

National Training Fund

National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance

CAREER GUIDANCE AT LABOUR OFFICES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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1. Introduction

The faster the human society develops, the more dynamic changes take place in terms of labour market requirements. The labour market is a dynamic phenomenon responding to technological advancement as well as to the economic situation in a particular area. It reflects the education structure of the population, the industry structure, the establishment and closedown of enterprises, and a number of social factors. The demands for knowledge and skills and their continuous improvement are growing as a result of the introduction of new technologies. New occupations emerge, obsolete ones cease to exist and many of the existing ones are undergoing major changes in nature. Gone are the times when initial education pre-determined the lifelong career of an individual. Career planning is becoming more complex and, in this context, professional guidance services are growing in importance. And this concerns population of all ages.

It was just a matter of time for career guidance to come into focus as one of the instruments for social and economic development. It is gaining increasing support not only at national level, but also at the level of major international organisations. The turning point as regards the change in understanding guidance services came as result of the following developments: a survey into the provision of information and guidance services organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Commission and the World Bank (2001–2002), the establishment of the Expert Group for Lifelong Guidance at the European Commission (2002), the Resolution of the Council of the European Union on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the Field of Guidance throughout Life (2004)¹, the Handbook for Policy Makers in the area of career guidance (2004)² and other publications which drew on the analyses of the outcomes of the survey mentioned above³.

The supply of information sources, particularly on the Internet, is being expanded considerably, which results in a better availability of

¹ Draft Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe. 2004. Brussels, Belgium.
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004_en.pdf

² Career Guidance. A Handbook for Policy Makers. 2004. OECD, Paris, France. 76 pages. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/53/34060761.pdf>

³ For example.: Career Guidance and Public Policy, Bridging the Gap. 2004. OECD, Paris, France. 171 pages. Available at www.oecd.org/dataoecd/33/45/34050171.pdf

information, but also in the need for understanding the relevant terminology. For the sake of uniform terminology the Expert Group for Lifelong Guidance has proposed the term “career guidance” (kariérové poradenství) for the entire scope of information and guidance services concerned with the choice of education and a career.

However, the term “career guidance” still does not have a generally acknowledged definition. The OECD defines it as a system of guidance services the objective of which is to assist individuals regardless of age in deciding on the issues of education, vocational training and career choice and development at any stage of their lives.

Essentially the same definition was produced in the Resolution on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the Field of Guidance throughout Life stating that:

- 1) “In the context of lifelong learning, guidance refers to a range of activities¹ that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used.
- 2) Guidance provision within the education and training system, and especially in schools or at school level, has an essential role to play in ensuring that individuals’ educational and career decisions are firmly based, and in assisting them to develop effective self-management of their learning and career paths.
- 3) Guidance throughout life contributes to the achievement of the European Union goals of economic development, labour market efficiency and occupational and geographical mobility by enhancing the efficiency of investment in education and vocational training, lifelong learning and human capital and workforce development.
- 4) Effective guidance provision has a key role to play in fulfilling the concept of social inclusion, social equity, gender equality and active citizenship as it encourages individuals’ participation in education and training and supports their choice of realistic and meaningful careers
- 5) Guidance in the Member States of the European Union is provided through a wide diversity of structures, delivery systems and practices both in private and community sectors and in the fields of education, training, employment or unemployment.

6) Guidance can provide significant support to individuals during their transition between levels and sectors of education and training systems and from school to adult and working life. It helps young people re-entering education or training after leaving school early and persons re-entering the labour market after periods of voluntary or involuntary unemployment, or homemaking. Help is also provided to workers where sectoral restructuring requires them to change the nature of their employment; and to older workers and migrants.

7) High quality guidance provision throughout life is a key component of education, training and employability strategies to attain the strategic goal of Europe becoming the world's most dynamic knowledge based society by 2010."

As regards the definition of guidance activities the Resolution further states:

"... Examples of such activities include information and advice giving, counselling, competence assessment, mentoring, advocacy, teaching decision-making and career management skills. In order to avoid ambiguity, since a variety of terms are used in Member States to describe services engaged in these activities, including educational, vocational or career guidance, guidance and counselling, occupational guidance/counselling services, etc., **the term 'guidance' is used throughout this text to identify any or all of these forms of provision**" ...

Along with the changes in terminology there are certain changes as regards the content of these services which may be described as follows:

- Departure from the mere job brokering towards more comprehensive services which include not only the provision of advice and information, but also help the client acquire the competencies necessary to make his/her own decision,
- A much larger supply of information sources available related the choice of education and a career particularly on the Internet, which brings about the need for the user to understand, critically assess and effectively use the information
- A transformation of the career and educational paths into a lifelong process encompassing a very complex and multi-layer sequence of individual decisions concerning both education and employment.

In the Czech Republic the following terms are used: “*poradenství pro volbu povolání*” (career guidance), “*profesní poradenství*” (vocational guidance) and “*pracovně-profesní poradenství*” (work/vocational guidance). Sometimes the terms “*studijní*” or “*vzdělávací poradenství*” (study-related or educational guidance) and “*poradenství pro volbu vzdělávací dráhy*” (guidance for the choice of an educational path) are used. There are also terms covering additional activities, such as “*výchovné poradenství*” (guidance related to problems in up-bringing), “*pedagogicko-psychologické poradenství*” (pedagogical-psychological guidance) or “*personální poradenství*” (human resources guidance).

In Czech circumstances where, in the past, the connotation of the term “career” was rather pejorative, the concept of **career guidance** is related to counselling provided to mature and economically active clients. One of such definitions describes career guidance as a “set of personal assistance activities and counselling services aimed at retaining a job and promoting occupational mobility based, most importantly, on life experience, social competencies and access to lifelong learning”.

The term career guidance has quite recently found its way into the Czech schools system. It is used to describe the process of educational orientation and learning about the world of labour for the purpose of making a career choice, although the new schools act⁴ describes this form of guidance at schools as **educational counselling**. Neither the act nor the decree on the provision of guidance services in schools⁵ use the term career guidance. The gradual introduction of this term is being justified by its central focus on an individual and his/her career in the sense of the optimal position in the labour market.

THE TERMINOLOGY USED IN THE SCHOOLS LEGISLATION:

- **Educational Guidance (*výchovné poradenství*)** – assistance in common as well as difficult situations related to education and upbringing, prevention and solution of problems related to learning and upbringing, socio-pathological disorders and other education-related problems, assistance in the choice of a suitable education and training for a future occupation that children, pupils or students must make (provided by a trained teacher at school);

⁴ Law no. 561/2004 on pre-school, basic, secondary, higher professional and other education

⁵ Decree no. 72/2005 on the provision of guidance services in schools and school guidance facilities

- **Pedagogical-Psychological Guidance (*pedagogicko-psychologické poradenství*)** – professional psychological assistance in resolving common as well as difficult situations related to upbringing and education, common psychological and special psychological examinations in relation to placement of children in schools and classes, methodological assistance to schools in preventing socio-pathological disorders and in implementing preventive measures, and co-ordination of school prevention methodologists (provided by a specially trained expert at a pedagogical-psychological guidance centre).

In the system of employment services the term **vocational guidance** (*profesní poradenství*) is used which places a central emphasis on occupations – i.e. this is essentially in line with the objectives of the guidance system operated by employment services. However, in terms of legislation the situation is the same as in schools. The new law on employment⁶ only uses the terms guidance and guidance services.

THE TERMINOLOGY USED IN THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES LEGISLATION:

- **Information Services (*informační služby*)** – collection and provision of information about the labour market and employment, provision of information about employment opportunities and job vacancies, the labour force supply and educational and training provision,
- **Guidance for Individuals (*poradenství pro fyzické osoby*)** – assessment of personal aptitudes, capacities and skills, recommendations related to employment, the training for a future occupation, career choice and retraining. These services may be provided by labour offices staff and also by pedagogical-psychological guidance centres and diagnostic centres based on an agreement on the provision of guidance services by specialist facilities,
- **Guidance for Employers (*poradenství pro zaměstnavatele*)** – assistance in the selection of employees according to qualification and personal criteria set by employers,
- **Brokering Services for Individuals (*zprostředkovatelské služby pro fyzické osoby*)** – finding jobs for job seekers,

⁶ Law on Employment no. 435/2004

- **Brokering Services for Employers (*zprostředkovatelské služby pro zaměstnavatele*)** – finding employees for employers who seek new labour force,
- **Work Rehabilitation (*pracovní rehabilitace*)** – it is designed to assist persons with disabilities in the choice of an occupation and job, while focusing on theoretical and practical training for a job or other gainful activities, job brokering, retaining or changing employment, a change of an occupation and the creating of suitable conditions for the performance of a job.

It is obvious that the terminology in the two sectors will develop further and that the changes will be reflected in the relevant legislation. It is also obvious that the clients of career guidance services will increasingly involve people of all age categories who find themselves at various crossroads of their professional paths, and that guidance services will concentrate not only on the provision of advice and information, but also on equipping the clients with key competencies necessary to make decisions related to a career, education and employment.

2. Employment Services in the Czech Republic

One of the principle objectives of state economic and social policies is the achievement of a full, productive and freely chosen employment. The right to employment regardless of the race, colour, gender, language, religion, political and other convictions, membership of political parties or movements, nationality, ethnic and social background, property, health condition and age is one the fundamental rights of a citizen.

State employment policy strives to ensure:

- A balance between the supply of and demand for the labour force,
- An efficient use of the labour force,
- The right of citizens to employment.

The organisational structure of employment services

State administration in the area of state employment policy in the Czech Republic is executed by Employment Services Administration at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and by labour offices.

The Employment Services Administration at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (ESA MoLSA) is a central body responsible for employment and labour market issues. It monitors and assesses the situation in the labour market and adopts measures to affect the supply of and demand for the workforce. It drafts state employment policies, administers resources for their implementation and decides on how they should be used. Moreover it co-ordinates the operations of the European Employment Services (EURES) in the CR, arranges for the provision of national funding in the area of employment and human resources development within the European Social Fund. It manages methodically and conceptually the operations of labour offices.

Labour offices

Labour offices are local bodies of state administration in the area of employment. Their tasks include:

- Monitoring and assessing the situation in the labour market, drafting employment development plans for their administrative areas,

- Adopting measures to affect the supply of and demand for the workforce,
- Brokering jobs for job seekers,
- Providing guidance and information services to individuals and employers in relation to career choice and other employment-related services,
- Maintaining registers of job vacancies, job seekers, disabled persons and foreign nationals,
- Arranging for the implementation of measures as part of active employment policy the main instruments of which include retraining, investment incentives, publicly useful work, socially purposeful jobs, “bridging” contributions, travel allowances for employees, on-the-job training contributions and contributions in relation to the switch to a new business programme,
- Paying out unemployment benefits and contributions for retraining.

The location of labour offices

In terms of administration, the Czech Republic is divided into 14 regions (NUTS 3). The regions are further divided into districts (77) and there is a labour office in each district. To facilitate better accessibility of their services labour offices have set up branches across the districts. One labour office in each region is authorised to co-ordinate state employment policy within the administrative area of the relevant region.

The structure of labour offices

The organisational structure of labour offices is set out in the internal organisational regulations of each office. A labour office is managed by a director appointed by the minister of labour and social affairs. A labour office consists of departments. The main departments include:

- **Job Brokering Department** – maintains a register of job seekers, recommends job seekers to employers, provides information about job vacancies, retraining courses, counselling programmes and various measures related to the employment of job seekers,
- **Labour Market and Analyses Department** – develops monthly statistics, updates data on employers as part of monitoring activities,

carries out labour market analyses and prognoses concerned with the development of employment and unemployment,

- **Guidance Department** – provides individual and group counselling for job seekers of all age categories, normally includes the operations of *Informační a poradenské středisko pro volbu a změnu povolání* (Information and Career Guidance Centre – IPS) and at some labour offices also of European Employment Services (EURES).
- **State Social Support Department** – pays out state welfare benefits, organises consultations for citizens as regards the payment of state welfare benefits.

Other departments might be e.g. economical, controlling or legal ones. The organisational structure is not fully binding, the labour offices can adapt it to their needs.

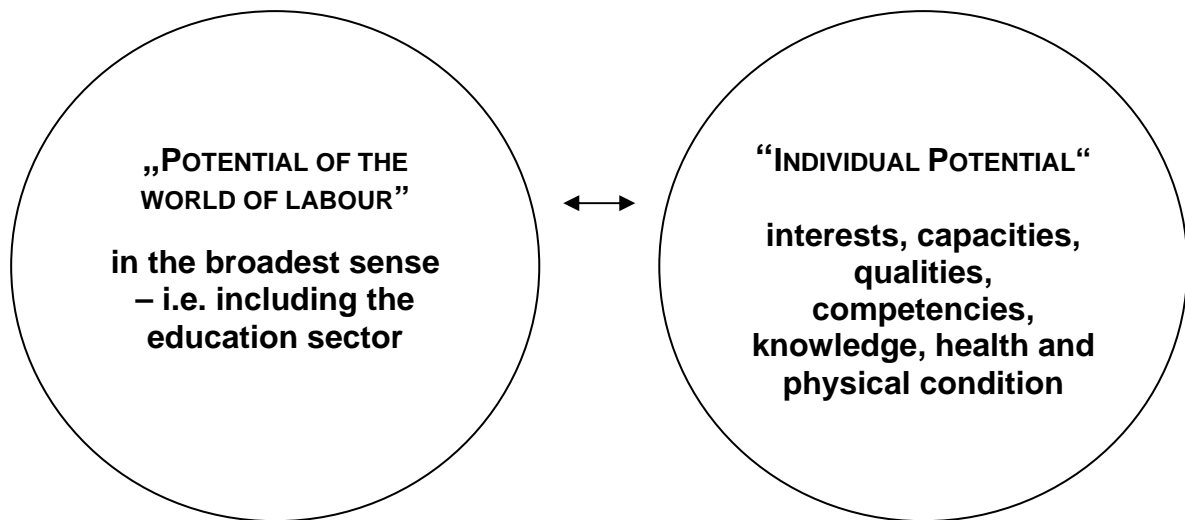
3. The Essence of Career Guidance

Guidance related to the choice of an occupation is a process, in which the client is provided support and assistance in developing a professional orientation as well as in choosing a suitable occupation and the relevant educational pathway. This is a decision which strongly affects the entire life of an individual – his/her personal happiness as well as material resources. Making the right choice normally involves a range of interlinking decisions which, eventually, constitute an educational and professional pathway of the relevant person. Career choice is far from being a one-off act. It is a lifelong process which takes account of a number of external and internal aspects.

The external aspects of this decision-making process are determined by circumstances of which the individual is independent. Apart from social and cultural conditions these mainly include the situation in the labour market (i.e. the demand for certain qualifications) and the available educational opportunities. This “external environment” may be viewed as the “**potential of the world of labour**”.

The internal aspects are the qualities, skills and knowledge of the relevant individual. They are determined by his/her understanding of his/her role in society in cultural and social contexts, his/her physical and mental qualities, age, in some cases race or ethnicity, and also by the regional situation in the labour market and willingness to move to follow a certain job offer. A set of these internal aspects may be called the “**potential of an individual**” (the term “individual potential” is also used).

When making a career choice these two “aggregates” are compared in order to identify as many common elements as possible and to find an optimum match:



THE “POTENTIAL FO THE WORLD OF LABOUR” may be described using certain characteristic features of labour. These may be divided into two groups:

- Features characterising the labour content,
- Other features linked to labour performance.

Features characterising the **labour content** provide basic information about four aspects of labour:

WORK ACTIVITIES	answer the question	WHAT	is the nature of the work.
WORK INSTRUMENTS	answer the question	WITH WHAT	is the work performed.
SUBJECTS OF WORK	answer the question	WHAT	is worked upon, what is taken care of.
WORK ENVIRONMENT	answers the question	WHERE	is the work performed.

Examples:

Work activities: assembling, adjusting, planning, selling, fostering, nurturing, etc.

Work instruments: machine tools, measuring devices, manual tools, precision tools, computers, etc.

Subjects of work: metals, wood, textiles, foodstuffs, plants, animals, people, information, securities, etc.

Work environment: nature, workshop, construction site, means of transport, shop, restaurant, office, etc.

The content of labour may also be described by the nature of the work activities. These may be further divided into subcategories illustrated in the following table (more details – see Annex 2).

What are the work activities directed towards:	What is the main characteristic of the work activities:
Primarily towards things	Machinery and equipment operating
	Machinery and equipment adjusting and repairs
	Manual production, working, assembling, arranging
	Measuring, testing, trials
	Thinking up, design, construction design, projecting
	Assessing, evaluating
Primarily towards people	Upbringing and education
	Caring, nursing, healing
	Customer services
	Counselling provision
	Negotiating, representing other people's interests
	Managing, planning, organising
	Providing for security and order, protecting and guarding
Primarily towards nature, animals, plants	Cultivation
	Breeding
	Environmental protection
Primarily towards information	Filing, documenting, administration
	Conducting analyses and implementation of resulting proposals
	Software development
	Editorial work, journalism

Other features linked to **work performance** include the following:

- Demand for the relevant occupation in the labour market,
- Wages,
- Working hours,
- Composition of a working team,
- Possibilities of career development,
- Possibilities of professional growth,
- Possibilities of establishing important contacts, getting to know interesting people,
- Social prestige,
- Possibility of travelling,
- Gaining some advantages for staff (company car, cell phone, etc.).

Besides these features of work, another important aspect belonging to the “potential of the world of labour” is the specification of the qualification acquired – i.e. education required for the performance of the relevant job (possibly additional practical skills and knowledge). This may be a general description, such as the level of education achieved (e.g. secondary education, secondary vocational with a vocational certificate or “maturita”), or a specific course of study and required skills and knowledge.

THE „POTENTIAL OF AN INDIVIDUAL“ is a set of characteristic features of a personality – i.e. intellectual and personal qualities which change and improve in the course of one’s life as he/she acquires new skills and knowledge and is exposed to the effects of the external environment. Individual potential is a multidimensional concept consisting of several components (qualifications, culture, socio-political potential) which characterise specific competencies or position.

Characteristic features of a personality most importantly include:

- interests (e.g. in technology, nature, computers, music, etc.),
- capacities and skills (dexterity, quick judgment, language talent, capacity to deal with people, etc.),
- moral qualities and preferences (motivation, mental resilience, perseverance, unselfishness, consistency, systematic approach, impatience, conflicting disposition, etc.),
- physical condition (physical strength, stamina, agility, etc.),

- health condition (allergies, sight impediments, epilepsy, spinal disorders, various chronic diseases, etc.),
- demographic features such as age, gender, ethnicity.

The qualification potential most importantly includes:

- the level and field of education achieved, courses and examinations undertaken,
- practical skills, professional experience, specific skills and knowledge gained through practice,
- language competencies,
- other special knowledge and skills (driver's licence, mastering of a specific software, operating machinery, etc.).

The major principle of career choice

When deciding on a future profession and the optimal position in the labour market it is necessary to achieve the tightest possible match between the "labour potential" and the "individual potential". By their mutual comparison and by identifying the common and contradicting aspects, the suitability of the relevant individual for a specific occupation is determined.

In view of the extremely complex nature of the two "potentials" it is necessary to ensure that this is not a one-off act. It must be a process where the client realises, step by step, his/her strengths and weaknesses and, at the same time, becomes familiar with labour market requirements. The client slowly becomes more and more competent, with the relevant assistance, to make a final, responsible decision. With pupils and students it is assumed that it is the school that will assist them – as part of the "career choice education" subject (at basic schools) and the "introduction to the world of labour" (at secondary schools) – in acquiring a general overview of groups of occupations and that they will be motivated to think about their future career.

An ideal approach to career choice (professional orientation) consists in assessing the match between the characteristic features of work and the characteristic features of an individual. However, in practice a young person is exposed to various influences.

For example:

- parents' desires ("I want my son to be a barrister"),
- examples of friends ("Honza works as a croupier and is in the money"),
- media examples ("I want to be like X.Y. actress").

There are additional criteria linked to the above which enter the decision-making process – these may be described as the overall focus of the young person. For example, the aspiration to achieve higher education or, on the contrary, preference for a vocational qualification. There may also be questions asked such as whether he/she is overwhelmed by the idea of success at work to which one must sacrifice free time, or whether he/she pursues a career which allows for appropriate time that may be devoted to the family and pastime activities, whether peaceful and tranquil life is what he/she is after, or whether he/she is ready to fight for his/her ideals. Another question is whether remuneration is of priority importance or whether he/she prioritises work that is enjoyable although less paid, whether he/she seeks admiration of others or tends to keep a low profile.

Some young people have unrealistic aspirations due to the fact that they are often unable to assess their abilities – they may both underestimate and overestimate them. Assisting them does not mean deciding for them, but providing them as much timely information as possible for them to be able to identify their limits, and equipping them with the competencies so as to make use of the opportunities life has in store for them.

4. The Guidance System in the Sphere of Labour and Education

Well-structured and operational guidance services are important for the workings of both the education system and the labour market, and their mutual links are of no less importance. By means of matching the qualification potential with labour market needs these services improve the effectiveness of the two systems, as well as the effectiveness of other social processes.

The sectors of education and employment in the Czech Republic have identified their responsibilities as regards the provision of guidance services, and the counselling system is being built in two streams the function and effectiveness of which are far from optimal. Neither are the links between the two “sectoral” systems well functioning and optimal.

Guidance services in the education sector enjoy a long tradition. They are provided both by educational guidance centres and by schools directly. Their mission is to create suitable conditions for a healthy physical, mental and social development of pupils and students, and for the development of their personality before entering and in the course of education. The guidance services are important in terms of preventing and resolving educational difficulties, socio-pathological disorders and other problems related to education and prospective employment. Thanks to their relatively long history their geographic distribution is almost optimal. This is not the case with pedagogical-psychological guidance centres which fail to accommodate the number and needs of clients.

There is still considerable room for improvement as regards the contribution of educational guidance to the preparation of pupils and students for entering the adult world, as they often leave school unprepared and lacking certain information. The situation has somewhat improved as “career choice education” was introduced to basic school curricula and “introduction to the world of labour” was incorporated into secondary school curricula. Still, it would be beneficial for pupils and students if these thematic areas, which are taught as part of other social science subjects, became regular subjects taught by educational counsellors.

Unemployment among school leavers has been receiving increased attention for several years. There is increasingly robust evidence that this

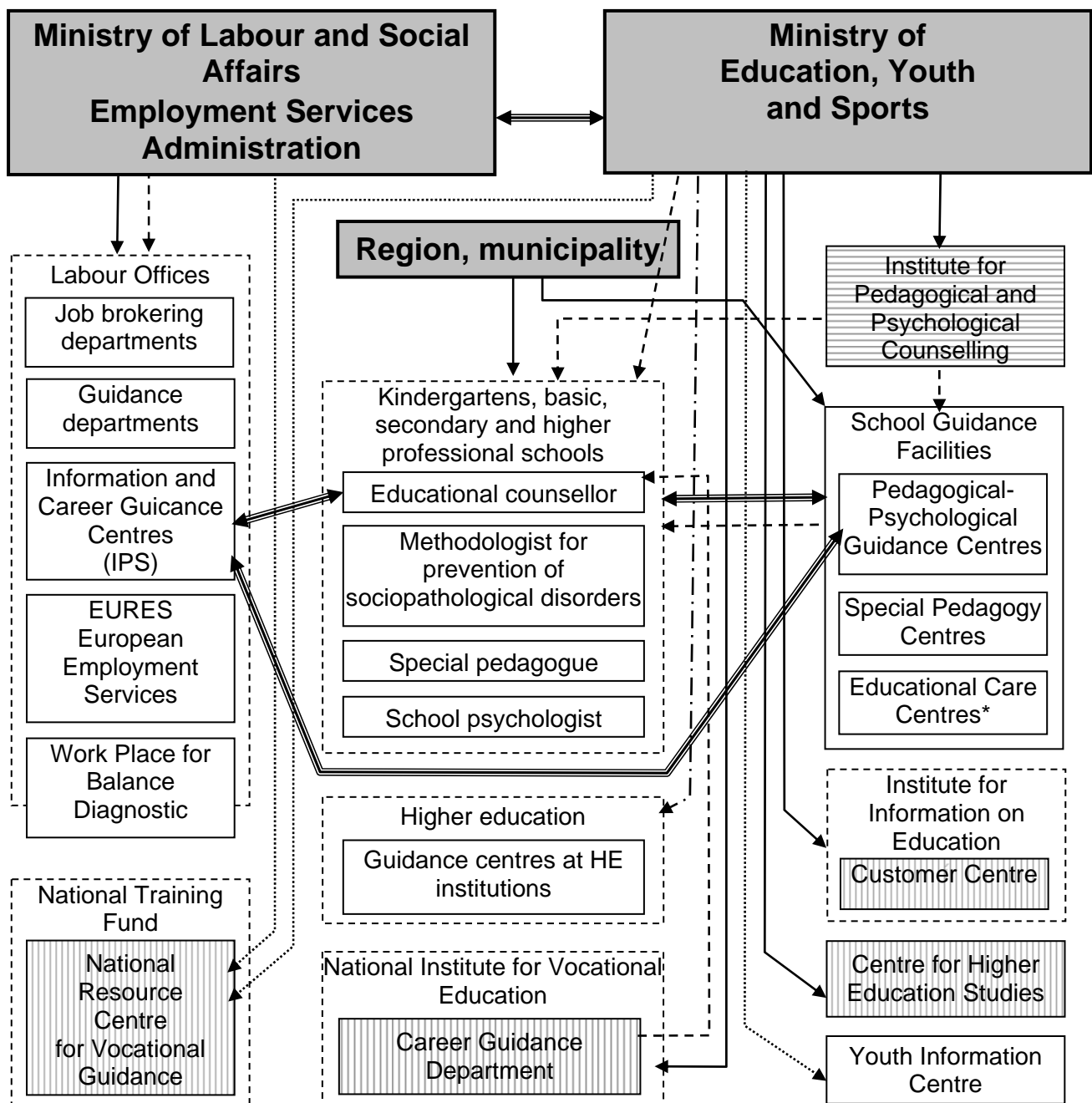
is not a phenomenon that is just related to the transfer from school to practice, but that it is structural unemployment – i.e. in certain areas, occupations or professions this problem is much larger as compared to others. The attention paid to this phenomenon has resulted in the occurrence of various opinions as to the solution – primarily by means of influencing schools to provide programmes the graduates of which have higher chances of succeeding in the labour market. However, it is not easy to find the appropriate instruments. Enforcement of any directive measures would mean a non-sensitive interference with school autonomy. From this perspective career guidance appears to be a democratic and natural instrument facilitating the presentation of labour market requirements in the schools sector. From this perspective carer guidance appears to be a natural instrument for bringing labour market requirements into the schools sector, and a source of feedback drawing on the contact with a wide variety of clients, industry and other educational institutions (as the findings are valuable in terms of planning educational provision).

Guidance services in the labour sector in the CR have a relatively short history as the system has only been built since 1990. The services are well distributed geographically and receive central support from Employment Services Administration at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (ESA MoLSA). The law on employment stipulates that labour offices are obliged to provide assistance and support as regards the relationship between an individual and the labour market, and to pursue prevention of unemployment in their regions. A labour office “drafts employment development outlines, brokers jobs for job seekers and provides counselling, information and other services related to employment” and career choice.⁷

⁷ Law on Employment no. 435/2004, § 8.




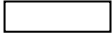
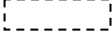
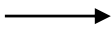
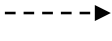
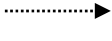
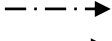

Figure no. 1:

The Structure of the System of Guidance Services in the CR



* *Středisko výchovné péče* (Educational Care Centre)

This organisation is concerned with the provision of special educational and educational-psychological services for young people with behavioural problems. The objective is to help these individuals and groups become fully adapted and integrated into society. Social prevention is another area of activities. The centres provide diagnostic and guidance services, regular consultations, and individual, family and group psychotherapy.

<u>Legend:</u>		describes governing institutions,
		institutions providing methodological support for guidance services,
		institutions providing information support and information about educational opportunities,
		information and guidance institution/staff,
		“umbrella” organisations the main mission of which is other than the provision of guidance services (not all departments are stated),
		direct governance and funding,
		methodological assistance,
		partial funding through grants and subsidies,
		financing, not direct governance,
		critical points of the guidance system.

4.1 The Division of Responsibilities within the Career Services System

One of the trends in guidance services consists in a comprehensive approach to these issues, which not only includes the provision of advice and information, but also seeks to equip the client with competencies to make an independent decision with the use of reliable and appropriate information. Career choice support should therefore consist of three basic levels:

- support in terms of information,
- support in terms of guidance,
- support in terms of education,

whilst these three levels should form a coherent and interlinking system creating conditions for a long-term process of professional orientation of each individual.

It is clear from the above that one of the important imperatives in career guidance is the synergy and interrelation of the educational and information/counselling processes.

A major weight in terms of the support for young people in their career choice has for several years rested with guidance departments at labour offices – primarily their **Information and Career Guidance Centres (IPSS)**. Schools take part in this support in the form of educational

guidance which, with some exceptions, has so far only involved the provision of basic information mostly about educational programmes on offer and administrative procedures related to the filing of applications to secondary schools and higher education institutions. (Figure 1 describes the system by means of a schematic diagram.)

Recently, the schools sector has become more involved in the support for the career choice process. Newly introduced subject matter related to these issues (**career choice education** at basic schools and an **introduction to the world of labour** at secondary schools) provides the relevant support as part of the educational process. These are not new subjects – this subject matter is incorporated into the syllabi of social sciences with a view to developing key competencies necessary for self-understanding, work with information about occupations, search for such information, its classification and evaluation and, particularly, the preparation of pupils and students to plan the career choice process. In the new system of national (framework) and school curricula the subject matter is included into the subject area “**Man and the World of Labour**”.

The main objective of **career guidance** at labour offices is to assist the client in deciding on further studies and in entering employment. For this purpose there are data collected centrally about the provision of educational institutions and the labour market, about professions, employers and other services the labour market offers (for details see 5.1).

On the other hand, the main objective of career guidance at schools is to equip the pupil with competencies so as to make a full use of various information resources and guidance services, to learn how to take an independent and responsible decision, possibly to adjust his/her professional goals, and to learn throughout life. The most important competencies are as follows:

- the pupil should know which factors related to work and education should be taken into consideration when making a career choice, what weight should be attributed to them, how they should be assessed and where information about them is best to be obtained;
- he/she should learn how to work with information and use it to make a responsible decision;
- he/she should gradually realise “his/her own self” – interests, aptitudes, qualities, health and other disadvantages; the pupil

should learn to identify his/her ambitions, means available and limitations, and to come to identify with them;

- he/she should be able to compare these ambitions, means and limitations with factors related to work and education, and to find mutual links;
- he/she should acquire basic awareness of the worlds of labour and education, have at least a basic idea as to various occupations and educational opportunities, and be aware of possible setbacks in the labour market and the working life;
- he/she should realise the importance of education and responsibility for his/her own life, seek motivation for self-education, active professional life and successful career.

Besides this guidance services in schools assist in:

- increasing the level of participation in education,
- reducing the level of early school leaving and supporting return to school,
- facilitating transfers between various levels of education,
- enhancing the preparations on the part of young people for transfer from school to the labour market.

Career guidance at schools and labour offices aims to provide a comprehensive assistance to clients in their decision-making. The two systems are interrelated and complement each other.

School as an institution with the closest relation to the pupil has been given room for a systematic approach to career issues in the form of the subject areas “Career Choice Education” and “Introduction to the World of Labour” which facilitate the development of competencies for career-related decisions. Pupils should also be provided with guidance and information services which are further elaborated on by more professional and thorough guidance services provided by labour offices as institutions with more extensive data sources. Thanks to these data sources labour offices (via their Information and Guidance Centres) may provide guidance and information services which appear to be similar to those provided by schools but which are far more extensive – particularly as regards information about the world of labour, the labour market and various occupations.

5. Career Guidance Services at Labour Offices

Guidance services provided by labour offices constitute an important instrument for implementation of state employment policies. They assist clients in optimising their choice of an occupational path and the relevant training, in finding a stable position as a member of the workforce (mainly as regards the particular job) and increasing the chances of succeeding in the labour market. Guidance services are concerned with work performance and efficiency, issues related to career change (retraining), and problems related to adaptation to a specific job and to the loss and new acquisition of employment. They observe valid international documents and an ethical code. The services are of an interdisciplinary nature – they build on the knowledge in psychology and sociology, as well as law, economics, pedagogy and, to an extent, also medicine. They make use of the knowledge of the specificities of individual professions.

Guidance services at labour offices, that are provided for free, are delivered primarily by guidance, retraining and job brokering departments. It may be said that they virtually pervade the work of all labour office departments. In principle, guidance services may be divided into two categories:

- basic guidance concerned with the choice and change of an occupation,
- professional guidance concerned with the choice or change of employment and with entering employment.

5.1 Guidance Departments at Labour Offices

Each labour office has a guidance department which covers a far larger area than just career guidance. Assistance is provided to clients in resolving their personal and social problems related to unemployment or other difficulties associated with their entering the labour market. Various other sections operate as part of guidance departments, such as a section dealing with employment abroad (EURES) and a retraining section, as the change of a career may also be part of the career choice process. The link between the change of an occupation and retraining is obvious.

Guidance departments normally include:

- **Specialized guidance section** – counselling for the long-term unemployed and persons facing difficulties finding employment;
- **Career choice section** – *Informační a poradenské středisko pro volbu a změnu povolání* (Information and Career Guidance Centre, see 5.2);
- **EURES section** – counselling related to work abroad;
- **Retraining section** – training programmes aimed at changing a qualification, counselling related to the choice of a suitable retraining course.

Guidance departments closely co-operate with other departments at labour offices – primarily with job brokering departments and departments dealing with labour market analyses and labour market issues.

The guidance services provided by the guidance and job brokering departments may range from basic advice and information to special professional services aiming to resolve complex problems one may encounter during a professional career. This includes psychological examinations designed to identify the capacities and qualities of a client, his/her personal suitability for a specific occupation or for a specific training programme. Counsellors from the job brokering sections also provide information about unemployment benefits, employment opportunities abroad, employment opportunities for foreigners in the CR, etc.

Certain guidance services are provided to specific groups of clients which, in line with the law on employment,⁸ receive increased attention.⁹ There is also legal advice and counselling related to starting up a private business.

⁸ Law on Employment no. 435/2004

⁹ For example, disabled citizens, young people under 25, graduates of higher education institutions within 2 years of completion of studies (up to 30), pregnant women, breastfeeding women and mothers within nine months of childbirth, persons looking after a child up to 15 years of age, people over 50, people registered as job seekers more than 6 months, persons in need of special assistance (particularly those who are living in or temporarily facing severe hardship, persons who have difficulties adapting to society, ex-offenders and persons from disadvantaged socio-cultural backgrounds).

Clients may approach counsellors at labour offices either directly or via the staff of job brokering departments. Guidance services provided by labour offices may be generally divided as follows:

- ***Poradenství pro volbu povolání a zaměstnání*** (Career Guidance) is concerned with the provision of specialist information and guidance services related to study and professional orientation in relation to a suitable employment while taking account of the existing situation in the labour market and the expected changes. It is provided both for individuals and for groups and focuses primarily on basic school pupils, secondary school students and other specific client groups, regardless of whether they are registered job seekers. The activities also cover the following related areas:
 - The development of the clients' individual potential, their employment prospects, and fostering a match between their personality and the requirements of the relevant profession,
 - Vocational training and retraining,
 - The shaping, efficiency and optimisation of the client's professional focus
 - Search for suitable job opportunities for the client,
 - Adaptation to social and working circumstances.

Career guidance specialists are also approached by clients who have failed in seeking an optimal solution to their problems via various brokering agencies or other counselling facilities.

- **Guidance related to career change and retraining** – professional services concerned with retraining and the related arrangements. This type of guidance seeks to identify the suitability of a profession in view of the personal features and qualifications of a client and in view of the requirements of the new profession under consideration.
- **Guidance for specific client groups** – for clients who require more intensive assistance (see footnote on the page 27). This also covers the work of Job-Clubs where group counselling is performed focusing primarily on the training in skills for effective job seeking and on facilitating return to work for the long-term unemployed.
- **Vocational-psychological guidance** – professional services provided by an individual with a qualification in psychology. The assistance aims to address specific personal, social and health

problems of clients who face difficulties finding employment. There is an integrated system for dealing with these clients which is called “**balance diagnostics**”. This is a guidance process which aims to ensure an optimal use of the individual potential in searching for a suitable professional orientation and employment. The objective is to help the client understand his/her strengths and weaknesses and prospective professional paths, and identify opportunities for finding an optimal educational and professional route (see 5.3).

Guidance services may be provided to individuals as well as to groups, through personal contact as well as via communication media.

Guidance through a personal contact between the counsellor and the client:

- Collective form normally one-off events for a large number of clients – e.g. contact or informative sessions, meetings, discussion clubs and lectures.
- Group form for a smaller group of clients, this makes use of the group dynamics – i.e. psychological strengths and processes within a group which affect the behaviour of its members, e.g. Job Clubs.
- Individual form between the counsellor and the client.

Guidance provided through communication media:

- Using a telephone.
- Using e-mail, chat, video-conferences.

Counsellors may have various specialisations (e.g. young people, unemployed adults, the disabled, etc.) and they are ready to discuss the client’s situation and seek, in co-operation with him/her, a suitable solution.

5.2 Information and Career Guidance Centres at Labour Offices

There is a so-called *Informační a poradenské středisko pro volbu a změnu povolání* (Information and Career Guidance Centre – IPS)¹⁰ at each labour office. Its objective is to assist the clients, originally mainly pupils of basic and secondary schools, in making use of the maximum amount of information for their decisions related to education and occupation. The portfolio of clients using the centres' professional services and equipment has gradually expanded to cover adults. These include registered job seekers, but also many other adults who are faced with the challenge of continuing education or employment.

In IPS the client is offered various printed materials, computer programmes and video-clips about various occupations (for details see 5.2.1). Some information (e.g. about educational programmes) may be found on notice boards at various places in the labour office.

Most of the IPS information sources are self-serviced. The client may also ask the counsellor for further information and seek advice as to a further step, such as the use of computers or audio-visual media. The counsellor may guide the client through the process of obtaining information. If the situation so requires, the client may be offered a test of personality or interests in order to identify his/her study and professional orientation.

As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, the IPS activities take various forms:

- **Events for the general public**, e.g. involvement in the organisation of promo-events of secondary schools and fairs of educational and employment opportunities and long-term unemployed,
- **Activities for specific groups of clients**, e.g. meetings with students in final years at basic and secondary schools, with educational counsellors, teachers, parents;
- **Individual consultations** with clients.

IPSs co-operate with educational counsellors and teachers of the subjects related to career choice and introduction to the world of labour. The IPS staff are often required to provide information about specific

¹⁰ A Czech acronym

schools, study programmes, fields of study, admission proceedings, occupations, employment opportunities, services provided by labour offices, continuing training and retraining opportunities¹¹, study and employment opportunities abroad.¹² Individual professional diagnostics mainly takes the form of tests of interests, and is perceived as an important service by counsellors.

The system of career guidance has been developing for over 10 years and IPSs are well equipped both in terms of methodology and technical resources. The benefits of an IPS for young people facing a career choice are viewed positively not only for the comprehensive nature of the services, but also due to the fact that the information about professions, the relevant requirements and needs and the actual situation in the labour market (employment opportunities, employers' requirements, the structure of regional economies, labour market development trends, up-to-date requirements of professions, etc.). is provided by people with experience and direct links to the industry and the sources of necessary information. The IPS staff (mostly holders of higher education degrees in teaching, social work, psychology and related professions) have undergone special training in counselling.

The IPS services and information media, which are provided for free, are annually presented at the educational fairs Gaudeamus¹³, Student Expo Lingua¹⁴ and Schola Nova¹⁵, and at regional school exhibitions.

5.2.1 Career-Related Information and Support Resources Available at IPSs

IPSs provide extensive information and a range of services for free. These aim to facilitate the choice of an occupation, training and employment on the part of the client – the client either decides independently or uses the assistance of counsellors.

¹¹ Detailed information about retraining is provided mainly by the retraining section which is responsible for its organisation.

¹² Detailed information about work opportunities and conditions abroad is provided by the EURES counsellors and contact persons.

¹³ <http://www.gaudeamus.cz>

¹⁴ <http://www.expolingua.cz>

¹⁵ <http://www.bvv.cz/scholanova>

Independent decisions

- The client adopts the self-service approach to the information resources and media without assistance from the counsellor.

Decisions with the counsellor's assistance

- The client uses the information resources and media with the counsellor's assistance,
- The counsellor provides the client with information and advice based on his/her questions,
- The counsellor provides the client with comprehensive guidance services – i.e. seeks to identify his/her personal features (an interview, medical history, diagnostic tools, psycho-diagnostic tests, etc.). Based on these data the counsellor recommends suitable alternatives for which, in the end, the client decides independently.

PRINTED MEDIA

a) Information about education and training

There is a large number of materials which contain information both at national and regional levels.

Education Atlas – an Overview of Secondary Schools

It is a series of fourteen publications corresponding to the administrative set-up of the CR (according to regions). They contain a comprehensive overview of educational opportunities after basic school – i.e. secondary schools and conservatoires in the relevant region, basic contact data, the programmes taught, the length of studies, information about entry examinations, numbers of applicants and intake figures, and information about accommodation and meals. The information is taken from a database of schools which is continuously updated by labour office staff for the module Career Choice which is part of the OK Práce information system. The Atlases also contain promotional presentations of schools and IPS contacts. Education Atlases are distributed for free to basic schools by ISPs – approximately one copy for 5–7 pupils. They may also be ordered by

post. The Atlases are issued every year between September and November.

<http://www.atlasskolstvi.cz>

Education Atlas – Higher Professional Schools, Language Schools and Higher Education Institutions

A comprehensive publication providing an overview once a year of “post-maturita” study programmes provided by higher professional schools, language schools and higher education institutions. It contains contact details, data about programmes on offer, the length of studies, the number of applicants and intake figures, information about entry examinations, accommodation and meals.

<http://www.atlasskolstvi.cz>

“Which School – Secondary Schools in the CR” (Kam na školu – střední školy v ČR)

The publication contains comprehensive information about study programmes offered by secondary schools and conservatories, contact details, information about entry examinations, the lengths and form of studies, applicant and intake numbers in the previous year, information about tuition fees, etc. The publication also provides information about follow-up courses and part-time programmes (distance or combined studies). There is a special chapter for disabled pupils containing a list of suitable programmes and secondary schools. The publication is issued by the National Institute for Technical and Vocational Education.

http://info1.nuov.cz/sob/school_main.html

“Which School – Higher Professional Schools in the CR” (Kam na školu – vyšší odborné školy v ČR)

The publication contains comprehensive and up-to-date information about study programmes offered by higher professional schools, their links to higher education institutions (universities), entrance examinations, the length and form of studies, the number of applicants and intake figures for the previous year, tuition fees, open door days, application deadlines and the date of entrance examinations. There is an address, telephone and fax number, e-mail and website address for each school (broken down by regions).

The publication is issued by the National Institute for Technical and Vocational Education.

http://info1.nuov.cz/sob/vos_main.html

“Choosing a Secondary School (Prague, Bohemia, Moravia) (Vybíráme střední školu – Praha, Čechy, Morava)

A three-volume publication issued at the beginning of the academic year. It is designed primarily for parents, teachers and basic school leavers and helps them get their bearings in the programmes offered by secondary schools. In addition to a complete list of study programmes, information about entry examinations, opportunities for the disabled, transportation, etc., it also contains valuable advice concerned with the choice of an educational pathway, a specific school and a study programme. Nation-wide collection of data takes place every year at all types of secondary school. The publication is issued by the Institute for Information on Education.

<http://www.uiv.cz/hledani>

How to Get to a Higher Education Institution (Jak na vysokou školu)

The most extensive publication about study programmes offered by Czech higher education institutions (public, state, private) which is primarily designed to facilitate the application procedure. It contains basic information about the structure of the institution and faculties, an overview of bachelor and master study programmes and branches, open door days, various fees, admission proceedings, and entry examinations. It also contains selected statistical data about the number of applicants and intake figures for the previous school year, and an estimated number of applicants in the given year. The publication is compiled by the Centre for Higher Education Studies and published by the Fortuna publishing house.

<http://www.csvs.cz/databaze> (January–May)

b) Information about the world of labour

Characteristics of occupations

Materials with a uniform structure for all occupations describing the nature of the work activities tools of work, negative effects of the

working environment, the main areas of knowledge and skills, health disorders, required qualities and capacities, the required qualification, continuing training opportunities, related occupations (see Annex 1).

They are part of the Information System of Standard Working Positions (ISTP) and available at <http://www.istp.cz>

Occupation leaflets

They constitute a more concise way of describing occupations. They are similarly structured, but their content is briefer and concentrated on both sides of one sheet. They may be taken home or copied and read in peace (see Annex 1).

They are part of ISTP and available at <http://www.istp.cz>

Characteristics of areas for career choice

Five-page materials describe fifty different areas of work and facilitate understanding of the relevant areas when making a career choice.

<http://www.startnathprace.cz>

Offers of job vacancies

These need not only assist in the actual search for a job, but help create a picture of the demand on the part of employers for various occupations. This may constitute one of the career choice criteria.

<http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/vm>

IPS aktual

A biannual bulletin contains information about the existing situation in the labour market, the changing levels of demand from employers for various occupations, suitable information and other courses related to counselling, and other data related to the world of labour.

The bulletin is not available on the Internet.

c) Other media

“Towards an Occupation” (Cesta za povoláním)

The calendar is designed for pupils in the eighth and ninth years of basic school and motivates them in an enjoyable manner to think about various aspects of career choice. Its publication is organised by the Employment Services Administration of the MoLSA in co-operation with the National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance at the NTF. It is published by P.F.Art. The calendars are distributed to schools via IPSs and each pupil in the eighth year gets a copy.

Information about the calendar is available at <http://www.pfart.cz>

Client type sheets to facilitate work with information

An aid for work with various types of clients which enables estimating which information is a client interested in and describes where and how it may be procured. It includes the ways of using specific sources of information.

The sheets are not available on the Internet.

ELECTRONIC AND OTHER AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA

a) Information about education and training

The “Career Choice” module of the “OK Práce” information system

The information system which is used by all Czech labour offices is entitled “OK Práce”. The system in the form of interlinked modules processes information related to all areas of activity carried out by labour offices. The “Career Choice” module contains detailed information about secondary and higher professional schools and their provision, the programmes offered in the particular year, the form of studies (daily attendance, distance learning, a combination of the two), tuition fees, student performance requirements, the number of applicants in the previous year, the actual intake, intake planned for the following year, conditions for the disabled, etc. Data collection is managed by the Guidance and Brokering Department of ESA MoLSA

and carried out by the staff of IPS at labour offices. The data is processed by ESA MoLSA.

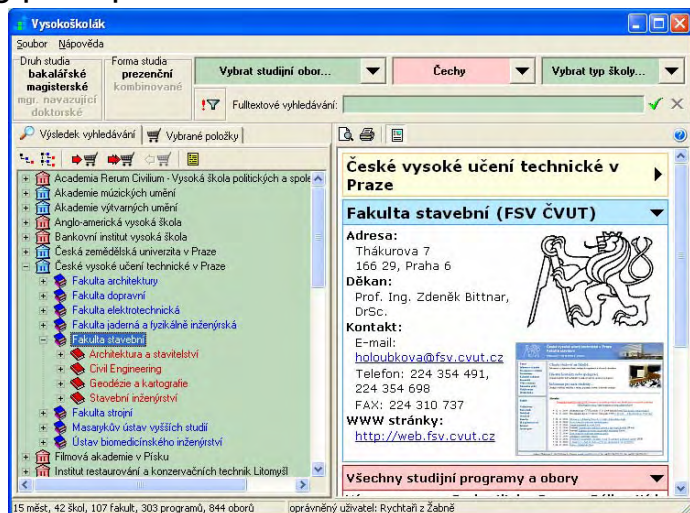
<http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/skoly>

The BKOV Programme – information about studies at higher education institutions in the CR

The programme provides comprehensive and coherent information for those who wish to apply for admission to higher education. The information concerns the types of institution, faculties, study programmes and fields of study available in the CR. It facilitates the choice of an institution.

The product has the following principal characteristics:

- comprehensiveness,
- coherence,
- user-friendliness,
- selection according to various criteria
- possible accumulation of info according to various criteria (e.g. related courses at various institutions, etc.)
- printing of pre-determined reports.



The databases also contain information on admission proceedings organised by various higher education institutions.

The DAT database of continuing education and training

A database of educational opportunities within a broad spectrum of continuing training and retraining courses. The data are continuously entered by continuing vocational training providers.

<http://www.eu-dat.cz>

The M-Servis Programme

This programme caters to the growing number of individuals interested in working and studying abroad and offers an overview of internationally recognised examinations in major world languages and Italian, including the locations where the exams take place. The users

may also do a sample test. The list also contains characteristics of the destinations – i.e. countries where English, French, German, Italian and Spanish are official or at least commonly used languages. Guidance is also provided as to short-term jobs abroad, as well as information on the ongoing changes in higher education systems in the EU as part of the Bologna process (2005), and on the functions and structure of the Diploma Supplement. Moreover, the product presents information about equivalence of US diplomas and recognition of diplomas in the academic environment, which is a process which should facilitate studies abroad and eliminate compensatory tests and application proceedings related to recognition upon return. The product facilitates search for information according to focus and key words, and allows for printing of reports.

Further information is available at <http://www.bkov.cz>

Information about studies at foreign higher education institutions

The programme is a support instrument for the staff of Information and Career Guidance Centres at labour offices in the CR. The application serves as a source of information about study opportunities at foreign HE institutions (Denmark, France, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Poland, Austria, Sweden, Great Britain). The programme database contains descriptions of the countries and their administrative systems, maps, addresses of embassies, information about travelling formalities, etc. There are also characteristics and specific features of education systems in individual countries with a particular focus on tertiary education, and information about study programmes available. There is a directory of HE institutions containing addresses, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses, web pages, etc. The information on individual institutions (where applicable) also concerns the study programmes on offer.

More information is available at <http://www.bkov.cz>

Lifelong education and learning

The core of the product consists in an overview of accredited short courses at HE institution in the Czech Republic which facilitate further studies and acquisition of higher education degrees, as well as other lifelong learning courses varying in terms of length and topic. The chapter Foreign Systems of Continuing Education provides information on *Volkshochschulen* (Germany, Austria) and *Universités*

populaires (France, Denmark). In line with the European Commission's policies the certificates of short courses – e.g. from *Université populaire, Volkshochschule*, etc. – in combination with higher education should document sufficient competencies for work in a foreign country. This electronic hypertext publication facilitates a fulltext search of terms and reports printing.

More information is available at <http://www.bkov.cz>

Studying in the USA

The product offers information in the Czech language about university studies in the USA as it has been prepared by the Peterson's Association (www.peterson.com). The directory of universities contains some 350 institutions which are ready, in terms of organisation and content, to admit and train foreign students. Students are initiated to the studies by specially trained staff. The product also provides up-to-date information about the US education system and requirements for admission to colleges and universities. For each university we mark the required TOEFL level (number of points). The applications facilitates a quick and easy access to the content at the level of individual countries, HE institutions and fields of study, as well as search for study programmes according to Czech titles and the city where the institution is located. There is also a chapter on basic data about the US states including a lexicon as an introduction to the language communication on the US territory.

More information is available at <http://www.bkov.cz>

The Ploteus Portal – a European Navigator in the World of Education

The portal is an information system about educational opportunities in Europe. It facilitates the search for information about studies in Europe for students, those interested in continuing education, parents, guidance practitioners and teachers. It consists of an indexed database of references. The selection, description and updating of the references is the responsibility of the international network Euroguidance.

<http://europa.eu.int/ploteus>

b) Information about the world of labour

The Integrated System of Standard Working Positions (ISTP)

The comprehensive information system about occupations (standard working positions are occupations divided up on the basis of further job details). ISTP consists of two major parts: 1) the **index of standard working positions** contains a full list and description of occupations including qualification, personal and health requirements; 2) the **analysis of individual potential** makes it possible for clients to assess their suitability for the relevant working positions.

<http://www.istp.cz>

The computer programme “Guide to the World of Occupations”

The programme facilitates career choice according to various criteria (favourite school objects, sartorial preferences, the nature of the work tasks, the subject of work, working environment) using a list of over 900 occupations in an alphabetical order which corresponds to the official national work catalogue. Disabled clients may search according to basic health and physical disorders (e.g. blindness, deafness, epilepsy, allergy, etc.). The client is shown a list of occupations where he/she could have a chance. Information about occupations is provided in the form of text descriptions, photos of main working tasks, and even spoken dialogues in some occupations.

The Guide also contains a module providing information as to how to apply for a job, to get ready for a job interview or appointment procedures, and how to write a job application, a CV, etc.

Available at **<http://www.gwo.cz>** in Czech, English and another eight language versions.

Video-clips about occupations

Approx. 10-12-minute films describe orally and visually various occupations (see Annex 1). The IPS client may see the main working tasks in the relevant working environment and the tools of work used, and may get a picture of the “atmosphere” at the workplace. There is also a commentary providing information about the aspects of the occupation which cannot be captured by a camera – e.g. qualification requirements.

Films about groups of occupations

Short film sequences about various groups of occupations

Films about groups of occupations made in the CR

Building a House
Designing the Interior of Buildings
Creative Woodwork
Taking Care of Our Forests
Taking Care of Personal Appearance
Crafts in Ceramics Manufacturing
Mechanical Engineering Professions

Other films

Labour Offices – Counselling and Retraining
Labour Offices – the Labour Market
The Labour Office will Find You a Job
Before Knocking on Your Potential Employer's Door
An Individual in the Right Place
Difficult Types of Customer, Employee and Client

The video-clips are not available on the Internet.

The Portal of European Employment Services – EURES

The Czech Republic joined the European Union on 1 May 2004. On this day labour offices in the CR began to provide a new regular service entitled EURES. The service aims to facilitate international mobility of the labour force and makes it possible for job seekers and employers to obtain information about job vacancies and living and working conditions in the Czech Republic and in the EU/EEA countries. The service is provided by EURES counsellors and contact persons operating at all labour offices in the CR who make use of the EURES information resources.

<http://europa.eu.int/eures>

c) Diagnostic means

The COMDI programme for occupational diagnostics

“Occupational diagnostics” constitutes a support instrument in guidance as it helps identify the optimal range of occupations and jobs for an individual. The COMDI programme facilitates access to a computer-based set of tests, their evaluation by an accredited

organisation and ensuing implementation of the results. The diagnostics process includes professional, psychological, pedagogical and somatic aspects. The objective is to make it possible for the client to carry out self-evaluation covering his/her entire personality and focusing on his/her professional orientation. The outcome of the diagnostics process is a “certificate” in a simple graphic layout with a commentary. Labour offices provide access to several testing modules (so-called “testing batteries”):

- module B is designed for guidance and brokering services at labour offices which are concerned with manual occupations
- module C facilitate the choice of an occupation for graduates of secondary schools with “maturita”
- module D is suitable for job appointments in manual occupations.

The programme is not available on the Internet. More information is available at <http://www.rcv.cz>.

Schuhfried’s test (AIST)

This test is adjusted for the computer environment and facilitates diagnostics of the client’s interests with a view to identifying a matching occupational area. The AIST is always carried out at the presence of a guidance practitioner who interprets the results for the client.

5.2.2 Other information sources available on the Internet

The information sources presented in this subchapter are not usually available at labour offices (including the IPSs). However, as this publication is also designed for educational counsellors, we believe it is useful to mention them.

Internet pages to support education related to career choice at basic school and the introduction to the world of labour at secondary schools

As part of the regional project PHARE START websites were launched in 2004 which deal with various issues related to career choice and entry to the labour market (including the relevant sources of information).

The websites are administered by the National Institute for Technical and Vocational Education.

<http://www.startnathprace.cz>

A database of programmes offered by secondary and higher professional schools

The data about educational and training provision are processed by the National Institute for Technical and Vocational Education. Various criteria may be applied in selecting a school and a study programme (location of school, name of programme, level of education).

http://info1.nuov.cz/sob/vos_main.html,
http://info1.nuov.cz/sob/school_main.html

Schools register

A database of the Institute for Information on Education containing basic information about schools in the CR (from pre-school facilities to higher professional schools) and their provision, and school facilities (canteens, pedagogical centres, pedagogical institutes). Various search criteria may be applied.

<http://founder.uiv.cz/registr/vybskolr.asp>

A register of higher education institutions and organisations within their purview

A database of HE institutions and organisations within their purview. The register facilitates searching according to school location, the nature of study programmes and forms of study. The database is administered by the Institute for Information on Education.

<http://delta.uiv.cz/pro.htm>

5.3 Balance Diagnostics

This is a chapter concerned specifically with a methodology that is increasingly gaining in importance –so-called “balance diagnostics”. This concept involves a comprehensive counselling process which aims, while using expert diagnostic methods, at ensuring the optimal use of an individual’s potential for the purpose of planning his/her professional and

educational pathways. In addition to qualifications, capacities and interests, the client's needs, personal background and health condition are taken into account.

By means of group and individual consultations and on the basis of the results of psychological approaches it is possible to seek ways, together with the client, which will facilitate his/her return to the labour market while finding the proposed solution relatively satisfactory (the individual plan).

Balance diagnostics have gradually and naturally acquired a special position within guidance services as a specialist activity, the objective of which is to provide the client with appropriate information for him/her to focus on an educational or professional route offering the highest possible degree of economic reward and social acceptability – a route ensuring him/her success and elimination of various barriers in life.

This requires that the client should show a high level of adaptability and flexibility. It is therefore necessary for the client to get a chance to understand not only the current situation in the labour market, but also his/her skills and capacities, health condition and related work potential, his/her ambitions and, of-course, motivation for the practice of the relevant profession. Such an analysis can hardly be performed by the individual himself/herself. It is necessary that the client is offered a comprehensive service which may help direct him towards an optimal solution to his/her specific situation.

Upon undergoing this diagnostic process, the client is mobilised to care for his/her work and social position, and gradually transformed from a passive recipient of welfare benefits to an active player in the labour market. Of course, the service is only effective provided that the client is appropriately motivated.

For balance diagnostics to be effective the client must meet the following requirements:

- To take an active approach to co-operation with experts in seeking a specific solution to the relevant situation;
- To define and gradually implement partial objectives as part of an individual plan;
- To focus on a realistic, optimal option to resolve the situation – both in line with the client's needs and the anticipated labour market requirements.

The guidance practice performed by employment services to date shows that it is possible (according to the needs and resources available at labour offices) to define various groups of individuals where it is appropriate to carry out balance diagnostics:

- The long-term unemployed who, for various reasons, face difficulties when seeking employment (some no longer seek it). They include persons who must be re-socialised and motivated to take various steps leading to their re-integration into the work process.
- Persons with various disabilities whose work potential must be assessed as part of their rehabilitation or following ergo-therapy.
- Persons for whom it is difficult to assess their individual potential (particularly their professional orientation) by other means:
 - When making their first career choice,
 - When seeking an appropriate way of completing their education,
 - When changing a qualification or considering retraining.
- Job seekers selected based on employers' requirements.

Again, it is necessary to point out that the above only applies to those clients of labour offices who are willing and able to work, who co-operate and for whom other forms of guidance did not generate sufficient effects.

6. Development Trends in Career Guidance as Part of Employment Services

Inter-operability of guidance services in education and employment and their smooth operation are issues that, since recently, have been gaining in importance. Matching the labour market needs with the potential of the population plays an important role not only in the lives of individuals, but also in the development of society as a whole.

The possible improvement of the two counselling systems consists in fostering their **mutual links** and **identification of responsibilities**. There are no central provisions as to the co-operation between the schools sector and the employment sector. There is a mention of the contact between the school and the labour office in the decree on the provision of guidance services in schools¹⁶ which is part of the standard tasks of an educational counsellor, but this contact only occurs as the result of an initiative on either side. The mechanisms ensuring the links between counselling activities may be influenced by self-governing regional bodies and regional councils for human resources development (which often do not realise this need), and by the Czech Schools Inspectorate whose supervision over the provision of guidance services is not very forceful.

However, there is also room for improvement in guidance services in the labour sector, particularly as regards the methodological background which lacks clearly defined counselling standards. The system of the continuing training of counsellors also shows certain drawbacks. The counselling system would certainly be improved if a decree was issued on guidance services at labour offices followed by a uniform and binding directive on the provision of such services.

Labour offices have relatively extensive and high-quality information/counselling resources and career-related media which must be regularly updated, innovated and expanded. For the sake of a comprehensive approach to the client it will be necessary to set up “balance diagnostics” centres for specific catchment areas either at additional labour offices or outside them, which would accommodate for psychological counselling as an independent unit of operations. This section would operate in conformity with specific rules and help improve

¹⁶ Decree no. 72/2005 on the provision of guidance services in schools and school guidance facilities.

the chances of citizens in the labour market and, at the same time, provide for the needs of employers.

The newly perceived guidance services are becoming an indispensable part of lifelong learning. It is a fact, however, that adult education and lifelong learning are not among the strengths of the education systems in the Czech Republic, and the same holds true for many other countries, particularly post-socialist countries in Europe. In the CR we may even speak about severe underestimation of this part of education, and an urgent need to redress the situation.

Annex 1

A List of Occupations for which Information Media are Available in IPSs

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Accountant	√	√	√
Actor, puppet actor	√		
Administrative worker	√	√	
Agricultural machinery repairman	√	√	√
Agronomist	√	√	√
Air traffic controller	√	√	√
Air-conditioning fitter	√	√	√
Aircraft mechanic	√	√	√
Aircraft pilot	√	√	√
Aircraft pilot	√	√	√
Airline officer	√	√	
Airline steward (stewardess)	√	√	√
Ambulance worker	√	√	√
Ambulance worker	√	√	√
Animator			√
Apartment designer	√	√	√
Archaeologist	√	√	
Architect	√	√	√
Artistic blacksmith and fitter	√	√	√
Artistic glazier and windowpane maker	√	√	√

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Artistic wood carver	√	√	
Assembler – dry constructions			√
Assistant cameraman			√
Assistant driver	√	√	
Assistant trading officer	√	√	√
Bag maker	√	√	√
Baker	√	√	√
Banking cashier	√	√	
Banking expert	√	√	
Banking liquidator	√	√	√
Barber and hairdresser	√	√	√
Barrister	√	√	
Basket maker and knitter	√	√	√
Beauty therapist	√	√	√
Biochemist – food production	√		
Blacksmith	√	√	
Blacksmith – horse shoe maker	√	√	
Boat engine operator	√	√	
Bookbinder	√	√	√
Brewer and maltster	√	√	√
Bricklayer	√	√	√

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Brush maker	√	√	
Business assistant	√	√	
Butcher and sausage maker	√	√	√
Cable worker	√	√	√
Cameraman	√	√	
Can maker	√	√	√
Car body fitter	√		
Car electrician			√
Car garage operative	√	√	
Car mechanic	√	√	√
Carpenter	√	√	√
Cashier	√	√	
Cattle breeder	√		
Ceramics maker	√	√	
Ceramics painter	√	√	
Chambermaid	√	√	√
Chemist	√	√	√
Chemist – laundromats and dry-cleaning	√	√	
Chemist – pharmaceutical and medical products	√	√	
Chief clerk	√	√	
Chimney sweep	√	√	√
Cleaner	√	√	√
Clerk – general	√	√	
Coach	√	√	
Commentator, reporter, journalist	√	√	
Commercial lawyer	√	√	

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Commercial loan bank officer	√	√	
Computer systems programmer	√	√	√
Computer technician	√	√	
Concrete placer	√	√	√
Confectioner	√	√	√
Construction designer	√	√	
Construction designer	√	√	
Construction electrician	√		
Construction engineer	√	√	
Construction fitter	√	√	
Construction glazier	√	√	
Construction joiner	√		√
Construction manager	√	√	√
Construction tinsmith	√	√	√
Construction worker	√	√	
Cook	√	√	√
Cooper and wrapper	√	√	
Crane operator	√	√	√
Customs inspector	√	√	√
Dancer	√	√	
Database administrator	√	√	
Day care centre nurse	√	√	√
Decorator – wall paper hanger	√	√	√

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Dental technician	√	√	√
Dental tool maker	√	√	√
Designer, engineer, analyst – computer systems	√	√	
Detective			√
Digger	√	√	
Dispatcher	√		
Dispatcher in manufacturing	√	√	
Draughtsman	√	√	√
Driving instructor	√	√	√
Dyer	√	√	
Ecologist	√	√	
Economist	√	√	
Editor – journalist	√	√	
Educator	√	√	√
Electrician	√	√	√
Electrician in manufacturing	√	√	
Electro-mechanic	√	√	
Electroplater	√	√	
Endangered species manager	√	√	√
Energy works machinist	√	√	
Engine driver	√	√	√
Entrepreneur			√
Environmental protection inspector	√	√	
Exchange office counter clerk	√	√	
Explosives manager	√	√	

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Eye optician	√	√	√
Farmer	√	√	√
Fire service mechanic	√		
Fire service technician	√		
Fire fighter	√	√	
Fisherman	√	√	√
Fitter – locksmith	√	√	
Fitter in manufacturing	√	√	
Floor maker	√	√	√
Foreign correspondent	√	√	√
Forester	√	√	√
Founder	√	√	
Foundry worker			√
Furrier	√	√	√
Game warden	√		
Gardener – vegetable production worker	√	√	√
Gas works machinist	√	√	
Gas-pipe fitter in manufacturing	√	√	
Geologist	√	√	√
Girdler			√
Glass cutter	√	√	√
Glass etcher	√	√	
Glass maker	√	√	√
Glass painter	√	√	
Gloves maker	√	√	√
Goldsmith and jeweller	√	√	√
Graphic designer	√	√	√
Hardener	√	√	√

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Heating operator	√	√	√
Horse breeder – rider	√	√	√
Hostess	√	√	
Housekeeper	√	√	√
Human resources officer	√	√	
Hygiene service assistant	√	√	
Insulator	√	√	
Insurance expert, re-insurance expert	√	√	
Insurance officer		√	√
Inventory manager	√	√	√
Investment officer	√	√	
Jewellery maker	√	√	
Joiner	√	√	√
Judge	√	√	
Junior lawyer – legal assistant	√	√	
Knitter	√	√	
Laboratory animals breeder	√		
Laboratory technician	√	√	
Laboratory technician in healthcare	√		
Lace maker	√	√	
Lawyer	√	√	
Lecturer	√		
Librarian	√	√	√
Lifeguard	√	√	

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Lift fitter	√	√	√
Lithographer	√	√	√
Livestock specialist	√	√	√
Local police officer	√	√	√
Loss adjuster	√		
Manager	√	√	
Mariner	√	√	
Marketing officer	√	√	
Masseur	√	√	√
Mathematician – analyst	√	√	√
Mechanic	√	√	
Mechanic – aircrafts	√		
Mechanic – communications equipment	√	√	√
Mechanic – cooling equipment	√	√	√
Mechanic – electronic equipment	√	√	
Mechanic – keyboard musical instruments	√	√	√
Mechanic – measuring and regulation equipment	√	√	√
Mechanic – optical devices	√		√
Mechanic – stringed musical instruments	√	√	
Mechanic – telecommunication networks	√	√	
Mechanical engineer	√	√	

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Metal cutter	√	√	√
Metal roller	√	√	
Metal turner	√	√	√
Metal welder	√	√	√
Metallurgist – steel maker	√	√	
Metalworker	√	√	
Milkman	√	√	√
Mill master – mill assistant			√
Miller	√	√	√
Miller operator	√	√	√
Miner	√	√	
Mining dresser	√	√	
Mining electrician	√	√	
Mining fitter	√	√	
Model	√	√	
Modeller	√		
Nurse	√	√	√
Nurse (children)	√	√	√
Nurse (general, children's, midwife)	√	√	√
Operations manager	√	√	
Optician	√	√	√
Packer	√	√	
Painter	√	√	
Paper maker	√	√	√
Pastry cook	√	√	√
Pastry cook	√		√
Paviour – asphalter	√	√	
Pedicurist – manicurist	√	√	
Pharmaceutical lab technician	√	√	√
Pharmacist	√	√	√
Photographer	√	√	

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Photolab technician	√	√	√
Photo-reporter	√	√	
Physician	√	√	
Physiotherapist	√	√	√
Pipe fitter	√	√	√
Pipe fitter	√	√	
Plastics maker	√	√	
Plumber	√	√	√
Pointsman	√	√	
Police inspector	√	√	√
Police investigator	√	√	
Police officer	√	√	
Post office cashier	√	√	√
Post transport operative			√
Postman	√	√	
Poultry breeder	√	√	√
Poultry breeder			√
Power engineer	√	√	
Pre-school teacher	√	√	√
Price regulator	√	√	
Printer	√	√	√
Prison guard	√	√	
Producer	√		
Professional hotel employee			√
Professional soldier	√	√	
Promotion officer	√	√	
Psychologist	√	√	
Quality control officer	√	√	

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Rail transport operator	√	√	
Railway worker	√	√	
Railway worker – general	√	√	√
Rationalisation – officer	√	√	
Receptionist	√	√	√
Rehabilitation worker	√	√	√
Retoucher	√	√	
Road vehicle driver	√	√	
Roofer	√	√	√
Rubber maker	√	√	
Saddler	√	√	√
Sales assistant	√	√	√
Sales representative	√	√	√
Scaffolding builder	√	√	√
Secretary	√	√	
Security technician	√	√	
Security worker	√	√	√
Senior trainer	√	√	
Sewing machine operator	√	√	
Shoemaker	√	√	√
Shoemaker – repairs	√	√	√
Shunter	√	√	
Social assistant	√	√	
Social worker	√	√	
Sociologist	√		
Special pedagogue	√	√	
Spinner	√	√	√

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Stage and circus set builder	√	√	
Standard task setter	√	√	
State administration officer	√	√	
Steel structure fitter	√	√	
Stock exchange broker	√	√	
Stock officer	√	√	
Stock operative	√	√	
Stonecutter	√	√	√
Sugar maker	√	√	
Supervising physician	√	√	
Supervising technician	√	√	
Supplier – expert on commodities	√	√	
Surgical tool maker	√	√	√
Surveyor – cartographer	√	√	√
Surveyor – geodesist	√	√	√
System engineer			√
Tailor	√	√	√
Tanner	√	√	√
Tax officer	√	√	√
Teacher	√	√	
Teacher	√		
Technical services operative	√	√	
Technician in manufacturing	√	√	
Technologist	√	√	

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Textile production worker	√	√	
Tinsmith	√	√	√
Tool maker	√	√	
Tool setter	√	√	
Toolmaker	√	√	√
Tourist guide	√	√	√
Train conductor	√	√	√
Train dispatcher	√	√	√
Train driver	√	√	
Tram driver	√	√	
Translator and interpreter	√	√	
Transport supervisor	√	√	
Travel agency assistant	√	√	√
Typesetter	√	√	√
Upholsterer and decorator	√	√	√
Veterinary surgeon	√	√	√
Veterinary technician	√	√	√
Vintner	√	√	√
Visual artist-promotion	√		
Waiter	√	√	√
Watch maker	√	√	√
Watchman	√	√	
Water delivery operative	√	√	
Water industry specialist	√	√	
Water industry worker	√	√	
Weaver	√	√	
Well-digger	√	√	
Window dresser	√	√	√

Name of occupation	Media on occupations		
	Characteristics	Leaflet	Video-clips
Wine grower	√	√	√
Wood processor	√	√	
Wooden products and jewellery maker	√	√	
Wooden semi-finished products maker	√	√	
Worker in laundering and dry-cleaning			√
Workshop planner	√	√	

Annex 2

Getting to Know the World of Labour

The world of labour is very large and complex and therefore cannot be covered in this publication in its entirety. This annex contains characteristics of major areas of the world of work and basic differences between them. Individual areas of work are defined in terms of what they are directed towards, and in terms of their principal features.

	What are the work activities directed towards:		What is the main characteristic of the work activities:
1)	- things	1.1)	Machinery and equipment operating
		1.2)	Machinery and equipment adjusting and repairs
		1.3)	Manual production, working, assembling, arranging
		1.4)	Measuring, testing, trials
		1.5)	Thinking up, design, construction design, projecting
		1.6)	Assessment, evaluation
s)	- people	2.1)	Education and upbringing
		2.2)	Caring, nursing, healing
		2.3)	Customer service
		2.4)	Provision of counselling
		2.5)	Negotiating, representing other people's interests
		2.6)	Managing, planning, organising
		2.7)	Providing for security and order, protection and guarding
3)	- nature, animals, plants	3)	Cultivation, breeding, environmental protection
4)	- information	4.1)	Filing, documenting administration
		4.2)	Conducting analyses and implementation of resulting proposals
		4.3)	Software development
		4.4)	Editorial work, journalism

1.1) Machinery and equipment operating

The main work activity in all relevant occupations consists in operating machinery and equipment as the main tools of work. The machines need not be understood in detail. However, the way they are operated must be mastered as well as the setting up of parameters and basic maintenance. In the event of a breakdown a repairperson is normally called. It is necessary to know the objects which are worked upon by the machines – i.e. to know the subject of work. The work subjects primarily include:

Metal materials

- Through the application of various work procedures, the workers get metal materials of required qualities (e.g. steel from iron ore) or semi-finished metal products of various shapes (e.g. tin, bars, wires, unworked casts). These are later processed into further products. The work takes place mostly in a hot environment and in difficult working conditions. Typical occupations include: smelter, founder, metallurgist, metal roller, etc.
- By working on the shape of metal materials or semi-finished products on so-called machine tools, specific shapes and dimensions of metal parts are achieved. Their qualities are then improved by finishing adjustments. The work takes place mostly in engineering workshops and plants. Typical occupations include: turner, miller, grinder, toolmaker, electroplater, etc.

Wooden materials

This field is primarily concerned with the production of wooden semi-finished products (boards, rods, logs) and the production of furniture, flat accessories, toys etc. The work takes place mostly on various woodworking machines in carpenter's workshops, further and other wood processing workshops and plants. Typical occupations are carpenter, plywood maker, maker of wooden semi-finished products, wooden jewellery maker, etc.

Glass and ceramic materials

By means of blowpipes, glass moulds, furnaces, presses, potter's wheels and other devices various functional as well as decorative products are manufactured. Typical occupations are glassmaker, glasscutter, and ceramics maker.

Textile and leather materials

This field is concerned with the production and finishing of textile, leather semi-finished products of various qualities, colours and dimensions on weaving machines, spinning machines, in various chemical environments etc. Typical occupations are: weaver, spinner, tanner, dyer, etc. This area also involves the production of clothing mostly on sewing machines. Typical occupations are tailor (seamstress), furrier, and sewing machine operator.

Chemical materials

This field involves the production of paints, varnishes, glues, fuels, building materials, cosmetics, polystyrene semi-finished products, plastic foam, PVC and other plastic material products, products made of rubber, paper, as well as drugs and other pharmaceutical products, etc. The work takes place mostly in areas with chemicals and it is normally automated to a large extent and remote controlled. Typical occupations include chemist, rubber maker, plastician, chemist in pharmaceutical production, etc.

Foodstuffs

This field is concerned with the production of various kinds of raw materials for food, foodstuffs and drinks in mills, bakeries, canning factories, sugar factories, breweries, distilleries, dairies, chocolate factories and, of course, in kitchens. Typical occupations include miller, baker, can maker, sugar maker, brewer-maltster, dairyman, confectioner, vintner, cook, etc.

Polygraphic products

This field involves the production of books, magazines, newspapers, posters, leaflets, calendars, diaries, etc. The work takes place mainly in printing houses on printing machines or in bookbinding shops on paper-cutting, pressing and grooving machines etc. (bookbinding, finishing adjustment). Typical occupations are printer, bookbinder, etc.

Energy

The subject of work is the production and distribution of various kinds of energy (electricity, heat, water). Tools of work normally include control rooms (counters) in power plants, heating plants, etc. Typical occupations are various operators.

Transport

The subject of work is the transport of persons and goods and the tools of work are various means of transport and other mobile machinery and

equipment. Typical occupations are driver (car, bus, and tram), engine driver, tractor driver, crane operator. It is also possible to include excavator operator or mining machinery operator, although they do not deal with transport but in soil breaking.

1.2) Machinery and equipment adjusting and repairs

Unlike the preceding field, where machinery and equipment represent the tools of work, in this field they are the subject of work. It is therefore important, in understanding this subject, to have “technical mind”, and a sense of technology. An important activity consists in diagnosing the breakdown, i.e. establishing the cause of the breakdown. Adjusted or repaired machinery may be (very roughly) divided three groups:

Machinery and equipment working on a mechanical principle

These may be common production machines (lathes, presses, sewing machines, etc.), means of transport, construction machinery, heating, etc. Typical occupations include adjuster, auto-mechanic, heating operator, etc.

Machinery and equipment working primarily on an electrical engineering or electronic principle

These may include both machines working mechanically with electronic control, measuring or signalling systems (digital control production machines, automated production lines, aircraft), and purely electronic equipment and systems (televisions, video-recorders, tape recorders, telephone switchboards, security systems, electronic measuring equipment, automated control systems etc.). Finally, this category includes electricity distribution systems. Typical occupations are electrician, digital control machinery mechanic, communications equipment mechanic, measuring and regulation mechanic, etc.

Computer technology

Computers and the associated technology also function on an electronic basis. However, most of the work is concerned with software. Typical occupations are computer engineer, computer network administrator, etc.

1.3) Predominantly manual production, working, assembling, arranging

The main working activity, as compared to the field called “machinery and equipment operating”, is, as a rule, manual production with the use

of various tools and instruments or simple equipment and appliances. The work consists either in putting together several components in one unit or in manual shaping and adjustment. The activities take place both in various workshops where the environment is mostly cleaner than that of engineering workshops (although there is also a share of work on machines and it is often a combination of machine operation and manual assembling) – and on construction sites. Some of the occupations in this field are identical with the field state above. Manual skills are important. The subjects of these working activities are most importantly:

Engineering products

Typical occupations are assembly worker, car assembly worker, welder, optician, gun maker, etc.

Electrical engineering products, systems and networks

Typical occupations are electrician and electro-mechanic.

Wood products

Typical occupations are carpenter, joiner, basket maker, etc.

Textile and leather products

Typical occupations are tailor (seamstress), furrier, manual lace maker, bag maker, etc.

Polygraphic products

Typical occupations are bookbinder, retoucher, etc.

Foodstuffs

Typical occupations are cook, confectioner, and butcher.

Building constructions and their equipment

Typical occupations are bricklayer, roofer, builder, plumber, paver, etc.

1.4) Measuring, testing, trials

Tools of work include most importantly measuring devices and apparatus as well as complex measuring systems including their links to computer technology. Work materials include various measured, tested and tried equipment, substances and materials – solid, liquid and gas, various processes, quantities and parameters. The work normally takes place in testing rooms and laboratories. Typical occupations are chemical lab technician, medical lab technician, land surveyor, geologist, mine surveyor, etc.

1.5) Thinking up, proposing, designing, projecting

There are many different occupations with different professional focus in which work is based primarily on the application of one's own thoughts, ideas and discoveries. The result may be a modern building, a new car model, a newly-designed special material, a discovered ancient housing estate, a discovered comet, an elegant dress model, well-dressed shopping window, a newspaper article, literary, visual arts or other artistic work etc. It must be added that an idea does not suffice, it is important to bring the idea down into a detailed and precise proposal. Inventiveness, resourcefulness, creativity and a systematic approach condition success in this area.

1.6) Assessing, evaluating

This field involves the assessment of the characteristics of certain objects. One of the characteristics may be the price (e.g. of buildings for sale, inherited property, articles given to pawnbrokers, etc.). Another one may be the size of loss (damaged building or other property). Typical occupations include assessor, pawnbroker, loss adjuster, etc.

2.1) Education and upbringing

Schools, kindergartens, boarding facilities, young people's homes as well as retraining centres and other educational facilities – these are environments where education is provided to children and young people, but also adults. It is said that one must be born a good teacher and there is a point in this claim. The ability to establish a relationship with children, natural authority, ability to explain and appropriately formulate things, to be an actor of sorts and have a lot of patience – these should be the characteristics of a good teacher and educator. The main occupations include teacher (at various levels of the education system), practical training instructor, educator, kindergartens teacher, special pedagogue (the education of disabled children and young people).

2.2) Caring, nursing, healing

The subject of work is people – ill, invalid, elderly, lonely and young children. All of them need someone to take care of them, to nurse them, treat them in their illness, to assist them in coming back to ordinary life. The working environment includes doctor's offices, hospitals, sanatoria, rehabilitation centres, old people's homes, nursing homes and households. Tools of work include various manual aids, tools and devices, sometimes of high technological standards. Major occupations

include physician, nurse, rehabilitation specialist, child-minder, etc. In all these occupations one must be really fond of people and have the ability to empathise. A pleasant word and a stroke is sometimes more powerful than the best medicine. However, medical treatment may not dispense with medicines or with other treatment procedures. It is therefore necessary – particularly as regards physicians – to be a competent professional. Specialists in these occupations must also be absolutely reliable, as their mistakes may cost someone's life.

2.3) Customer service

This field covers a whole range of diverse services. Their common denominator is contact and dealing with people. It is therefore necessary know how to deal with people, to have cultured manners, to be able to overcome one's own bad mood and irritation with a surly customer. The entire area may be divided into several sub-areas as follows:

- sales,
- work behind a cash desk or a cash register,
- personal services,
- waiting,
- tourism services.

Sales

In this area one must reckon with being “on one's feet” all day, which be tiring for some people or even impossible due to health reasons. The subjects of work, i.e. selling, are goods of various nature – from food, clothes, glass, domestic appliances, and electronic appliances to cars or building materials. Cash is involved – concentration, accuracy, reliability and arithmetical skills are therefore important. The work environment includes across-the-counter shops, self-service shops, various department stores, vending stalls, etc. The typical occupation is sales assistant.

Work behind a cash desk or a cash register

This involves even more demanding work with cash compared to sales assistants, Absolute long-term concentration is therefore a must as well as accuracy, arithmetical skills and reliability. Work environment includes counters in post offices, insurance companies, banks, exchange bureaus as well as places behind cash registers in department stores and supermarkets. Typical occupations include a cashier, exchange office counter clerk, bank or post office counter clerk.

Personal services

A characteristic feature of work in this area is a close contact with a customer and activities related to his/her appearance or condition. This involves having skilful and sensitive fingers and hands and a sense of cleanliness. Typical occupations are hairdresser, beauty therapist, masseur, chiropodist and manicurist.

Assisting in restaurants, coffee shops, congress halls and similar establishments

A customer is brought food, drinks or possible other things such as written documents, information, etc. The typical occupation is waiter (waitress), but also stewardess and hostess.

Tourism services

This field involves a wide range of services the main feature of which is attending to travelling customers. The services include organisation of their travel (travel agency assistant), providing for their accommodation (hotel staff such as receptionist, chambermaid etc.), travel guide and interpreting services (guides, interpreters) and attending to participants of various conventions and conferences (hostesses).

2.4) Counselling provision

Counselling is provided by various specialists concerned with various issues and problems, such as law, marriage, taxation, upbringing, career or education choice, interior design of apartments, choice of office furniture etc. The work in this area is based on an analysis of the client's problem and ensuring search for its optimal solution. It is important to be able to discover quickly the core of the problem, to recognise what is relevant and what is irrelevant, to have a correct judgment, to be able to put thoughts into appropriate words and to deal with people. One must also be capable of establishing contact with the client, to create an atmosphere of mutual trust. A prerequisite is, of course, a profound knowledge of the counselling are concerned.

Typical occupations are barrister, tax advisor, psychologist, educational guidance specialist, labour office counsellor, interior designer, garden designer, etc.

2.5) Negotiating, representing other people's interests

Business does not only take place behind shopping counters, but also in a stylish environment of neat offices and meeting rooms. This normally involves larger amounts of money and the actual business is about

negotiating the most suitable conditions for one's own purposes or on behalf of a customer whom the businessperson represents. A typical occupation is a businessperson who may specialise, for example, in houses, flats, land (real estate agent), in shares and other securities (stock exchange broker) or virtually in anything else. The occupations in this field also includes a sales representative (dealer) who offers good produced by a specific company, and also insurance agents who offer the services of insurance companies.

Representing other people's interests does not occur only in business transactions, but also in courts. Again, the objective is to ensure the best possible terms of the client and, again, this is achieved by means of eloquent speaking. Typical occupations include barrister, commercial lawyer, etc. Another form of representing other people's interests is representing someone in public, particularly in the media (spokesperson). The basic activity in this area, which pertains to all these occupations, is dealing with people. The subject of work is, apart from the traded goods, usually a large amount of money. It is important – besides being able to deal with people – to have a cultivated appearance and manners, ability to respond quickly and a feeling for the situation.

2.6) Managing, planning, organising

These activities are often called management-related activities and individuals who perform them are called managers. They manage, organise and plan the operations of an organisational unit, company or firm that they have under their control. They may manage the organisation as a whole. Their work includes primarily the management of subordinates, assigning tasks, supervision over their fulfilment, motivating and rewarding staff, solving frequent problems, which occur in connection with these tasks, and with the operation of the relevant entity. These are mostly activities which have a fundamental impact upon the organisation's prosperity. The manager therefore bears significant responsibility and his/her work is usually very exhausting and exceeds the normal working hours. However, it is normally well paid. It is an acknowledged truth that managing people is one of the most difficult activities and not everyone is capable of doing this successfully. It is also important to have knowledge of the professional field in which the organisation and the relevant unit operates. A prerequisite is consistency in relation to one's own work and to subordinates' work, the ability to make quick and correct decision, to use time efficiently, to distinguish what is relevant from what is irrelevant. It is vital to know how to deal with

people, how to persuade them and how to formulate one's thoughts into words.

Not only managers do organisation and planning. Planning occurs at all levels of human activity – from long-term planning, through short-term plans to planning of individual production operations in all sectors and at all management levels. Planning is carried out by both managers and planners (e.g. formulation of a detailed production plan for a specific operation or workshop for a certain period), technologists (planning technological procedures for the production of a certain product), designers (planning work on a project, such as the implementation of an information system, gas-pipe construction etc.) and other employees. Organising permeates work even more than planning and is done, apart from the staff stated above, by administrative workers in technical-organisational departments.

2.7) Providing for security and order, protection and guarding

This field covers police services or customs services and activities of various security agencies. The relevant occupations are normally associated with a uniform and sometimes with difficult or even dangerous people and situations. It is therefore important to be in a good physical and mental health.

3) Cultivation, breeding, environmental protection

It is not only people that need care, but also animals, plants and nature. This care is provided in various environments – fields, cowsheds, poultry farms, gardening centres, zoological gardens, veterinary surgeries, and in the wild. Those interested in working in this field should be truly fond of nature, should be real enthusiasts. Such jobs are not performed for money. Mere love for flowers and animals is not enough – this type of work is also connected with physical exhaustion, discomfort, and whims of the weather. The main occupations are: farmer, breeder (e.g. of cattle, pigs, horses – also a rider), poultry farmer, fisherman, forester, gardener, manager of endangered species, veterinary surgeon, veterinary assistant, ecologist, etc.

4.1) Filing, documenting, administration

Administrating, maintaining, updating and using databases with various types of data, selecting and searching data – these are the main activities of “information” workers. They carry out work of a “library” type

as well as a host of other activities with the purpose of processing information.

This area also includes all occupations which are associated with the term “office work”. It must be added that “office work” nowadays means mainly work with information, which automatically means work with computers (one need not have a profound understanding of computers, it is important to master work with the relevant user software). The very basic activities in this field include maintenance of various directories and other lists, registration of property and other assets, filing of various business cases, clients, administrative decisions, verdicts and other matters, accounting, typing and filing of letters and other written documents.

Other activities may be added in many workplaces – of a more professional nature, such as dealing with various decisions resulting from administrative proceedings including supervision of their carrying out, making out and carrying out changes, entries in and excerpts from official documents, sorting out and storing various documents, calculating benefits, taxes and fees etc. Activities of this kind occur in virtually every company. A large volume of such work is to be found in certain types of organisation (in state administration, banking, insurance, in legal matters, in post offices, transport, tourism, trading organisations, etc.).

4.2) Conducting analyses and implementation of resulting proposals

These activities mostly follow from those stated above – in order to conduct analyses, what is needed is information. Analyses are carried out, for example, by economists, various analysts, sociologists and researchers with various specialisations. They are used in banking, insurance, the corporate economy, market surveys, opinion polls and scientific work.

4.3) Software development

The development of computer programmes is a creative activity. However, similarly to the field above, it must be preceded by a profound analysis of information – in this case users’ requirements and conditions, environment, data components and other factors in which and with which the proposed programme should operate. Apart from programmes, there is an important place for analysts. These two activities are frequently

carried out by a single person. Moreover, it is important to realise that rather than developing new programmes, the objective often is to design extensive computer systems by means of using or adapting the existing programmes.

This area as a whole is undergoing a dynamic development, primarily in the context of the development of multimedia. New work activities emerge and, along with them, new occupations. It is difficult to break the activities down into clear-cut occupations. The reason is that these activities are developing simultaneously with the division of labour. The approach of companies to their staff specialisation varies – specialised staff with various occupations may carry out the job carried out by one programme in one company. The main feature of most activities in multimedia development is the integration of skills belonging to the area of informatics with graphic skills, as well as the integration of technical and creative components of the relevant qualification. In various specific professional cases the proportion of these components differs – however, they are always inter-related and complementary. Teamwork is very important. Continuing learning is an absolute necessity. Dropping out from professional work may mean that, due to rapid development, it may be difficult to catch up.

4.4) Editorial and literary work, journalism

This area is also built on information. The output, however, takes the form of creative texts of a professional, artistic or journalistic nature. The development of the texts includes both the writing stage and the editorial adjustment stage. This means that authors, reporters and other journalists contribute to such work and so do editors (professional, language and graphic).

Similarly to the two aforesaid fields, several other fields of labour which have not been mentioned are of a creative nature – primarily artistic work (theatre, film, television), advertising, designing and arranging etc. (These activities may be included in the field called “Thinking up, designing, projecting”). Many creative occupations as well as those of technical, organisational or business nature operate in connection with these activities.

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