

6TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE IN E-GUIDANCE: *WIDENING ACCESS TO LIFELONG GUIDANCE*

ABSTRACT

TITLE OF THE SPEECH

Policy Issues Relating to the Use of ICT in Lifelong Guidance

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Professor Tony Watts is a Founding Fellow and Life President of the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling, Cambridge, UK, and Visiting Professor at the University of Derby and at Canterbury Christ Church University. He has lectured in over fifty countries, and has carried out many comparative studies of guidance systems around the world, as well as acting as consultant to international organisations including the Council of Europe, the European Commission, OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank. He is an expert consultant to the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network.

ABSTRACT

The history of the European conferences on ICT in guidance, and of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, are outlined. The current work activities of the ELGPN are described, together with the attention paid to ICT within each of these activities to date. It is noted that the conference to which this paper is a contribution stemmed from the concern of an EU-funded project on ICT skills for guidance counsellors to establish closer synergies with other EU-funded projects and closer links with policy, which in both respects is directly related to the work of ELGPN's Task Group 2. It is also noted that ICT is particularly relevant to the work of ELGPN's Work Package 2 on access, and in addition has emerged as a significant theme in relation to the work of Work Package 3 on co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms, in terms of its integrative potential. Short case-studies demonstrating this potential are presented from Slovenia and Turkey. In addition, case-studies illustrating the potential of ICT as an agent of strategic change are presented in relation to the three leading examples of all-age services in the world: those in Scotland, Wales and New Zealand. Five issues related to these various examples are discussed: the centrality of career management skills; productivity; the potential of the telephone; whether the service structure should be centralised or localised; and the new opportunities offered by Web 2.0 technology and social networking. It is concluded that if the concept of lifelong guidance is to be converted into effective practice through public policy, ICT has a pivotal role to play.



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