

# Career guidance policy and practice in the pandemic

Results of a joint international survey







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Results of a joint international survey  
June to August 2020

Please cite this publication as:

Cedefop; European Commission; ETF; ICCDPP; ILO; OECD; UNESCO (2020). *Career guidance policy and practice in the pandemic: results of a joint international survey – June to August 2020*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. <http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/318103>

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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2020

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PDF ISBN 978-92-896-3113-6  
doi:10.2801/318103  
TI-03-20-890-EN-N

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Cedefop was originally established in 1975 by Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75. This decision was repealed in 2019 by Regulation (EU) 2019/128 establishing Cedefop as a Union Agency with a renewed mandate.

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## Foreword

This report is based on a flash joint international survey, designed to provide a snapshot of how career guidance policies, systems and services were adapting and coping, following the declaration of the world Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020.

The survey, launched on 8 June 2020 and closed on 3 August 2020, examined the policy, systems and practice changes that occurred during the first phase of government reactions to the pandemic, the extent to which the pandemic and its social consequences triggered a debate on career guidance reform, and the role for career guidance in pandemic recovery measures. It also considered the support role of international and donor bodies.

In this joint initiative, several international organisation members of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Work-Based Learning (IAG-WBL), encompassing the European Centre for Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), the European Commission, the European Training Foundation (ETF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) worked collectively with the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP) and Cedefop's CareersNet. The survey design and implementation was coordinated by Cedefop.

This survey also follows on the joint statement of the IAG-WBL, *Investing in career guidance*, published in December 2019 (IAG-WBL, 2019), a landmark precedent in international cooperation. In its introduction, the statement highlighted the importance of career guidance to individuals, families, society, the labour market and the economy at large:

'Effective career guidance helps individuals to reach their potential, economies to become more efficient and societies to become fairer. It provides people with personalised, impartial, and timely information and support to make informed decisions about their lives. It acts as a lubricant for developing and nurturing human talent to power innovation, creativity, and competitiveness. It helps to implement lifelong approaches to learning and active approaches to labour market engagement and transition.'

In light of the growing negative impact of Covid-19 on national labour markets and people's lives, the role of career guidance has become ever more important to individuals, families, communities, the workforce, employers and society. Our international organisations are strongly committed to continue to support

investment in quality career guidance as a permanent feature of services of public interest for our societies.

Jürgen Siebel, Executive Director, Cedefop

Cesare Onestini, Director, ETF

Manuela Geleng, Director for Skills, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission

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## Acknowledgements

The current joint report was made possible through the close voluntary work of a team of individuals <sup>(1)</sup> supported by direct international and inter-agency cooperation. These efforts involved creating and providing inputs on the questionnaire development, online meetings, email exchanges, data analysis, and report drafting and editing – tasks that were shared by the survey team.

This survey would not have been possible without the cooperation of government officials responsible for career guidance, guidance practitioners' associations and members, social partners and other stakeholders, including interested community members who disseminated, coordinated and completed the questionnaire.

Jaana Kettunen (CareersNet), Raimo Vuorinen (CareersNet steering group and ICCDPP Chair) and Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze (CareersNet and ICCDPP) constructed the first version of the questionnaire. Other members furthered its development and data collection approach.

Members responsible for data analysis presented in the main chapters and relevant chapter contents were as follows:

- Chapter 3: John McCarthy (ICCDPP) and Anthony Mann (OECD);
- Chapter 4: Raimo Vuorinen (primary) and Jaana Kettunen;
- Chapter 5: Jaana Kettunen (primary) and Raimo Vuorinen;
- Chapter 6: Pedro Moreno da Fonseca (ILO) and Hiromichi Katayama, (UNESCO);
- Chapter 7: Florian Kadletz (ETF), Ernesto Villalba and Cynthia Harrison (Cedefop).

Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze also undertook valuable cross-tabulation analysis. Jennifer McKenzie (CareersNet), Fotini Vlachaki (CareersNet) drafted text for the first versions of the report. There were several voluntary contributors who also collaborated in the development of the survey, questionnaire, analysis and/or drafted parts of the report: Katerina Ananiadou (UNESCO), Tristram Hooley (ICCDPP), Aline Juerges (European Commission), Susanne Kraatz (CareersNet) and the late Helmut Zelloth (ETF). Cedefop's ReferNet also helped disseminate the survey.

---

<sup>(1)</sup> See Annex 3 for a full list of affiliations for all group members.

Along with Cedefop staff Cynthia Harrison and Ernesto Villalba who coordinated the survey work, John McCarthy provided extensive inputs and editing of the final draft. Finally, we would like to thank Antonio Ranieri, Head of the department for learning and employability, Cedefop, for supporting the project cooperation until its conclusion.

## Dedication

This report is dedicated to the memory of Helmut Zelloth, Senior Specialist for vocational education and training policies and systems at the European Training Foundation (ETF), who died suddenly while this survey was in progress. For many years, Helmut promoted the role of career guidance in education, training and employment policies in neighbouring countries of the EU, undertook country reviews of career guidance, and produced many comparative reports. He represented the ETF in IAG-WBL discussions on career guidance and was a valued member of the Executive Board of ICCDPP. He left us too early, but his legacy will endure.

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# Executive summary

## Context

The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified challenges in our societies, adding complexity and accompanying turmoil to different economic and labour market developments. When governments started to react to the pandemic with lockdown, social distancing and other safety measures, many services around the world were reduced or shut down when most needed. Career-development support, notably, was at risk at an unprecedented time of social and economic turmoil. Such reductions and closures were particularly worrying since career guidance and counselling would be essential in assisting individuals, families and communities to successfully cope with the challenges of unprecedentedly turbulent transitions into and within the labour market.

In order to study the impact of the evolving crisis, in late spring 2020 the individuals and seven organisations represented on the survey team joined forces to undertake an international survey to shed light on the new challenges presented worldwide to career guidance policies, systems and practices. The survey builds on the shared commitment of these organisations to support policies and systems for career guidance, and for universal access to comprehensive, quality services. The work built on the ongoing collaboration in career guidance of the Inter-Agency Group on Work-Based Learning (IAG-WBL).

This report is intended to provide a better understanding of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and of any official measures, actions or decisions taken, such as lockdown and social distancing, on the implementation of policies for career guidance worldwide. The results from the survey are intended to feed into national policy discussions as well as into international debates on how to shape modern and flexible career guidance systems in the future. The results from the survey may also inform future policies, programmes and initiatives of international organisations.

Data were collected from 8 June to 3 August 2020 via a web link questionnaire and distributed across the network of the organisations. This included national experts and country representatives who redistributed the link to their networks, multiplying the reach of the survey. The information collected presents the views and opinions of the respondents. Their answers are a function of their administrative or professional role in relation to guidance, the sector in which they work, and the beneficiaries to whom their answers pertain. While all respondents might have a certain degree of knowledge and understanding of the situation of career guidance, the report provides only an indication of these individuals'

perceptions. Nevertheless, the survey provides a worldwide snapshot of the views of many professionals with administrative or professional responsibilities for career guidance provision who are likely to be well informed, giving us relevant and unique information on the situation in career guidance during the first months of the pandemic.

## Who answered the survey?

There were 963 valid respondents from 93 countries.

The highest number of respondents were career guidance practitioners (47%), distributed across 53 countries. Policy officials – including policy official/advisor (government), programme administrator or manager of guidance services (responsible for service delivery as a supervisor) – accounted for around 30% of the sample, collecting information from 73 countries. The majority of respondents work in public organisations or in organisations that are publicly funded.

Responses pertain to different beneficiaries, reflecting the diversity of career guidance provision. Many respondents identified overlapping responsibilities related to several different beneficiary groups. These may be explained by the transversal nature of certain inclusion policies, such as those on gender and disabilities, which are integrated into education, training and employment policies in many countries. Respondents were also asked which policy field their response pertained to. A majority (77%) marked their responses as pertaining to education and training, while 49% identified the policy field of employment. Around 30% marked education and training together with employment as their policy field. Other fields (e.g. youth or social services) were marked by around a quarter of the respondents; in most cases, they also identified their responses as pertaining to education and training or employment.

## Did career guidance receive attention as part of the response to the pandemic?

Career guidance was reported to have received policy attention or been part of policy actions to deal with the impact of the pandemic (40%), but an equal percentage of respondents stated that no such attention was given (40%). Career guidance was part of education and training measures in a number of countries, mainly in relation to undertaking online learning. Additionally, guidance was part of reskilling and upskilling measures. Through 2020, respondents from a large minority of represented countries reported that investment in career guidance had increased in their country in response to the unprecedented circumstances created



by the Covid-19 pandemic. For the majority of respondents, however, it appeared too early to conclude whether investment in guidance would increase or decrease as a result of the pandemic.

The survey highlighted innovative practice initiated in response to the crisis, drawing on examples provided by a small number of respondents. Much of such provision represented a ramping-up of alternative service delivery developed prior to the pandemic and which the Covid crisis served to accelerate. In a number of countries, however, new approaches were trialled during the pandemic. For example, greater use of social media was reported, as well as the development of online resources to replace face-to-face provision. In all cases, changes in practice were designed to make career guidance more accessible to users. In this way, and if delivered in ways to ensure equity of access, innovation represents a positive development in the provision of guidance.

## Did the pandemic trigger cooperation among professionals and stakeholders?

According to the survey respondents, cooperation to ensure comprehensive coverage was led by individual providers rather than motivated by inter-ministerial coordination. It is noticeable that career guidance was reported to have been integrated into education, training and labour market measures in some instances. The survey also shows some evidence of a rise in collegial support among practitioners, and of cooperation between guidance practitioners and new actors such as social workers or health professionals as part of wider multi-professional networks.

As an outcome of previous cooperation among stakeholders, many countries have established national career guidance forums or other representative structures that bring together relevant partners to share knowledge on national, regional and local levels. Given the known diversity of career services in different settings, the structures for cooperation need to be established in accordance with national conditions. It is now more important than ever to intensify the cooperation between government ministries and agencies, service providers, employers and other stakeholders in rethinking and repositioning guidance in the national Covid-19 recovery strategies.

## How has guidance been delivered since the pandemic started?

The provision and operation of career guidance services was transferred mainly online during the lockdown. Services were for the most part successfully adapted, although certain provisions were dramatically reduced – especially highly individualised activities, such as counselling. While digital means were widely used, lower-tech solutions, such as telephone support, appear to have more relevance for vulnerable groups, helping to combat inequalities in access and in usage of equipment as well as barriers related to written communication and expression, and related issues.

As a whole, career guidance provision was maintained at some level of operation, and practitioners' positive attitude to the use of technology in career guidance was observed. Respondents reported an increased demand for various kinds of support (e.g. training, financial, material, online practice, resources) for practitioners as they adapted to new modes of delivery.

## What is the demand for career guidance since the pandemic started?

An increasing demand for career guidance services was observed by respondents worldwide during the first stages of the pandemic; in particular, demands for labour market information, job-search assistance, reskilling opportunities, and education and training opportunities. There was also a considerable perceived increase in demand for psychosocial support. Such increases reflect the uncertainty created by the pandemic for specific groups of users, particularly for end-year students; low-skilled, low-qualified and low-income workers; the unemployed, and other workers at risk. The majority of the respondents noted that users had a positive attitude to the use of technology in career guidance.

On the other hand, respondents reported that many people in vulnerable categories had difficulties in accessing career guidance services. The level of increase in demand for career guidance services was low or not significant among some groups, such as workers employed in micro, small or medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), older adults, people with special needs, rural populations, migrants and refugees, and platform workers. Low-qualified and low-skilled workers also reportedly suffered more the effects of reduced access to career guidance services, alongside people with special needs and the self-employed.

## What role can career guidance play in the recovery?

Respondents confirmed the potential of career guidance to contribute to the recovery in terms of efficient investment in education, skills development, labour market efficiency, and social inclusion. Importantly, they highlighted the role of career guidance in supporting and enabling distance and blended learning, which itself has been an institutional response to the pandemic. Debate triggered by the pandemic, where it occurred, has focused on systems adaptation: the supply or provision of blended forms of career guidance and the move towards remote forms of delivery.

Respondents highlighted the need for individualised solutions, given the uncertainty created by the pandemic: career counselling, coaching, mentoring, and psychosocial support. But problems of access exist, especially for persons with disabilities, migrants and refugees, and the pandemic has increased difficulties for these groups. A fair share of respondents consider that guidance can contribute to social inclusion and support, such as accessing social protection benefits, and accessing learning and work by women, migrants and refugees.

## Future considerations

### **Career guidance reform**

It is more important than ever to intensify cooperation between different service providers, stakeholders and employers in rethinking and repositioning guidance in the national Covid-19 recovery strategies. The pandemic can constitute an opportunity for governments to pay further attention to and rethink career guidance provision from a systemic perspective. This might include actions to develop career guidance that moves from information delivery to more collaborative approaches, enhanced using technology, integrated in the services, and underpinned by appropriate/effective strategies for career management skills development.

### **Ensuring access and outreach**

Access to digital services needs to be guaranteed to all groups and individuals, by ensuring sufficient access to digital equipment, internet coverage and the necessary digital skills. Remote or online career guidance services require that all modalities are accessible to ensure adequate interaction and optimal service delivery for all. In many cases, other distance technologies, such as the telephone, should be prioritised to overcome issues linked to skills or barriers related to written communication and expression, and related issues.

Distance services need to be extended to provide individualised support and develop outreach and holistic support to the most vulnerable groups. Referrals to and additional need for psychosocial support during the recovery for people with more complex needs should also be considered in planning guidance provisions, such as work with multi-professional teams and related services.

### **High-impact youth support**

It is important that schools and school counsellors are supported in terms of resources, tools and methodologies to increase their responsiveness during this period. Impartial information and support to take up work experience opportunities and work-based learning need to be at the front line. Labour market information needs to be quickly updated to reflect a shifting labour market, and guidance practitioners need to be aware of the impact of new technologies and big data on the creation of labour market intelligence. At a time of unprecedented labour market turbulence, it is more important than ever that young people have multiple opportunities to speak with people who work in areas of career interest. People who work in fields undergoing significant change are well placed to provide advice that is particularly trusted and valued by young people making important education and training decisions. It is especially important that young people understand the opportunities presented by programmes of vocational education and training linked to access to good-quality employment.

### **Upskilling, reskilling and adaptation**

Accelerating trends partly driven by technological change identified prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, growing numbers of workers can expect to need to train and retrain to be redeployed in other functions or move jobs. More than ever, career guidance will need to position itself to provide integrated learning pathways and access to financial resources, as well as validation of skills and job-search support. Effective guidance will be necessary to help people understand and address their needs, by choosing effective/appropriate distance and digital learning solutions, which lead to the right skills and credentials.

The weak role assigned to career guidance at company level shows the importance at this stage of increasing penetration in enterprises, especially MSMEs. Guidance can play a critical role in enabling firms to have job-saving solutions that encourage strategic staff management towards a sustainable recovery.

### **International and donor cooperation**

Finally, international and donor organisations can play an important enabling role in the development of national career development systems. This may include

continued collaboration in promoting the role of career guidance in education, training, employment and social-inclusion policies by undertaking targeted research on these themes, developing tools and promoting peer exchange. Around the world, countries are responding to the unprecedented challenges presented by the pandemic in different ways. International organisations have an important role to play in enabling learning between countries and providing means to measure the expected effectiveness of policy interventions. Promotion of partnerships for developing national digital systems and increased access to multi-channel services is also a potential area for work.

## CHAPTER 1.

# Introduction

### 1.1. Career guidance services at the start of the Covid-19 crisis

The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified challenges in our societies, adding complexity and accompanying turmoil to different economic and labour market developments. Digitalisation and automation, global shifts and the emergence of new sectors were already exerting pressure on the economy.

The first half of 2020 witnessed an unprecedented scale of global disruption (ILO, 2020). The pandemic accelerated the processes of digital transformation and, at the same time, influenced changes in work organisation, such as the need for remote working. It has also created multiple life and occupational challenges for those employed in precarious working conditions. Millions of people lost their jobs. There has been a decline in working hours and an increase in people 'employed but not working' (e.g. where workers are put on temporary leave), or who have experienced a significant loss of income. The assessment of the pandemic's impact on the labour market is all the more challenging because employment and unemployment figures alone do not reveal the extent of the challenges faced, particularly when the employed are prevented from returning to work and are absent (ILO, 2020; Eurostat, 2020).

The changes brought about by the pandemic are exerting pressure on individuals, families and communities in ways that will need to be studied to understand its long-term effects. Young people are vulnerable as the digital divide deepens rifts in Europe, where there is a risk of increasing the rural/urban divide and exacerbating differences between education systems <sup>(2)</sup> (European Committee of the Regions, 2020).

Other access issues are increasingly reported. According to some estimates for the EU, higher risks are reported for those in micro-sized workplaces, and 'the burden of the Covid-19 social distancing risk falls disproportionately on vulnerable workforce groups, such as women, older employees, non-natives and the low qualified' (Pouliakas and Branka, 2020, p.6).

When governments started to react to the pandemic with lockdown, social distancing and other safety measures, services all over the world were reduced or

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<sup>(2)</sup> Eurobarometer (2020) reports that only six Member States have highly digital school provision for 80% or more of students.

shut down when most needed, including schools. This can entail high social and economic costs for people across communities, and exacerbate disparities within education systems (ETF, 2020; UNESCO, 2020). Importantly, career-development support such as career guidance and career learning programmes in schools, and career guidance provided in community settings, youth and adult learning centres, public employment services and other physical guidance settings, were at risk at an unprecedented time of social and economic turmoil, with the emergence of an increasingly unpredictable future (Cedefop, 2020).

Such reduction and closures were worrying, since career guidance and counselling would be essential in assisting individuals, families and communities to successfully navigate the newly emerging transition challenges, to develop and reinforce career management skills, such as career adaptability and resilience, and to reinvent careers by capitalising on unplanned positive and even negative events (Krumboltz, 2009; Bimrose and Hearne, 2012; Savickas, 2005; Savickas, 2011). Career guidance services are changing to meet new needs for the already complex labour market, and to prepare the new generations. Employer engagement programmes for young people have proven effective (Musset and Kurekova, 2018). 'Career guidance is both an individual and a social good: it helps individuals to progress in their learning and work, but it also helps the effective functioning of the labour and learning markets, and contributes to a range of social policy goals, including social mobility and equity' (Musset and Kurekova, 2018, p.4).

The continuing challenges and demands from the public urge policymakers and stakeholders in the field to respond with adapted policies, systems and resources to ensure quality and accessible career guidance services for all (e.g. Cedefop, 2020; Hooley, Sultana and Thomsen, 2020). There is a range of different solutions to this crisis and also potential benefits for users of guidance. Careful rethinking must accompany technology-driven discussions, such as how to learn videoconferencing (e.g. Barnes et al., 2020; Kettunen, 2017).

To meet the new demand for career guidance and to reshape practice, there is also a need for enhancing practitioner reskilling and upskilling so as to reinforce and activate a well-trained, professional and motivated workforce.

## 1.2. Cooperating to explore challenges for career guidance policy and practices internationally

In order to study the impact of the evolving crisis, in late spring 2020 the individuals and seven organisations represented on the survey team joined forces to undertake an international survey to shed light on the new challenges presented worldwide to career guidance policies, systems, and practices. The survey builds

on the shared commitment of these organisations to support policies and systems for career guidance, and for universal access to comprehensive, quality services. The work built on the ongoing collaboration in career guidance of the IAG-WBL.

The questionnaire responses were intended to provide a better understanding of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and of any official measures, actions or decisions taken, such as lockdown and social distancing, on the implementation of policies for career guidance worldwide. The results from the survey should feed into national policy discussions as well as into international debates on how to shape modern and flexible career guidance systems in the future. The results may also inform future policies, programmes and initiatives of international organisations. The team worked collaboratively. Some group members contributed with analysis and writing of specific chapters and/or editing the report, while others provided constructive support and insight during the development of the survey, data analysis and report writing. All members could comment on the draft report. The report summarises some of the results and data collected.

### 1.3. Report structure

The report is structured into eight chapters. Chapter 1 provides the introduction and Chapter 2 the survey methodology. Chapter 3 analyses government responses to the provision of career guidance arising from the pandemic, and reports on emerging systems and practice. Cooperation among career guidance stakeholders is analysed in Chapter 4, including cooperation across different ministries and organisations. The delivery and operation of career guidance services during the data collection period is covered in Chapter 5, while Chapter 6 reports on user demand for services. Chapter 7 looks at whether or not the pandemic and restrictions triggered a debate on guidance policy; if respondents anticipate a role for career guidance in pandemic recovery policies and measures, and its most important social, educational and economic aims. A brief summary and concluding remarks, followed by reflections for policy, are presented in Chapter 8.



## CHAPTER 2.

# Methodology and respondents

### 2.1. Terminology – career guidance

The understanding of ‘career guidance’ followed the joint statement *Investing in career guidance* of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Work Based Learning (IAG-WBL, 2019): ‘Career guidance describes the services which help people of any age to manage their careers and to make the educational, training and occupational choices that are right for them. It helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications, skills and talents – and to relate this knowledge about who they are to who they might become within the labour market.

Career guidance involves a range of connected activities, including provision of careers information, personalised guidance/counselling, skills assessment, engaging with the world of work and the teaching of decision-making and career management skills. [...]

Career guidance is a continuous process throughout life. It is critical to the smooth transitions of young people as they make choices about education and training and to the mobility and (re)engagement of adults within the labour market. Guidance is provided to people in a wide range of settings: schools and training centres, tertiary and higher education institutions; employment services and career guidance centres; in workplaces, trade unions and professional bodies as well as in local community settings.’

The meaning of career guidance ‘practitioner’, a term used in the questionnaire, was provided to survey respondents: ‘The activity described as ‘career guidance’ in this questionnaire is also known by other terms such as ‘career development’, ‘workforce development’, ‘career counselling’, ‘employment counselling’, ‘careers information, advice and guidance’, ‘lifelong guidance’, ‘vocational counselling/guidance’, ‘professional orientation’ or ‘livelihood planning’ in different countries. The career guidance person or individual professional provider of guidance including specialised support, information, advice and career counselling is herein referred to as the ‘guidance practitioner’.’

### 2.2. The questionnaire and data collection

The survey team agreed that the questionnaire should seek to produce information that provides a broad, general overview and snapshot of the dynamic situation for

guidance delivery, services, usage and careers learning in countries during the pandemic; that it should touch on critical issues that would raise questions for further study and wider research, and advocates for more attention to guidance policy and practice during, and as a response to, the unfolding social and economic crisis. At the same time, the questionnaire needed to apply to the diverse contexts and career guidance systems across the globe at a time when very different challenges faced different countries.

The questionnaire was developed between April and June 2020 in a collaborative effort of the survey team. Compromises in terms of final questions used were reached through multiple team meetings, shared drafts, and feedback sessions in groups or individually with Cedefop. It was developed in English and translated into French, Arabic (by UNESCO), Spanish and Vietnamese (by ILO) and Russian (by ETF). The questionnaire is a mix of open-ended and closed questions. The final questionnaire had six sections (see Annex 1).

The data were collected using an online questionnaire open to anyone with access to the link. Each organisation sent the questionnaire links to their own organisation's networks, and individuals in the team used their networks, channels and contacts to reach the best-placed respondents in career guidance with enough knowledge to answer the questionnaire. This included national experts and country representatives who redistributed the link to their networks, multiplying the reach of the survey. The survey collected information from 8 June to 3 August, using two reminders to encourage responses.

### 2.3. Methodology, analysis and limitations

The data collection, as could be expected, resulted in wide variability of respondents within and across countries. Some country representatives responded in coordination with other stakeholders in their country by providing a single response that gives an overview of their country situation. Other respondents distributed the questionnaire across networks of public employment services or career guidance providers and relevant centres and/or associations, resulting in several responses from similar organisations or countries. This has important implications for the interpretation and analysis of the data.

The survey design is explorative, and does not adopt a statistically random sampling strategy. Therefore, the findings are only indications of tendencies in order to inspire discussions about career guidance policy and stimulate further studies or analysis of the data set. The survey cannot be regarded as providing a detailed, exhaustive, statistically representative sample of responses concerning changes in career guidance policies, systems and practices during the pandemic.

There are between-country and within-country variations to different degrees. As expected, given the time the survey was conducted (8 June to 3 August 2020), the number of respondents differed considerably from country to country due to the pandemic and the summer in the northern hemisphere, the great differences between services, provisions and country settings, and the maximum possible responses. One country perspective might be based on the answer of a single individual, while in other countries this perspective might be the result of many responses.

The information collected presents the views and opinions of the respondents. Their answers are a function of their administrative or professional role in relation to guidance, the sector in which they work, and the beneficiaries or target groups to whom their answers pertain. While all respondents might have a certain degree of knowledge and understanding of the situation of career guidance, the report provides only an indication of these individuals' perceptions.

The report focuses on providing an overall picture of the situation, a 'helicopter view' with limited level of detail. From Chapter 3 onwards, the figures present the arithmetic average of the percentage of respondents per country for each question. Therefore, the impact of having countries with many responses in the sample is adjusted, as all countries contribute equally to the figures presented <sup>(3)</sup>.

Nevertheless, the survey provides a worldwide snapshot of the views of a large portion of persons with administrative or professional responsibilities for career guidance provision who are likely to be well informed, thus giving us relevant and unique information on the situation in career guidance during the first months of the pandemic. To complement the reporting of data from the figures, selected comments from respondents or brief country illustrations are included in some chapters. Countries are also referred to as examples when reporting on the responses, but this does not mean that all cases are shown, nor all responses analysed. This information is not to be taken as representative of all relevant comments collected from the open-ended question; they were selected based on convenience.

The following section provides details of the profile of respondents and discusses its possible implications for understanding the results.

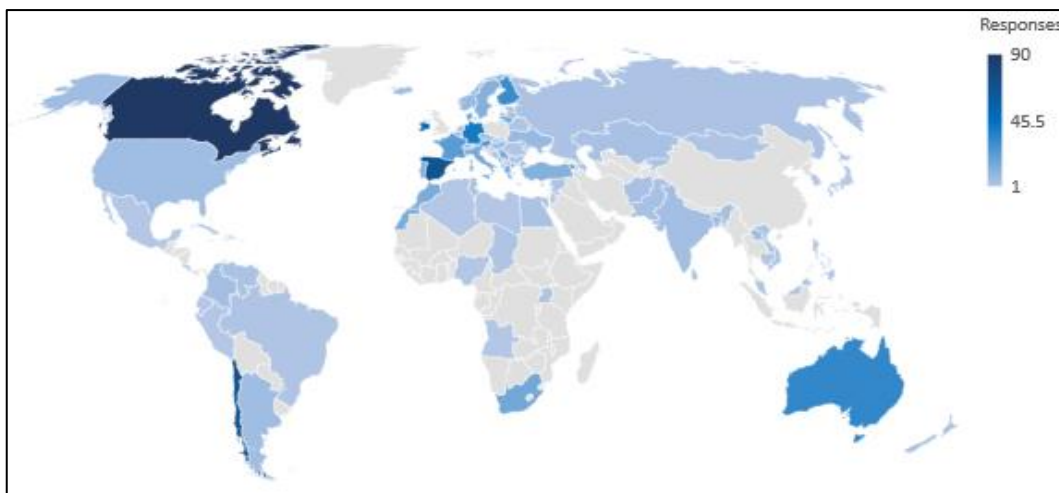
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<sup>(3)</sup> This means that, in countries with many responses, such as Canada or Chile, the individual response has less weight on the overall percentage presented, while individuals in countries with fewer responses contribute more.

## 2.4. Respondents

More than 1 300 persons responded to the questionnaire. After data cleaning and deleting non-completed questionnaires, there were 963 valid respondents from 93 countries across the globe. As there was no sampling framework, the data collection depended heavily on contact persons from the networks of the participating organisations. The timing of the distribution of the survey, when Covid-19 was provoking extensive adjustments in working life, likely created more difficulties in some world regions and countries, in terms of responding to the questionnaire, than in others, where changed working conditions and teleworking made electronic communication easy. The number of respondents ranged from 90 in Canada to just one in several countries. In most cases with only one response, this was from a policy official/administrator working in government (who may or may not have collected responses from colleagues/stakeholders across sectors/guidance policy areas). Europe and Central Asia are more represented than other regions. Few Arab states provided answers. The number of respondents per country can be found in the table in Annex 2.

Figure 1. **Number of respondents, country distribution**



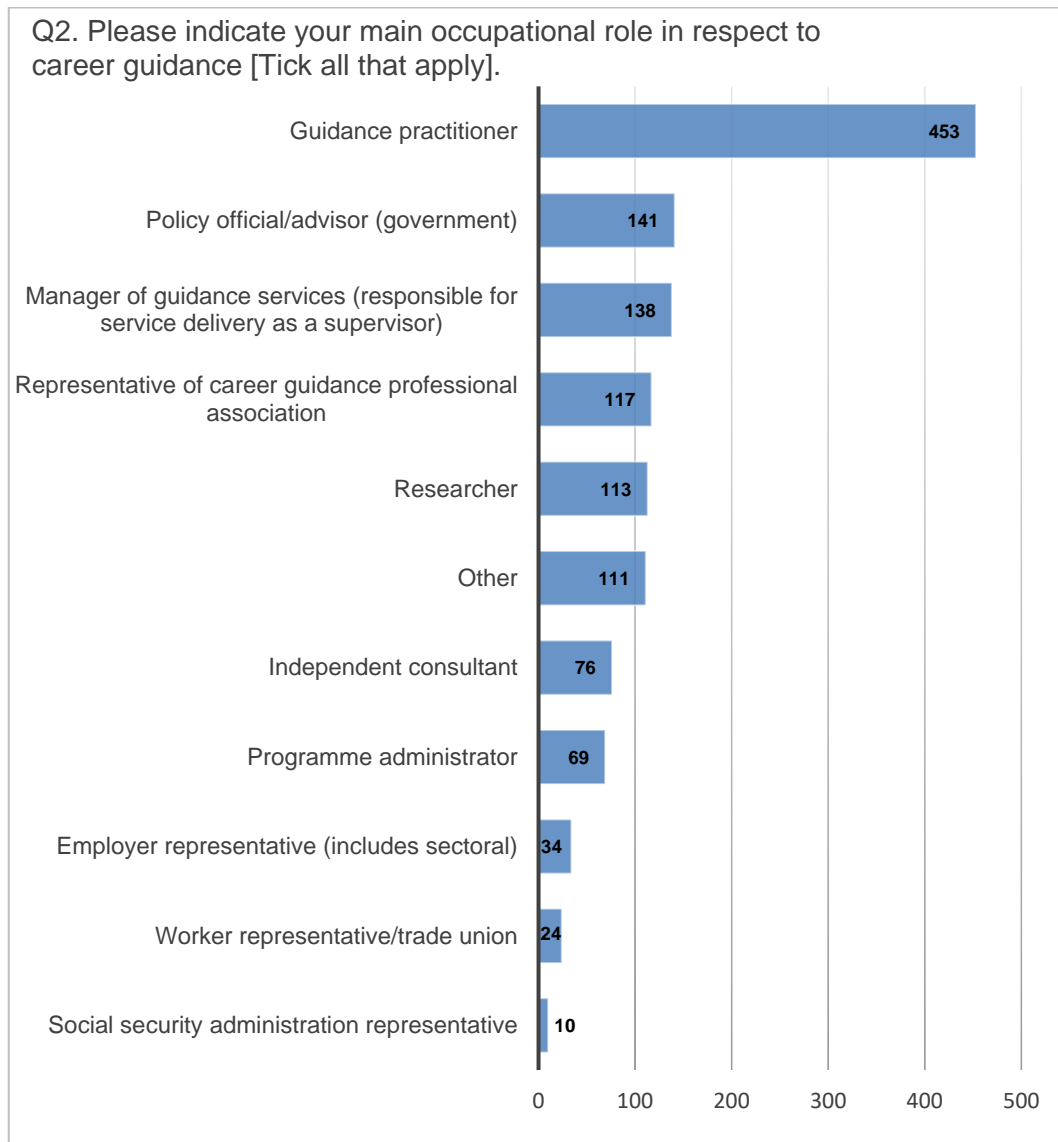
NB: N=963

Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

Respondents self-reported as working for national, regional and other bodies responsible for managing career guidance services, relevant private and civil society/non-governmental/third-sector settings, as well as guidance practitioners and researchers. The highest number of respondents consisted of career guidance practitioners (47%), distributed across 53 countries, despite not being the main target group of the survey. Policy officials – including policy official/advisor (government), programme administrator or manager of guidance services

(responsible for service delivery as a supervisor) – accounted for around 30% of the sample, collecting information from 73 countries. Respondents who identified themselves as representatives (social security administration, employer, sectoral or worker representative as well as representative of career guidance professional association) represent around 20% of the total responses, and researchers account for a similar percentage. It is important to note that people could mark several roles. Around 30% of all respondents marked more than one role, and 26% of practitioners identified themselves also as managers of guidance services, researchers or consultants. The composition of the respondents in terms of their reported roles also supports the decision to use the arithmetic average of percentage of respondents across countries to provide a more accurate picture of guidance activity across the globe.

Figure 2. Respondent's occupational role in respect to career guidance

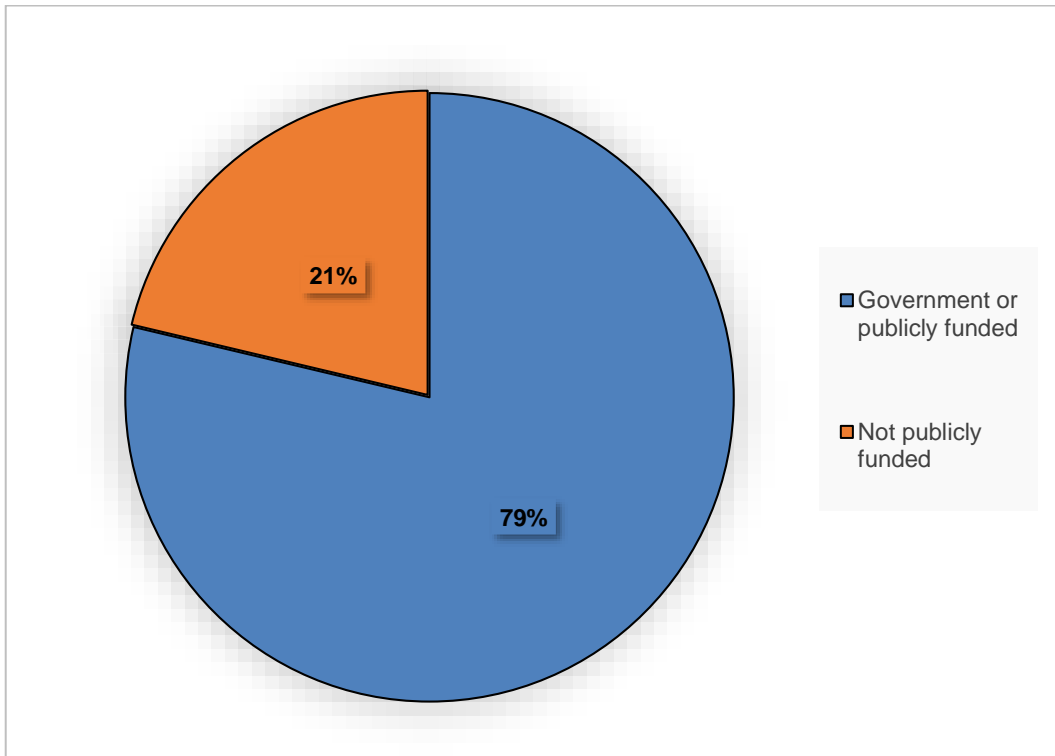


NB: Multiple response possible.  
N=963

Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

The majority of respondents work in public organisations or in organisations that are publicly funded: 63% reported working in public/government organisations, 13% in private and 14% in NGOs, while 10% reported 'other' (mainly foundations or universities). In total, 79% of all respondents worked in organisations that are publicly funded.

Figure 3. Source of funding respondents' organisations



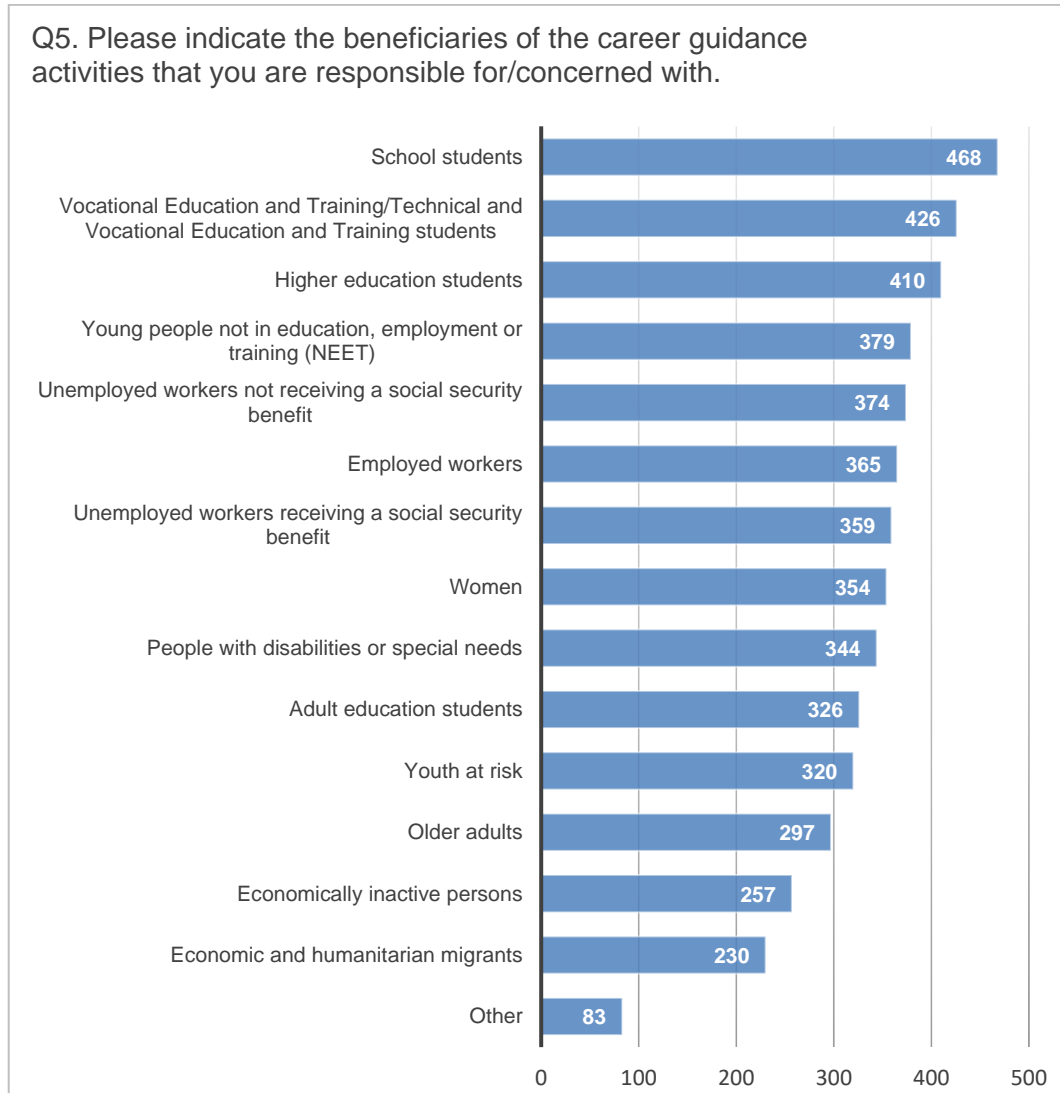
NB: Government or publicly funded includes all cases where respondents identified the status of the organisation in which they work as 'Public' (Q3) and/or reported their organisation to be largely government-funded (Q3b).  
N=963

Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

Respondents were asked to indicate which beneficiaries their responses would pertain to. There was a relatively even breakdown among three main categories of beneficiary responsibilities: those who identified themselves as responsible for education and training participants (e.g. school, adult education students); those who identified themselves as responsible for different categories of labour market participants (e.g. employed, unemployed), and those who identified themselves as responsible for certain specific groups (e.g. NEETS<sup>(4)</sup>, migrants, people with disabilities, etc). Many respondents identified themselves as having overlapping responsibilities for several different beneficiary groups. This may be explained by the transversal nature of certain inclusion policies, such as on gender and disabilities, that are integrated into education, training and employment policies in many countries.

<sup>(4)</sup> NEETS: people not in education, employment or training.

Figure 4. **Respondents' responsibilities in terms of beneficiaries of career guidance**

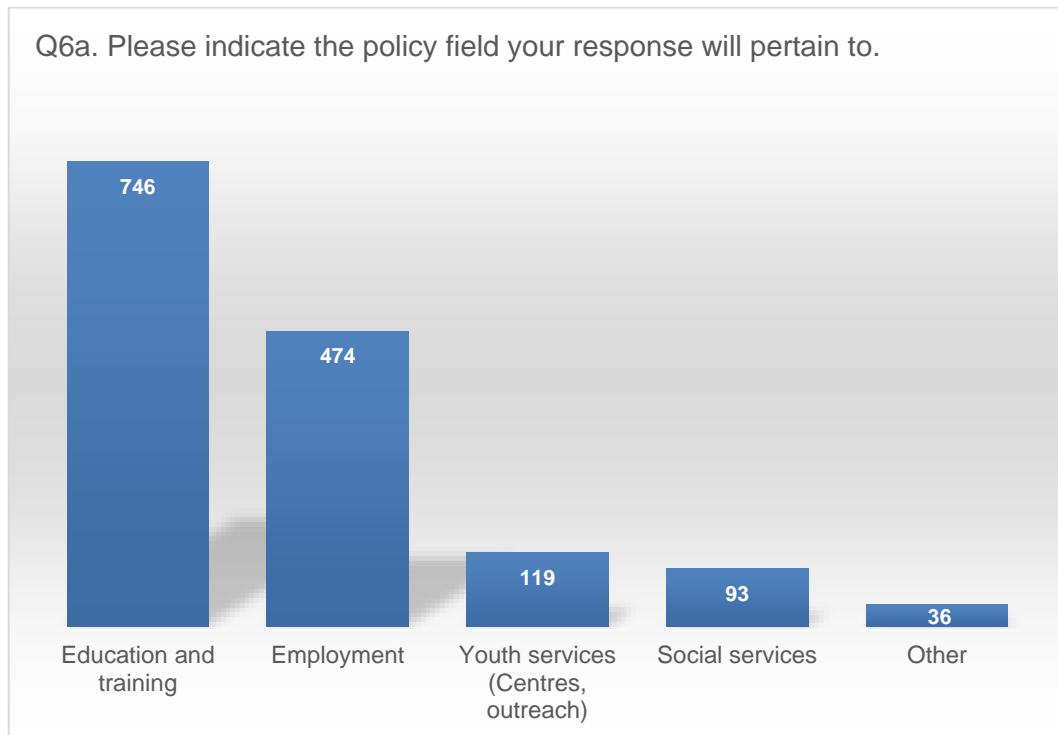


NB: Multiple response possible.  
N=963

Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.



Figure 5. Responses policy field



NB: Multiple responses possible.  
N=963.

Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

Finally, respondents were asked which policy field their response pertained to. A majority (77%) marked their responses as pertaining to education and training, while 49% identified the employment policy field. Around 30% of the respondents marked education and training together with employment. Other fields (e.g. youth or social services) were marked by around a quarter of the respondents, who in most cases also identified their responses as pertaining to education and training or employment. In total, only around 4% of the respondents identified their answers as exclusively pertaining to youth or social services.

## CHAPTER 3.

# Career guidance as part of government response to the pandemic

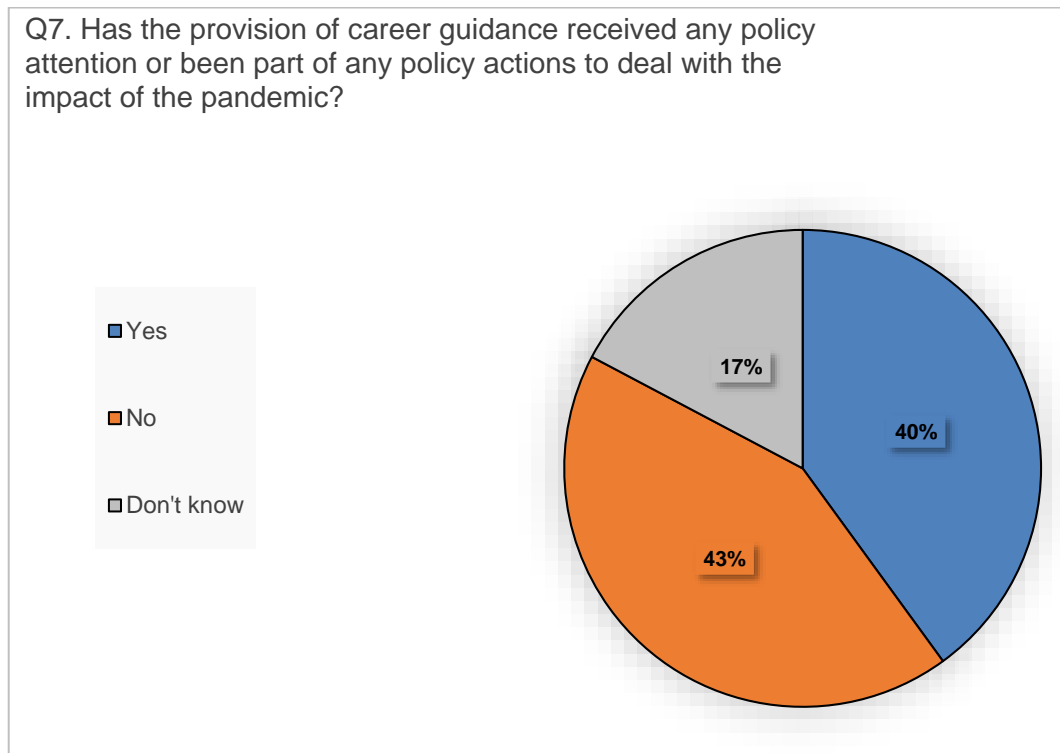
### 3.1. Policy responses to the pandemic

This section looks at how respondents perceived the attention that governments gave to career guidance during the initial stages of the pandemic and how it has been part of the response to the Covid-19 crisis. It also presents some examples of responses drawn from the data from the open-ended responses.

Government attention and interest in career guidance is normally expressed through a range of policy instruments (regulatory, economic, information) to implement policies for career guidance. Regulatory instruments include government decisions, laws, mandates, regulations, guidelines, procedures, statements of priorities and principles, and standards. Economic incentives refer to the financial, material, physical and human resources that assist organisations in implementing their policies. Public information campaigns are used to influence people's behaviour – e.g. to make the public aware of the existence of career services and to encourage their use (McCarthy and Borbély-Pecze, 2020a).

A total of 40% of respondents reported that career guidance had received policy attention from government during the early pandemic but a comparable percentage stated that no such attention had been given. There were some interesting within-country differences (e.g. Canada and Spain), where policy officials reported increased policy attention while practitioners reported no change.

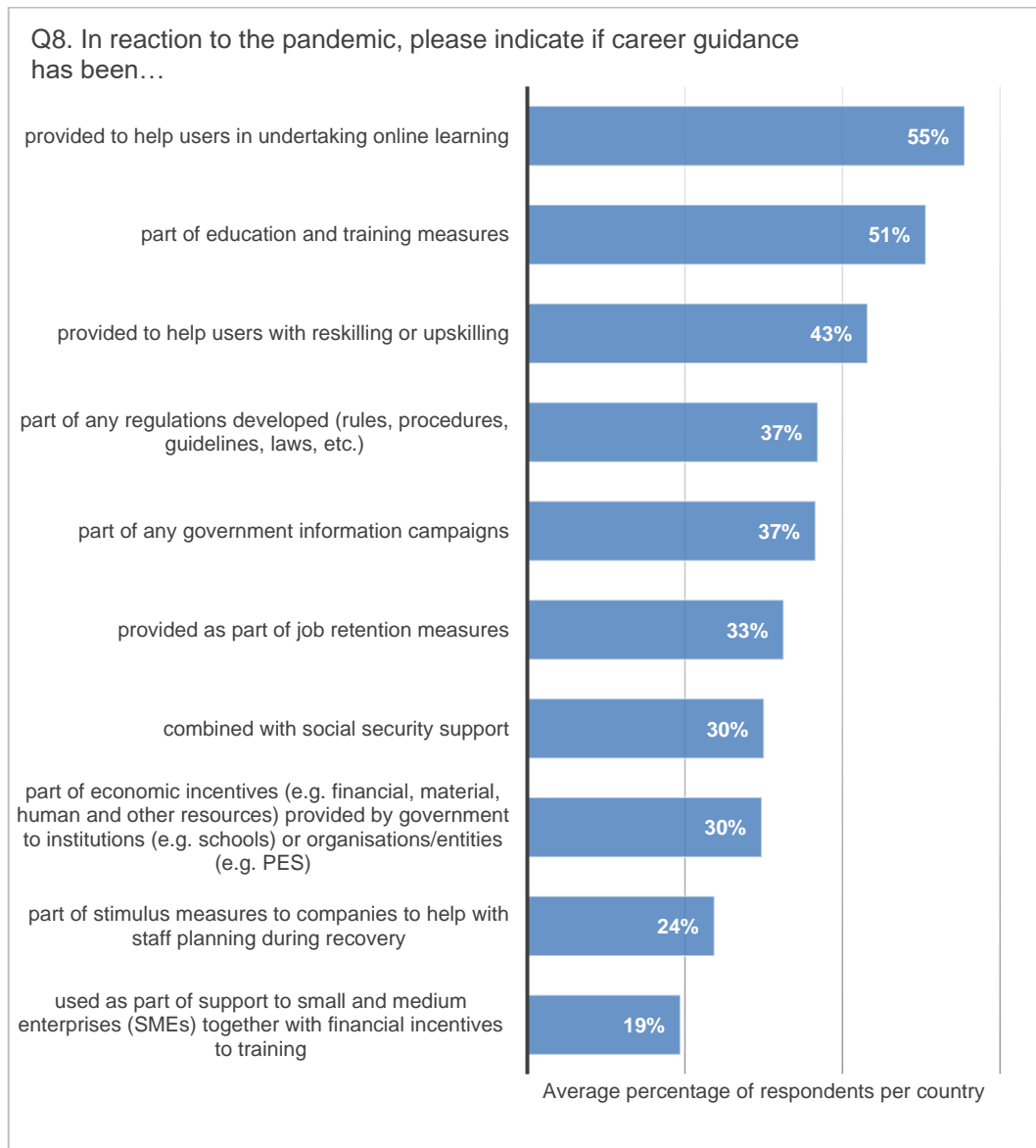
Figure 6. Policy attention to career guidance



NB: N=936.  
 Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

In terms of regulatory instruments, the most frequently noted policy attention or actions involve the inclusion of career guidance interventions with regard to online learning (55%), education and training measures (51%), and reskilling and upskilling programmes (43%). Career guidance provision was least referenced in support measures for companies, especially for small to medium enterprises (SMEs) (19%). New regulations for career guidance were developed in some countries, such as Ireland, where the Department of Education and Skills published guidelines for career guidance practitioners on providing online support in the context of school closures due to Covid-19.

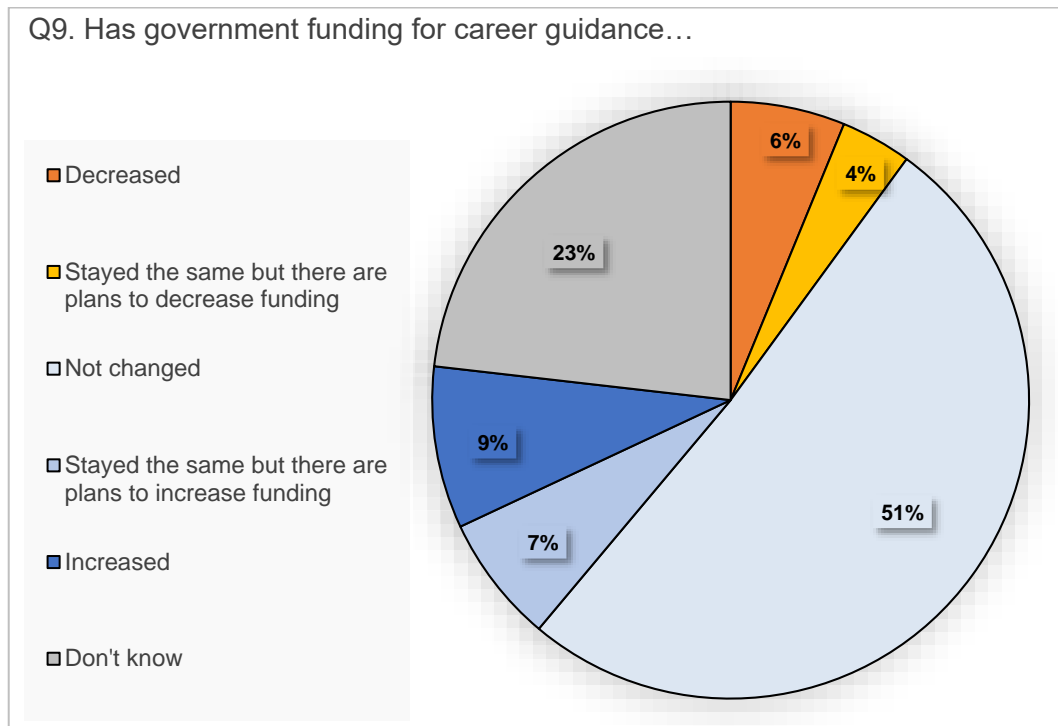
Figure 7. **Role of career guidance in the pandemic**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

In terms of providing increased funding (economic incentives) during the period, the majority of respondents reported no changes in funding for career guidance. Where change did occur, there was a stronger tendency to increase rather than to decrease funding for such provision. In Norway, for example, a respondent indicated that counties had received increased funding as an incentive to regional guidance providers to better serve the career guidance needs of the newly unemployed. The counties were also noted to have received increased funding to provide more career guidance to refugees in integration programmes.

Figure 8. Career guidance funding during the pandemic



NB: N=935

Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

In some countries, there seems to be a clear commitment by governments to prioritise career guidance. The Irish government announced the allocation of an additional 120 career guidance counsellor posts for second-level schools as part of a package and plan to support student wellbeing in the context of the reopening of schools. However, this was also viewed nationally as another incremental step in redressing the severe cutbacks to the provision of career guidance in schools that were part of the government response in 2012 to the crisis in public finances that beset Ireland at that time. In Singapore, a public commitment was made to double the availability of counsellors (Ministry of Education of Singapore, 2020). In England too, greater investment in guidance was announced in July 2020 by UK finance minister Rishi Sunak, who said (July 2020): ‘We can do more for young people; [...] the evidence says careers advice works, so we will fund it, with enough new careers advisers to support over a quarter of a million more people.’

With reference to information campaigns, the third category of government policy instruments for career guidance, few examples were given by respondents of government-sponsored information campaigns that encouraged the use of career guidance services at a time of increased social and economic uncertainty caused by Covid-19.

### 3.2. Practice changes

The survey asked respondents whether any noteworthy guidance practices, which other countries could learn from, had appeared in their countries in response to the pandemic, and, if yes, to share details. Fifty respondents shared new and emerging practices. The remainder of this chapter summarises their responses. It should be stressed that the survey reflects the perceptions of pandemic responses of policy officials, managers and practitioners involved in career guidance, providing individuals' perspectives on how governments and guidance systems during the early stages of the pandemic responded to the lockdown and the new culture of social distancing. There were few concrete examples provided that could be reported on. This might be attributed to the fact that the survey went out before many services, practitioners and providers had adjusted to the situation, and reflect the fact that systems and governments had other priorities to cope with (Cedefop, 2020).

A common refrain among respondents (notably Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Sri Lanka, Spain, Singapore and Wales) was that support for users (young and adult) had been transferred online. Such transfers varied in strength and effect from country to country. A researcher from Russia explained: 'All attempts to do what they did before, only remotely, look home-grown and artisanal. Only those few remote distance career guidance practices that were developed and tested long before the pandemic worked effectively.'

Several practitioners from different countries (e.g. England, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Malta and Montenegro) reported introducing greater use of email, online one-to-one counselling, webinars, online job fairs and other guidance sessions using such channels as Skype, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Facebook community groups and YouTube for tutorials related to career guidance. Webinars were introduced for school-leavers (Scotland) and parents (Denmark, Wales) and virtual university career days were introduced in Greece. Educational institutions reported virtual open days (Wales), online question-and-answer sessions about courses and application processes (Ireland) and welcome sessions, after confinement, designed to reduce student stress and tackle psychological distress (Australia, France). In Latvia, Morocco and Spain, respondents reported significant increases in the use of digital documents, accessible through websites, rather than paper copies for administering and delivering guidance provision. This is in line with other reports, such as the one by Holland and Mann (April, 2020) which indicated:

'As Estonia went into confinement in mid-March, the total number of counselling sessions dropped to around 600 per week. Since then, demand for remote counselling has skyrocketed. Between January and March 2020, the

number of remote sessions rose from 182 to 1 327, and this excludes use of Microsoft Teams.’

Non-digital distance methods also proved useful during confinement, including telephone counselling (Chile, Greece, Spain), a redundancy hotline (Scotland) and guidance through radio shows (Turkey). A guidance practitioner from Estonia, for example, indicated that there had been a rapid switch from face-to-face delivery to telephone consultations.

In many cases, innovation was sought to improve access and outreach of career support. In Mongolia, many guidance practitioners responded to the crisis by becoming active for the first time on social media. In Malta, infographics were prepared to present students with information on post-secondary course requirements, using a medium designed to be visually appealing and easily understood by students. In the same country, voiceover resources (adding a voice spoken description to resources that are mainly visual) were developed, aimed at students with low academic abilities and with disabilities, to ease understanding.

**Box 1. Spotlight on Malta: supporting adults in search of employment**

In Malta, a guidance practitioner described wide-ranging adaptation of services in response to the pandemic by the Public Employment Service:

‘Jobsplus has adapted its career guidance services to cater for the unprecedented changes forced on it by the Covid-19 pandemic. For instance, all Job search assistance, career guidance and job coaches of various vulnerable groups have been delivered through virtual meetings or on the phone. Additionally, since the traditional registration face-to-face process for persons with disabilities with Jobsplus was suspended, Jobsplus has referred its clients to apply for [...] the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD) whose assessment is desk based. To access services for disabled persons, the CRPD special ID cards were [...] used instead of Jobsplus disability registration. Moreover, given that a decrease in vacancies was registered, Jobseekers were mainly guided to seek online courses which could provide better future employability prospects post-Covid-19 restrictions.’

Respondents from a number of countries reflected on action taken to support practitioners working with young people and adults during the confinement. In Finland, one trade-union representative involved in career guidance highlighted the cooperation and peer-support networks made available to practitioners. In Ireland, a manager of guidance counsellors pointed to webinars delivered free of charge for practitioners. A practitioner working with school students in England reported:

‘My organisation reacted very quickly to adapt the way we deliver careers guidance in our area. They have put together focus groups to create and develop a range of materials that the guidance practitioners have been able to use and pass onto our schools. For example, up-to-date labour market information, an eight-session careers lesson plan, information on local opportunities, who to contact for help, an online booking system and so on. Schools have put these on their websites for the students and parents to access. I have personally had regular virtual meetings with my career links in school to plan and co-ordinate the delivery of the guidance. It has worked well’.

A number of respondents felt that the crisis led to innovations and raised policy questions of long-term importance to guidance systems. For respondents from Finland, the pandemic was expected to increase long-term demand for online provision and raised important questions about the feasibility of different communication methods and wider social elements of learning in online provision. Maltese respondents noted that many students had become more proficient in accessing information online. Prior to the pandemic, notifications for events aimed at 16-year-old students would be sent to schools and circulated by school staff to students. During confinement, information was circulated online, particularly through social media. While such engagement by students must be welcomed, indicating a stronger demonstration of individual agency as well as a technological competence, risks remain that some young people will fail to access information important to their ultimate navigation of educational pathways and labour markets.



**Box 2. Spotlight on England: Enabling secondary school student access to career guidance at a national level**

Among the comments from England (UK), some national officials reported a wide-ranging approach to the pandemic, with online delivery of career guidance activities aimed at young people, new organisational structures and a significant initiative in collaboration with the Oak National Academy<sup>(5)</sup>: an ‘online classroom made by teachers, for teachers’, making available ‘free, high-quality video lessons and resources’ in response to the pandemic’s impact on face-to-face teaching and e-learning. One official commented:

‘Through our efforts, high levels of engagement with, and amongst, schools and colleges, employers and careers support providers has been maintained throughout the lockdown period. Through regular, weekly contact with 5,000 school and college Careers Leaders <sup>(6)</sup>, we have listened and responded to their needs [...]. Actions taken include:

- (a) a national ‘My week of work’ initiative developed with Oak National Academy and Learn Live [...] in a week of online lessons to replace Year 10 [age 15] work experience. It hosted more than 50 live broadcasts from employers including Microsoft, the NHS, BAE Systems and Rolls Royce. More than 750 schools and nearly 120,000 young people took part;
- (b) deployment of Careers Hubs: Areas of the country that have had the most agile and rapid mobilisation are those that are actively making use of Government funded Careers Hubs. Hubs have reported high levels of engagement and are a strong fulcrum for coordinating multi-agency responses including those offered by local authorities, Job Centre Plus and independent learning providers. Careers Leaders are utilising Hubs to share best practice and receive targeted support for their most disadvantaged pupils;
- (c) 10 ‘Work it’ career talks, featuring young people not long into employment, and aimed at school pupils in their transition years (Y11-13, aged 16 to 18). These are distributed throughout our network of schools and colleges;
- (d) refocusing providers, to support them to find new ways to deliver careers activity in online circumstances.’

### 3.3. Conclusions

The results of the survey suggest that, while career guidance was considered by many countries in their immediate responses to the pandemic, this was by no means always the case. Responses suggest that guidance has been more strongly

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(<sup>5</sup>) See the welcome page of the Oak National Academy: <https://www.thenational.academy/>

(<sup>6</sup>) A Career Leader is responsible for the delivery of the career guidance programmes of secondary schools in England. For more information about the role see: <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/understanding-careers-leader-role-careers-enterprise.pdf>.

recognised as a policy imperative by officials working in education than their peers responsible for dealing with adult unemployment. This may be a reflection of survey respondents, but is likely to reflect the weaker adult guidance infrastructure found in many countries. Most of the support provided to youth and adults has moved online, making use of a range of online tools as well as non-digital distance tools.

The closures of education and training institutions have forced the creation of online spaces for student learning at every level of education, including the provision of career guidance. While career guidance receives some mention in education and training measures, the threats of unemployment and underemployment are huge, and this should be factored into support measures for SMEs and for the reskilling and upskilling of workers.

Through 2020, a number of countries have increased investment in career guidance in response to the unprecedented circumstances created by the pandemic. The results of the survey suggest that many people working in career guidance around the world are struggling to hear such messages.

Innovative practice was revealed by the survey. Much of it represented a ramping-up of alternative means of face-to-face delivery developed prior to the pandemic; the Covid crisis served to rapidly expand such practice. In a number of countries, however, new approaches were trialled. In all cases, changes in practice were designed to make career guidance more accessible. In this way, and if delivered so as to ensure equity of access, innovation represents a positive development in the provision of guidance. At a time when social distancing is set to continue for all, and further periods of lockdown and quarantine are to be expected for schools and institutions where the coronavirus is detected, opportunity exists for considerable peer learning between countries.

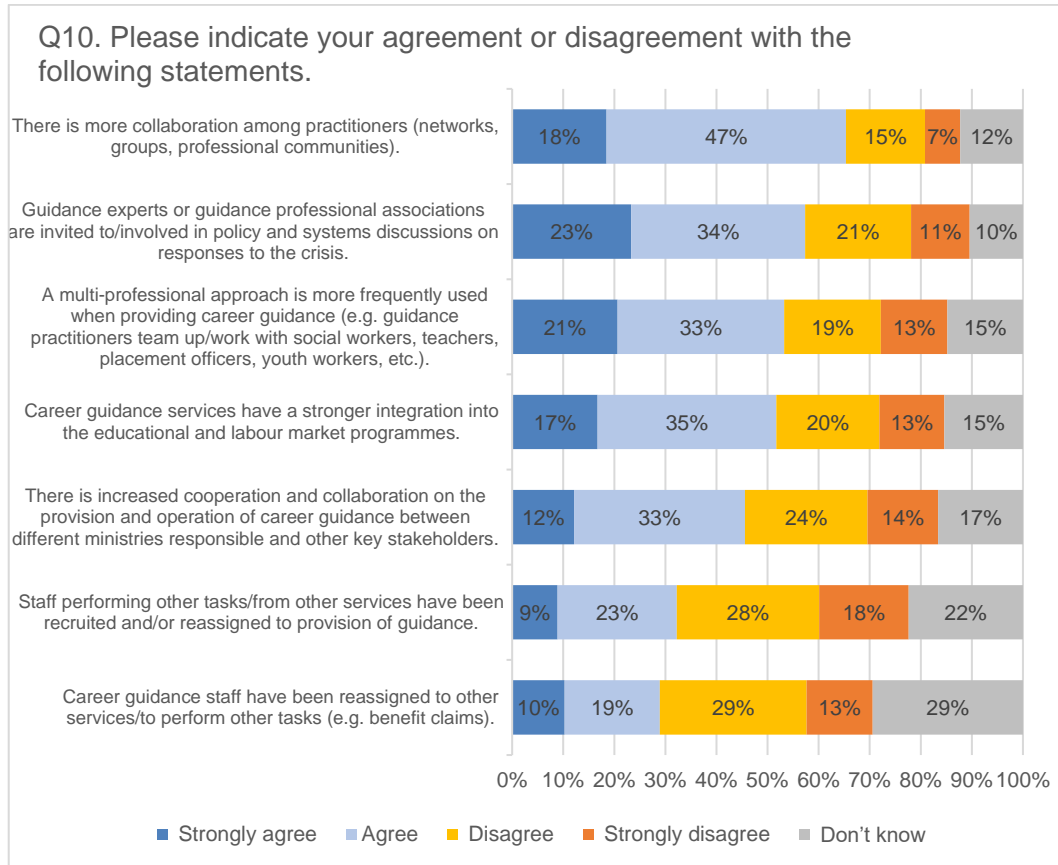
## CHAPTER 4.

# Cooperation among stakeholders

This section concerns cooperation among stakeholders and partners of career guidance services since the pandemic began and during the period of social distancing or other similar restrictions (e.g. lockdown). The aim is to examine whether the Covid-19 pandemic as a common challenge across sectors acted as a catalyst for more structured joint efforts in career guidance. The respondents were asked to express their views on: guidance community involvement in policy responses to the crisis; recruitment or reassignment of staff members in guidance services; recruitment or reassignment of career professionals to other tasks; integration of career services in educational and labour market programmes; enhancement of multi-professional approach in service delivery; cross-sectoral cooperation between government sectors and other stakeholders, and collaboration among practitioners and professional communities.

The overall results of this study show an increased perceived level of cooperation between stakeholders, with variances in the modes of cooperation. It appears that the pandemic has increased cooperation in career guidance more among practitioners than between government sectors. Around two thirds of the respondents (65%) agreed or strongly agreed that collaboration had increased among practitioners (networks, groups and professional communities). Some respondents stated in the open-ended questions that the shift to online communication had provided more chances to engage with stakeholders. Further, collegial support increased in the form of information-sharing and webinars organised by national associations or umbrella organisations (e.g. Australia, England, Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Philippines and South Africa). Open access to online continuous professional development (CPD) has promoted sharing of best practices. In Canada, the focus of national conference programmes shifted to urgent themes (e.g. job-search skills) rather than addressing individual career developmental needs. In Armenia, practitioners developed virtual career education lessons, which were broadcast on public television.

Figure 9. **Cooperation among stakeholders and partners of career guidance services**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

Cooperation among professionals emerged also through international professional networks, which shared examples of good practices during online events around this theme. A more targeted example of cross-border cooperation was identified by the Nordic-Baltic countries, where representatives from different countries shared experiences in responding to the pandemic.

Over half (57%) of the respondents replied that career experts or professional associations had been invited to policy and systems discussions on responses to the crisis. On the other hand, representatives of national professional associations reported that they had been advocating for active engagement in policy discussions on providing career guidance with seemingly little or infrequent response from government.

According to half of the respondents (53%), a multi-professional approach is more frequently used when providing guidance services. Guidance professionals work more closely with social workers, teachers, placement officers and youth workers. In Australia, career professionals have cooperated at local level with youth health organisations and expanded this networked practice on a national

level through research trials. In countries where a multi-professional approach was already in place, the means of communication between experts has shifted from face-to-face to online meetings.

Around half of the respondents (52%) stated that career guidance services had been more strongly integrated in educational and labour market programmes. A concrete example was presented from Belgium, where schools had the opportunity to seek support from organisations whose normal activities ceased because of the pandemic. Half of the respondents working in policy advisory or programme manager positions agreed about stronger integration. There were no real differences on this matter between the views of the practitioners, researchers/independent consultants and the programme managers.

Increased cooperation between ministries responsible and other stakeholders was reported by almost half of the respondents (46%). There were indications that government sectors had been totally engaged in immediate responses within their own sector before looking for synergies in guidance delivery. In countries where more structured cooperation already exists, there was little change, as the existing relationships between sectors and stakeholders supported cooperation in reaction to the crisis. The representatives of the government sector tended to agree that cooperation had increased within the policy fields. However, just under half of the programme managers observed growing synergies since the Covid-19 epidemic started.

Fewer than one third of respondents replied that the Covid-19 pandemic had implications for the job profiles of existing staff members. In meeting the increased demand, some countries had reassigned staff from other tasks (32%) to provide career services to individual clients; or *vice versa*, the career guidance staff in the employment sector (29%) were reassigned to perform new tasks (e.g. benefit claims, emergency funding applications). Some organisations, whose normal activities were stopped because of the pandemic, have provided support for local schools to meet the emerging challenges. However, some countries reported a decrease in service provision and in collaboration with other professionals as not everyone had been able to work through the pandemic.

#### 4.1. Conclusion

No one sector (education, employment, other) has an encompassing mandate or the expertise to cover career guidance services in all national contexts and in response to this crisis. According to the survey respondents, cooperation to ensure comprehensive coverage was led by individual providers rather than motivated by

inter-ministerial coordination. It is noticeable that, in some instances, career guidance was integrated in education, training and labour market measures.

The survey also shows some evidence of a rise in collegial support among practitioners, and of cooperation between guidance practitioners and new actors such as social workers or health professionals as part of wider multi-professional networks. Cedefop (2020) has provided evidence of national-level efforts to increase collaboration among professionals and of the involvement of new actors in the provision of career guidance, despite the conditions during the pandemic.

Barnes and colleagues note that the most important factor in promoting coordination and cooperation is the willingness of key people and sectors to work together (Barnes et al., 2020). As an outcome of previous cooperation among stakeholders, many countries have established national career guidance forums or other representative structures that bring together relevant partners to share knowledge on national, regional and local levels. Given the diversity of career services in different settings, the structures for cooperation need to be established in accordance with national conditions. It is now more important than ever to intensify the cooperation between government ministries and agencies, service providers, employers and other stakeholders in rethinking and repositioning guidance in the national Covid-19 recovery strategies.

## CHAPTER 5.

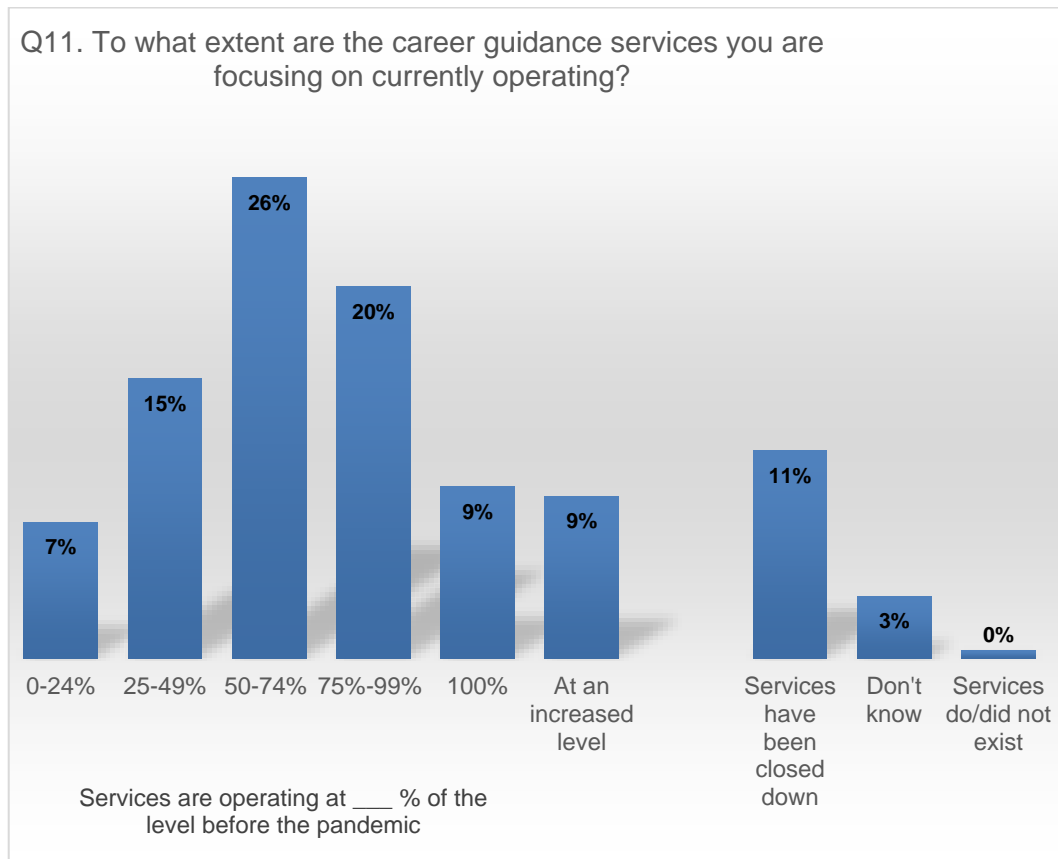
# Provision and operation of career guidance services

This section deals mainly with the provision and operation of career guidance since the onset of the pandemic and social distancing or similar restrictions. The data (collected from 8 June to 3 August 2020) provide a snapshot of respondents' views on (a) the level of operation of career guidance services; (b) guidance activities; (c) communication options offered to users of guidance services; (d) support for guidance service providers; and (e) the delivery of career guidance services before, during and after the lockdown (where relevant/applicable, during the time data were collected).

### 5.1. Level of operation of career guidance services

Respondents were asked to estimate to what extent relevant career guidance services were operating as compared to the situation before the pandemic was declared. The results indicate that, although career guidance services have been partially or completely disrupted in some areas, most maintained some level of operation during the first phase of the pandemic. Some 22% of respondents estimated that service levels were less than half the pre-pandemic level (0-50%), and 11% that services had been closed down. Some 55% estimated that services were operating at more than half the previous level (50%-100%). A small proportion of participants (9%) estimated that service levels had increased compared to their pre-pandemic level.

Figure 10. Career guidance level of operation



NB : N=741

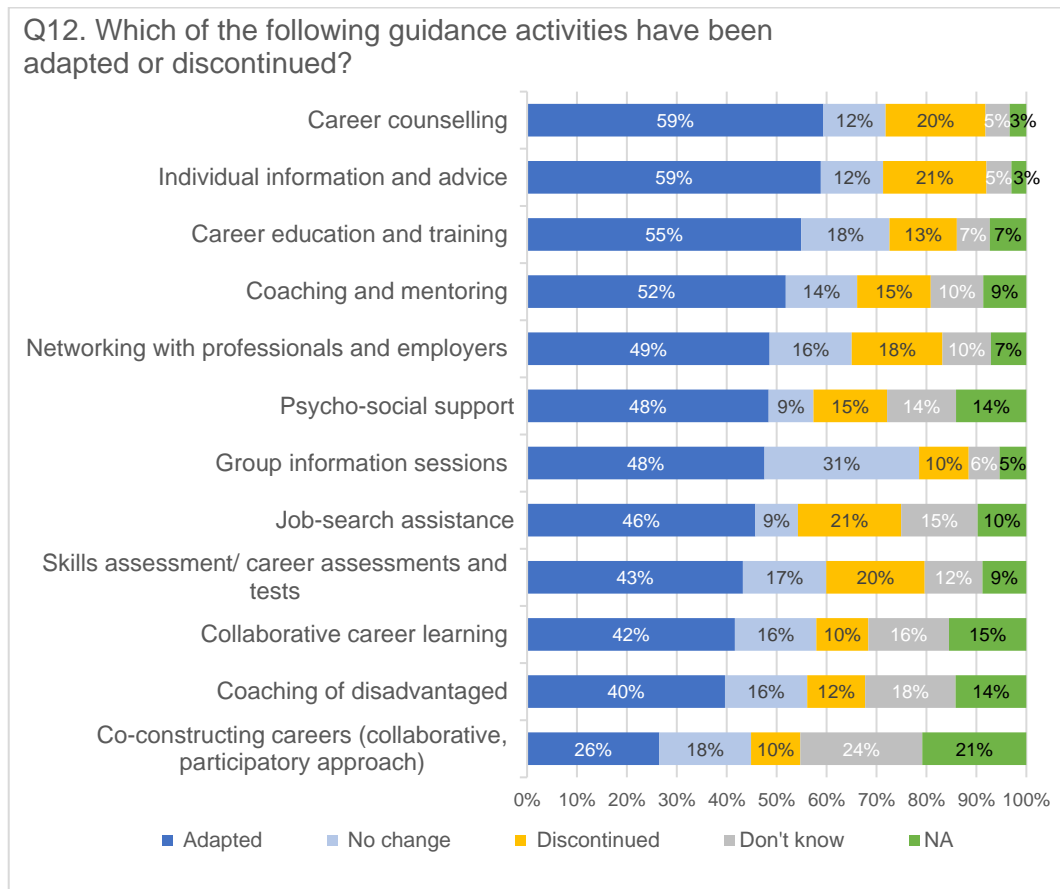
Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

## 5.2. Guidance activities

Respondents were asked to indicate which guidance activities had been adapted or discontinued during the pandemic. A significant proportion agreed they had been able to adapt most guidance activities to the new conditions, while 31% reported no change in group information sessions. However, some job-search assistance, individual information and advice and career counselling activities had been discontinued, partly as a result of the overall closedown of services. Respondents seemed to mark 'don't know' more when referring to psychosocial support and collaborative and participatory activities such as career co-construction (collaborative, participatory approach).



Figure 11. **Level of adapted or discontinued guidance activities**

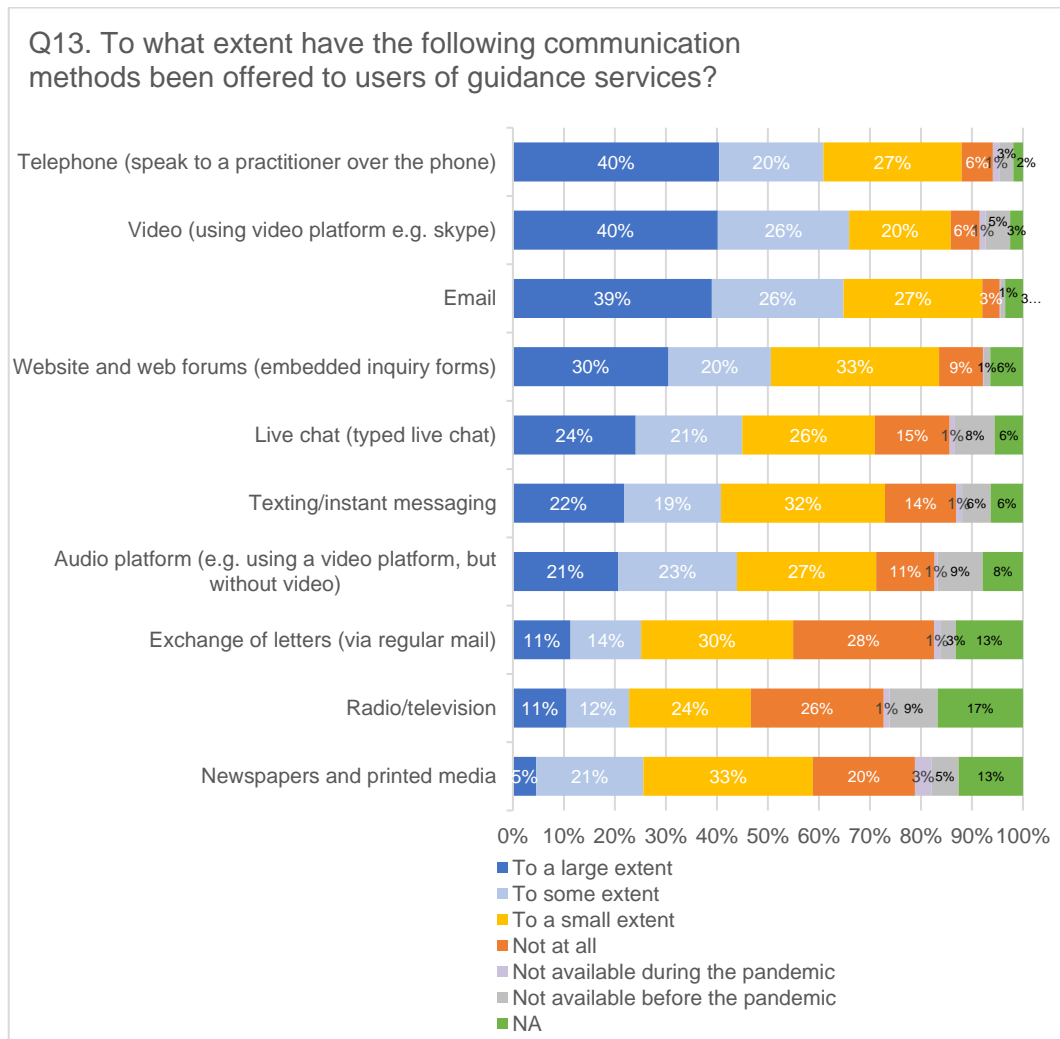


Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

### 5.3. Communication options offered to guidance service users

Respondents were asked about the extent to which different communication methods were offered to service users. Telephone, video (e.g. Skype, Teams) and email were most frequently offered (40%) while letters, radio/television and newspaper and print media were perceived as less widely offered.

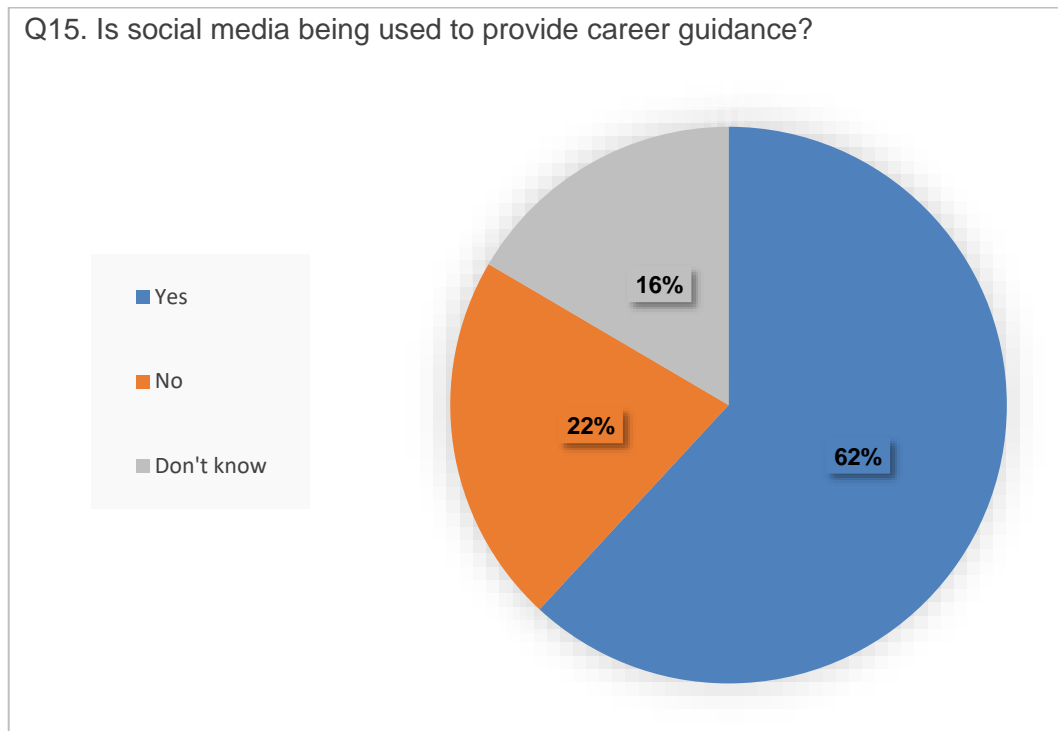
Figure 12. **Extent of communication methods offered to users of career guidance**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

When asked whether social media platforms were being used to provide career guidance, 62% of respondents confirmed that social media were used. Individual respondents listed a number of applications (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram) used mainly to share information, for marketing purposes, to draw attention to certain information (e.g. blog entries, links, YouTube contributions) and to promote events and services. Only a few respondents mentioned using social media for communication or for collaborative activities.

Figure 13. **Use of social media for guidance**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

When asked to identify the three communication methods they considered most effective for reaching vulnerable groups, a majority of respondents (67%) reported the telephone as the most effective means of reaching vulnerable groups who in some cases are unable or unwilling to leave their home. Video platforms (41%) and email (40%) were also considered effective. In many cases, the telephone was reported by respondents to be the only available means of communication.

Respondents expressed concern that vulnerable individuals were particularly affected by the restrictions imposed during the pandemic. These include people who lack ICT skills, online banking facilities, email, internet connection, and computer or smart phone. Such groups were considered the most difficult to reach or contact. Many have only limited access to stable internet or other essential technologies, and others lack the skills and competences to use these media or have no safe space for full engagement. Written communication presents particular challenges for those who lack language competences or the ability to express themselves. Respondents highlighted the need to ensure that official websites and online resources are accessible for people with disabilities.

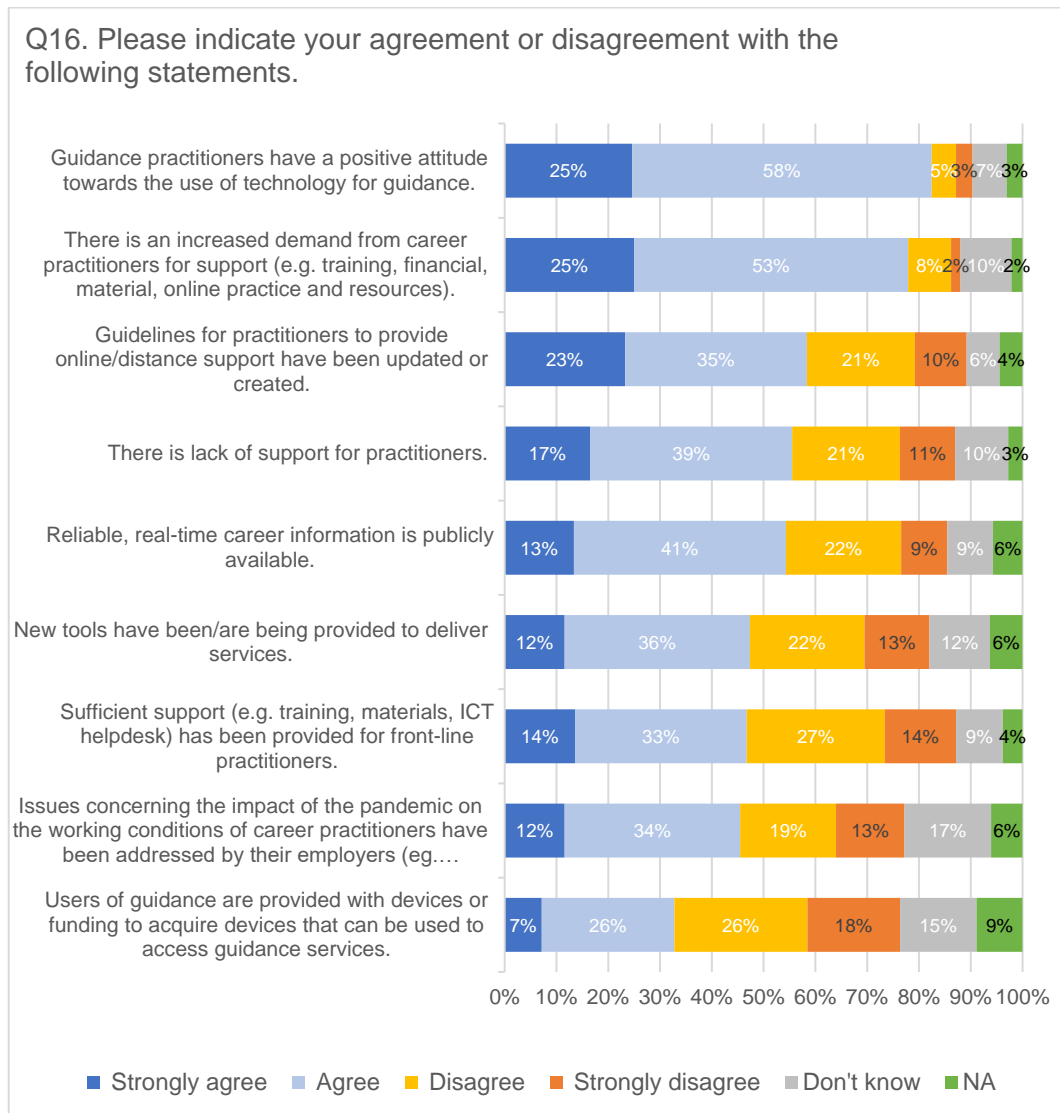
#### 5.4. Support for guidance service providers

Respondents were asked to indicate whether guidance service providers had received any form of additional support. Practitioners' attitudes to the use of technology in guidance were regarded as positive by 82% of respondents. Most (78%) also reported an increased demand for various kinds of support (e.g. training, financial, material, online practice, resources), and 56% strongly agreed that there was a lack of support for practitioners. Some countries were seen to have responded to the shift to remote delivery by updating or introducing guidelines for online support (59%) or by providing adequate support (e.g. training materials, ICT helpdesks) for frontline practitioners (47%). On the other hand, 40% of respondents did not agree that sufficient support was provided. Importantly, 44% of respondents indicated that guidance service users had not been provided with devices (or funding to acquire them) for accessing guidance services.

#### 5.5. Modes of career guidance delivery

When asked to identify the main modes of career guidance service(s) delivery, respondents highlighted a shift to remote methods during the pandemic. The availability of online career information was considered helpful in this shift to online service delivery. However, respondents felt that, while distance tools are now better able to support guidance processes than before the pandemic, this approach cannot fully replace personal communication. Organisations have realised the impact on clients and their desire for remote services, and online tools have gained acceptance among citizens and practitioners. However, respondents were unsure as to whether this will continue to be the case and expressed increased interest in the development of online tools, services and related professional practices. One perceived effect of the pandemic was that both on-site and remote service delivery are considered sustainable and valid operational models, allowing practitioners to work remotely when necessary.

Figure 14. **Support for guidance service providers**



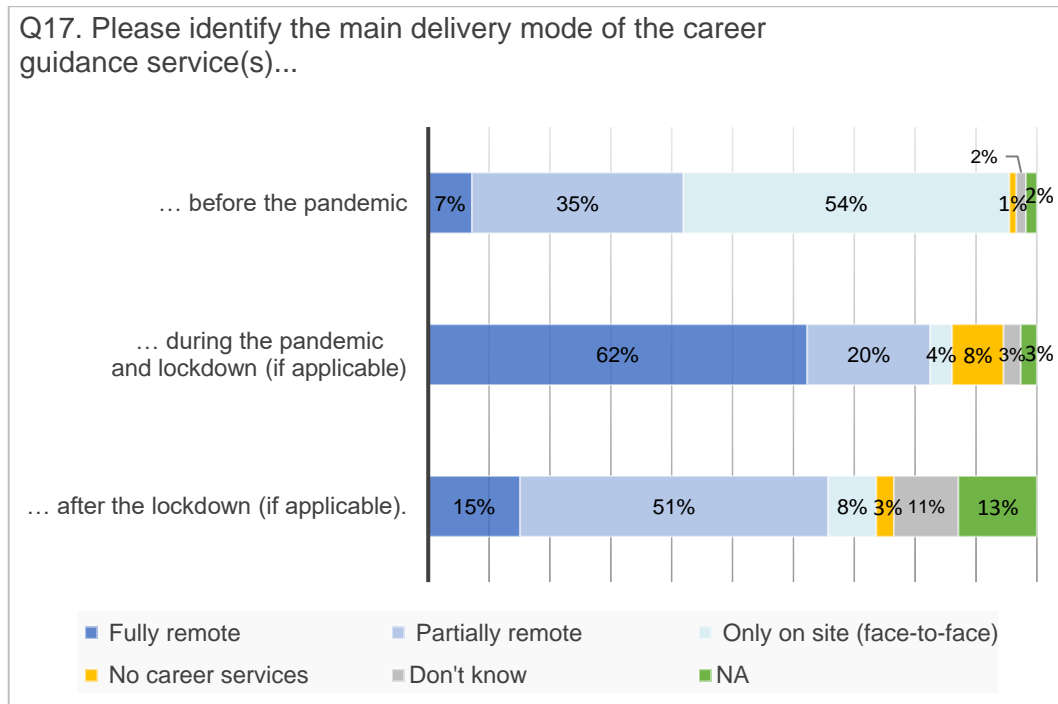
Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

## 5.6. Conclusions

According to the survey responses, during the Covid-19 pandemic the provision and operation of career guidance services was transferred mainly online. Services were for the most part successfully adapted, although certain provisions were dramatically reduced, especially highly individualised activities such as counselling. While digital means were widely used, lower-tech solutions such as telephone support appear to have more relevance for vulnerable groups, helping to combat inequalities in access and usage of equipment. Written communication

presents particular challenges for those who lack language competences or the ability to express themselves.

Figure 15. **Delivery of career guidance services before, during and after the lockdown (where applicable)**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

As a whole, career guidance provision was maintained at some level of operation and practitioners' positive attitude to the use of technology in career guidance was observed. It can be assumed that the option of remote guidance services provision will become the most common and most desired by users. It should be noted that this requires that all modalities be made increasingly accessible to ensure adequate interactions and optimal service delivery for all. Special attention is needed for vulnerable groups.

The remaining challenges for optimal and effective service delivery are investment in technological infrastructure and technical support, career guidance workforce development to ensure that career practitioners feel confident and competent in this aspect of their work, and investment in public access to online services.

## CHAPTER 6.

# User demand for career guidance

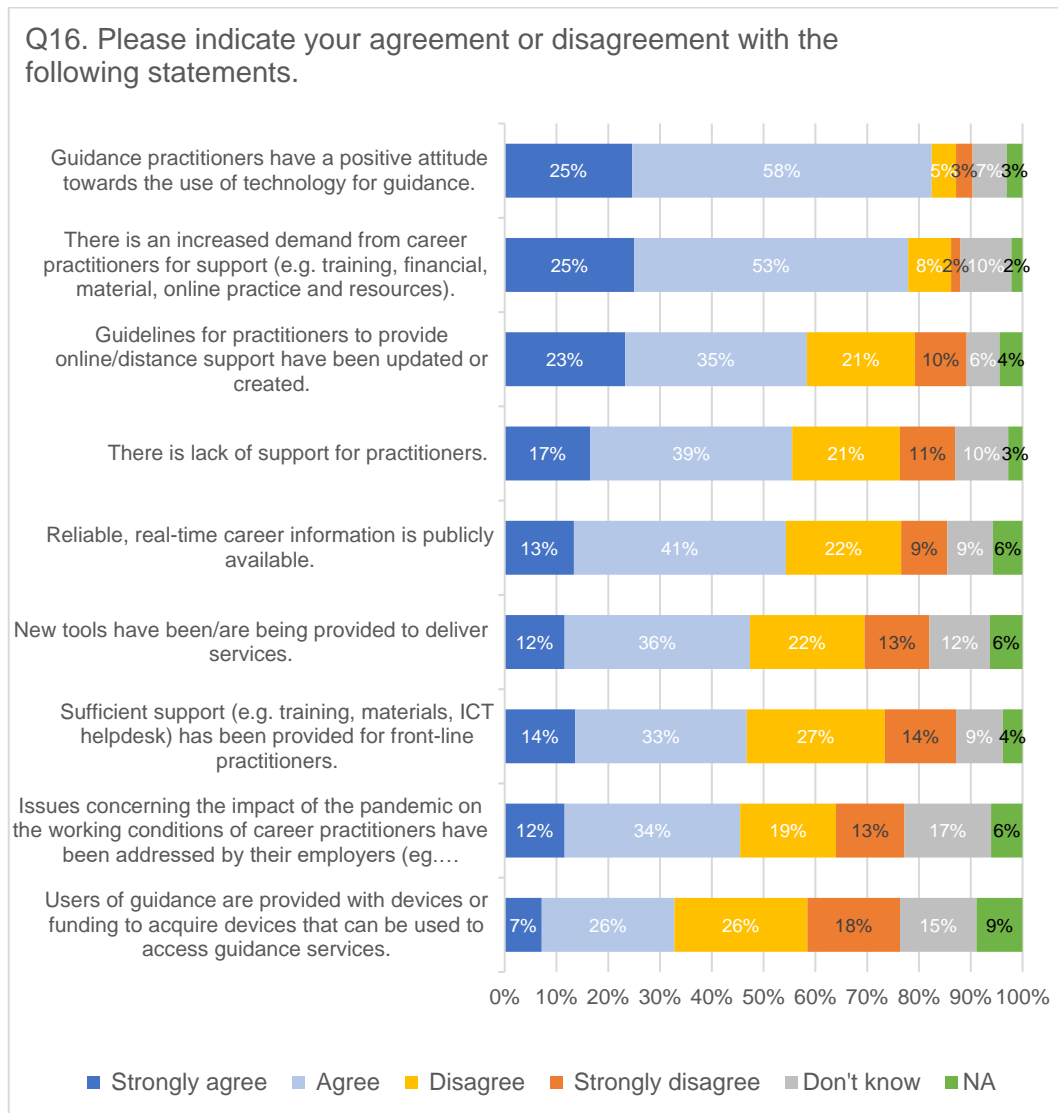
This section concerns the perceptions of user demand for career guidance services since the pandemic began, and during the period of social distancing or other similar restrictions. It provides snapshots of respondents' views on: (a) the demand for career guidance services; (b) the groups that they note exhibited an increased demand for career guidance services; (c) the groups that have been severely affected by the breakdown in guidance service, and (d) the delivery of career guidance services.

### 6.1. Demand for career guidance services

The survey results highlighted a generalised increase in demand for guidance activities linked to support for labour market transitions, skilling and reskilling. A large percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there has been an increase in demand for labour market information (74%) and job-search assistance (73%). For example, in England there was an increase in the request for information about online job interviews and applications.

Similar increases were perceived in the search for reskilling opportunities (70%) and information on education programmes (67%), especially online solutions; e.g. in Latvia the number of questions to the e-counselling service of the National Database on Learning Opportunities has increased. Results also indicate that users searched for more psychosocial support (60% strongly agree or agree), reportedly linked to higher anxiety levels among students and inactive youth. A respondent from Australia reported that many young people seem to have used the opportunity of lockdown to clarify career goals and to enrol in online courses.

Figure 16. **Changes in demand for specific career services/activities**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

Nearly 50% of respondents reported an increase in demand for individual guidance sessions (see Figure 16). Some respondents commented that, while there had been an increase in short individual information requests, demand for more individualised services had decreased. For example, a respondent from Finland noted a sharp rise in online group sessions and self-directed career management skills development activities (described as ‘career guidance courses’) at the expense of individual services, including online. Services linked to geographical mobility (search for jobs abroad) seem to also have suffered, possibly as result of the closure of frontiers in many parts of the globe.

While the data did not highlight significant divergence across countries, in some instances it was reported that the closure of services had a negative impact



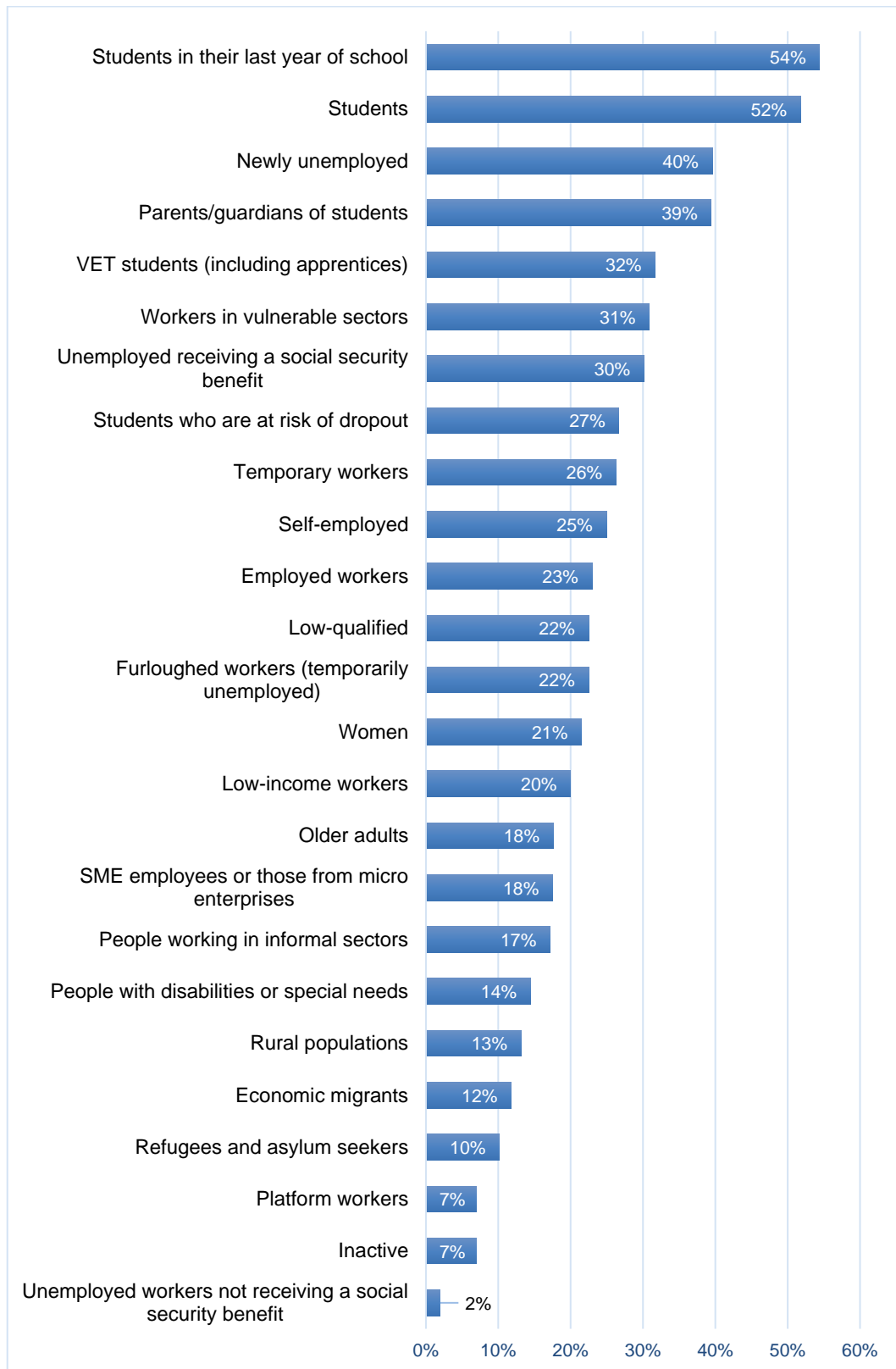
on demand, despite positive trends in search for specific online provisions. In Chile, several respondents noted that lockdown had a particular negative effect on the demands of unemployed people. Respondents working in policy officer/ programme administrator and manager roles reported a stronger need for career guidance services during the first phase of the pandemic.

## 6.2. The groups showing an increase in demand for career guidance services

Respondents were requested to indicate those groups from which they perceived an increase in demand, by ticking all applicable groups. All categories of students (plus parents and guardians) displayed increased demand for guidance, including vocational education and training (VET) students and apprentices, in particular. A total of 54% reported increased demand from students in the last year of their study cycle. Some participants highlighted how schools had few resources and were unprepared to support students adequately during lockdown.

The unemployed were also perceived as having an increased demand for career guidance; in particular, 40% and 30% of respondents answered that this was the case for the newly unemployed and unemployed, respectively, without access to social protection. Some 31% and 26% of respondents observed an increase in search for career support from employed people in vulnerable sectors and temporary workers, respectively – consistent with observed higher levels of job search and reskilling solutions. Unemployed people covered by unemployment or social benefits seem to have been one of the categories that sought guidance support least (2%). A Slovenian respondent noted that, in many cases, people receiving social security benefit were simply following mandatory procedures and did not have options for a different course of action.

Figure 17. **Groups with an increase in demand for guidance**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

Many of the groups of users with lower or non-significant increases in demand can be framed as groups with low access to or low knowledge about guidance services, such as micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME) workers, older adults, people with special needs, rural populations, migrants and refugees, platform workers and the inactive. These results are consistent with a low penetration of regular guidance services in informal sectors and low levels of access by the socially vulnerable and geographically isolated.

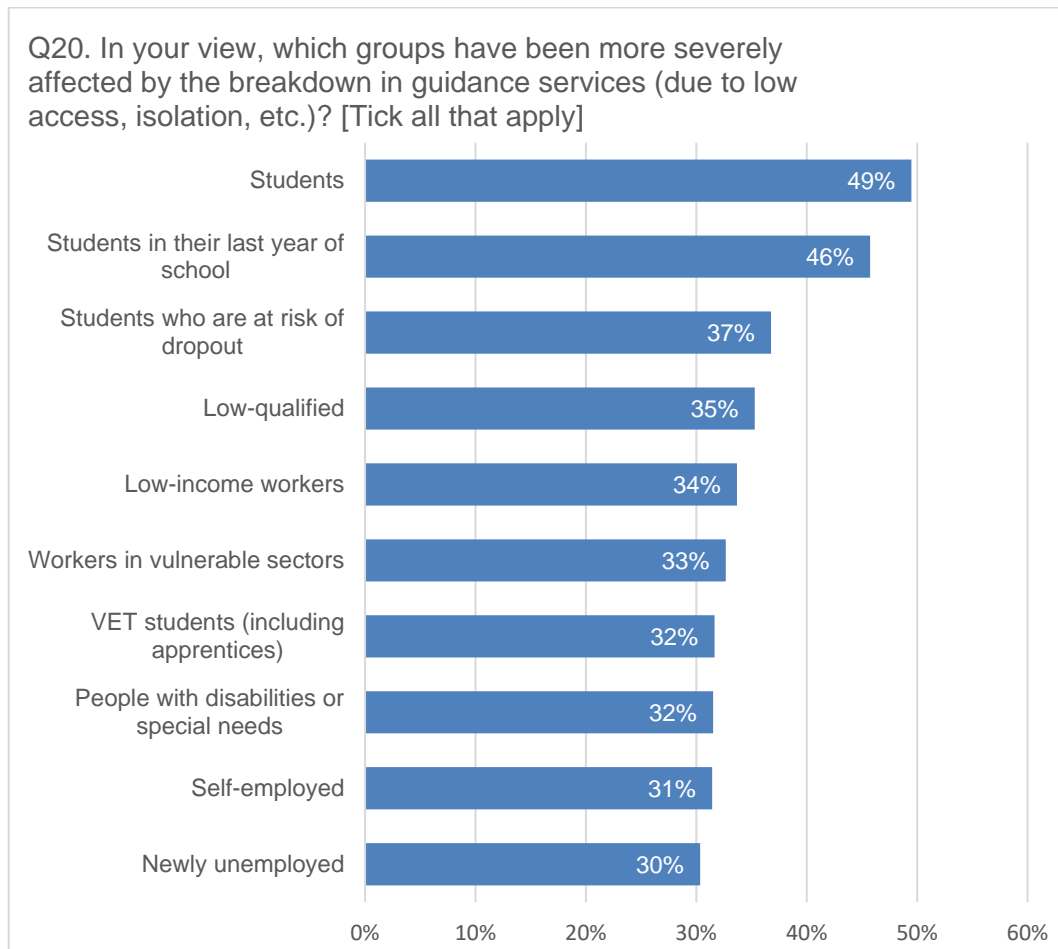
### 6.3. The groups affected by the breakdown in guidance service

Respondents were asked to comment on the effects of the closure of guidance services. There was a wide range of responses. Generally, respondents from higher-income countries perceived the lockdown as less of a limitation due to the existence of strong digital-based services already widely used by the population. Nevertheless, school counsellors consistently reported difficulties in obtaining student engagement in virtual sessions.

When requested to depict which groups were most affected by the closure of services, close to 50% of all respondents once again highlighted students, especially those in the final year of schooling. However, low-qualified, low-skilled, low-income workers and those in vulnerable sectors were perceived as significant groups suffering adverse effects from reduced access to guidance services, alongside people with special needs and the self-employed. These are groups that would normally have less access to such services and may be severely affected by lack of support during a particularly uncertain period.

Low-income groups were depicted in several comments as having unequal access to digital services and lower capacity to benefit from them, due to lower literacy and digital skills. Individual respondents also focused on the fact that at-risk groups became even harder to reach than usual, with adverse effects over levels of skills, motivation and mental health. Importantly, people with higher levels of vulnerability became even more difficult to engage in online activities when compared to face-to-face engagement.

Figure 18. **Top 10 groups most affected by closure of services**

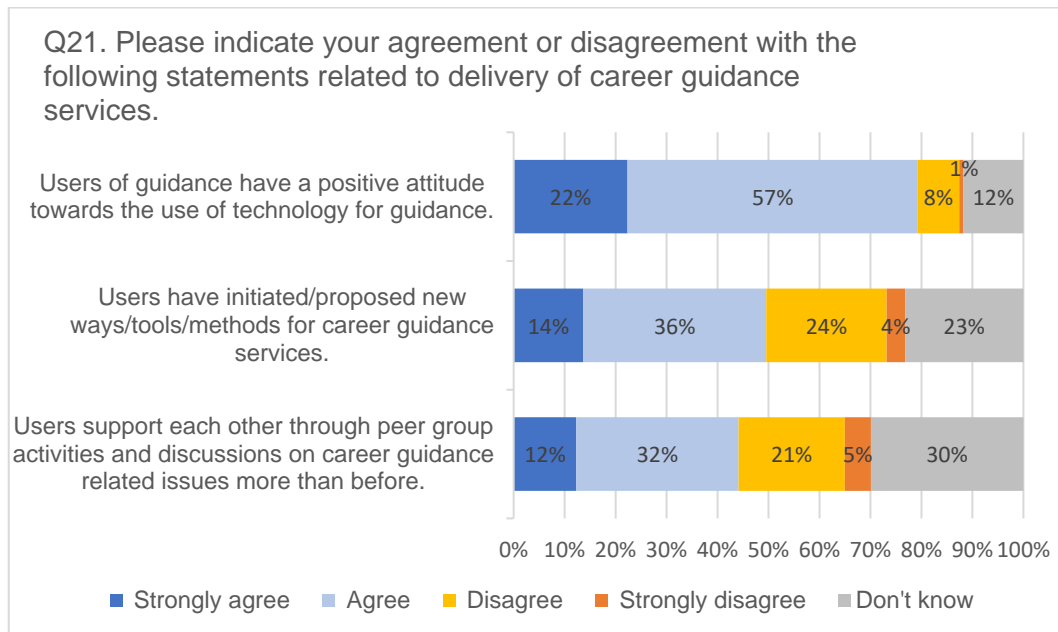


Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

#### 6.4. **User attitude and behaviour in career guidance delivery**

Respondents were asked their views on user attitude and behaviour in the delivery of career guidance. A large majority of respondents answered that users had a positive attitude to the use of technology for career guidance. About half of respondents reported that they had initiated new ways, tools or methods for guidance services, while 44% said users of career guidance supported each other through peer-group activities. However, 30% of respondents did not know or did not provide their views on career guidance through peer-group activities.

Figure 19. The role of users of career guidance services



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

## 6.5. Conclusion

Increasing demand for career guidance services was observed worldwide under the Covid-19 pandemic; in particular, demands for labour market information, job-search assistance, reskilling opportunities, and education and training opportunities. There was also a considerable perceived increase in demand for psychosocial support. Such increases reflect the uncertainty created by the pandemic among specific groups of users, particularly end-year students; low-skilled, low-qualified and low-income workers; the unemployed, and workers at risk. Some respondents highlighted in their comments that demands for individual career guidance services had increased, particularly to meet the demands of those who had lost their jobs or been laid off. The majority of respondents noted that users had a positive attitude to the use of technology in career guidance.

On the other hand, many people in vulnerable categories had difficulties in accessing career guidance services. The level of increase in demand for such services was low or not significant among some groups, such as MSME workers, older adults, people with special needs, rural populations, migrants and refugees, and platform workers. Low-qualified and low-skilled workers reportedly suffered more the effects of reduced access to career guidance services, alongside people with special needs and the self-employed. Future policy measures should respond to the increasing demand for career guidance services in general, as well as to the

need to provide feasible, affordable and accessible services that target and support the more vulnerable groups.

## CHAPTER 7.

# Towards the future

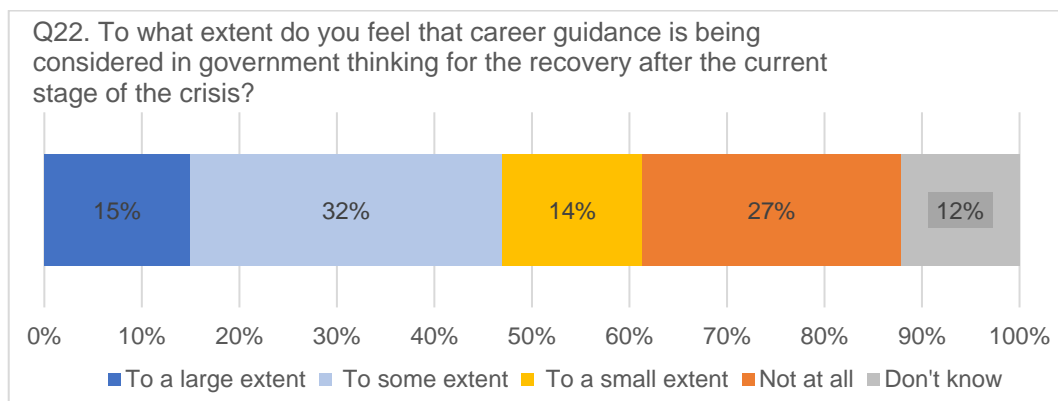
The pandemic has prompted the need to rethink career guidance policy, systems and practices. These systemic issues were already being reviewed due to rapidly changing labour markets, related shifts in skills demand, changes in workers' contractual situations, increasing use of digital technologies, and advancements in artificial intelligence and its use to collect and process labour market information, among other factors.

While the previous chapters have examined respondents' views on the actual role of career guidance during the pandemic, this chapter looks to the future. It presents the respondents' views on possible roles for career guidance in the recovery. It also explores whether the pandemic has triggered reform and rethinking of career guidance systems, activities and roles. It concludes with respondents' views on the role that international and donor organisations can play in supporting guidance systems across the globe.

### 7.1. Career guidance as part of the crisis recovery

The survey asked respondents to what extent career guidance was being considered in government thinking for the recovery, after the current stage of the crisis. Around 47% reported that it was being considered 'to a large extent' or 'to some extent', while just over 14% specified 'to a small extent'. Around a quarter reported that guidance was not considered in government thinking at all. The remaining 12% responded with 'do not know'.

Figure 20. **Extent that career guidance is considered in government thinking for the recovery**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

The results appear to be influenced by respondent group, relevant sector and/or occupation, and region (within and between countries). In Canada, for example, 36% of respondents answered that guidance was considered 'not at all' while 32% said 'to some extent'; this might be due to differences in approaches among the country's provinces, and also to different perceptions of policymakers and practitioners. Respondents from the education and training sectors tended to report that guidance was being considered in government programmes for the recovery to a larger extent than those responding from the employment sector, but this may also reflect the fact that there were more respondents from the education sector.

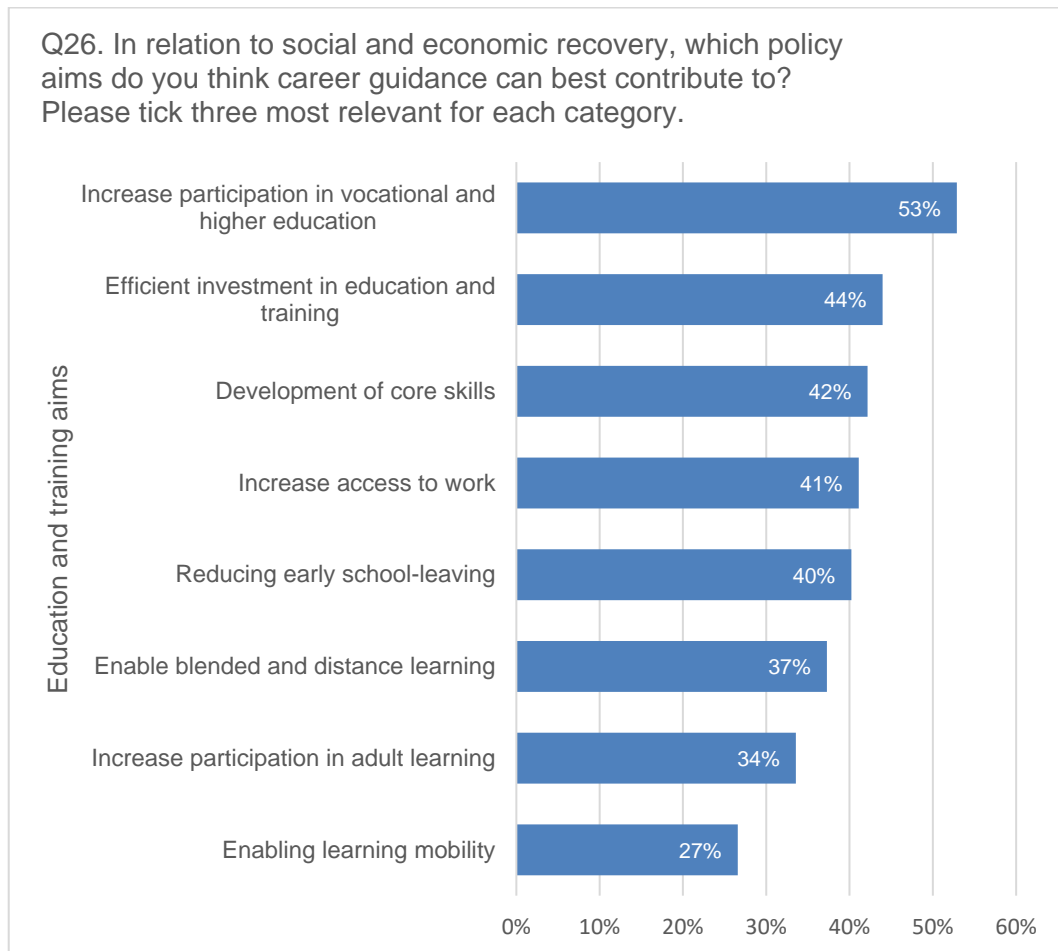
## 7.2. Main policy aims

The survey explored which policy aims, in the areas of education and training, labour market and social policies, career guidance can best contribute to, in relation to the social and economic recovery. The results show that, overall, career guidance was considered to be important for increasing participation in vocational and higher education and for efficient investment in education and training, in skills development and labour market efficiency, and for social inclusion.

In the context of the recovery, career guidance was viewed as contributing to different forms of efficient investment in education and training (44%): increased participation in education and training (53%), including through distance learning (37%), a reduction in early leaving from education and training (40%), and the development of core skills (42%). Increased access to work (41%) was among the top four policy aims. Most of these aims have been recognised in pre-pandemic conditions (such as McCarthy and Borbély Pecze, 2020b) but the emphasis that 37% of respondents placed on career guidance as enabling policy on blended and distance learning may reflect a shift in thinking and behaviour on virtual learning opportunities and the need for digital skills, forced by the pandemic.



Figure 21. **Education and training policy aims**

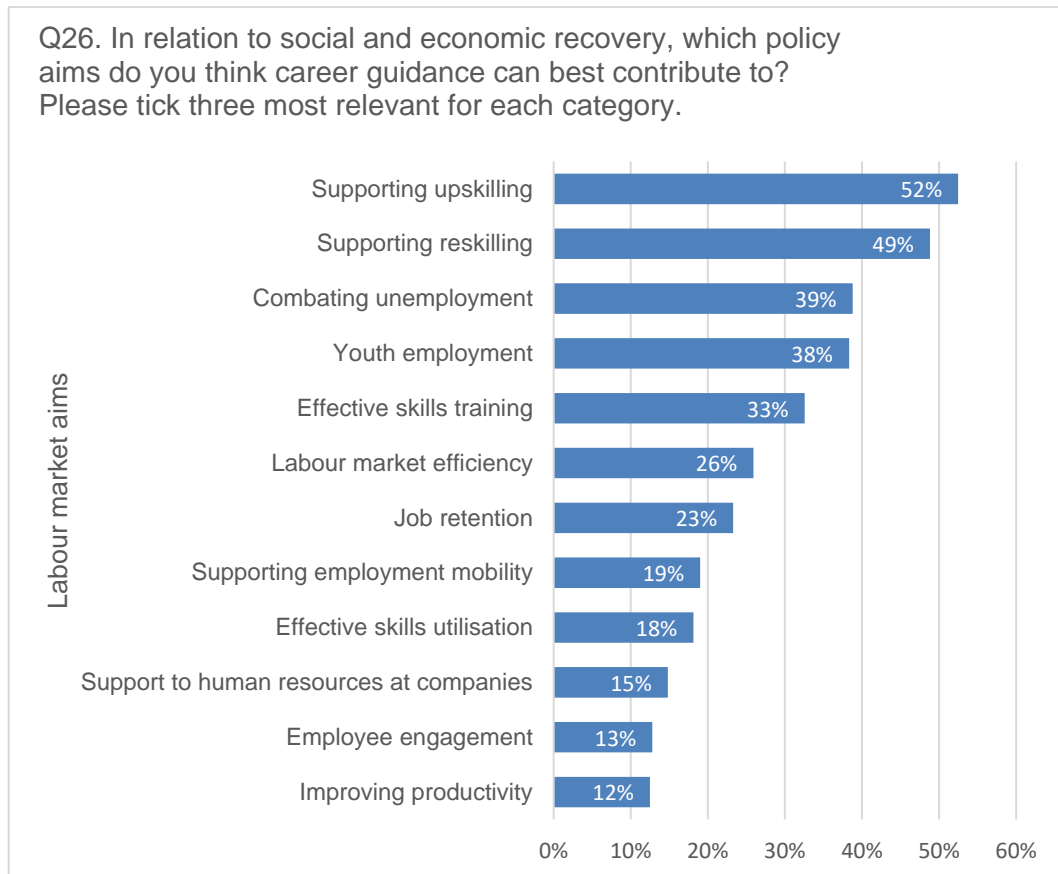


Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

Similarly, the contribution of career guidance to the labour market sector during the pandemic recovery reflects aims identified in previous studies on guidance (such as Hughes et al., 2002; Hooley, 2014; Hooley and Dodd, 2015; Musset and Kurekova, 2018; Skills Development Scotland, 2020; Barnes et al., 2020; McCarthy and Borbély Pecze, 2020a): skills development (upskilling, reskilling, skills training and utilisation) and labour market efficiency (youth employment, job retention, combating unemployment, and employment mobility). The survey results can serve to underline previous evidence arguing for the role guidance can play in the labour market. Around 50% of the respondents on average considered that guidance can best contribute to upskilling (52%) and reskilling (49%). Just below 40% responded that guidance may play a role in combating unemployment in general (39%) and supporting youth employment (38%) in particular. A significant but lower proportion of responses pertained to policy aims related to effective skills training (33%) and utilisation (18%), job

retention (23%) and supporting employment mobility (19%). The responses highlighted a weak role assigned to career guidance at company level: fewer than 15% of the respondents considered as the top three: supporting human resources at companies, employee engagement, and improving productivity.

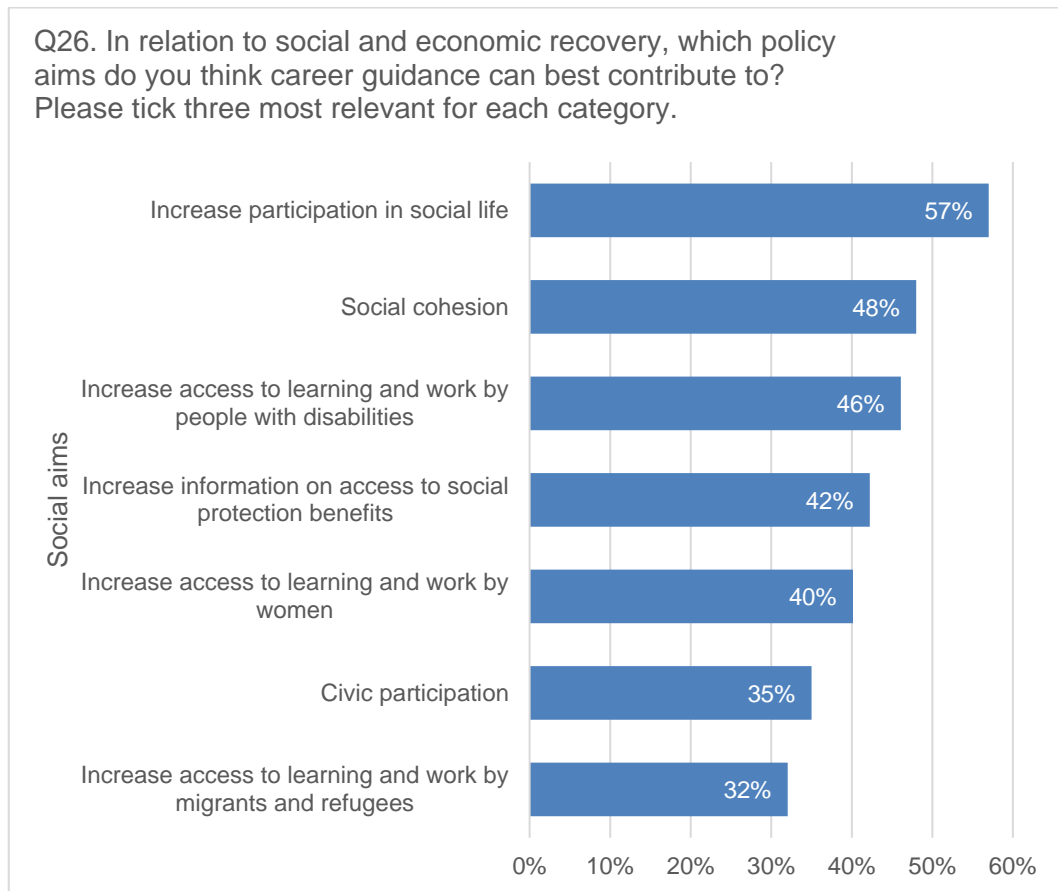
Figure 22. **Labour market aims**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

Finally, as regards social policy aims during the recovery, respondents indicated that career guidance can contribute to different forms of social equity and inclusion: increased participation in social life (57%) and civic participation (35%). Included is access to learning and work for groups who face barriers or are typically identified as having access challenges, such as persons with disabilities (46%), women (40%), migrants and refugees (32%). Such inclusion is a major contributor to social cohesion, mentioned as an aim by many respondents. Many (42%) respondents also noted that career guidance can help to increase information on access to social protection benefits.

Figure 23. **Social policy aims**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

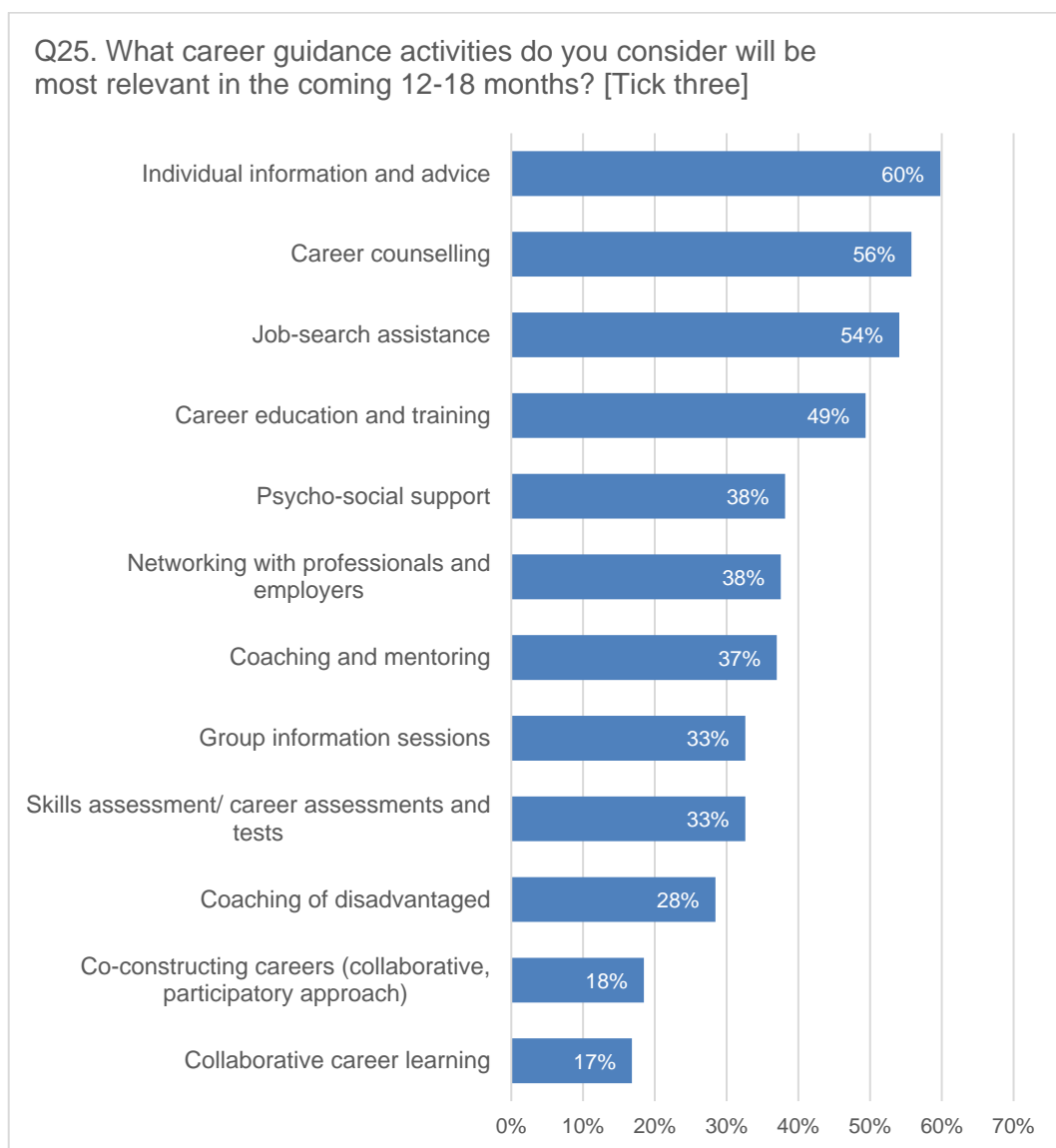
Open-ended responses emphasised the importance of coordinating policy areas and services and the need for innovations in career guidance, more personalised services with regular meetings and effective follow-up and decision-making support; providing all-age guidance on the diversity of education and training opportunities and professions; career management skills development, and increased funding for training.

### 7.3. Most relevant career guidance activities in the near future

When respondents were asked to select the top three most relevant guidance activities in the 12 to 18 months following the survey, career counselling (56%) including individual information and advice (60%), job-search assistance (54%), and coaching and mentoring (37%) (and 28% specifically for disadvantaged users) were considered to be the most relevant. Respondents also highlighted the need

for psychosocial support (38%), networking with professionals and employers (38%), group information sessions (33%) and skills assessment (33%). While all of these activities have been part of a range of interventions commonly included in career guidance services, the importance attached to individual interventions and psychosocial support reflects the need for more customised individual responses in times of great uncertainty. Fewer than 20% of respondents on average considered that collaborative career learning and career co-construction would be the most relevant activities in the coming months.

Figure 24. **The most relevant guidance activities for the future**



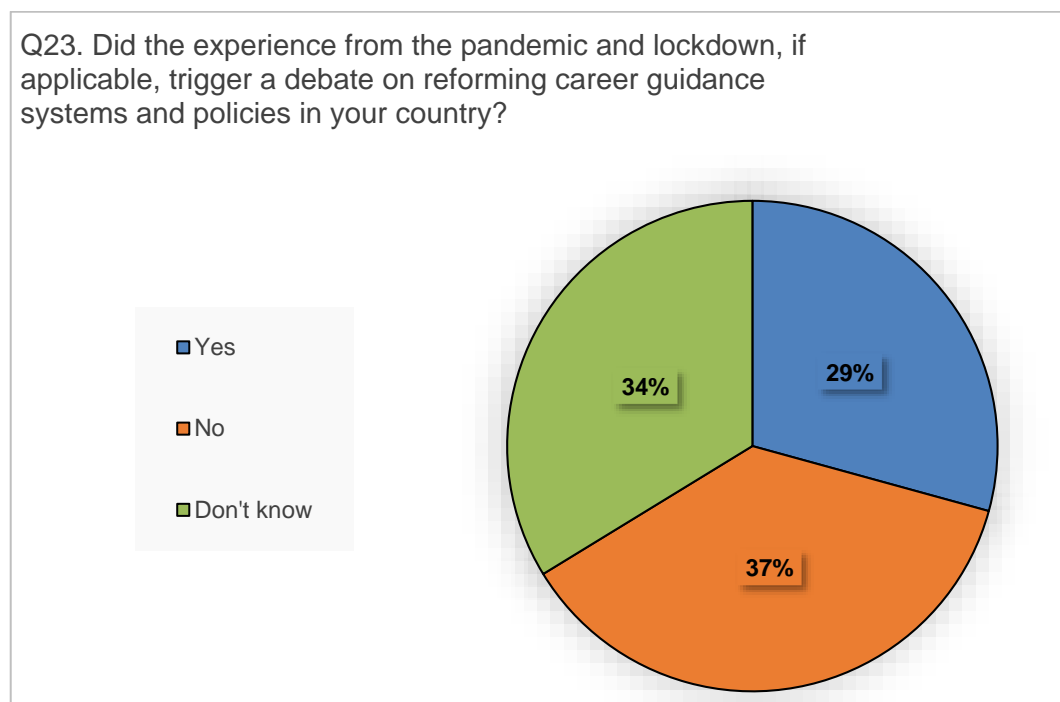
Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

#### 7.4. Will Covid-19 lead to reform of career guidance policies and systems?

The pandemic and resulting restrictive measures also provided a new context for rethinking the way career guidance provision is delivered, as restrictions and associated measures have forced an often sudden move to hybrid or fully remote delivery. Respondents were asked whether this extreme situation in many cases had triggered a debate on guidance reform: 29% of respondents agreed, 37% disagreed, and 34% did not know. Additional comments suggested that the debate centred more on the supply or provision of blended forms of career guidance provision and the move towards remote forms of delivery.

Practitioners tended to answer that the pandemic and lockdown experience had not triggered a debate, while researchers and policymakers suggested that such a debate had taken place.

Figure 25. **The role of the pandemic in triggering a debate about career guidance reforms**



Source: Joint international survey on lifelong guidance.

## 7.5. The role of international and donor organisations in providing policy and systems support

Respondents were requested to consider the role of international organisations and donor organisations in supporting the career guidance initiatives of countries in the post-Covid-19 or recovery period. The rationale for these questions is that career guidance provision faces challenges posed by the Covid-19 crisis, but also the parallel challenges of changes in the labour market and related changes in skills demands, as well as the need to adapt to remain relevant and effective. At the same time, career guidance cuts across many policy areas and therefore is a complex area to manage. International organisations and donor organisations may be able to support policy learning and systems development. Hence, knowing the needs of countries can inform the support work of those organisations.

Of the fully completed questionnaires, around 45% provided responses to the open-ended question on ways that international organisations could provide policy and systems support to countries experiencing problems arising from the pandemic. In total there were 315 responses (212 in English, 20 in Russian, 63 in Spanish and 19 in French), distributed across 75 countries. Respondents showed strong support for the role of international organisations in facilitating peer learning and information exchange, including at practitioner level. This also includes enabling learning through sharing good practices.

As regards the role of international organisations in the overall development of national career guidance systems, respondents stated that organisations have a key role in raising the awareness of national policymakers on the importance of career guidance provision and to make career guidance a priority issue on the policy agenda. At the same time respondents see a role for these organisations in raising the status of career guidance practitioners, which is linked to the demand for professionalism; i.e. national competence frameworks for service providers, legally defined qualifications, micro-credentials and badges, standards, licences, accreditation, national register of professionals, programme recognition frameworks, continuous education and training availability, and solid initial education and training for guidance practitioners.

Respondents further highlighted the key role of international organisations in supporting national and international stakeholder cooperation and collaboration and providing technical assistance and financial support to this end. Technical assistance and financial support were, overall, seen as appropriate in general, such as in facilitating career guidance efficiency monitoring and evaluation, creating projects and programmes to improve career guidance provision, or through offering internships in developed countries. With respect to enabling international policy learning, respondents supported the idea of international

organisations establishing an information system on career guidance provision in countries, which would also enable cross-country comparison of strategies and policies. This would further support the promotion of common standards and guidelines which, respondents argued, is a role for international organisations. Related to this was a firm request to ensure the availability of more research, including on the impact of career guidance. Respondents underlined that international organisations should contribute to improving access to global and national labour market information.

As concerns the role of donor organisations in providing support to countries, a total of 273 responses (40% approx. of completed questionnaires) were received across 66 countries (186 in English, 17 in Russian, 55 in Spanish and 14 in French). Responses emphasised the role of donor organisations in providing financial support; for example, for funding international peer learning, for supporting community organisations offering services, and for funding mobility. A second priority related to providing technical support, *inter alia*, through supporting countries' shift to effective remote career guidance provision.

Respondents saw a role for donor organisations in boosting research on guidance, ensuring the availability of publications on statistics, and facilitating the exchange of experiences through, for instance, the organisation of international events for professionals, feeding of social networks, or creating networks of professionals or tutors. Respondents further supported the role of donors in promoting integrated guidance services at national level. They also encouraged the creation of a global career guidance system to ensure common standards in the light of the global challenges of changing labour markets, changing skills demands, and epidemics like Covid-19.

## 7.6. Conclusion

The pandemic has affected many people and is changing the way we live, work and relate to each other, as well as institutional and systems behaviour. Respondents confirmed the potential of career guidance to contribute to the recovery in terms of efficient investment in education, skills development, labour market efficiency and social inclusion. Importantly, they highlighted the role of career guidance in supporting and enabling distance and blended learning, which itself has been an institutional response to the pandemic. It is interesting to note that debate triggered by the pandemic, where it occurred, has focused on systems adaptation: the supply or provision of blended forms of career guidance and the move towards remote forms of delivery.

Respondents highlighted the need for individualised solutions, given the uncertainty created by the pandemic: career counselling, coaching, mentoring, and psychosocial support. But problems of access exist especially for persons with disabilities, women, migrants and refugees. A fair share of respondents consider that guidance can contribute to social inclusion and support, such as accessing social protection benefits, accessing learning and work by women, migrants and refugees. The pandemic has increased the difficulties of such groups in accessing career guidance. Respondents also highlighted the weak role assigned to career guidance at company level, which should be an integral part of targeted support for job-saving recovery, with balanced restructuring and reconversion processes.

The results show that respondents assigned international organisations and donors a clear role in supporting countries, especially by adding value through peer learning, information exchange, sharing good practices, and financial and technical assistance. Further, respondents emphasised that international organisations and donors could play a stronger role in supporting the development of national systems through awareness-raising at national policy level. This would support the professionalisation of career guidance and providers, and enhance the professionalism of practitioners, the establishment of international standards, and the development of information systems and access to modern labour market information (LMI). Hence, respondents expressed a desire for the stronger involvement of international and donor organisations in national policy, systems and practice development, and in international knowledge-sharing.



## CHAPTER 8.

# Concluding remarks

### 8.1. Summary

This flash joint global survey on the perceived impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on career guidance systems and policy development, during the first half of 2020, has resulted in important insights and points for reflection and follow-up. It was intended as a first inquiry undertaken during a time of unfolding social and economic upheaval and change, and the prospect that the recovery would be long, and the impact on our societies lasting.

The survey indicates that some policy attention (regulatory tools) to career guidance provision has been assigned as part of the response to the pandemic in some countries, supported by additional funding and investment (economic incentives) in human and other resources. Career guidance services, as other types of services, suffered a disruption in their traditional face-to-face provision and adapted by widely adopting distance provision strategies, where possible. Innovative practices have emerged in many countries, mainly adaptations of career guidance provision from physical to online presence. However, it is not yet clear if these shifts will stabilise in the form of more permanent practices, service modes and provisions, and what their future shapes, forms and configurations will be. Apart from reported service adaptations, during the period covered by the survey, the pandemic did not seem to have acted as a catalyst for policy and systems reform – but it was too early to tell at the time, and the situation was dynamic. This is understandable as the suddenness and speed of the Covid-19 onslaught focused minds on short-term solutions rather than longer-term planning.

These abrupt changes may also explain why more respondents observed increases in collaboration and cooperation among providers and practitioners compared to collaboration between relevant ministries and with other stakeholders. The latter collaboration, possibly leading to more integrated services and to more permanent institutional and structural changes, requires a longer time frame and is more likely to support or be part of a reform agenda.

Some unexpected positive effects from lockdown measures were documented, such as the positive attitudes to remote delivery among practitioners and users. This is linked to greater engagement of learners, job-searchers and workers with digital tools, encouraging development of attitudes and skills. Nevertheless, many respondents raised concerns about access to digital support and gaps in delivery to the most vulnerable groups, such as low-skilled and low-

qualified, workers in vulnerable sectors and people with disabilities and special needs. Many users still lack awareness of services, and the necessary skills to make the best use of available services, and practitioners could use additional resources and technical support. The pandemic has provoked social and economic uncertainty for people of all ages, leading to increases in career guidance service demand, especially for careers and labour market information, individualised career counselling, and psychosocial support. But these changes mainly addressed the needs of those who already had physical access to services (e.g. schools, local employment offices), and certain vulnerable groups seem to remain difficult to engage. The pandemic might exacerbate the obstacles for those vulnerable groups in society and in the labour market for whom access to such services has always been difficult. Respondents reported youth groups as being particularly vulnerable because of the uncertainties of the current period, especially students in their last year of school, and schools might have limited means to provide support.

Improving access requires more investment (economic incentives) by governments in infrastructure and technical support, in training/upskilling career practitioners for new roles, and in broadening the means of accessing career services. This includes recognition by employers, especially SMEs, of the value of career guidance in supporting human resource development as well as employee engagement, and productivity. Information campaigns and government measures for certain labour market groups can be used to these ends.

The survey indicates that the role that guidance can play in the process of recovery has been considered; namely, efficient investment in education and training, skills development, labour market efficiency, and social inclusion and cohesion. However, further efforts are required to consolidate this, especially in areas outside the education sector. This recognition is encouraging for all the international organisations involved in this survey that have been promoting the value and inclusion of career guidance in education, labour market, and social policies, particularly in the past few years. Thus, the survey results serve to reinforce this message to member governments of their organisations. The strength of demand for career services, the types of career learning support requested, the range of delivery modes developed or adapted, and the challenges to accessing services for vulnerable social and labour market groups provide a strong basis for government actions and measures in the pandemic recovery period, which is likely to stretch over several years in many countries.

Key support roles for international and donor organisations were identified in the survey. These included supporting national policy and systems development for career guidance provision through policy statements and information, providing technical and financial assistance for national strategic actions, and supporting

international knowledge-sharing leading to the development of international standards.

## 8.2. Future considerations and follow-up

The survey points to a set of key areas of policy debate and potential development for national systems.

### **Career guidance reform**

Given the diversity of career services and their settings, the structures for cooperation need to be established, in accordance with national conditions. It is more important than ever to intensify cooperation between different service providers, stakeholders and employers in rethinking and repositioning guidance in the national Covid-19 recovery strategies. Reinforcing these partnerships will help enable integrated individual pathways for learners, strengthen social safety nets and better prepare communities for unpredictable or unexpected crises.

The pandemic can constitute an opportunity for governments to pay further attention to and rethink career guidance provision from a systemic perspective. There could be reviews of career guidance service provision, with a view to new configurations of such public services in the longer term. This might include actions to develop career guidance that moves from information delivery to more collaborative approaches enhanced by using technology, integrated in the services, and underpinned by adequate career management skills development strategies.

### **Ensuring access and outreach**

Access to digital services needs to be guaranteed to all groups and individuals, by ensuring sufficient access to digital equipment, internet coverage and the necessary digital skills of users and professionals. Remote or online career guidance services require that all modalities be accessible to ensure adequate interaction and optimal service delivery for all.

In many cases other technologies, such as the telephone, could be preferred to resolve issues linked to lack of language competences or the ability to express oneself. Distance services need to be extended to provide individualised support, and develop outreach and holistic support for the most vulnerable groups. Referrals to and additional need for psychosocial support during the recovery for people with more complex needs should also be considered in planning guidance provisions, such as work with multi-professional teams and nearby services.

### **High-impact youth support**

It is important that schools and school counsellors be supported in terms of resources, tools and methodologies, to increase their responsiveness during this period. Impartial information and support to take up work experience opportunities and work-based learning need to be at the front line, including internships and apprenticeships. Labour market information provided to youth needs to be quickly updated to reflect a shifting labour market, and in parallel, guidance practitioners need to be aware of the impact of new technologies and big data on the creation of labour market intelligence. Many young people opting for or being forced into gig work will require dedicated support (e.g. entrepreneurial development, knowledge of labour law).

### **Upskilling, reskilling and adaptation**

Many workers will need to train and retrain to be redeployed in other functions or move jobs. Guidance will need to position itself to provide integrated learning pathways, access to financial resources, validation of skills, and job-search support. The development of transferrable skills such as career management skills linked to autonomy at work and in learning, literacy, social skills, among others, will play a strong role. Effective guidance will be necessary to help people understand and address their strengths and needs, by choosing adequate distance and digital learning opportunities, which lead to the relevant skills and credentials.

Low recognition of the value of career guidance in business environments shows the importance at this stage of promoting career guidance in enterprises, especially MSMEs, which account for the lion's share of employment worldwide. Guidance can play a critical role in enabling firms to have job-saving solutions that encourage strategic staff management towards a sustainable recovery. While career guidance receives some mention in education and training measures, the threats of unemployment and underemployment are huge; this should be factored into support measures for MSMEs and for the reskilling and upskilling of workers.

### **International and donor cooperation**

Finally, international and donor organisations can play an important enabling role in the development of national career development systems. There is a need for continued collaboration in promoting the role of career guidance in education, training, employment, and social inclusion policies by undertaking targeted research in these areas, developing tools and promoting structured, mutual policy learning and peer exchange. The promotion of partnerships for developing national digital systems and increased access to multi-channel services is also a potential area for work. Donor organisations can continue to provide technical and financial

assistance to support national strategic efforts to develop or enhance career guidance provision.

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Annex 1. Questionnaire

## COVID-19 pandemic and career guidance systems and policy development

### Joint survey by international organisations

#### The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on career guidance systems and policy development

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on people's working lives, employment status, and economic prospects. Career guidance assists individuals, families and communities to successfully navigate such transitions. The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted on how policies for career guidance are implemented as part of education, training, employment and social service delivery.

The European Centre for Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), the European Commission, the European Training Foundation,(ETF), the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), have joined forces to undertake **a survey to shed light on the current challenges of career guidance policies and practices** around the world. The survey builds upon the shared commitment to support policies and systems for career guidance, and for universal access to such services.

We greatly appreciate your valuable time in completing this questionnaire. We will use your responses to better understand the impact of a pandemic such as COVID-19 and any measures taken, such as lockdown and social distancing, on the implementation of policies for career guidance in your country and worldwide. The results from the survey will inform future policies and programmes related to career guidance in your country and those of international organisations.

**Respondents:** The questionnaire is mainly designed for respondents who develop and/or monitor the implementation of career guidance policy and provision, such as national, regional and other bodies responsible for the management of career guidance services, as well as relevant private and civil society/non-governmental/third sector settings. Guidance practitioners and researchers may also respond to the questionnaire.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- the survey will take you about 25 minutes to complete
- we sincerely apologise for any cross-posting (there is need for only one response)
- please provide responses that pertain to the area(s)/beneficiary group for which you are responsible/manage in your country/region, or which concern your area(s) of focus
- participation is voluntary and you can stop or withdraw from the survey at any time
- we are not collecting personal data and we will not be able to identify you. Please see [the privacy statement](#)
- for any other questions, please contact Cedefop's CareersNet team: [CareersNet@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:CareersNet@cedefop.europa.eu), or ICCDPP: [jmc@iccdpp.org](mailto:jmc@iccdpp.org)

**Terminology:** The activity described as 'career guidance' in this questionnaire is also known by other terms such as 'career development', 'workforce development', 'career counselling', 'employment counselling', 'careers information, advice and guidance', 'lifelong guidance', 'vocational counselling/guidance', 'professional orientation' or 'livelihood planning' in different countries. The career guidance person or individual professional provider of guidance including specialised support, information, advice and career counselling is here referred to as the 'guidance practitioner'.

The survey is available in the following languages:

- [English](#)
- [Spanish](#)
- [Vietnamese](#)
- [French](#)
- [Russian](#)

## COVID-19 pandemic and career guidance systems and policy development

### Section I - Information on the respondent

\* Q1. Country

\* Q2. Please indicate your main occupational role in respect to career guidance [Tick all that apply].

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Policy official/advisor (government)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance practitioner                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Programme administrator   | <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of career guidance professional association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manager of guidance services (responsible for service delivery as a supervisor) | <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social security administration representative                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent consultant                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employer representative (includes sectoral)                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worker representative/trade union   |   |

Please specify:

\* Q3. Please indicate the status of the organization in which you work.

- Public (government)
- Private
- NGO/third sector/civil society
- Other, please specify:

## COVID-19 pandemic and career guidance systems and policy development

Q3b. Is your organisation/company largely government-funded?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

Comments:

## COVID-19 pandemic and career guidance systems and policy development

\* Q4. Please indicate at which institutional level you work.

- National
- Regional
- Local/organisation/company
- Other, please specify:

\* Q5. Please indicate the beneficiaries of the career guidance activities that you are responsible for/concerned with [Tick all that apply].

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School students   | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed workers not receiving a social security benefit      | <input type="checkbox"/> Women  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational Education and Training/<br>Technical and Vocational Education<br>and Training students | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed workers receiving a social security benefit          | <input type="checkbox"/> Older adults                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Higher education students   | <input type="checkbox"/> Young people not in education,<br>employment or training (NEET) | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth at risk                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult education students  | <input type="checkbox"/> Economically inactive persons                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities or special<br>needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employed workers  | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic and humanitarian migrants                              |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:  |  |   |

\* Q6a. Please indicate the policy field your response will pertain to.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education and training | <input type="checkbox"/> Social services                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment             | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth services (centres, outreach) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: |   |

\* Q6b. In responding to this questionnaire, are you thinking about guidance activities that predominantly involve

- Young people in educational institutions?
- Adults (seeking employment, job changes, upskilling, etc.)?
- Both?
- Other

Comments:

Other relevant information on your area of focus/responsibility that will help us to interpret your responses in the questionnaire?

## COVID-19 pandemic and career guidance systems and policy development

### SECTION II - Government actions since the pandemic

**This section concerns government actions relating to career guidance provision in your country since the pandemic and during the period of social distancing or other measures taken (e.g. lockdown).**

Q7. Has the provision of career guidance received any policy attention or been part of any policy actions to deal with the impact of the pandemic?

Yes  No  Don't know

If yes, please specify:

Q8. In reaction to the pandemic, please indicate if **career guidance** has been...

	Yes	No	Don't know
part of any regulations developed (rules, procedures, guidelines, laws, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
part of any government information campaigns.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
part of economic incentives (e.g. financial, material, human and other resources) provided by government to institutions (e.g. schools) or organisations/entities (e.g. PES).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
part of education and training measures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
provided to help users in undertaking online learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
provided as part of job retention measures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
provided to help users with reskilling or upskilling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
combined with social security support.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
part of stimulus measures to companies to help with staff planning during recovery.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
used as part of support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) together with financial incentives to training.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide examples related to the above changes you have observed:



Q9. Has government funding for career guidance

- Increased
- Decreased
- Not changed
- Stayed the same but there are plans to increase funding
- Stayed the same but there are plans to decrease funding
- Don't know

Comments (e.g. which sector/main beneficiary groups):

## COVID-19 pandemic and career guidance systems and policy development

### III - Cooperation among stakeholders and partners of career guidance services

**This section concerns cooperation among stakeholders and partners of career guidance services since the pandemic and during the period of social distancing or other similar restrictions (e.g. lockdown).**

Q10. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Guidance experts or guidance professional associations are invited to/included in policy and systems discussions on responses to the crisis.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff performing other tasks/from other services have been recruited and/or reassigned to provision of guidance-related services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career guidance staff have been reassigned to other services/to perform other tasks (e.g. benefit claims).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career guidance services have a stronger integration into the educational and labour market programmes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A multi-professional approach is more frequently used when providing career guidance (e.g. guidance practitioners team up/work with social workers, teachers, placement officers, youth workers, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

There is increased cooperation and collaboration on the provision and operation of career guidance between different ministries responsible and other key stakeholders.

There is more collaboration among practitioners (networks, groups, professional communities).

Please describe specific changes you have noticed pertaining to guidance concerning cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders or partners.

## COVID-19 pandemic and career guidance systems and policy development

### Section IV - Provision and operation of career guidance services during the pandemic

**This section mainly concerns the provision and operation of career guidance in your country since the pandemic and during the period of social distancing or other restrictions (e.g. lockdown).**

**We are interested in your opinion as we understand that there might not be data available.**

Q11. To what extent are the career guidance services you are focusing on currently operating? Your own estimate is good enough [Select one. If you would like to report on differences among or within sectors, please provide comments].

- Services are operating at an increased level than before the pandemic crisis.
- Services are operating at 100% of the level before the pandemic.
- Services are operating at 75%-99% of the level before the pandemic.
- Services are operating at 50-74% of the level before the pandemic.
- Services are operating at 25-49% of the level before the pandemic.
- Services are operating at 0-24% of the level before the pandemic.
- Services have been closed down.
- Services do/did not exist.
- Don't know.

Comments:

Q12. Which of the following guidance activities have been adapted or discontinued?

	No change	Adapted	Discontinued	Don't know	Not applicable
Individual information and advice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Group information sessions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job-search assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coaching and mentoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills assessment/ career assessments and tests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career counselling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career education and training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborative career learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-constructing careers (collaborative, participatory approach)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking with professionals and employers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Psycho-social support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coaching of disadvantaged	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify in the box below)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Can you provide specific examples of how these activities have been adapted?

Q13. To what extent have the following communication methods been offered to users of guidance services?

	to a large extent	to some extent	to a small extent	Not at all	Not available during the pandemic	Not available before the pandemic	Not applicable
Telephone (speak to a practitioner over the phone)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Radio/ television	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newspapers and printed media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video (using video platform e.g. skype)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audio platform (e.g. using a video platform, but without video)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Live chat (typed live chat)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Texting/instant messaging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Email	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Website and web forums (embedded inquiry forms)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exchange of letters (via regular mail)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other, please specify:

Q14. Which of the communication methods do you consider have been the most effective in reaching vulnerable groups? [Tick the **three best**]

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone (speak to a practitioner over the phone)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Live chat (typed live chat)                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio/ television   | <input type="checkbox"/> Texting/instant messaging                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers and printed media                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Email   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video (using video platform e.g. skype)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Website and web forums (embedded inquiry forms) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audio platform (e.g. using a video platform, but without video) | <input type="checkbox"/> Exchange of letters (via regular mail)          |

Other, please specify:

Please provide comments concerning these vulnerable groups:



	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Not applicable
New tools have been/are being provided to deliver services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliable, real-time career information is publicly available.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q17. Please identify the main delivery mode of the career guidance service(s)...

	Fully remote (e.g. on-line, telephone, etc.)	Partially remote	Only on-site (face-to-face, in person)	No career services	Don't know	Not applicable
before the pandemic.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
during the pandemic and lockdown (if applicable).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
after the lockdown (if applicable).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide comments here on any relevant lockdown or similar measures taken in your country/region/local area, that would help explain your responses:

Do you have any additional comments on provision and operation of career guidance services covered in this section (Section IV)?



## COVID-19 pandemic and career guidance systems and policy development

### V – Demand for career guidance services

**This section concerns the level of demand for career guidance services since the pandemic and during the period of social distancing or other similar restrictions (e.g. lockdown).**

**Again, we are interested in your opinion as we understand that there might not be data available.**

Q18. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement about the demand for career guidance services.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
There is a significantly stronger demand for labour market information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information on education and training is requested by users more than before.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Searching opportunities for re-skilling have increased.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demand for job search assistance has increased.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More individuals/users are signing up for individual guidance sessions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More individuals/users are requesting/registering for group support sessions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is increased demand for psychosocial support for users (e.g., guidance practitioners refer users to counselling related to mental health or handle more of this type of support, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is increased user demand for more short information delivery talks/chats.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is increased demand for cross-national services related to finding work in other countries.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments on user-demand increase:

Q19. According to your observations, since the pandemic, among which groups do you note an increase in demand for career guidance services? [Tick all that apply]

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Platform workers   | <input type="checkbox"/> Inactive                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> VET students (including apprentices)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Workers in vulnerable sectors                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic migrants                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students in their last year of school | <input type="checkbox"/> SME employees or those from micro-sized workplaces         | <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees and asylum seekers               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students who are at risk of dropout   | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed  | <input type="checkbox"/> Women                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/guardians of students         | <input type="checkbox"/> People working in informal sectors                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Older adults                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-qualified/ Low-skilled            | <input type="checkbox"/> Furloughed workers (temporarily unemployed)                | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural populations                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employed workers                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed workers not receiving a social security benefit | <input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities or special needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-income workers                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed receiving a social security benefit             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary workers                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Newly unemployed   |  |

Comments:

Q20. In your view, which groups have been more severely affected by the breakdown in guidance services (due to low access, isolation, etc.)? [Tick all that apply]

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students   | <input type="checkbox"/> People working in informal sectors                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> VET students (including apprentices)               | <input type="checkbox"/> Furloughed workers (temporarily unemployed)                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students in their last year of school              | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed workers not receiving a social security benefit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students who are at risk of dropout                | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed receiving a social security benefit             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/guardians of students                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Newly unemployed   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-qualified/ Low-skilled                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Inactive   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employed workers                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic migrants  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-income workers                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees and asylum seekers                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary workers                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Women  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Platform workers                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Older adults   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workers in vulnerable sectors                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural populations  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SME employees or those from micro-sized workplaces | <input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities or special needs                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed                                      |   |

Comments:

Q21. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements related to delivery of career guidance services.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

Users support each other through peer group activities and discussions on career guidance related issues more than before.

Users have initiated/proposed new ways/tools/methods for career guidance services.

Users of guidance have a positive attitude towards the use of technology for guidance.

Comments:

Do you have any additional comments on the demand for career guidance services (Section V)?

## COVID-19 pandemic and career guidance systems and policy development

### VI: Toward the future

**This section concerns the role of guidance in the recovery period, yet uncertain, even if restrictions may still be in place.**

Q22. To what extent do you feel that career guidance is being considered in government thinking for the recovery after the current stage of the crisis?

- To a large extent  To some extent  Not at all  Don't know

Q23. Did the experience from the pandemic and lockdown, if applicable, trigger a debate on reforming career guidance systems and policies in your country?

- Yes  No  Don't know

- If yes, please elaborate:

Q24. Are there any noteworthy career guidance practices in your country that appeared as a result of the pandemic, that other countries could learn from? Please share relevant details below.

Q25. What career guidance activities do you consider will be most relevant in the coming 12-18 months?  
**[Tick three]**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual information and advice               | <input type="checkbox"/> Career education and training                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group information sessions                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative career learning                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job-search assistance                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Co-constructing careers (collaborative, participatory approach) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching and mentoring                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Networking with professionals and employers                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skills assessment/ career assessments and tests | <input type="checkbox"/> Psycho-social support   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career counselling                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching of disadvantaged                                       |

Other, please specify:

Q26. In relation to social and economic recovery, which policy aims you think career guidance can best contribute to? Please tick 3 most relevant for each category.

**A- Education and training [Tick three]**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase participation in vocational and higher education | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase participation in adult learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reducing early school-leaving                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase access to work-based learning   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enabling learning mobility                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Development of core skills               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient investment in education and training            | <input type="checkbox"/> Enable blended and distance learning     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:                                    |   |

**B- Labour Market [Tick three]**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting upskilling          | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth employment                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting re-skilling         | <input type="checkbox"/> Effective skills utilisation            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labour market efficiency       | <input type="checkbox"/> Effective skills training               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job-retention                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Employee engagement                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Combating unemployment         | <input type="checkbox"/> Improving productivity                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting employment mobility | <input type="checkbox"/> Support to human resources at companies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):        |  |

**C- Social [Tick three]**

- Increase participation in social life
- Increase information on access to social protection benefits
- Increase access to learning and work by women
- Increase access to learning and work by people with disabilities
- Increase access to learning and work by migrants and refugees
- Social cohesion
- Civic participation
- Other, please specify:

Please provide details on how career guidance can contribute to these policy aims:

Q26a. In what ways do you think international organisations (European Commission, Cedefop, ETF, ICCDPP, ILO, OECD, UNESCO, etc.) can provide policy and systems support to countries experiencing problems arising from the pandemic (e.g., peer learning, facilitating space for discussion, technical support)?

Q26b. In what ways do you think can donor organisations help and provide support (e.g. financing, facilitating space for discussion, technical support)?





	Policy official/advisor (government)	Programme administrator	Manager of guidance services (responsible for service delivery as a supervisor)	Social security administration representative	Employer representative (includes sectoral)	Worker representative/trade union	Guidance practitioner	Representative of career guidance professional association	Researcher	Independent consultant	Other	Total Respondents
<b>Canada</b>	10	6	12		6	2	53	16	8	10	14	90
<b>Chad</b>								2				2
<b>Chile</b>		13	4				41	6	3	1	12	69
<b>Colombia</b>			2				2	1	2	2		5
<b>Costa Rica</b>							1					1
<b>Croatia</b>	2		1									2
<b>Cuba</b>	1											1
<b>Cyprus</b>	1						4	1		1		5
<b>Czechia</b>	1						2	2	1	2		5
<b>Denmark</b>	9	1	3				7	6	2		1	21
<b>Ecuador</b>									1			1
<b>Egypt</b>		1	3				1			1		3
<b>El Salvador</b>	1											1
<b>England</b>	3	1	4				30	7	4	4	6	54
<b>Estonia</b>			2				3				1	5
<b>Finland</b>	8	1	7		4	1	6	1	2		6	31
<b>France</b>	2	2	4		1		12	3	1		2	23
<b>Germany</b>	4	6	3	3	4	2	18	4	1	7	3	40
<b>Greece</b>		1	3				8		5	2	2	15
<b>Hungary</b>	3							3	2			6

	Policy official/advisor (government)	Programme administrator	Manager of guidance services (responsible for service delivery as a supervisor)	Social security administration representative	Employer representative (includes sectoral)	Worker representative/trade union	Guidance practitioner	Representative of career guidance professional association	Researcher	Independent consultant	Other	Total Respondents
Iceland	1						3		1			5
India			1				3	3	1	3		5
Ireland	3	1	6	1	2		33	2	4	4	9	52
Italy	2		5		2		6	1	2	6		16
Japan									1			1
Jordan		1										1
Kazakhstan	1			1					1	1		4
Kosovo	3	1	1				1	1	1			5
Kuwait							1					1
Kyrgyzstan						2					1	3
Laos						6					1	7
Latvia	4	2					2			1		7
Lebanon	1											1
Libya										1		1
Lithuania			1	1			12				2	16
Luxembourg			2									2
Malaysia							1		1	1		2
Malta	4	2	7		2	3	16	2	1		1	29
Mauritius									1			1
Mexico							1	1	1			1



	Policy official/advisor (government)	Programme administrator	Manager of guidance services (responsible for service delivery as a supervisor)	Social security administration representative	Employer representative (includes sectoral)	Worker representative/trade union	Guidance practitioner	Representative of career guidance professional association	Researcher	Independent consultant	Other	Total Respondents
<b>Slovenia</b>	2	1						1			2	5
<b>South Africa</b>	8	3	3		3		5	2	2	1	3	17
<b>South Korea</b>									1			1
<b>Spain</b>	5	3	5			1	47	4	12	2	1	68
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	1						1	2	1			2
<b>Sweden</b>	3					1	6	2	1		1	12
<b>Switzerland</b>	2	3	3					1				4
<b>Syria</b>	1		1				1	1	1			2
<b>Tunisia</b>	2		1				1					3
<b>Turkey</b>	2		1		1				4	3	5	12
<b>Uganda</b>	1	1	1									2
<b>Ukraine</b>	1						2	1	5	1	1	8
<b>United States</b>			1				4	2	1	2	1	6
<b>Venezuela</b>		1					3	1	3		1	3
<b>Vietnam</b>	1		1				2		3			3
<b>Wales</b>	1		2				1					4

## Annex 3. Team members and affiliations

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Zelloth, Helmut (deceased)	Senior specialist for VET policies and systems, European Training Foundation (ETF)



# Career guidance policy and practice in the pandemic

## Results of a joint international survey

In light of the growing negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on national labour markets and people's lives and livelihoods, the role of career guidance has become ever more important to individuals, families, communities, the workforce, employers and society. This report is based on a flash joint international survey, designed to provide a snapshot of how career guidance policies, systems and services were adapting and coping, following the declaration of the world Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020.

The survey, launched on 8 June 2020 and closed on 3 August 2020, included an exploration of these policies, systems and practices (focusing on remote and ICT-based delivery) in the context of the early phase of government reactions to the pandemic, the extent to which the pandemic and its social consequences triggered a debate on career guidance reform, and the role for career guidance in pandemic recovery measures. It also considered the support role of international and donor bodies.

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