PES) and human resource (HR) management functions, with citizen-representatives and policy-makers concerned questions of education, training, employment, and lifelong guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> This text and the tables therein have been prepared by Johannes Katsarov, Jukka Lerkkanen, Jacques Pouyaud and Kestutis Pukelis (named in alphabetical order), who have been coordinating the NICE project to develop European Competence Standards since May 2013. The presented concepts and competence standards have been developed in cooperation of 38 experts from 19 European countries, and represent drafts for further discussion. The first official publication of the European Competence Standards is foreseen for 2015.

In addition to the opportunity of discussing our proposal for competence standards at the Canterbury Summit, **we will appreciate any kind of feedback submitted to us by November 15, 2014.** Feedback will be collected and summarized by Johannes Katsarov (johannes\_katsarov@hotmail.de), and will be considered in the revision and publication of the standards through NICE in 2015.

The European Competence Standards shall be a living document, which we will update regularly as a responsible network, and which we hope to translate into many languages. In future revisions, we will consider feedback from our community and stakeholders, as well as new developments. Please understand that we can only promise to consider comments in the first edition of the standards, which reach the email address above by November 15, 2014, or which are raised at the Canterbury Summit.

We have already explained the goals of the European Competence Standards in this introduction. On the following pages, we will explain our approach in view of a number of challenges, offer important definitions, and introduce our model as shortly as possible. After this introduction, we will present our proposal for competence standards. The first table describes the general professional functions, which career professionals should be prepared for all around Europe, differentiating between career advisors, career guidance counsellors (or practitioners) and career experts. The second table describes the level of competence needed to perform the professional functions.

## 2. The NICE Professional Roles

The foundation for the development of European Competence Standards was laid with the development of the NICE Professional Roles from 2009-2012. With a couple of slight adaptations, we are continuing to use this framework, and employ it to structure the competence standards. A detailed description of the professional roles and the core competences can be found in the NICE Handbook (NICE 2012) in English, French, German and Spanish on [www.nice-network.eu](http://www.nice-network.eu). Here we will only introduce the professional roles briefly, to explain how they relate to each other, and to explain a couple of changes to the framework.

From the perspective of our network, the five roles expressed in the NICE Professional Roles together make up the **professional identity of career guidance and counselling**. In other words, we regard each of the roles as part of the societal mission of our profession. To live up to its full potential, the practice of career guidance and counselling should not neglect any of these roles, but should integrate them to achieve a holistic service for citizens. Professionals of career guidance and counselling should be able to perform in each of these roles – at least to some degree – and organizations offering career services should also perform all of these roles. Taken by itself, each of the roles is incomplete. In Figure 1 this is symbolized through a large circle, which unites the five roles in the profession of career guidance and counselling (CGC).

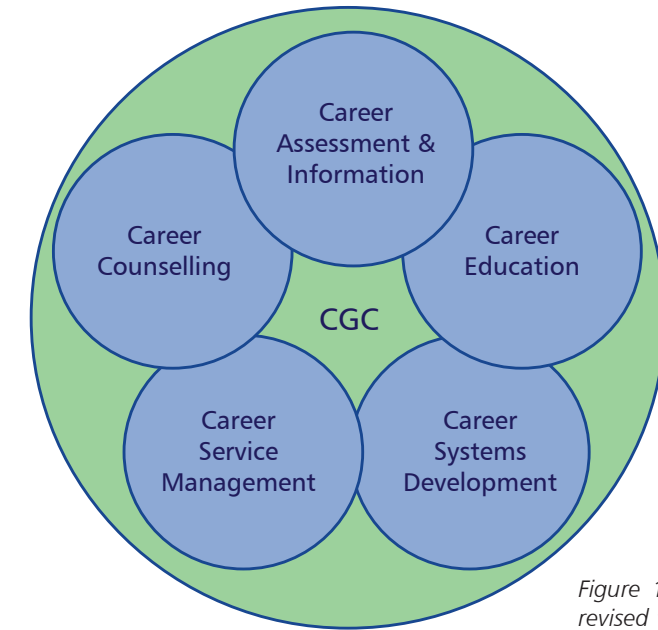


Figure 1: The NICE Professional Roles, revised version from July 2014, © NICE

**Career Counselling** describes the professional role of career services and career professionals to support people in making sense of the situations they are experiencing, working through issues towards solutions, making difficult career decisions, and realizing personal change. Career Counselling supports people in a reflective manner. It builds on a strong professional relationship, and allows clients to open up to new possibilities, rethink themselves and their role in society.

**Career Education** describes the professional role of career services and career professionals to support people in developing the career management competences, i.e. the competences, which they need for career-related learning and development. Career management competences include the ability to become aware of own resources and needs, understanding the functioning of labour markets, vocational and educational systems, the mature use of career information systems, developing career plans, making career decisions, adapting to change pro-actively, self-presentation skills etc.

**Career Assessment & Information** describes the professional role of career services and career professionals to support people in attaining relevant information about themselves (e.g. their interests, talents and competences), the labour market, and educational or vocational options – depending on their individual information needs. Professional career assessment & information is always client-centred, therefore it begins with the assessment of people's informational needs, before specific techniques and resources are used to provide relevant information.

**Career Systems Development** describes the professional role of career services and career professionals to support people and organizations in designing and developing adequate career pathways. Careers are always embedded in social systems, so the structures and cultures of society, organizations and institutions are immensely important when it comes to individuals' potentials for career development. Career Systems Development supports individuals, organizations and

political communities alike, when it comes to making career systems more inclusive, efficient and effective. For instance, it includes supporting clients in entering an organization (placement), or improving cooperation between public services and employers for the inclusion of unemployed youth.

**Career Service Management** describes the professional role of career services and career professionals to manage themselves and assure the quality of their work. The management of career services (Career Education, Career Assessment and Information, Career Counselling, and Career Systems Development) requires a good understanding about how career services work, how their quality can be measured and secured, and what kind of support different types of clients need. In particular, the need to customize career services to clients' individual needs demands a high level of autonomy of career professionals and career services, which is precisely why self-management must be considered an integral part of the professional identity of career guidance and counselling.

An important aspect to consider when reviewing the NICE Professional Roles is that **good career services are the outcome of cooperation** between many different career professionals working together with other types of services, professionals and experts. In other professional areas, e.g. relating to health or to education, we have a similar situation: Nobody should be expected to be able to do everything, and very few organizations are capable of performing all of the relevant tasks. Thus, in defining competence standards, the NICE Professional Roles are a good starting point. Yet, the world of career guidance and counselling is too complex for us to derive competences directly from the professional roles, and we need to differentiate the professional roles some more for this purpose.

### 3. Challenges for the Development of Competence Standards

The **major challenge** in developing European Competence Standards for our field is that we need a model, which is relevant for the labour markets for career professionals, which can be integrated into the functioning of higher education systems, and which fosters the (further) professionalization of career services and the career workforce.

None of these **three dimensions** may be neglected, as we will show in the following. Figure 2 illustrates the three dimensions as three distinct systems with different goals and structures, which need to be addressed, so to reach an "ideal model" for competence standards. If competence standards are to be accepted and used in practice, in training, and contribute to a higher quality of service provision, they need to add value in relation to the logics of each dimension.

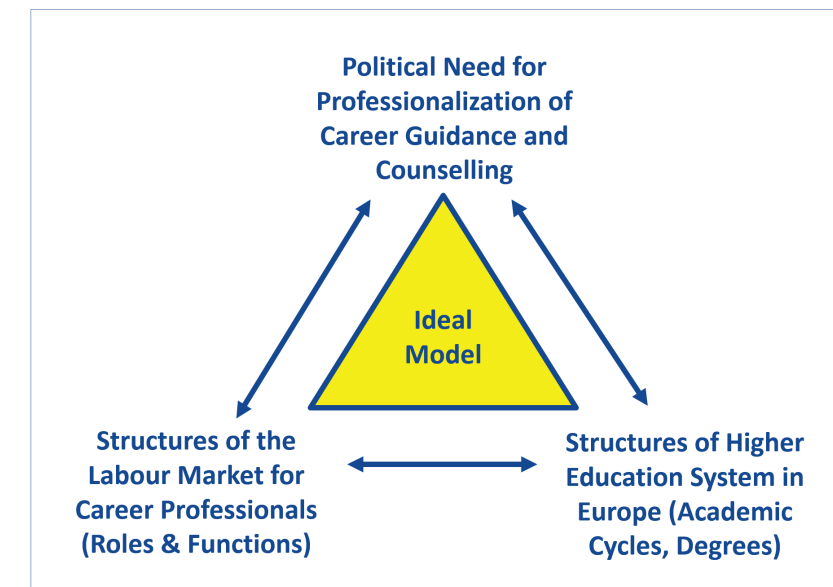


Figure 2: Three dimensions need to be considered in developing an "ideal model" for European Competence Standards, © NICE 2014

1. **The competence standards need to add value for the labour market for career professionals.** Many career services and career professionals depend on public funding in Europe. The systems differ, but relevant public funding relates to the policy fields of employment, education and youth support in general. It is important to point out that we cannot talk about an "ideal market" that is regulated by supply and demand only, for this reason. Similar to public schooling, career guidance and counselling is in the public interest and there is typically a mismatch between the people who need career services and the people who can afford them. This leads to a situation, where different public actors together create a large part of the demand for career professionals and regulate the market through the salaries they offer, the level of training and competence, which they require, and other measures. In addition to these circumstances, some enterprises and citizens are wealthy enough to create a private demand for career guidance and counselling.

The important question here, is which kinds of competence profiles the labour market for career guidance and counselling actually needs? Therefore, competence standards need to offer a **typology of functional profiles**, which are relevant for the labour market, taking into consideration the different systems all around Europe. If competence standards do not add value for employers of career professionals, their relevance for practice and training will be questionable.

Therefore, a human resource perspective is highly important for our model to be accepted by policy-makers and the employers of career professionals. Additionally, in a world of growing consumer awareness and responsibility, the functional profiles of career professionals, which underlie competence standards, also need to be attractive for citizens as clients of career services. In other words, it is pivotal that the functional profiles of career professionals **address the actual career-related challenges that people face**, and offer promising solutions.



2. **The competence standards need to connect with the higher education systems of the different countries, including the national qualification frameworks.** Similar to the public employment systems and school systems, there are differences between the higher education systems in the different countries – even if there is a trend towards some common features through the Bologna Process and the efforts to establish a European Higher Education Area.

The point that needs to be acknowledged here is that the existing training systems in Europe still deviate from each other to some extent, and that there are different expectations in the different systems, for instance regarding the level of training which teachers or psychologists need in order to practice. In this way, the current training of career professionals and the relevant labour market are connected in different ways in all countries of Europe. Due to the high influence of public institutions in the definition of expectations regarding the level of training expected from career professionals (see above), the established degree programmes around Europe also follow different logics.

For our framework, this leads to a central message: Whatever model of competence standards we propose - there is no “one size fits all”. It cannot be our objective to create “the standard degree programme for career guidance and counselling in Europe”. Instead, we need a framework, which helps us to **raise the quality of training** in all of Europe, and which **enables more mobility and cooperation** in Europe, but which **respects the diversity and autonomy** of higher education institutions and nations in line with the principles of the Bologna 2020 agenda.

Additionally it is in the interest of higher education to give career guidance and counselling a **common image in Europe as a unique field of academic training**, so that it is acknowledged publicly, and the public has a common idea and realistic expectations, what to expect from career professionals. This objective is also endorsed by the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education in the “Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué” of 2009 (“The Bologna 2020 Process”), which demands ongoing curricular reform. In particular, academics are expected to develop **subject-area specific learning outcomes and international reference points** in close cooperation with student and employer representatives.

Therefore the flexible framework we need, which has to offer **space for customized degree programmes**, needs to have a common core at the same time, so to enable the mutual recognition of degrees and to develop and assure the quality of academic training in our subject area. For this purpose, our framework will also need to relate to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF 2008), which enables **the translation of qualifications** between national systems and frameworks.

Finally, our framework needs to live up to scientific standards regarding general advances in the quality of academic training. With the Bologna reform, there is a trend for harmonizing the educational systems towards a higher level of **student-orientation and towards higher**

**degree of student-centred and competence-based learning.** This trend towards an increased use of higher education for graduates to address the actual challenges in the world of work, and for the purpose of them becoming active and responsible citizens, is not only in the interest of employers. In particular, the ongoing reforms are in the interest of citizens, who can expect a higher level of competence of professionals in the future.

3. **This point connects directly with the need to professionalize career guidance and counselling around Europe.** The availability of lifelong guidance for all citizens, which is good enough to support them in mastering their career-related challenges, is still more of a political vision, than an actual reality. At the same time, multiple developments (globalization, aging populations, technological developments and growing specialization of vocations, and the individualization of career decisions – to name only a few) increase the complexity of people’s career-related challenges. In the future, we will not only need more career services and career professionals to address these developments: In particular, we will need to **secure the quality of career services** and their relevance for addressing the needs of the population.

For the academic discipline of research and training in career guidance and counselling, the need for a larger and more professional career workforce means a growing political responsibility in Europe, which we have to acknowledge. For policy-makers and professionals the implications are similar: We need to work together more closely in the future and jointly invest into a further development of career guidance and counselling.

For the development of our framework of European Competence Standards, this means that we have to look towards what will probably be needed in the future. When we think about the professionalization and training of our career workforce, we need to **focus on what our clients, the citizens of Europe need** – not on what we can offer already.

For a movement towards even better and even more professional career services, our starting point should be the actual career services and the existing training opportunities around Europe. With the first two points, we have addressed the logics of these two systems. The need for a continuous improvement of practice, competence and training transcends these two systems, and is already being addressed by them to some extent, e.g. by the Bologna 2020 Agenda. The important point that we need to keep in mind for the development of our framework is that competence standards should support the movement towards the professionalization of career guidance and counselling. It would be irresponsible for us to set standards, which all of us can already meet, only for the sake of pleasing everybody. Instead, we need to challenge ourselves to become better and prepare for the growing challenges of the future.

## 4. Competence Standards for Three Types of Career Professionals

Based on the presented goals and challenges, nobody will be surprised to hear that the development of a draft for European Competence Standards for Career Guidance and Counselling has been a difficult enterprise. From the beginning, this complex process has been very open, and we have all learned a lot through the international and multidisciplinary discussions and development activities that have formed an integral part of this effort. It would fill a complete book to go through all of the aspects, which we have discussed in the process of developing our proposal.

In this chapter, we will present our suggestion for European Competence Standards, without much discussion. We will begin with an introduction of the key concepts, followed by a presentation of the competence standards in two large tables. Only after this presentation, will we move on to a discussion of some of the most important questions that we have dealt with in the process of development (Chapter 5).

### 4.1. Professional Functions and Competence Descriptions

To have a performance-based rationale we need a system where **competence standards** are based on the actual professional challenges of the career workforce (**professional functions**), and the **competences**, which people need to deal with these types of professional challenges effectively.

This expectation draws on the definition of a **competence** as “the ability of people to meet complex demands in particular situations, drawing upon adequate psychosocial resources in a reflective manner” (NICE 2012, p. 32).

The “**psychosocial resources**”, which are mentioned in this definition relate to knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. These affective, behavioural and cognitive resources form the basis of a particular competence. However, on their own, they are not sufficient to perform the professional functions demanded of career professionals.

**An example:** In order to support “clients in clarifying their career-related goals, needs, options and challenges within their life contexts” (one of the “professional functions”, which we formulate for the career profession), career professionals clearly need a multitude of skills, adequate values and attitudes, and a broad knowledge basis. Knowledge of fundamental career theories, on motivation and decision-making processes etc. is clearly important in order to perform such a professional function, as well as interviewing skills and the motivation of the career guidance counsellor to understand what is important for the individual client.

Whereas many competence frameworks do not differentiate between competences and psychosocial resources, we find it important to first look at the level of competence. The reasoning is very basic: Which knowledge, skills, values and attitudes are relevant in the training of professionals should depend on the competence expected of a professional, i.e. what is the person supposed to be able to do in practice. Therefore, we have decided to first identify the most important competences, which career professionals need for their practice, before we investigate further, and try to identify the relevant psychosocial resources in the next step.

**Following this line of thinking, competence standards need to differentiate between two dimensions:**

1. The description of occupational challenges (“professional functions”)
2. The description of measurable “competences” needed to perform these professional functions

The first dimension (“professional functions”) is important to explain to the public what career professionals actually do, what the purpose of the profession is, and what may be expected of professionals. It is also important for career professionals to have a common idea about the mission of their profession, particularly because a professional identity encourages people to live up to professional standards and develop themselves further as professionals.

The second dimension (“competences”) is important for purposes of training and assessment of people’s readiness to perform professional functions. Therefore, competence descriptions are a rather “technical” concept belonging to the worlds of higher education, performance management etc. The purpose of a competence description is to offer a measurable and valid definition of what somebody should be able to do, in order to be considered ready for a wider area of tasks and professional activities.

#### Definition of Professional Functions

In 2012, we have proposed the five NICE Professional Roles as a broad definition of the central roles and responsibilities of the career profession (see Chapter 2). The professional roles are clearly too abstract and general, for us to define measurable competence descriptions. As a basis for the definition of competence standards, we have to define a framework of concrete **professional functions** for each of the professional roles, which describe the actual challenges and activities of career professionals in an understandable way.

We see the definition of these professional functions as an important part of the proposed competence standards, and introduce them in Table 1 (pages 30-31) for each of the NICE Professional Roles. Some of the professional functions are specific for the entire profession, not only for one of the roles, which is why we define them in an additional category called “generic professional functions”. This means that they are important for all of the professional roles.

When we defined our suggestion for the professional functions for each of the professional roles, the leading question, which we discussed, was “What do people career professionals do in this professional role?” For a comprehensive collection and definition of the most central professional functions of the career profession, we consulted a large variety of literature, including policy papers, degree program descriptions from various countries, international competence profiles etc. and drew on the descriptions, which we had already jointly developed in the NICE Handbook (NICE 2012).

### Definition of Competences

Based on the professional functions for the different levels of competence we then defined the concrete **competences**. For such competence descriptions to be meaningful for academic training and for employment questions, they need to be measurable and prepare people for performing a particular professional function successfully. To reach these requirements, we apply a performance-oriented definition of competences (see above), and use the Taxonomies of Educational Objectives (Bloom et al. 1956; 1964), guidelines for developing measurable level descriptors (Moon 2002), and the generic level descriptors for the domain of competence offered in the European Qualification Framework (EQF 2008).

For each of the professional functions (Table 1, pages 30-31), one competence is defined as a competence standard (Table 2, pages 32-33). As for the “generic professional functions”, which are relevant for all professional roles, we also define corresponding “generic professional competences”.

## 4.2. Three Types of Career Professionals

It became evident early on in our working process that the societal need and the corresponding labour market for career professionals is too complex, for us to define professional functions (and competence standards) for only one minimum standard ‘job profile’. In reality, there is not only a horizontal diversity of professional roles in our field, but also a **vertical diversity of career-related challenges in terms of their complexity and the required levels of competence** for dealing with these challenges effectively.

As we have argued in the first NICE Handbook (2012, p. 13 ff.), we see a need for dedicated professionals, who are specialized on career guidance and counselling, and are competent in performing all of the professional roles to a some degree (see section 2). Nevertheless, we also need to acknowledge the findings of Watts & van Esbroeck (1998), whose detailed analysis of counselling in the field of higher education has shown that many career-related challenges can be dealt with sufficiently through so-called “first-in-line-advisers”. This relates to people who primarily work in another role (e.g. as teachers), but who are capable of offering some amount of support in career-related questions, too. Furthermore, a study done by Cedefop (2009) has demonstrated that there is additionally a need for some highly trained career professionals,

who are capable of performing very complex functions, e.g. coordinating career services at regional or national levels, conducting large-scale research projects etc.

These considerations have led us to the insight that we need to **develop different sets of competence standards**, which relate to different levels of minimum competence necessary to perform particularly important professional functions in the field of career guidance and counselling. Accordingly, our proposal builds on the definition of **three generic types of career professionals**, with different professional functions in the field of career guidance and counselling, and with growing expectations considering their **degree of specialization** in career guidance and counselling.

**As we argue, we need three different sets of competence standards, one for each of these three types of career professionals:**

- **“Career Advisors”** are teachers, placement managers, psychologists, social workers or public administrators (among others). They are people, whose area of specialization (vocation or profession) is not in career guidance and counselling, but in another field. However, they are often the first people who clients come to for advice in career-related matters, because their areas of work relate to career-questions. Career advisors are important sources of career-related information for clients, and they can build connections between clients and professional career services.
- **“Career Guidance Counsellors”** are the people, who are dedicated to career guidance and counselling and who see it as their vocation to support people in facing complex career-related challenges through career counselling, career education, career assessment & information, career systems development and by managing their career services professionally. They practice all of the professional roles related to career guidance and counselling autonomously and responsibly, and do so in an integrated way.
- **“Career Experts”** are specialized in one (or more) of the five professional roles and work towards the advancement of career guidance and counselling in different ways. Some of them engage primarily engage in research, academic training and developmental activities as academics. Others concentrate on practical matters, e.g. the management of career services, policy-making or the supervision of career advisors or career guidance counsellors.

## 4.3. Three Levels of Competence

The three types of career professionals are all equally important for society from our perspective. All three of types of career professionals are needed in practice, for career guidance and counselling systems to support citizens as effectively and efficiently as possible, in coping with career-related challenges. At the same time, it must be clear that we shouldn’t expect the same minimum levels of competence from people, who act as career advisors, as we would expect



from people who work as specialized career guidance counsellors, or career experts. When we define competence standards, we need to acknowledge the **necessity of different levels of competence in practicing the professional roles of career guidance and counselling** for the different types of career professionals.

We propose **three levels of competence** for each of the NICE Professional Roles, which build on each other systematically, and work to provide different levels of competence standards for the three types of career professionals. The three levels of competence, which we have used as “level descriptors” for the definition of competences, relate to the domain of competence in the European Qualification Framework (EQF 2008):

1. People working as **career advisors** require a basic level of competence in career guidance and counselling for the professional functions associated with their type of career support. Due to the responsibility, which they necessarily carry for supporting the professional development of individuals and groups, and the need for them to have a critical understanding of some theories and principles, we have primarily referred to EQF Level 6 in formulating the relevant competence standards.
2. **Career guidance counsellors** require a higher level of competence in the professional roles of career guidance and counselling, due to the increasing complexity of some of the professional challenges they need to be able to face in practice. They do not only need to be able to offer the kind of support, which will be expected from career advisors. Additionally, they need to be ready to support people who are facing career-related crises and questions of high uncertainty. Clients often face multi-faceted problems and unpredictable situations, knowing that their decisions could have a heavy impact on the rest of their lives. They frequently require support in developing strategic approaches, and access to highly specialized knowledge, through which they will be able to gradually make progress in their career development. Facing stressful phases of transition, many clients need support in mastering projects of personal change. Due to the high professional demands of the majority of professional functions expected of career guidance counsellors, we have primarily referred to EQF Level 7 in formulating the relevant competence standards.
3. Whatever professional roles **career experts** specialize in, they will need to demonstrate substantial authority, scholarly and professional integrity, autonomy and innovation. This will be the case, whether they act as managers of large career services, whether they supervise or train career guidance counsellors and career advisors, or whether they work in research and development. As a necessary foundation for their practice as career experts, we argue that they should also be capable of performing all of the professional functions, which are demanded of career guidance counsellors. This is an important premise for them to be recognized as career professionals on the one hand, but also for them to reflect the complexity of the complete field of career guidance and counselling in their particular field of expertise. For these reasons, we have primarily referred to EQF Level 8 in formulating the relevant competence standards.

#### 4.4. Competence Standards as a Basis for Qualification Standards

Based on the proposed competence standards at the three general competence levels, we finally propose a couple of minimum qualification standards for academic training of career professionals, together with recommendations:

1. Career professionals of all types, career advisors, career guidance counsellors, and career experts, should receive academic training specialized on career guidance and counselling.
2. Furthermore, opportunities for further education and lifelong learning should be provided to all types of career professionals at level of academic training.
3. The minimum level of academic training for career advisors should be offered at EQF Level 5, which is the level of undergraduate courses and so-called “short cycle” programs. However, due to the complexity of the relevant professional functions and the high level of responsibility, which career advisors carry (see above), we recommend them to be trained at EQF Level 6, or as part of training at even higher levels (e.g. as part of specialized MA degrees for teachers at EQF Level 7).
4. The minimum level of academic training for career guidance counsellors should be offered at EQF Level 6 in terms of full Bachelor Degrees, which are specialized on career guidance and counselling. However, due to the complexity of the relevant professional functions and the high level of responsibility, which career guidance counsellors carry (see above), we recommend for them to be trained at EQF Level 7 through dedicated MA degree programs or specialized Postgraduate Certificate programs. Such training should be offered on the basis of competence in the professional roles of career advisors.
5. The minimum level of academic training for career experts should be offered at EQF Level 7, e.g. in the shape of specialized MA degrees or Postgraduate certificates, which focus specifically on one of the professional roles of career guidance and counselling, and which build on previous training as career guidance counsellors. However, due to the complexity of the relevant professional functions and the very high level of responsibility, which career experts carry (see above), we recommend for them to be trained at EQF Level 8, e.g. through structured PhD programs.

# Professional Functions of All Types of Career Professionals

	Career Education Functions	Career Assessment & Information Functions	Career Counselling Functions	Career Service Management Functions	Career Systems Development Functions	Generic Professional Functions (All Roles)	
Career Advisors engage in...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting clients in preparing applications to the further education or receiving job</li> <li>Facilitating learning for clients about general educational and vocational options and how to access information on offers, requirements etc.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performing preliminary screening sessions to investigate clients' interests and resources</li> <li>Guiding clients towards relevant self-assessment tools and sources of career information, based on their explicit interests and resources</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating an environment, where clients feel safe to speak about career-related problems they face</li> <li>Getting an idea of the options and challenges that a client is facing, to assess how they could be supported</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisting in the development of career services which meet the needs of clients best</li> <li>Promoting the benefits of professional career services for social inclusion, employment and the wellbeing of individuals, organizations and communities</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitating placements of clients in a career-related experiences (work or education), which aid them in developing their career management competences and making career-related decisions</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making referrals to a qualified career guidance counsellor, if clients would benefit from specific support, and managing such cases</li> </ol>	Career Advisors engage in...
Career Guidance Counsellors engage in...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measuring clients' career management competences</li> <li>Facilitating learning for clients to improve their career management competences individually and in groups</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the informational needs of clients, regarding to their own interests, aptitudes, skills and competences as well as the labour market, vocational and educational opportunities</li> <li>Providing clients with relevant career information and access to appropriate sources of information, including self-assessment tools</li> <li>Performing comprehensive screening sessions to investigate clients' interests and resources</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting clients in clarifying their career-related goals, needs, options and challenges within their life contexts</li> <li>Building a constructive counselling relationship with clients</li> <li>Supporting clients in tackling challenging projects of personal change and coping with stressful transition phases</li> <li>Supporting clients in the interpretation of complex situations and multifaceted information</li> <li>Supporting clients in exploring options, making and implementing career decisions</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing, promoting and advertising particular career services for particular target groups</li> <li>Coordinating own work efficiently to support as many clients as effectively as possible</li> <li>Building partnerships and contracts with clients, other professionals and organisations for professional career services</li> <li>Assuring that the quality of their work meets professional standards for career guidance and counselling</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing and coordinating interdisciplinary networks so to draw on a helpful connections in case clients need additional support</li> <li>Advocating on behalf of clients to promote their career development within organisations and in phases of transition</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging in continuous reflection and development of their own practice, particularly in regard of ethical questions, and supporting peers to doing the same</li> </ol>	Career Guidance Counsellors engage in...
Career Expert of a particular role engage in...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating and developing tools to assess people's career management competences for particular target groups</li> <li>Improving existing and developing innovative career education approaches and training programs for particular target groups</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing psychometric assessment and diagnosing tools, and measuring techniques to identify informational needs of clients and support them in understanding their career-related interests</li> <li>Developing career information systems and systematize information on developments in labour markets, education and training systems to prospect emerging challenges</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing, validating and sharing effective and innovative practices in career counselling</li> <li>Providing supervision to practitioners and advisors, particularly supporting them in the reflection of very challenging cases, their intercultural sensitivity and their ethical attitudes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluating the quality of career services for their further development in cooperation with the responsible career professionals</li> <li>Managing career service centres, departments and networks and ensuring their sustainability</li> <li>Innovating career services and practices and developing their quality</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the quality of career systems on the basis of a critical review of their functionality and the interdisciplinary cooperation between different types of professions in the process</li> <li>Coordinating career-related policies and cooperation schemes between policy-makers, career services and other stakeholders</li> <li>Mediating particularly critical and controversial situations of clients within career systems</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training other professionals in the professional role of their expertise</li> <li>Conducting and disseminating research and developing fundamental theories related to career-related subjects</li> <li>Developing scientifically based concepts (e.g. psychometric measures or quality standards for career services) in cooperation with other professionals and stakeholders</li> <li>Promoting the academic discipline, and specialized research and training in career guidance and counselling</li> </ol>	Career Expert of a particular role engage in...

# Competence Standards for All Types of Career Professionals

	Career Education Competences	Career Assessment & Information Competences	Career Counselling Competences	Career Service Management Competences	Career Systems Development Competences	Generic Professional Competences (All Roles)	
Career Advisors should be able to...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain how to prepare applications for jobs and training opportunities (CVs, letters, interviews) to the level of general standards</li> <li>2. Explain how to learn about educational and occupational options and requirements</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify websites, self-assessment tools and other sources which provide career information for the particular target group of the client, responding to the explicit interests, abilities, skills, competences and needs they have formulated</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Produce a confidential, respectful and supportive environment for clients to speak openly about their career-related concerns and questions</li> <li>2. Confirm the type of career-related challenge a client is facing, based on active listening to concerns and questions voiced by client</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Report on the quality of career services based on specific quality criteria and standards for career guidance and counselling</li> <li>2. Assess potential benefits of career services for individuals, communities and organizations to better deal with existing and emerging challenges</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrange a voluntary meeting of a client with a placement-provider, relating to the needs formulated by the client</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Judge when to make a referral to a career guidance counselor or to another professional service, based on assessment of one's own ability to provide the support needed by a client</li> </ol>	Career Advisors should be able to...
Career Guidance Counsellors should (additionally) be able to...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assess the career management competences of clients with appropriate instruments and approaches</li> <li>2. Design and implement career education sessions and educational methods to meet learning needs for the particular target group</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assess informational needs of clients, regarding their interests and competences, the relevant labour market, and features of vocational and educational systems, to confront informational problems such as information overflow, stereotypes, disinformation, and lack of information</li> <li>2. Select scientifically validated methods and tools for self-assessment, as well as information sources to satisfy the clients informational needs</li> <li>3. Assess particular resources, interests or other relevant characteristics of an individual client using a validated career assessment approach in a collaborative way, to provide the client with personally relevant information</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conclude a client's main reason for seeking support in an empathic and respectful way, based on a client-centred interview</li> <li>2. Formulate an offer for a counselling agreement with a client, specifying objectives and approaches that suit the client's priorities and resources</li> <li>3. Explore which psychological and external resources are available to support the client to cope with phases of stress and achieving personal growth</li> <li>4. Assess the meaning of complex situations and different types of information together with clients, based on their interests, competences and other resources</li> <li>5. Apply suitable models for creative problem-solving, decision-making and planning, based on the interests, preferences and resources of clients</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Construct appropriate communication channels, language and arguments to attract members of a particular target group to a particular career service offer</li> <li>2. Implement career services strategically in cooperation with other relevant actors</li> <li>3. Produce good professional relations with clients, colleagues and organisations to ensure quality of career services</li> <li>4. Review career services and their organisation on the basis of quality standards for career guidance and counselling and the needs of their specific target groups, and propose viable approaches for service enhancement, based on such an analysis</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify common interests between the perspectives of different stakeholders in supporting a particular target group (e.g. early school leavers), to propose how relevant cooperation structures could be built up and maintained</li> <li>2. Justify a need for support and propose a strategy in the case of an individual client in dealing with relevant stakeholders (e.g. parents, employers, public institutions) for the sake of the client's career development</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Produce a case study of a professional interaction with a client, reviewing the client's needs, the process of professional support and their own behaviour on the basis of professional and ethical standards for career guidance and counselling and related theories</li> </ol>	Career Guidance Counsellors should (additionally) be able to...
Career Experts of a particular role should (additionally) be able to...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop methodologies for measuring people's career management competences for particular target groups, based on scientific evidence and methodology</li> <li>2. Develop strategies, curricula and training programs for improving the career management competences of various target groups based on recognized needs of the target group and relevant quality standards</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design and validate psychometric tools (tests, questionnaires, scales etc.) scientifically, to provide a relevant and reliable diagnosis of people's career related interests, abilities, competences, motivations and other characteristics</li> <li>2. Design and develop career information systems to systemize relevant information on specific labour markets, education and training systems, and to anticipate emerging trends and issues</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design and validate career counselling approaches and instruments to support clients with specific needs to solve their career-related problems</li> <li>2. Review the practice of career guidance counsellors and career advisors for the development of their competence and professional self-awareness in a collaborative way, paying particular attention to intercultural and ethical aspect</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluate the quality of techniques and program evaluation models used in career services, applying standards and expertise on innovative and effective practices</li> <li>2. Appraise human resources of career services applying appropriate management approaches to ensure the quality and sustainability of career services provided, also in relation to funding</li> <li>3. Implement a quality assurance and development system to secure relevant quality standards and improve the quality of services in a collaborative way with other stakeholders</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and implement concepts for more inclusive and effective career systems in collaboration with employers, policy-makers and other stakeholders, based on an evaluation of the systems' ability to foster social justice, employment and the well-being of communities, organisations and individuals</li> <li>2. Design policies and strategies the inter-sectorial and interdisciplinary coordination in cooperation with relevant stakeholders at regional, national or international level</li> <li>3. Devise recommendations on how to overcome a career-related conflict, based on the best interests of all involved stakeholders</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide academic training to reach learning outcomes according to international and national quality standards to assure the competence of all types of career professionals</li> <li>2. Conduct and publish original research and develop fundamental theories on career-related topics to inform evidence-based practice, applying scientific standards rigorously</li> <li>3. Design and validate scientifically based concepts (e.g. psychometric measures, quality standards, ethical guidelines) in cooperation with other professionals and stakeholders</li> <li>4. Justify the value of interdisciplinary research and training in the field of CGC based on the findings of various academic disciplines and empirical knowledge on the particular challenges of career services</li> </ol>	Career Experts of a particular role should (additionally) be able to...



## 5. Frequently Discussed Proposals, Critiques and Questions

In the process of developing this proposal for European Competence Standards, we have led discussions with experts from various countries, and we have consulted several studies on related questions. Our proposal has emerged from these discussions and consultations. A couple of questions have been discussed repeatedly and intensively, and we see it as important to illustrate how we deal with these aspects.

*1. “Wouldn’t it be better to concentrate on people who practice career guidance and counselling as a full profession, and dedicate most of their working time to matters of career guidance and counselling? Why not only define minimum competences for the career guidance counsellors?”*

There are several important reasons, why we have additionally decided to define minimum competences for career advisors and career experts.

The reasoning behind **competence standards for career advisors** is two-fold: On the one hand, we see it as a necessity to professionalize the many people who offer general advice in career matters to clients. For instance, there are no common concepts, which kinds of competences schoolteachers need when it comes to career questions. Likewise, there is no common framework for the training of HR managers, when it comes to topics of career guidance and counselling, and it would be helpful to offer a suggestion for the minimum competences, which people working in public employment services should have, who frequently need to decide, whether somebody would benefit from career guidance and counselling services. On the other hand, there is a need to differentiate between the roles and functions of career advisors and career guidance counsellors. If we only gave career guidance counsellors a clear profile, career advisors wouldn’t feel valued in their important role in society, or they might feel overburdened with the high expectations connected with the minimum competence standards of the career guidance counsellor profile.

The reasoning behind **competence standards for career experts** is inherent in the need to professionalize career guidance and counselling. One important question is which minimum competences the people need, who train or supervise career guidance counsellors and career advisors? Moreover, which competences do the people need, who manage large career services? Finally, as already stressed in the NICE Memorandum, establishing an academic discipline and large-scale research activities in the field of career guidance and counselling requires people, who are competent for interdisciplinary, practice-oriented research in our field, which should focus on particularly relevant themes of research and apply state-of-the-art research methodologies for this purpose. Competence standards can also suggest commonly recognized career development pathways for career professionals.

*2. “For the situation in my country, the proposed standards are too tight: Career guidance counsellors in my country also need to be able to do (a) and (b)...”*

Sometimes the model we propose is criticized as being “too absolute”, and the proposed standards as being “too tight”. This criticism can generally be resolved quite easily, because it is based on a misunderstanding of what we mean by “competence standards”, and what we mean by the “types of professionals”. As explained in the introduction, we are looking for competence standards, which we can refer to in Europe as “minimum expectations” about what different types of career professionals should be able to do.

Additionally, standards do not call for career professionals to dedicate themselves exclusively to performing the professional functions described for the different types of career professionals. Quite contrarily, the model is very open for combinations, both in practice and in training. For instance, a degree program could be train career guidance counsellors based on the competence standards, but also train the same people for other types of counselling (e.g. psychosocial counselling) or as social workers. Similarly, a person could be a Career Expert in Career Assessment & Information, but also work as a generalist Career Guidance Counsellor half of the time.

*3. “The three types of career professionals sound good, but they don’t match the profiles of career professionals currently trained in my country/ my higher education institution. We do not currently train career professionals to develop these competences. Many career guidance counsellors in my country/ my organisation currently do not have these minimum competences.”*

In some cases, people are concerned about the competence standards, because the standards expect more than what they offer, either as career professionals (“This goes beyond what I can do”), or as training programs (“That is not part of our curriculum”).

Our proposal is aspirational. We aspire to professionalize the practice of career guidance and counselling in the future. We want a trend towards good guidance for all citizens in Europe, and see the necessity for a general “up-skilling” of people working in the field of career guidance and counselling – no matter at which level of the system they operate. This will necessarily take time.

The opposite of what we want, is a “minimum compromise”, where competence standards only aim at confirming for everyone “everything is okay as it is” and “nothing needs to change”. The way we have formulated the suggested competence standards, they will challenge nearly everyone, nearly every career advisor, every career guidance counsellor, every career expert, and every training institution to engage in lifelong learning and further development. If we want career guidance and counselling to be respected as a profession in the future, and to become an acknowledged field of academic training and research, we will all need to do our share.

Therefore, we call for all relevant individuals and organisations to commit themselves to adopt the suggested competence standards gradually, and to take necessary actions for them to fulfil the standards.

This does not stand in the way of discussions, however, whether all of the professional functions and competences should actually compose “minimum standards” for the three different types of career professionals. The competence standards probably still need to be adjusted to some extent, before we publish them the first time. Some of the professional functions or competences might be too specific, or too advanced. We hope to discuss these points and to find a meaningful consensus, into which direction the profession should develop, and which minimum competences should be expected from the different types of career professionals for this purpose.

*4. “The minimum level of academic training proposed/recommended is higher than the level of qualification that what we currently offer/require for this type of career professionals.”*

The minimum qualification levels of academic training, which we propose for the training of career professionals, are based on the difficulty of the professional functions, which we have identified as critical for the three different types of career professionals. We have carefully evaluated, which competence is needed for each of the professional functions, and have used the level indicators for competences as defined in the European Qualification Framework (EQF 2008) as our key reference for assessing the appropriate qualification level.

Of course, the minimum qualification levels and competences, which we propose for career professionals, may conflict with particular political, organisational or personal interests. However, we cannot credibly make any proposals or recommendations, nor set competence standards, which would disregard the interests of citizens and the clients of career services, or the factual challenges of career guidance and counselling. Additionally, the fact that the proposed qualification levels of training are being offered in various European countries already, shows that we are not proposing anything revolutionary.

# European Research Agenda

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## Goals of the European Research Agenda<sup>1</sup>

Research in career guidance and counselling is clearly oriented towards the practice of career guidance and counselling, a profession, which itself has only been emerging for about one century. Unlike older professions, like medicine or teaching, which have established academic disciplines of their own, the profession of career guidance and counselling still lacks the foundation of a coherent body of knowledge and a clear scope of research objectives and methodologies. The scientific discourse on career guidance and counselling is often still dominated by the perspectives of broader academic disciplines, which are very rich, but which sometimes lack a holistic focus on the professional practice. For the professionalization of career guidance and counselling, we see it as inevitable to establish studies in career guidance and counselling as a unique academic discipline, with dedicated degree programmes, a common body of knowledge, and a unique focus of research (see NICE 2012, p. 13ff.).

NICE considers the definition of a European Research Agenda as an important goal for the professionalization of career guidance and counselling and the development of a dedicated academic discipline. Therefore, NICE and the European Society for Vocational Designing and Career Counseling (ESVDC) have joined forces in developing such a research agenda, as a strategic goal of the ECADOC project, which the European Commission is funding from 2012 to 2015.<sup>2</sup>

To develop, communicate and use a shared European Research Agenda for the field of career guidance and counselling can help to reach different objectives:

1. **Providing a Foundation for Cooperation in Innovative Research:** A central function of a research agenda is to offer a “research map”, which demonstrates the status quo of relevant research activities and highlights actual strengths (centres of excellence), but which also stresses possible desiderata and formulates future fields for research. Such a step would help to define the scope of the research field as well as increase its inner consistency. Due to the multidisciplinary nature of our field, such a map should also include references to relevant research methodologies, so to encourage a cross-fertilization of the involved disciplines and foster the development of common standards of practice for our interdisciplinary field of research.

2. **Promote Research Cooperation:** A more consistent description of the research field will allow individual researchers, research teams and institutions to relate their own themes of research to those of others, and can promote interdisciplinary and international research cooperation this way (e.g. topic-based research clusters). At the same time, a research agenda could also offer sensible categories for setting up an international “research database”, in which contributions from different lines of thinking can be organized for an enhanced exchange of knowledge.
3. **Offering Orientation for Research-Based Training:** Students of career guidance and counselling will profit from a research agenda at all levels of academic training. It will make it easier for them to identify research gaps and interesting issues for their own research, and to connect these with broader scientific discourses. Moreover, the research agenda will create the opportunity of actively involving doctoral researchers in broad international research contexts and projects. Through their involvement in collaborative and international research projects, aspiring researchers will benefit from an increase in perspectives, the connection with various experts in their field of research, and develop their key competences for interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research.
4. **Raising the Profile of Our Discipline:** Finally, a coordinated research agenda for Europe will open up the possibility to raise central and highly relevant research questions for our entire field and make it more visible to the public. This in turn will increase the overall visibility of study programs and doctoral training in our field throughout Europe and of our academic discipline as a whole, since it will inform the public about the meaningfulness of research in our field systematically. It might even be possible to acquire larger international research grants, based on such an agenda.

## Defining the Scope of Research in Career Guidance and Counselling

In order to develop a European Research Agenda, which can help us in reaching these goals, we need a conceptual framework, which will enable us to identify and systemize relevant research themes. This conceptual framework should be underpinned by empirical knowledge about the research that is actually going on in our field, but be open enough for it to incorporate important research questions, which are not being addressed (sufficiently) yet.

To underpin the discussion first approaches for the investigation of the existing research (Weber 2014) and a conceptual description of some relevant issues (Rossier 2014) have already been undertaken.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This text has been prepared by Peter Weber, Johannes Katsarov and Christiane Schiersmann as a basis for an open discussion at the Canterbury Summit. It builds on a first overview of research activities in the field of career guidance and counselling, to which 45 individual researchers and research teams contributed by July 2014. The first overview and systematization of research encompasses 428 recent studies from the involved colleagues and related researchers (Weber 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Next to the goal of developing a European Research Agenda, the ECADOC project focuses on setting up a European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance and Counselling. For more information, please visit <http://larios.psy.unipd.it/ecadoc/pages/index.php>

<sup>3</sup> Both investigations were presented at the ICAP Conference in Paris in July 2014. The presentations can be viewed on the website of the ECADOC project (see footnote no. 2)



Our next step in developing the research agenda in a broad and inclusive manner is the identification of a common logic to distinguish research, which is relevant for career guidance and counselling. With this paper, we want to suggest central categories for this conceptual framework. Career guidance and counselling is a complex field of research, which is why it is important to reduce the existing complexity in order to identify the different perspectives involved. At the same time, the used categories need to integrate all of the relevant perspectives systemically, demonstrating the interplay of the different aspects, and living up to the complexity of the subjective, dynamic and context-bound processes, with which career guidance and counselling deals (see Schiersmann/ Weber 2013; Vuorinen et al. 2011).

We propose to make use of the research undertaken in the context of NICE, especially regarding the professional roles associated with the profession<sup>4</sup> and the relevant fields of specific knowledge needed in the context of career guidance and counselling, which are identified in the so-called “knowledge modules” of the NICE Curriculum Framework (NICE 2012, p. 77-79). In NICE, we have developed these common reference points consensually with a high involvement of experts from all around Europe, including many members of the ESVDC, which is why we believe that this system addresses the main dimensions.

The first two categories of research in career guidance and counselling, which we propose are:

- a research regarding the clients (e.g. psychological and biographical aspects, values, characteristics, coping with career questions and other relevant challenges coming from environment, including their economic, legal and social status)**
- b research regarding the effectiveness of interventions (e.g. effectiveness of a method or a certain intervention)**

These two categories (with many possible sub-aspects) focus on the purpose of career guidance and counselling interventions. Evidently, clients and their career-related challenges are at the centre of career guidance and counselling, since the mission of the profession is to support people in dealing with such challenges successfully. At the same time, the needs, interests and challenges of clients define which outcomes are intended by career guidance and counselling, and therefore relate to a second category of relevant research into the ‘ends’ of the profession (e.g. psychological wellbeing, learning, changes in status of employment). Theoretical sources, which we can name here mainly coming from the related disciplines of Psychology, Education, Economics, Sociology, Law and others (see Ertelt et al. 2012, p. 65ff.).

This leads us to two further categories of research, which lie at the heart of our discipline:

- c research regarding the process of intervention (e.g. interaction of practitioner and client, process outcomes)**

- d research regarding the counsellors/practitioners (e.g. professionalism, competence, values, training of counsellors)**

Categories (a) and (b) delimitate the ‘subject’ and the ‘ends’ of career guidance and counselling interventions. The process of intervention, the ‘means’ and methods of career guidance and counselling (c) is a relevant research topic in itself, for which process-related theories play an important role. The competences, which career guidance counsellors as the ‘professionals’ who are responsible for such processes and interventions need, in order to offer support, is a category on its own (d). The NICE Professional Roles distinguish between three different formats of interventions to support clients, which can be considered as sub-categories of (c) in terms of roles and functions and (d) in terms of the competences of career professionals:

1. Career Education (e.g. supporting people in developing their career management competences),
2. Career Assessment & Information (e.g. supporting people assessing interest or competence or support information resources) and
3. Career Counselling (e.g. supporting people in counselling processes, investigation of values and interests, decision making or career planning).

Theoretical sources, which are of particular relevance for research categories (c) and (d) are Education, Psychology, Counselling Sciences, Sociology, Microeconomics, Neurology as well as findings from research on Social Work and Psychotherapy.

Following the NICE Professional Roles further and looking at the entirety of the guidance system, we propose to understand career guidance and counselling interventions as embedded into larger systems. This leads us to two last categories of research, which we propose for our discipline to focus on:

- e research regarding providers of career services, i.e. the organization offering career guidance and counselling services (e.g. management aspects, service improvement, organizational development, evolution of services, integration of technology and other innovations)**
- f research on environmental aspects relevant to interpret and understand the situation of clients (e.g. economic, educational, legal, family-related, cultural), as well as the political and societal circumstances that relate to the functioning of career services and the career guidance and counselling profession (e.g. comparisons of policies, coordination of career development opportunities in large organisations, involvement of employers and social partners in facilitating career development).**

Categories (e) and (f) focus on the ‘organisation’ of career guidance and counselling services, and the ‘connections’ of career guidance and counselling with related policy-contexts, both at the

<sup>4</sup> Please find the updated version on pages 18-20 of this digest.

levels of political communities, and within larger organisational and institutional environments. From the perspective of the NICE Professional Roles, (e) relates to Career Service Management, whilst (f) relates to Career Systems Development. Theoretical sources, which become important from this perspective particularly relate to Management, Organizational Studies, Sociology, Economics and Governance.

## Questions for the discussion in Canterbury

Based on this paper and a presentation of actual research in our field, we would like to discuss following questions at the Canterbury Summit:

- Do you support from your perspective the goal of establishing a European Research Agenda? Do you have suggestion regarding the proposed sub-goals?
- Do you agree to the categories used to structure the future Research Agenda? Do you have questions or suggestion to develop this further?
- What are from your perspective the key topics that should be part of the European Research Agenda (within or across the presented categories)?

At the summit, we will organize a plenary discussion focusing on the first two questions, followed by group work alongside the six categories presented above regarding the third question. In particular, we will offer the possibility to address research questions to be integrated in the first draft of the research agenda after the conference.

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