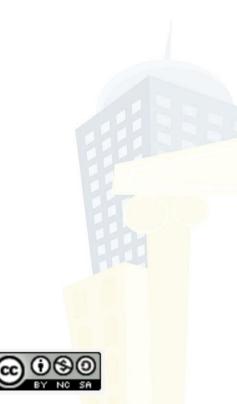Individual CAReer Development - ICARD

2014-1-IT02-KA203-003653

Intellectual Output O5

Guidelines and recommendations for the adoption of the European Career Development Programme (ECDP)
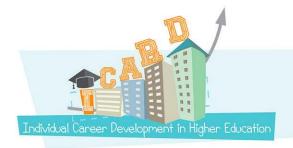
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INTRODUCTION

This report provides guidelines and recommendations regarding the implementation of the European Career Development Program (ECDP). The report will assist higher education institution in their process of designing and implementing a more user-centred, flexible and individualized career guidance approach. It will be of immediate interest to career guidance professionals from public and private universities.

O5 output is organised in 6 main sections, as follows:
1. ICT practices in career guidance
2. ECDP learning design
3. ECDP piloting in 4 European countries. Benefits and challenges
4. ECDP licence
5. ECDP implementation checklist

1. ICT CAREER PRACTICES IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND THE EUROPEAN CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (ECDP)

The integration of the technology in the provision of the career guidance services is not a new approach. It had been introduced since the middle of 60s and it was used as a tool, alternative tool and/or agent of change (Watts, 1986). During the years, given the technological evolution and the shift from an information to a knowledge society, the use of the ICT in guidance has diversified its roles and enhanced its impact (Hughes and Gration, 2009) by taking into account the needs and the expectations of the young people and by providing access to a new career guidance approach, while being a resource, a medium for communication and a mean to develop career materials (Bimrose et al, 2010). Analysing varying roles of ICT in developing lifelong guidance policies, Kettunen et al. (2015, pp. 1-2) found that ICT's role is important and "*increasingly essential*" to the development of integrated career guidance services.

According to the *EU Guidelines for Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems*[1] (2015, p.26), ICT might play five different roles when used in developing career guidance:

- ➢ tool which enhances traditional career guidance
- ➢ alternative to traditional approaches
- ➢ agent of change
- ➢ administrative agent
- ➢ integrative agent

Indeed, in a context of increased ICT access, lack of human resources and a constant pressure to reach to a higher number of students, while reducing the costs, the development of quality ICT career guidance tools can be a reliable solution to provide more access to a flexible and cost-effective career guidance approach (Bimrose et al, 2010; Bimrose et al., 2015), to "*complement the traditional forms of guidance*" (CEDEFOP, 2011, p.61) and to diversify career services which target a generation "*that grew up with technology at their fingertips*" (Iacob, 2012, p.10).

When integrated in career guidance, ICT aim to "*achieve more for less*" by providing access to information, advice, guidance, work-based learning opportunities, jobs and career education (Bimrose et al, 2011) and by providing a channel for communication and automated interaction (Hooley et al., 2010). Cogoi (2005) distinguishes between the use of ICT as a *medium* to enhance the communication between users and guidance practitioners via email, phone, chat, discussion groups and video conferences and as a *resource* to increase access to career information and to support informed career decisions.

The research conducted by ICARD team identified more than 80 career practices developed in European universities. Some of the practices identified indicate a certain degree of ICT use in providing career guidance, but ICT is only *a mean to increase access to some of the career services*. Therefore, it is used in order to enhance traditional career guidance services. Other EU universities have designed online career development programs which target one of the following skills and career activities: soft skills, career planning skills, career development skills and/or work placements. Only six of the practices used ICT as an integrative agent, developing online career programs designed and implemented at the level of one institution.

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[1]   http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/elgpn-tools-no-6-guidelines-for-policies-and-systems-development-for-lifelong-guidance/
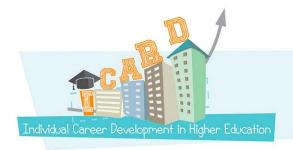
Table 1: ICT career practices developed in EU HEI's

Name of the practice	University and country	Focus on:
Online career programs		
Checkpoint concept	KU Leuven, Belgium	
Destinations®	Trinity College Dublin, Ire-land	career planning process, as part of: self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision making taking action
Big Interview	Bocconi University, Italy	interview skills
CAREER4U	Danubius University, Galati, Romania	
Career Unlocker	University of Reading, UK	career planning
Online courses		
Soft Skills Laboratory	Instituto Universitario de Lisbona, Portugal	soft skills
Career development course for MA students (16 hours)	Lisbon Executive Acade-my, Portugal	
Short courses on specific topics related to professional skills de-velopment	Humboldt University Berlin, Germany	professional skills
Career Planning Modules	Leeds University, UK	career planning skills
Career Development Modules		career development skills
Advanced Career Develop-ment Modules		career development skills
Work Placement modules		work placement
MOOC on career develop-ment	University of London, UK	career development skills
Entrepreneurship and Innova-tion	University of Coimbra, Por-tugal	entrepreneurship skills

Source: http://www.icard-project.eu/

When ICT is used as a mean to increase access to services, universities focus on providing infor-mation about how to create a CV, video CV and a letter of motivation, on facilitating feedback about the CV, and enhancing access to career libraries. The focus is also on developing students' self-awareness, networking and self-assessment and on providing matching tools, online career fairs and work placements to connect students with companies relevant for their professional de-velopment.
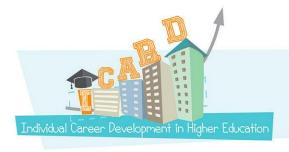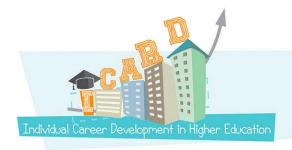
Table 2: Other career services provided online in EU HEI's

Name of the practice	University and country	Focus on:
The Career Development Center	New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria	Online support to students and companies Self-assessment Self-awareness Find internships Find jobs
Career and Psychological Counselling	University of Tartu, Estonia	Online information
Career Services	University of Aalto, Finland	Work placement Job matching
Aarresaari.net	University of Helsinki, Finland	Decision making Self-awareness Job search
Portfolio of experiences and competences/ Portefeuille d'Expériences et de Compétences (PEC)	University of Paul Sabatier Toulouse 3 University of Poitiers University of Grenoble 1 University of Toulouse1 Capitole, France	Self-awareness, Job-search CV Letter of Motivation Job application Job interview
Padova career service	University of Padova, Italy	Career virtual fair Video CV Remote interviews
UM Career Services	University of Maastricht, The Netherlands	Online career library Self-awareness Networking
Career Services	Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland	CV Checks via email

Currently, there is no online career guidance programme targeting all three moments of a student's academic experience and there is no ICT European career programme tested and implemented in different EU HEI's.

2. ECDP LEARNING DESIGN

The growing need to develop quality and financially efficient career tools has led to the development of self-promotion and self-directed instruments, career matching software, online resource centres and communication tools (Iacob, 2012; Bimrose et al, 2015). When developing online career information tools, one should make sure that the data provided is valid, reliable, accurate, objective, comprehensive, relevant and updated.
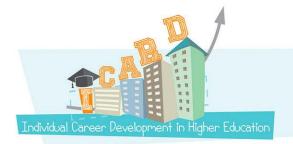
The ECDP uses a cost-effective and asynchronous ICT solution to deliver distance career services for HEIs' students, enhancing their access to career management skills and learning experiences, developing career awareness and career learning and improving career outcomes. ECDP is valuing a Moodle platform where the modules have been uploaded and tested by students from the University of Padova, University of Salamanca, University of Maastricht and University of Iasi.

2.1 ECDP structure

ECDP has a modular structure and includes three programmes corresponding to the three important phases of students' academic experience: transition in, ongoing, and transition out. Given the similarities and the differences identified among the universities involved in the consortium, ECDP has a common structure, but the information provided in the modules has been adapted to the institutional and national realities. Depending on the modules, some of them are entirely university-based designed (see for example M4 Thriving at the university), while some have shared-information and applications, but the content has been institutionally and nationally adapted (e.g. Self-understanding, Courses decision making). Flexibility and adaptability to the local and regional needs are two important characteristics of ECDP. Thus, since the adaptability and the links with the regional developments are key elements to ensure students' employability (Paviotti, 2015, p.15).

Table 3: ECDP structure

Accessing the university Transition in	During the study years In-course/ongoing	Entering the world of work Transition out
Self-understanding 1	Self-understanding 2	Self-understanding 3
Thriving at the university	CV and motivation letters	Seeking job opportunities
Courses decision making	Interviews and recruitment testing	Thriving in the workplace
Organisation and planning	Seeking work placement opportunities	Branding yourself
Managing your finances	Teamwork	Entrepreneurship (sense of initiative)
	Career decision making	Problem solving and negotiation techniques
	Effective workplace communication	Managing pressure
		Business culture and work ethics

When accessing the ECDP' modules[2], **the career professionals** will have access to the following data structure:

- Title;
- Recipients: first, second or last year students;
- Relations: connections with other modules and the type of module (compulsory/elective);
- Description: short description of the content;
- Learning outcomes;
- Assessment: elements to be considering while drafting the assessment process;
- Length of the module;
- Learning units: how the content should be organised;
- Learning materials: suggestions on how learning materials should be developed;
- Cultural adaptation: level of adaptation needed (from low to high); elements that should be considered for cultural adaptation.

Each module includes the information and the activity book. The information is provided using text, images and video resources. At the end of each module, a self-assessment quiz is accessible.

When **students** access online the program, they will be able to see the following structure:

Overview
Text
Learning outcomes
Text
       Learning outcome 1
       Learning outcome 2
Learning units
       Learning unit 1
Text, images, video materials, links
              Learning material 1.1
              Learning material 1.2
       Learning unit 2
Text, images, video materials, links
              Learning material 2.1
              Learning material 2.2
Self-assessment
Text
       Questionnaire
       Results (passed/not passed) and printable version of results

Each self-assessment quiz includes 10 questions which evaluate if students have read the content, watched the video-materials, and completed the activity book. A module is considered passed if the students will provide the correct answer for at least 6 of the questions. A positive or negative feedback will be provided to the student once he will submit the quiz. A negative feedback will require the student to study again the module and to repass the self-assessment.

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[2] For more specific information on each module, please access: Paviotti, G., (2015), Toward the European Career Development Programme: initiatives, cases, and practices in universities: http://www.icard-project.eu/docs/ICARD_O1_report_final.pdf
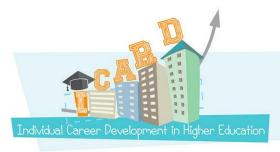
2.2 Focus on Career Management Skills

ECDP facilitates students' transition into the university and into the world of work by providing access to up to date career information and by equipping the students with the transferable skills required.

ECDP supports the development of career management skills (CMS) of all students, allowing career practitioners to provide more in-depth and complex face to face support for at-risk students (students with learning difficulties, with special needs, students who have difficulties during the transitions, those at risk of drop-out). This aspect is very important giving the student drop-outs rates and the increasing rates of those Not in Education, Employability or Training (NEET), although they have a graduate degree.
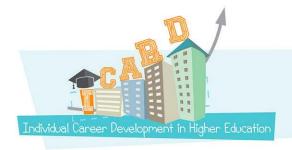
Table 4: Career management skills developed when using ECDP

Career management skills	ECDP modules
Self-awareness	Self-understanding 1, Self-understanding 2 Self-understanding 3, Branding yourself
Self-understanding	Self-understanding 1, Self-understanding 2 Self-understanding 3
Self-knowledge	Self-understanding 1, Self-understanding 2 Self-understanding 3
Self-discipline	Thriving at the university, Managing your finances, Interview and recruiting tests
Self-responsibility	Thriving at the university, Managing your finances, Interview and recruiting tests, Seeking work placements, CV and presentation/motivation letters, Thriving at the workplace, Branding yourself
Learning to learn	Thriving at the university, Organisation and planning
Resiliency	Thriving at the university, Seeking work placements, Thriving at the workplace, Managing pressure, Entrepreneurship (sense of initiative)
Goal setting	Thriving at the university, Managing your finances, Seeking work placements, Career decision making, CV and presentation/motivation letters
Cooperation	Teamwork, Problem solving and negotiating techniques
Marketable skills	CV and presentation/motivation letters, Branding yourself
Stress management	Managing pressure
Decision making	Courses decision making, Managing your finances, Seeking work placements, Career decision making, Branding yourself, Entrepreneurship (sense of initiative)
Career management skills	ECDP modules
Planning/Organising	Courses decision making, Organisation and planning, Managing your finances, Career decision making, CV and presentation/motivation letters, Entrepreneurship (sense of initiative)
Keeping records	Managing your finances
Wise use of resources	Managing your finances, Branding yourself
Critical thinking	Seeking work placements, Career decision making,

	Entrepreneurship (sense of initiative)
Communication	Teamwork, Effective workplace communication
Conflict resolution	Effective workplace communication
Concern for others	Teamwork, Effective workplace communication
Accepting differences	Effective workplace communication, Problem solving and negotiating techniques
Social skills	Teamwork, Thriving at the workplace, Entrepreneurship (sense of initiative)
Interview skills	Interview and recruiting tests
Teamwork	Teamwork, Problem solving and negotiating techniques

3. ECDP PILOTING IN 4 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. LESSONS LEARNED FROM ICARD CONSORTIUM

In order to increase the awareness about the ECDP, all face to face events (career days, career trainings, individual and group career sessions, conferences and workshops organised at the level of the university, faculties and departments) and online meetings and/or resources (university/faculty/department/student union electronic pages, Facebook pages and groups, newsletters) should be used to diffuse information and updates about its progress, piloting and use. The presentation of the platform in faculties or at student events will increase the popularity among the students and teachers and will ensure higher rates of participants accessing the tool. A strategy used by one member of the ICARD Consortium, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, was to organise a project presentation for students from all 15 faculties. The meeting allowed to raise awareness of the project and enlist participants for the piloting phase.

The institutional adaptation of the ECDP takes, in medium, nine months, includes six phases and requires resources for translating, adapting, setting up the platform, testing it and providing full access.

Table 5: ECDP Adoption in HEI: Phases and activities

Phase	Duration	Activities
1st	M1	**A1** Obtaining the agreement from the university stakeholders and career guidance experts and the required permission for the development of the platform
		A2 Setting up the team
		A3 Establishing an adaptation and piloting calendar of activities
2nd	M2-M4	**A4** a. Translating and adapting the modules
		b. Writing M4 – Thriving at the university
		A5 Create the Virtual Learning Environment. Set up the Moodle Platform
3rd	M5	**A6 Focus group** a. Organise focus groups
		b. Gather feedback about the current platform
		c. Gather suggestions about end-users needs
		d. Adapt the ECDP programme to users' feedback and needs
4th	M6-M7	**A7 Piloting** a. Enlist participants for the piloting
		b. Set up Moodle accounts
		c. Start the testing phase
		d. Ensure online access to learning and ICT support

Individual Career Development in Higher Education

Erasmus+
This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

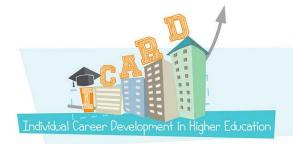|		A8
5th	M8	a. Adjust the ECDP to the feedback received during the piloting
		b. Create and continuously develop a database with students interested to access ECDP now, but also for the next phases.
		c. Create a mailing list/a blog/a discussion group where students can publish their questions and receive feedback and where stakeholders, career experts, and students can share information about the ECDP, and their experience with the piloting.
6th	M9-onwards	**A9** Extend the use of the ECDP

Obtaining the agreement from the university management is a very important phase for developing a shared vision about the value of the ECDP use in the university. Thus, since integrating ICT in career guidance *"is a complex, inherently social and developmental process"* (Bimrose et al, 2015).This will be the solid foundation for gathering all human, temporal and material resources required for the institutional adaptation. Without a shared vision, one might face blockages and challenges that might undermine the entire process.

The team should include:

➢ **Career experts** (organise institutional adaptation, check the translation, ensure that the information is valid, reliable, easy to use, and adapted to the national and institutional realities, organise meetings with students, focus groups, piloting sessions, analyse feedback, and ensure the continuous adaptation of the platform to the rapid changes in the career guidance field, and to the users' feedback).

➢ **ICT expert** (to adapt the Moodle platform, upload the modules, provide technical support)

➢ **Translator** (translate the original modules).

Establishing an adaptation and piloting calendar of activities is relevant because, in this way, members of the team would have a clear picture of the activities, duration, tasks and responsibilities and will have a shared view about the place where the platform will be hosted (university webpage vs career centre webpage).

The translation and adaptation of the modules to the national and institutional realities is an activity which requires shared-responsibilities between the translator (which ensures that the initial information is correctly presented in the national language) and the career guidance experts (which check the translation, make sure the information is correct, and introduce data from the services provided at the university). Given that there are 19 modules which need translation, cultural and institutional adaptation, this activity will require a good amount of time and needs to be carefully planned and inserted in the department's activities because of its significant load of work. If not carefully taken into consideration, it might lead to delays which can endanger ECDP's adaptation schedule or other career events and activities organised by the career centre. In parallel with the translation, the writing of Module 4 – Thriving at the university, should be pursued. Career experts should focus on presenting the career services accessible at institutional level, on creating synergies with other career projects (promoting them among the students) and on promoting all the student services available, including learning and training opportunities, scholarships, data about students organisations, national and international mobility.

When organising the focus group, universities should bring together a diversity of participants, like career experts, university stakeholders, students from all years of study, from bachelor and master programs, from all faculties. The focus group will include a presentation of the project, of the courses and of the modules and will be followed by a discussion session.

The presentation of the project will include information about:

➢ **ECDP's principles** (modular structure, flexibility to different cultural and linguistic contexts, complete career leaning experience, cost-effective career learning opportunity);

➢ **ECDP architecture** (20 modules with a duration of 1h10minutes/each module and with online and offline activities);

➢ **Courses** (Access to university-During the years of study-Entering the world of work; includes information about the mandatory and the elective courses).

The discussion session will focus on:

✓ Design of the programme (gather feedback about the topics covered by the modules and, if something is missing, gather suggestions);

✓ Issues that might hinder the institutional adoption (what factors should be taken into account);

✓ Possibility to provide credits (ECTS) and to formally include it in the curriculum;

✓ Suggestions about the learning materials and the piloting (how to diffuse information, enlist participants, raise awareness on the project).

Once the feedback from the focus group is gathered, the information is analysed at the level of the team and, if appropriate, changes are operated on the ECDP structure in order to accommodate the suggestions and to become more adapted to the users' needs.

The piloting requires a coordinated approach. This phase will allow the identification of issues needing improvements, either technical or content related and will gather feedback about ECDP use and impact. To access the *ECDP Piloting Toolkit* (which includes the Enrolment Form, Certificate of Informed Consent, Attendance sheets, Withdrawal Form, Online Questionnaire, Report Template for Interviews and Group Evaluation Sessions, Presentation of the aims of the Group Evaluation Sessions, ECDP Presentation and Presentation for Group Discussion), please read Paviotti (2016).

4. ECDP LICENCE

The ECDP will be licensed under Creative Common Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International, under the following terms:

Attribution — You must give **appropriate credit**, provide a link to the license, and **indicate if changes were made**. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.
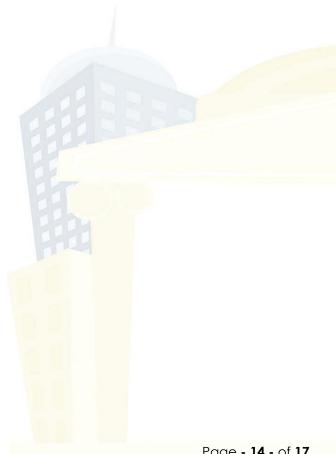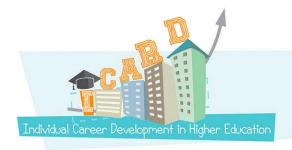
NonCommercial — You may not use the material for **commercial purposes**.

ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the **same license** as the original.

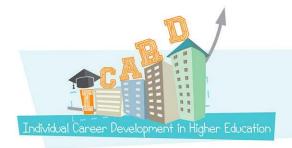Figure 1. Terms of the licence (creativecommons.org)

5. ECDP IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

In order to ease the adoption process of the ECDP in universities, a checklist has been created.

Table 6: ECDP Implementation Checklist

Activities	Status[3]
A1 Obtaining the agreement from the university stakeholders and career guidance experts and the required permission for the development of the platform	☐
A2 Setting up the team	☐
A3 Establishing an adaptation and piloting calendar of activities	☐
A4	
a. Translating and adapting the modules	☐
b. Writing M4 – Thriving at the university	☐
A5 Create the Virtual Learning Environment. Set up the Moodle Platform	☐
A6 Focus group	
a. Organise focus groups	☐
b. Gather feedback about the current platform	☐
c. Gather suggestions about end-users needs	☐
d. Adapt the ECDP programme to users' feedback and needs	☐
A7 Piloting	
e. Enlist participants for the piloting	☐
f. Set up Moodle accounts	☐
g. Start the testing phase	☐
h. Ensure online access to learning and ICT support	☐
A8	
d. Adjust the ECDP to the feedback received during the piloting	☐
e. Create and continuously develop a database with students interested to access ECDP now, but also for the next phases.	☐
f. Create a mailing list/a blog/a discussion group where students can publish their questions and receive feedback and where stakeholders, career experts, and students can share information about the ECDP, and their experience with the piloting.	☐
A9 Extend the use of the ECDP	☐

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[3] Check the box for the activities accomplished and keep track of the activities flow.

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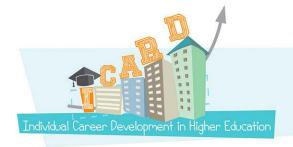
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Feedback form – Focus group on ECDP design

Focus group on the European Career Development Programme design
Location: <Organistion, Address, Country>
Date: <DD/MM/YY>

FEEDBACK FORM

Please answer the following questions by rating on the available choices	Not at all	A little	Average	Yes	Very
Did the focus group meet your expectations?					
Do you think you have learnt anything during the focus group?					
Is the addressed topic relevant to your work/professional life?					

Please rate the quality of the following items	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very good
Information provided before the focus group					
Materials delivered during the focus group					
Presentations and speeches					
Facilitation and sharing					

Please rate the following items with regard to present/future perceived usefulness in your professional life (or daily work)	I am not sure	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Quite useful	Very useful
The ECDP programme overall					
The discussion during the focus group					
Sharing with colleagues, with other stakeholders, networking					

Is there anything you do want to add? (e.g. suggestions, proposals, general comments, etc.)	

If you want to be kept informed about the progression of the ECDP, you can leave your e-mail address here	

Thank you!