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Catalogue of profile requirements for a gender and culturally sensitive career advising



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Introduction

This publication presents a catalogue with the suggested profile requirements for a gender and culturally sensitive career guidance designed within the Erasmus+ project Migration & Gender: Vocational and Educational Counselling (Project number: 2015-1-UK01-KA204-013550).

The catalogue includes quality criteria for professionals working in gender and culturally sensitive career guidance and counselling services. It builds on the experiences developed within the MOVE ON project to answer to questions such as:

- Which expertise should a good counsellor have?
- What attitude they should have towards their clients?
- What kind of methodologies and tools should they have?
- How should they act as a member of an organization?
- How should they act as a member of the society?

This catalogue has been developed by the partner organisations of the project in two round tables held in Frankfurt in February 2017, during the training provided by expert German partner *beramí berufliche Integration e.V.*) and in Florence, in April 2017. It was further developed in national round tables and with national/regional/local stakeholders in Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and the UK during Spring-Summer 2017.

The discussion was guided by the following questions:

1. What is the necessary **framework** (organization and structure) to offer a quality counselling and guidance?
2. What **attitude** should the counsellor have toward the client/advice-seeker (understanding of their own work)?
3. What are the necessary professional **skills** (e.g. understanding of legislations, gender and diversity issues, counselling methods)?



A necessary framework to implement the catalogue

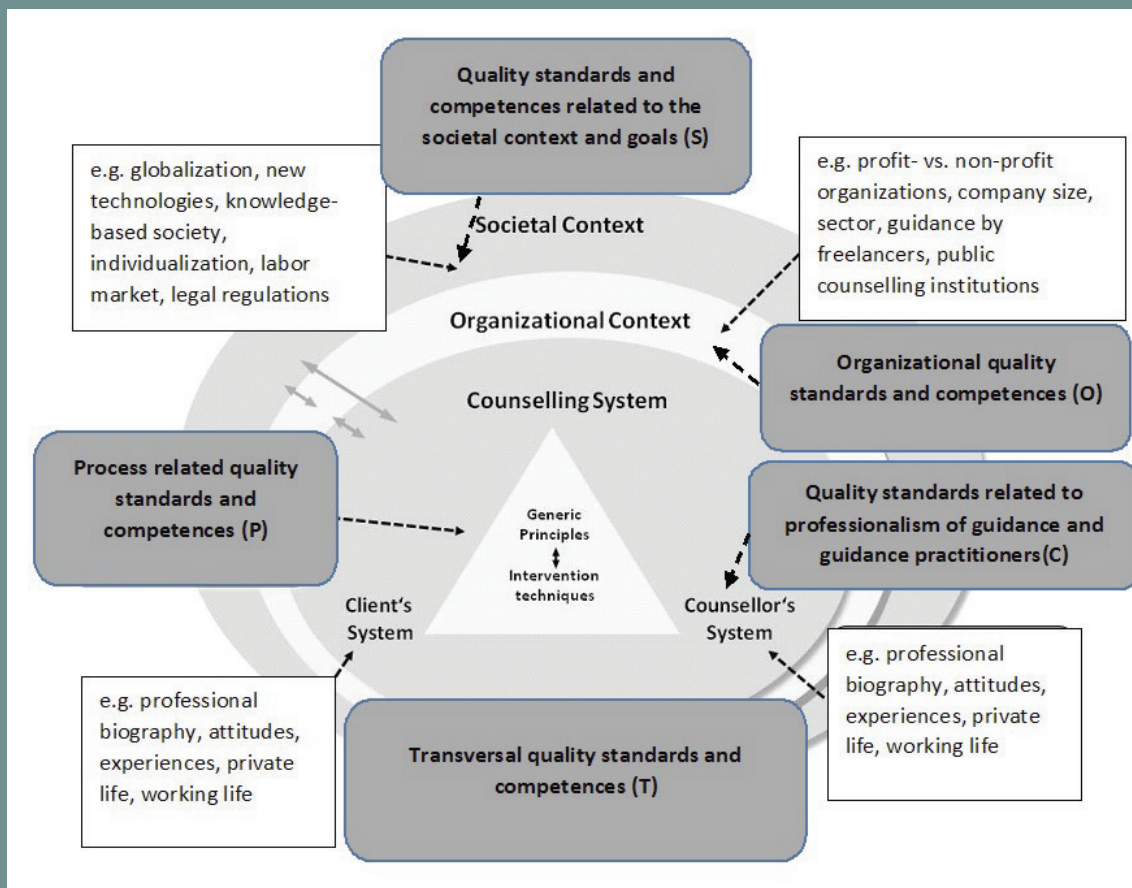
1.

The Move On project catalogue of quality criteria for counsellors follows and adapts partly the recommendations of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment and the University of Heidelberg (2012; 2016).

The implementation of this suggested catalogue of profile requirements for career counsellors requires a larger favourable social context. According to the systemic context model of career guidance and counselling, career guidance is not an isolated process between the practitioner and the client/advice-seeker. Rather, guidance is embedded in a wider organizational and societal context. Hence, the requirements for quality in guidance do not only refer to the interaction between the advice-seeker and the guidance practitioner, but to all actors responsible for guidance provision: practitioners, advice-seekers, provider organisations and the society as a whole including policy makers, legislation, etc. For any quality considerations, whether the focus is on enabling wide access to guidance, on the quality of provider services, or the competence of practitioners, all of these levels need to be taken into consideration.

Diagram 1 shows a visual representation of the systemic context model of career guidance and counselling, including different agents and stakeholders.

Diagram 1 | Quality criteria and practitioner competences assigned to the 5 systemic levels of the model



Source: Schiersmann, C. et. al 2008

One of the fundamental aspects to consider is a legal framework and political agenda which prioritises the integration of migrants, black and ethnic minorities, and equal opportunities between men and women, as well as the advocacy of civil society organisations and a wider social awareness. Research carried out during the initial phase of the Move On project shows the current political and social challenges in Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and the UK.

Consultation with stakeholders in the framework of the project gathered the following policy recommendations:

- ▶ Rights-based approach to immigration legislation
- ▶ Effective implementation of gender equality law
- ▶ Strengthening procedures for the validation of qualifications

Regarding service provision, another key issue is the need to establish a solid network with other organisations providing different services, in order to offer a wider support to advice-seekers. At the level of labour market agents, awareness-raising and lobbying with stakeholders in the labour market (employers, trade unions, policy-makers) is also recommended.

Concerning the organisational context, the importance of organisational constraints should not be overlooked. They determine what practitioners can actually do (e.g. limited counselling hours, programmes are rigid and do not allow for establishing a relationship with the advice-seeker). In this sense, it is recommended that programmes adopt a holistic approach, integrating career counselling within larger programmes including psychological support, community resources, etc.

Consultation with stakeholders in the framework of the project gathered the following recommendations related to service provision in state programmes and in organisations:

- ▶ Ensuring programmes for undocumented migrants (often State-funded official programmes are not aimed at them)
- ▶ Career counsellors often lack legal background. They should work in cooperation with legal counsellors.
- ▶ Increased exchange among the actors working in the sector
- ▶ Care of professionals to avoid burn-out. Professional supervision
- ▶ Childcare provision on-site or in cooperation with other organisations.
- ▶ Organisational policies to promote participation in training: Providing online courses, providing computer access, financial support to participants in training programmes
- ▶ Including in training programmes modules on workers' rights, citizenship rights, women's rights.

It was also suggested that part of the integration of gender and cultural diversity into service provision is the transformation of the kind of services provided so that they meet the actual demands of migrant and refugee women. Whenever possible, counsellors should not limit the options provided to advice-seekers to well-known and readily available options (for example job offers from certain companies or a limited range of training courses) and take into account the demands of the advice-seeker and try to find if there are feasible ways to meet them.



Quality criteria of career counselling

2.

Career and training guidance is an offer which supports individuals in all phases of education, career and employment to identify their interests, abilities and competences, to deal with problems and to take decisions in order to manage their educational and vocational biographies responsibly. In doing so, guidance services are not restricted to transitions, special situations or crises in the life course. Guidance rather focuses on potentials and resources of advice-seekers and possible opportunities. It may be preventive and thereby understood as a continuous, lifelong provision.

General quality criteria to guidance are based on the following key elements:

- The guidance practitioner acts professionally. This involves an explicit guidance setting including environment, clarification of guidance request, contract and transparency.
- Guidance is usually a voluntary, temporary and process-type interaction between the user and the guidance practitioner which is sensitive to interests and open to the outcome. Contexts in which guidance is obligatory and may even result in sanctions are also subject of this definition.
- The advice-seeker's interests, resources and circumstances of life are central to the intervention. However, guidance always takes place in a context of shared responsibilities in which the advice-seeker, the practitioner and the guidance organisation take responsibility for the guidance process.
- The interaction between the guidance practitioner and the advice-seeker exceeds mere information. It involves a reflection of relevant facts which enables the advice-seeker to make well-founded decisions.
- Guidance includes various activities and forms of which some may be combined. In addition to individual face-to-face provision, group guidance, online provisions or mobile services may exist in order to provide all advice-seekers with easily accessible guidance services.

The BeQu Quality Standards and Competence Profile at a Glance

The BeQu Quality Standards for Career Guidance and Counselling developed by the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment and the University of Heidelberg (2012, 2016) provide a guiding framework for career guidance and counselling. These standards were developed with the involvement of numerous stakeholders from the German guidance community and are proposed as a benchmark for professional career guidance and counselling in Germany.

The systemic context model provides the reference frame for the requirements for professional guidance as defined by the BeQu Quality Standards and in the BeQu Competence Profile. Five reference dimensions directly or indirectly involved and interacting systems: guidance practitioners, advice-seekers, organisation and society:

- Quality standards referring to **transversal** principles and values
- Quality standards referring to the **process** of career guidance and counselling
- A quality standard referring to the **competence** of the guidance practitioners,
- Quality standards referring to the **organisation** offering guidance
- Quality standards referring to the **societal context** and objectives

Details of each of these dimensions are provided in table 1 below.

Table 1 | Five reference dimensions for quality standards and practitioner competences

<p>TRANSVERSAL QUALITY STANDARDS AND COMPETENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Client orientation ▶ Voluntariness and open-endedness ▶ Transparency/accessibility of guidance ▶ Ethical principles and professional attitude ▶ Continuous quality development 	<p>ORGANISATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS AND COMPETENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mission orientation ▶ Clearly defined structures and processes ▶ Organisational and communicational culture ▶ Human and material resources ▶ Cooperation and networking
<p>PROCESS-ORIENTED QUALITY STANDARDS AND COMPETENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Structural stability and security ▶ Building of relationships and emotional security ▶ Clarifying the advice-seeker's concern and establishing a guidance contract ▶ Analysis of advice-seeker's situation and aims ▶ Resource orientation ▶ Prospective solutions and activities 	<p>SOCIETAL CONTEXT AND GOALS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Consideration of societal circumstances (related to education, vocations and the labour market) ▶ Focus on the acquisition of career management competences (capacity for self-organisation) ▶ Focus on the goals of successful career development and labour market integration ▶ Focusing on the goals of equal opportunity and social inclusion
<p>COMPETENCE AND PROFESSIONALISM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Professional action ▶ Orientation towards an acknowledged competence profile 	

Source: German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment and the University of Heidelberg, 2016

Within these five reference dimensions based on the systemic context model of career guidance and counselling, BeQu Quality Standards for Career Guidance and Counselling includes 19 quality standards. Brief definitions of these standards are included in table 2.



Table 2 | The BeQu quality standards for career guidance and counselling (overview)

Transversal quality standards
Good guidance focuses on the advice-seekers' concerns, interests, competences and potentials.
Good guidance, in principle, requires voluntary participation.
Good guidance is committed to ethical principles and protects advice-seekers' rights.
Good guidance is based on a strategy of continuous quality development, which is in accordance with the quality standards presented here or comparable standards.
Process-related quality standards
Good guidance requires the joint development of a relationship, which is advantageous in view of the advice-seekers' concerns and the guidance process.
Good guidance does not presuppose results and requires the collaborative clarification of the advice-seekers' expectations as well as an agreement on the objectives, procedure and desired outcomes of the guidance process.
Good guidance requires a joint analysis and reflection of the advice-seekers' situation as well as their interests, values and resources.
Good guidance assists advice-seekers in developing alternative solutions, making decisions and transferring them into action in an active and autonomous manner.
Quality standard on practitioner competence and professionalism
Good guidance presupposes that guidance practitioners are capable of offering professional guidance. The required competences are specified in a competence profile for guidance, which corresponds to the quality standards presented here.
Organisational circumstances, requirements, and strategies
Good guidance is oriented by an organisational mission statement, which describes the purpose of the guidance organisation, the strategy, goals and ethical principles of its guidance services
Good guidance requires clearly defined processes, workflows and responsibilities, which promote guidance as a communicative social service.
Good guidance requires a constructive and participative culture of communication and collaboration within the guidance organisation.
Good guidance requires the provision of adequate human and material resources for the specific guidance service offers in view of the quality standards presented here.
Good guidance requires a good collaboration between the guidance organisation with its partners and other relevant actors in the social environment.
Societal context and objectives
Good guidance considers the relevant societal context and current developments in the educational and vocational systems and the labour market, in addition to advice-seekers' individual situations, and makes this knowledge accessible for advice-seekers in an adequate manner.
Good guidance empowers advice-seekers to pursue their educational and professional development autonomously (capacity for self-organisation).
Good guidance assists advice-seekers in sustainably pursuing and realising their educational, vocational, and employment-related goals.
Good guidance promotes the social inclusion and equality of (potentially) disadvantaged groups, especially regarding gender, age, handicaps, cultural and ethnical background.

Source: German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment and the University of Heidelberg, 2016

In this publication, we want to focus in particular on two of these dimensions: **transversal competences** and, especially, **process-oriented quality standards and competences**, and point out the aspects tied to a gender and cultural sensitive counselling approach.

Competence profile of career counsellors providing gender and culturally sensitive career advice based on the process-Oriented Quality Standards and Competences

3.

Introduction

The gender and diversity approach in pedagogical fields of work is based on the principle that social diversity and the diversity of people (gender, age, color, ethnicity/nationality, religion and belief, sexual orientation, disability and impairment) and their project of life/personal life design have to be considered as resources. The aim of the approach is to draw attention not only to the diversity and heterogeneity of identities, but also to focus on social power and distribution structures. The gender and diversity approach is a further development of antiracist and intercultural pedagogy. It is necessary to critically examine assumptions about the importance of cultural affinities and to deconstruct socially shared conceptions of “male” and “female”.

At the level of counseling practice, the gender and diversity approach is important in two respects. On the one hand, counselling is understood as a social cross-section task which can and should contribute to the promotion of equal opportunities and social participation. On the other hand, when designing the advisory process, the focus should be on the advice seeker with his/her respective life design and advice concerns. The advisory activities are based on the principle of developing value-neutral action strategies. For this, it is necessary to take gender and diversity aspects into the life and problem situations of the counselor, to make them aware, and to support them in order to overcome them. It is necessary to counteract gender and diversity-specific stereotyping.

The gender and diversity advisory competence is/should be considered as part of the professional expertise (Ewers & Schallert, 2014). It is a cross-sectional competence, which refers to the knowledge, the methodical competencies, the attitude as well as the conduct of consultants.

Beramí (2014), expert partner on gender and diversity sensitive counselling of the project Move On, formulates, in addition to the list of Ewers and Schallert, the **central quality criteria of a gender and diversity-sensitive counselling approach** described in table 3.



Table 3 | Central quality criteria on gender and diversity-sensitive counselling (Beramí)

Career counsellors should:

- be familiar with theoretical approaches of equality, difference and deconstruction of gender, and with diversity models and migration theories
- consider that the educational and employment chances for women and men are different, as is the respective scope of action
- reflect on their own gender related and cultural identity and patterns of interpretation, awareness and behavior
- be aware of their own gender identity and attitudes regarding gender
- acknowledge individuality and difference, and should develop on this basis a neutral strategy of action which corresponds to the person seeking advice
- take into account the individual life situation and goals of the person seeking advice
- be respectful of the gender related self-image of the person seeking advice
- accept the plan of life of the person seeking advice, even if they do not share them
- be aware to make use of gender neutral language
- make use of simple and clear language when describing complex issues
- make use of language independent methods/prepare language methods in a multilingual way, or make use of pictures.

Source: Beramí, 2014

Table 4 below summarises a selection of the suggested theoretical and methodological approaches career counsellors should be aware of to provide gender and diversity-sensitive counselling

Table 4 Theoretical and methodological approaches for a gender and diversity-sensitive counselling

1. General to career counselling:

- Systemic approach: multiple social systems
- Holistic approach: all spheres of life of the individual
- Empowerment of the advice-seeker: being a resource to the advice-seeker, not a solution; focusing on the advice-seeker, supporting them in setting own goals and actions and accepting their decisions, even if not sharing them; respecting their process.
- Knowledge of the labour market and available resources and networks in the host country
- Knowledge of systems of qualifications and competence validation Knowledge of networks: Be able to network at local level and to raise awareness among all actors involved in the labour market (companies, HR specialists etc)
- Ongoing analysis of emerging employment sectors from a gender and cultural perspective: overcoming perpetuation of segregated work niches for migrants, women and migrant women.

2. Specific to gender and diversity sensitive career counselling:

- Diversity theories, post-colonial and migration theories, intercultural communication frameworks, equal opportunity/non-discrimination legislation and policies: diversity: Analysis of racial inequalities in the labour market as well as legal and social challenges preventing migrants to effectively integrate into the labour market.
- Gender: gender analysis of the labour market, gender equal opportunity policies in the labour market *and awareness of gender issues in the society in general (not only in the context of the labour market)*
- Social groups and their organisation (in home and host countries)
- Training / expert advice on legal issues, especially on workers rights, gender equality, aliens law and non-discrimination

Transversal competences and process-oriented quality standards and competences for career counsellors providing gender and culturally sensitive career advice

This section includes some of the competences of career counsellors described in the BeQu quality standards and competence profile, adapted to integrate the requirements of a gender and culturally-sensitive career counselling.

The competences that have been considered relevant are:

2 TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES:

- Focusing on the advice-seeker (client orientation)
- Exhibiting a Professional Attitude and Ethical Behaviour

6 PROCESS-ORIENTED COMPETENCES:

- Developing stable working conditions and a secure environment
- Building a sound working alliance and emotional security
- Clarifying the advice-seekers' concerns and coming to a guidance agreement
- Clarifying the situation and objectives
- Identifying and reinforcing advice-seekers' internal and external resources
- Developing perspectives for problem-resolution and action



Transversal competences

Competence: Focusing on the advice-seeker (client orientation)

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to focus their guidance activities on the particular needs and interests of the advice-seekers – whether they are interacting with advice-seekers, engaged in organisational activities, or working at the societal level. They recognise their advice-seekers as competent, autonomous individuals with their own rights and interests, and make them the centre of career guidance and counselling.

Guidance practitioners:	What should be considered from a gender and culturally sensitive point of view?
Align their activities with the individual needs and the concerns of the advice-seekers;	Do not assume the individual needs and concerns of the advice-seekers on the basis of your assumptions related to gender, origin or ethnic background; each individual situation will be different. Practitioners are to be critical about their own assumptions. <i>E.g. Question their assumptions such as: a man will not want to work in feminised sectors such as care, or a migrant woman has family care as a priority</i>
Respect the diverse characteristics of advice-seekers relating to their ethnic and cultural affiliations, their socio-economic status, gender and age;	Do not impose their own sociocultural systems, but understand the background of their clients and, if conflicts arise, try to negotiate. <i>E.g. Do not question clothing attire, but try to explain the challenges they may encounter in the job market or work place.</i>
Consider the advice-seekers' biographical circumstances, as well as the individual resources and restrictions, which result from the advice-seekers' social backgrounds in the guidance process;	Do not assume that the specific situation of a migrant advice-seeker can only be explained in cultural terms. <i>E.g. Do not assume that if a migrant arrives late to interviews it is simply because she has a non-Western conception of time and cannot change her habits: consider that there may be economic restrictions – maybe she has no money for transportation and has to walk kilometers.</i> <i>E.g. Carry out a power analysis, assume your own privilege</i>
Assist advice-seekers with the aim of strengthening their ability for self-organisation.	Do not take decisions for advice-seekers, but respect their process and timing towards empowerment and decision-making according to their own criteria. <i>E.g. Ask questions instead of making recommendations: "what do you think you should do?"</i>

Competence: Exhibiting a professional attitude and ethical behaviour

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to exhibit a professional attitude regarding their tasks and responsibilities and to adhere to ethical and professional principles for career guidance and counselling in their practice – whether they are interacting with advice-seekers, engaged in organisational activities, or working at the societal level.

Guidance practitioners:	What should be considered from a gender and culturally sensitive point of view?
Are aware of their roles and functions and can represent and justify their professional identity (mandate, role, and guidance concept) in a convincing manner	Are conscious of power asymmetries in the counselling process, in terms of gender, class, migration status or ethnic background. Manage expectations by ensuring that advice-seekers (who may not be aware of the host country counselling system) do not expect from practitioners things that they cannot provide. <i>E.g. Explain to advice-seekers that your role is not to provide them with a job quickly and clarify their commitments.</i>

Plan measures for their competence development and define their needs for further training	Understand that a changing society requires life-long learning. <i>E.g. Plan ahead time and resources for training</i> <i>E.g. Is flexible in its work and he/she is able to adapt his/her practices to the different users</i>
Engage in reflection as an immanent part of their professional conduct and demonstrate an awareness of their own abilities and limitations	Reflect on their own gender-related and cultural identity, and patterns of interpretation, awareness and behavior. <i>E.g. Do not assume that their views are always absent of gender biases: European countries also have high rates of gender inequalities.</i>
Deal with criticism, resistance and conflicts in their professional context in a constructive manner;	Are able to negotiate and solve intercultural conflicts, re-examine constantly the counselling process and negotiate flexible solutions. <i>E.g. If a client does not attend a training course regularly, ask them why and try to find ways to improve attendance.</i>

Process-related competences

The process-related competences describe the professional requirements of how guidance practitioners can shape and mould the individual guidance process in a narrower sense. Such professional management/organisation of guidance processes includes:

- the development of stable working conditions, a secure environment, and a sound working alliance for the collaborative process of career guidance and counselling,
- the clarification of the advice-seeker's guidance concerns,
- the collaborative analysis of the advice-seeker's situation and goal clarification,
- the identification and reinforcement of the advice-seeker's competences and resources, as well as the development of perspectives for problem-resolution and action.

Competence: Developing stable working conditions and a secure environment

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to develop stable working conditions for the guidance process, which promote the advice-seekers' feeling of structural security and a positive communicative atmosphere.

Guidance practitioners:	What should be considered from a gender and culturally sensitive point of view?
Ensure a comfortable, undisturbed atmosphere and adequate premises for guidance;	Prepare a comfortable space. <i>E.g. sit side by side to your client/advice-seeker and not at the other end of the table.</i> <i>E.g. offer something to drink, make small talk</i>
Make their mandates, roles and functions transparent, where these are relevant for the guidance process;	Are aware that the concept of counselling might be foreign to the advice-seeker. <i>E.g. ask the person seeking advice what her/his understanding of counseling is.</i> Explain in clear language their specific role and make explicit the organization of the process
Provide information about the conditions of the guidance offer (e.g., voluntariness, outcome-neutrality, scope of the offer, legal aspects);	Provide information (if possible) in the mother tongue of the advice-seekers. <i>E.g. work with language mediators; cooperate with women's/migrant community groups; refer clients to brochures or websites in the advice-seekers' language.</i> <i>E.g. language-sensitive counselling (see below)*</i> <i>E.g. Be aware of your limits as a professional and what your service can provide do not misguide the advice-seeker so that she has too high expectations. The advice-seeker, especially if in desperate situations, may expect a "savior" and disappointment may lead to the failure of the whole empowerment process.</i>



Find an agreement with advice-seekers about how to proceed in the guidance process;	Develop an individual action plan based on the negotiation of the advice-seeker's interests and the possibilities of the counselling organisation. <i>E.g. reaching a middle-ground agreement between short-term job placement and mid-term training goals.</i>
Find an agreement with advice-seekers about what should be documented during the guidance process;	Explain clearly to advice-seekers issues of confidentiality; <i>E.g. Take into consideration issues of safety and privacy especially relevant to vulnerable groups: e.g. women victims of gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, trafficking...) or asylum seekers.</i>

* Professionals should develop the competence of language-sensitive- counselling, using “simplified language”, “translanguaging”, when counsellors do not speak the mother tongue of the advice-seeker. Translanguaging means using resources from different languages together, with very little regard for what we might call the ‘boundaries’ of named languages such as ‘German’ or ‘English’. Translanguaging is when people are using elements of each language together to communicate more effectively. This is translanguaging: it’s about using the all your language resources to communicate.

Translanguaging can be defined as the process whereby multilingual speakers utilize their languages as an integrated communication system. It is a dynamic process in which multilingual language users mediate complex social and cognitive activities through strategic employment of multiple semiotic resources to act, to know and to be. Translanguaging involves issues of language production, effective communication, the function of language, and the thought processes behind language use.

Additional note: In the context of the current refugee crisis and to work with victims of trafficking and other forms of gender-based violence, stakeholders’ consultation showed that a key competence to develop is “**self-care**”, “**role clarity**” and “**thresholds/limits**” is missing. These competences are relevant above all in the work with advice seekers with mental illnesses, mostly due to traumatic experiences in the country of origin and on the way to exile. Stakeholders expressed the need of trainings for counsellors on this topic in order to be able to deal with traumatized persons in an adequate way.

Competence: Building a sound working alliance and emotional security

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to build a working alliance, which is adequate in consideration of the advice-seeker’s concern, and to foster the advice-seeker’s emotional security.

Guidance practitioners:	What should be considered from a gender and culturally sensitive point of view?
Demonstrate respect and appreciation for advice-seekers;	Take an empathic attitude: Counsellors focus on the content (what), not on the form (how). <i>E.g. show interest, give recognition and create a relaxed atmosphere.</i> Change the language to the person seeking advice. <i>E.g. speak slowly and clearly, make short sentences, rephrase their discourse, use words and structures of the everyday language.</i> Ensure understanding. <i>E.g. use gestures and facial expressions, allow questions, ask advice-seekers to ask and to explain what they understood in their own words</i>
Behave in a congruent and genuine way at all levels of communication (verbal and non-verbal) in the sense of authenticity and openness;	Practice their communication skills: active listening, paraphrasing, positive reformulation; using a language that is gender-neutral and non-discriminatory; ability to use simple and clear language; ability to use non-verbal and visual languages to facilitate communication, etc. <i>E.g. Use photographs for clients to choose from several options; ask advice-seekers to draw their paths.</i>
Foster and stimulate the motivation and initiative of advice-seekers regarding the guidance process.	Ask clients to define their objectives and actions. <i>E.g. Use visual resources to improve communication and engage both the analytical mind, as well as emotions and creativity.</i>

Additional stakeholders' note: Counsellors should have "psychological" competences, such as the ability to motivate advice-seekers to make an effort. It was pointed out that the counsellor has to be able to manage "usual" lack of motivation on the advice-seekers' part, but these symptoms become much more complicated when combined with issues related to migration status: dependency from the employer, instability of residence permits, separation from family, trauma and fear of return to the country of origin etc.

Competence: Clarifying the advice-seekers' concerns and coming to a guidance agreement

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to make the advice-seekers' concerns and expectations in view of the guidance process sufficiently explicit in dialogue with them. They come to an agreement regarding the goals of the guidance process / focus of the guidance offer.

Guidance practitioners:	What should be considered from a gender and culturally sensitive point of view?
<p>Clarify with advice-seekers which expectations they have regarding the guidance offer and explain the limitations of the service (e.g., which concerns go beyond the guidance offer);</p>	<p>Agree with advice-seekers the specifics of their training and guidance plan, taking into account advice-seekers' interests in terms of job placement and career development but also life-long learning and approach to life (adopting a holistic approach).</p> <p><i>E.g. Take into account family planning and childcare responsibilities in the terms that advice-seekers decide.</i></p>
<p>Pay attention to possible changes in the advice-seekers' concerns and objectives during the guidance process, and react in an appropriate way, e.g. by coming to a new agreement;</p>	<p>Revise periodically and flexibly the guidance plan, taking into account that instability is common among migrant and women advice-seekers.</p> <p><i>E.g. Take into account childcare arrangements, changes in the family or documents, visits to the home country or other countries, etc.</i></p> <p><i>E.g. Constantly clarifies the path and its goals (the limits, i.e. "finding a job" should always be associated to the opportunities deriving from personal activation)</i></p>



Competence: Clarifying the situation and objectives

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to support advice-seekers' in assessing their situations in view of their concerns, and to assist them in re-evaluating their situation and forming realistic objectives through deliberation.

Guidance practitioners:	What should be considered from a gender and culturally sensitive point of view?
Assist advice-seekers in forming an autonomous description of their situation, and in re-evaluating their situation (e.g. in view of their individual attitudes, values, abilities, and goals); collaborate with advice-seekers in prioritising their objectives;	<p>Are impartial when providing support to advice-seekers so that they analyse their situation.</p> <p><i>E.g. Support advice-seekers to establish short, mid- and long-term goals, related to the time needed to obtain recognition of foreign qualifications.</i></p>
Inform advice-seekers about chances and risks in the achievement of their goals, concerning the institutional and societal circumstances, and raise their awareness for potential conflicts and contradictions.	<p>Inform about the relevant legal regulations concerning education, vocational options, and employment (e.g. labour law, regulations for vocational education and training, labour market).</p> <p>Work out the legal framework in which developing sustainable professional objectives are possible.</p> <p>Inform about the influence of diversity on education, vocational choice, and employment (e.g. educational participation and opportunities, diversity as a resource).</p> <p><i>E.g. Keep updated about legislation and policies at national/regional/local level that could benefit target groups, such as preferential job contracts or funded educational opportunities for women and minorities.</i></p> <p><i>E.g. Are honest about discriminations that may exist and inform advice-seekers on the options they have to confront them so that they can make informed choices.</i></p>
Helping to “organize” the job search	Starting from the acquisition of self-awareness, identify the steps to be reached to achieve goals
Supporting the user to “organize” his/her aims	Supporting the user to identify the steps already taken and those that he/she will need to take, leaving nothing to chance

Competence: Identifying and reinforcing advice-seekers' internal and external resources

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to assist advice-seekers in identifying their competences and resources, and to consider these resources and their further development in view of their concerns and objectives.

Guidance practitioners:	What should be considered from a gender and culturally sensitive point of view?
<p>Collaboratively identify advice-seekers' attitudes, emotions, motivations and behaviours, where these are relevant for dealing with their concerns;</p>	<p>Support clients in reflecting on their situation not only in terms of analyzing information, but taking into account their underlying emotional competences and motivations, from a holistic approach that puts life at the centre and not only employment.</p> <p><i>E.g. Support advice-seekers in placing their job aspirations in relation to their life aspirations (e.g. family, life-long learning, hobbies, etc.).</i></p>
<p>Collaboratively identify advice-seekers' potential resources (and constraints), which result from their social background and wider societal environment, in consideration of their relevance for the achievement of the advice-seekers' objectives and their decision making (e.g. aspects of the family background, the educational, vocational, or occupational environment); Allow for competence assessment and/or self-assessment, where required; support advice-seekers in developing their self-perception regarding their potentials, competences and, resources;</p>	<p>Recognise the competences of advice-seekers, including those that are not supported by qualifications and that may have been developed in informal spaces (for example, unpaid care work) and in the country of origin of advice-seekers.</p> <p><i>E.g. Analyse jointly with advice-seekers how life paths are pools of resources (e.g. migration linked to initiative and resilience).</i></p> <p><i>E.g. Use competence-based tools (maps of competences, balance of competences) to support advice-seekers in their self-assessment</i></p> <p><i>E.g. analyse the informal and family network that can support reconciliation</i></p>

Additional stakeholders' suggestion: The counsellor should support the client in getting to know customs and traditions of the hosting country, to prevent discrimination and exclusion.



Competence: Developing perspectives for problem-resolution and action

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to support advice-seekers in developing possible solutions and action plans for reaching their goals.

Guidance practitioners:	What should be considered from a gender and culturally sensitive point of view?
<p>Jointly work out realistic ideas of how to solve problems and act with advice-seekers, in view of their competences, qualifications and resources; Jointly develop decision criteria with advice-seekers, and assist them in their decision-making processes;</p>	<p>Inform advice-seekers about the options to present their CV, and decide with them what they could be the best option for each job.</p> <p><i>E.g. Consider the use of competence-based CVs and portfolios, especially for clients with few qualifications and job experience.</i></p> <p><i>E.g. Supports the client step by step in drafting the curriculum (as an opportunity to identify and enhance the possessed skills)</i></p>
<p>Inform advice-seekers about options and strategies to increase their chances to achieve their goals and to overcome possible obstacles.</p>	<p>Take into account the constraints and opportunities specific to each client, depending on the crisscross of different factors (gender/ethnicity/socioeconomic status, etc.).</p> <p><i>E.g. Keep informed about the options in terms of support available to clients (economic benefits, recognition of qualifications, childcare support, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>E.g. is aware of the informal network of the client</i></p> <p><i>E.g. considers childcare strategies. Be proactive and creative to provide childcare facilities on-site or arrangements with other organisations/professionals, even in cases of economic constraints (e.g. community centres, students of the School of Education as interns or volunteers)</i></p>
<p>Provide advice-seekers with information and/or refer them to sources of information, which they can consult themselves, when these resources suit the target groups and needs of the advice-seekers</p> <p>Assess whether further and/or external counselling should be sought by advice-seekers to address their guidance concerns, also in consideration of the guidance process' development</p>	<p>Ensure that advice-seekers learn the resources available in their area and how they can use them.</p> <p><i>E.g. Make study visits to local resources. (Including public employment services)</i></p> <p><i>E.g. Introduce advice-seekers to local community/support groups, such as migrant women's groups.</i></p>
<p>Raise opportunities to promote social inclusion and equality in view of age, gender, handicaps, cultural and ethnic origins, where appropriate to the particular case and situation</p>	<p>Raise awareness among employers and social partners.</p> <p>Network with gender-sensitive and culturally-sensitive employers to arrange for potential internships and job placements.</p> <p><i>E.g. Create a pool of gender and culturally-sensitive employers for job shadowing, internships and job placement.</i></p>
<p>Collaboratively summarise the progression and results of the guidance process with advice-seekers when the process is progressing towards the end, and discuss the advice-seekers' next steps, where relevant.</p>	<p>Revise the client's action plan at the end of the process, so that it gets a closure and decides on potential new developments.</p> <p><i>E.g. Refer to other resources or community groups</i></p>

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