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# A Handbook of Total Counselling

## PREFACE



The recent OECD Career Guidance Policy Review<sup>1</sup> indicated the policy concern in all OECD countries for young people at risk of social exclusion. It noted that many countries had developed programmes for such young people, especially for early school-leavers drifting in and out of unemployment, labour-market inactivity and marginal unskilled work. It also indicated that successful strategies for working with such young people involved a highly individualised approach, addressing their personal and social needs as well as their educational and vocational guidance needs: in other words, holistic approaches. Much the same conclusions were reached in a parallel EU-wide review<sup>2</sup>.

At the same time, stemming from these reviews, two important caveats need to be noted. First, care needs to be taken to ensure that services for young people at risk are not developed at the expense of services for all young people<sup>3</sup>. Second, while holistic services are philosophically attractive for all young people, the OECD review indicated that within such services there was a tendency for attention to career guidance issues to be crowded out by attention to personal and social issues<sup>4</sup>: care needs to be taken that this danger, too, is averted.

This Handbook provides valuable evidence of the forms total counselling approaches can take, and the ways in which they can work. It is based on extensive practice in four countries: England, Iceland, Italy and Slovenia. It addresses a range of important issues, including the role of the counsellor, the ways in which services are structured, the assessment of young people's needs, quality assurance, training and supervision, and sustainability. It provides a valuable resource on which practitioners and policy-makers in these and other countries can draw.

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- <sup>1</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*, pp.49-51. Paris: OECD.
- <sup>2</sup> Sultana, R.G. (2004). *Guidance Policies in the Knowledge Society*. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.
- <sup>3</sup> Watts, A.G. (2001). Career guidance and social exclusion: a cautionary tale. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 29(2), 157-176.
- <sup>4</sup> OECD (2004). *Op. cit.*, pp.40-41.

# Introduction to the Handbook

**FOUR COUNTRIES – ENGLAND, ICELAND, ITALY AND SLOVENIA – JOINED TOGETHER TO DEVELOP HOLISTIC (TOTAL) COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. THE CONTEXTS AND APPROACHES WERE VERY DIFFERENT, BUT WITH SOME COMMON THEMES AS THE HANDBOOK REVEALS.**

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## **THE TOTAL COUNSELLING HANDBOOK**

In addition to the background to the project and the policy context, the Handbook aims to give the reader a comprehensive view of how each of the transnational partners has:

- 1 Identified its target group,
- 2 Organised its response to the needs of young people
- 3 Developed the role of their total counsellors
- 4 Organised their service
- 5 Assessed the needs of clients
- 6 Addressed monitoring, evaluation and quality issues
- 7 Developed training and supervision processes.

The aim is to provide examples of different approaches to delivering total counselling services, questions, based on experience in the project, to ask when considering setting up such a service, and an insight into some of the challenges that have been revealed by the project. General background on the Total Counselling concept and the general policy context is provided at the beginning of the Handbook, with references to relevant background and policy papers. The main body of the Handbook itself finishes with a section on how project sustainability can be achieved.

We have given technical terms and acronyms in full at the beginning of each section and indicated abbreviations used. There is also a glossary on page 78.

After the Handbook itself, there are sections for European Commission documents and those from each Total Counselling partner country. Where these have been identified before the Handbook text was completed, references are made to them in the text.

# “WHY TOTAL COUNSELLING?”

Defination of Total Counselling

## WHAT IS TOTAL COUNSELLING?

We define ‘Total Counselling’ for young people as follows:

**‘THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOLISTIC COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE THAT TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE YOUNG PERSON’S WHOLE LIFE SITUATION. THIS COULD MEAN CREATING LINKS FROM EXISTING GUIDANCE COUNSELLING SERVICES TO OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE OR COULD LEAD TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW SERVICES’**

## About the Project

The “Total Counselling” project was a pilot supported by the European Union through the Leonardo da Vinci programme. The project received the grant in November 2002 and it was completed in January 2005.

The project aimed to develop more holistic counselling services for young people that take into account the young person’s whole life situation. This could mean creating links from existing guidance and counselling services for young people to other support services for young people or could lead to the development of new services.

The partners in the project came from different geographical areas of Europe where three of the partners were from the West and North-west; the UK (1) and Iceland (2), one from the South, Italy, and the fifth partner came from the South-east, Slovenia.

The partners represented European societies with different cultures and different ways of delivering guidance and counselling to young people and with very different population sizes. An integral part of the project was to align the project work and partners to allow for this difference in geographical position, population size and culture, but at the same time to allow the partners to work towards a common goal – a comprehensive or holistic guiding and counselling methodology and service for young people.

## Concerns for young people

Most if not all European societies are concerned about the future of their young people and that they find a meaningful place in society. One of the most important ways of integrating young people in a meaningful way into the society is through education. But not all young people find their place in our society through educational and vocational training systems, and some don’t even connect with the society at all and these young people are at risk of being alienated and marginalized.

One way of countering the waste of human and economical resources is by offering young people advice, guidance and counselling that can better address their needs and help them to improve their choices and decisions. When young people feel that society is concerned and offers them meaningful opportunities based on an understanding of their existential situation and needs, there is a greater likelihood of a successful transition into society.

The Total Counselling project is directed at the need for advisers, guidance counsellors and guidance services to address fully the needs of young people for the right kind of counselling/guidance, at the right time and speed, on the right issues and by the right people.

We want to ensure that guidance services, guidance counsellors and advisers connect with young people’s lives in the broadest sense so that young people in turn feel connected with society and community. Furthermore Total – or holistic -Counselling can connect young people with their own future, helping them find motivation and through the right learning opportunities, for them to flourish in learning.

### Identification of new counselling needs in Europe

This need has been identified and discussed by counsellors in Europe, both on international conferences (International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance - IAEVG) and on a national level, to look for appropriate new solutions, alternative methods and tools to use when counselling young people, addressing life-skills and existential problems, such as finding meaning and motivation in their lives.

The role of the adviser of young people needs to change as traditional counselling methods are not working well enough or up to date. Across Europe major changes are taking place within the field of careers and vocational guidance. It has been recognised in many countries that the models of careers and vocational guidance that have been in place for a number of years need amending to take into account changes in society. The policy context is explored in the next section, Combatting Social Exclusion through Total Counselling.

One of the most important recent focuses has been to develop careers and vocational guidance services to counter the growing risks of the exclusion of young people from the education and the labour market. A key methodology in countering this problem is the growth of new systems of guidance and counselling which take into account the individual's whole life situation and are able to deal with a much wider range of issues, such as drugs, housing, criminality and therefore be able to address barriers which can prevent young people accessing education, training or employment.

These new systems are also important to society by connecting policies and services from across the government, national and local, so that they make sense to and deliver results for all young people. By their nature, they create new opportunities for collaborative working between different professions. For example, the total counselling concept fits very well with the aims of the European Youth Forum<sup>5</sup> which is rightly pressing for more involvement of young people as active citizens. At a local level, total counselling includes engaging youth workers in the guidance and counselling process.

### Importance of Lifelong Learning for young people

The European Commission has recognised, in the recent communication “Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning”<sup>6</sup>, that guidance systems should be accessible to all citizens, especially those at risk of exclusion”. It also stated that guidance systems should be “flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of the individual learner”.

One of the Key Messages in an earlier Commission Paper “A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning”<sup>7</sup> stressed the need to rethink guidance and counselling. Key Message Five called for a new approach which was essentially a brokerage role and that it should move towards a more “holistic” style of provision.

The Council of Europe's Resolution on Guidance noted, “the need for....the use of innovative methodologies and technologies, outreach and related services to increase access....”<sup>8</sup>

The TC project addresses the fact that such systems are currently developing across Europe and the need to produce syntheses and frameworks of good practice in this area of work, as well as training materials for those who would like to develop such systems in their own countries.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.youthforum.org/en/>

<sup>6</sup> Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning, European Commission, Brussels 2001,

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/l11/life/communication/com\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/l11/life/communication/com_en.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, European Commission, Brussels, 2000, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/l11/life/memoen.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004_en.pdf)



**Cross-disciplinary  
teamwork of professionals -  
A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO COUNSELLING**

The project team believes that there is a need for a common platform where specialists from different fields of work can go beyond the usual boundaries of their professions and work towards the common goal of assisting young people. Effective advice and guidance has to be based on a detailed understanding of young peoples' concerns that their needs can be met through differentiated working methods for particular age groups.

This concept of total or “holistic” counselling can be developed into an important tool for guidance and support for young people at cross-roads in their lives. Holistic counselling and guiding can become an important tool, among others, in what society can offer young people.

**The Aims of the TC project**

The aim of the project was to develop methodologies and tools so that existing information and counselling practices can be developed into more holistic services, taking into consideration the client's whole life situation and delivering better service and counselling for young people.

The partners within this project established cross-disciplinary teams of advisers connected, either directly in counselling- and information centres or indirectly as back-up teams that act in close collaboration with advisers and counsellors. In this way platforms for dialogue are established between professionals from different areas of counselling and advising in the society, such as social counsellors, people from the health sector (doctors, psychologists, re-hab workers / institutions), guidance counsellors, financial advisers, legal advisers, sexual educators, for example. Other professionals working with young people such as social workers, youth workers and others will also be able to develop closer links with guidance services.

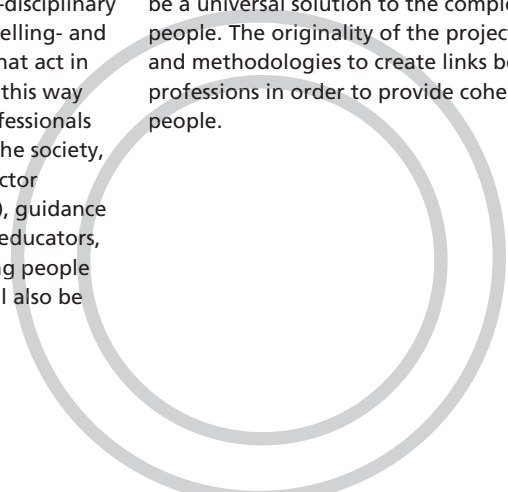
**On the road to adulthood...**

Every young person has a crisis of some kind or maybe on his/her way to adulthood, where he or she is in need of professional advice or counselling. The depth or comprehensiveness of the crisis may differ, from failing an exam at school or a broken relationship to life-threatening situation or addiction, etc, and this is where “total-counselling” comes in with an approach that takes into consideration the individual's whole life-situation and approaches it with urgency in a flexible way.

The project was aimed at all young people in general, and at disadvantaged young people, in particular. But at the same time “total-counselling” should become a gateway to general information on education, vocational training and employment. Young people with no clear direction in life, needing tailored advice, guidance and support to meet their individual needs, and removing barriers to learning and progression.

**Nothing is new under the Sun.**

The project was not original in the sense of something completely “new”, i.e. all (or most of) the services and professions exist somewhere in society, nor does it claim to be a universal solution to the complex problems facing young people. The originality of the project is in providing tools and methodologies to create links between the services and professions in order to provide coherent services to young people.





### **WE BELIEVE THAT THERE WAS A VERY MUCH NEEDED INNOVATION IN THIS PROJECT CONCERNING**

**A)** taking young people’s whole life-situation into consideration when guiding and counselling them and

**B)** creating platforms where dialogue and sharing of methods and experience, between different professions and professionals, can take place.

This new holistic approach can then be embedded in the practices of ordinary information centres including in the work of counsellors and advisers, so that it is possible to react to immediately to requests by young people (be the problem or crisis at hand small or large), and not to keep the clients waiting days or weeks or sending them somewhere else. For this we need to create cross-disciplinary (back-up and/or front-line) teams of different professions and professionals to address our criteria of speed and holistic approach to meet the need of our clients.

It is important to pool the vast knowledge and experience of working with and counselling young people that resides with the partners and their organisations, all of whom have identified the need for a new approach and solutions in counselling and giving information to young people.

### **Different cultures – different solutions**

#### **IN ICELAND – REYKJAVÍK**

In Iceland the drop-out percentage from upper-secondary education and vocational training has been between 25-45%, in the age group 16-20 years, over the last 10-15 years, though long term research has shown that many of these young people will return to school and reach a degree or diploma before the age of 30.

After years of working with young people in various projects, especially unemployment projects where hundreds of young people attended, we noticed that the available “conventional” channels for information, advice and guidance were not being used by them. Among the reasons stated by the young people were: lack of transparency of the system, the time-factor (i.e. the time it takes from the young person’s decision to reach out for help until he/she actually gets help, can be weeks), to get comprehensive guidance young people have to go to several places and, finally, when and if they to the advisers there is sometimes a language or attitude barrier that can block the effectiveness of the counselling.

Our discovery (i.e. in Iceland), after practical experimentation and experience, is that young people are often more in need of holistic guiding, help in finding motivation and sorting out their lives in general, than specific vocational- or study counselling. And our experience is that if young people are able to sort out their immediate life-situation, they are usually able to find direction for their professional ambitions.

Hitt Húsið created a holistic counselling service for young people in June 2002, where several different services provided professionals to a total counselling team that provides advice, counselling and information to young people in need. It is designed as a gateway where young people can reach counsellors in person and through the internet and by telephone, called [www.totalradgjof.is](http://www.totalradgjof.is). Miðberg is a community center which formally opened a TC service for young people in January 2004, as a part of the TC-project, where the aim is to work more intensively in the local community with holistic guidance and advice.

## “WHY TOTAL COUNSELLING?”

In the last few months we have had several hundred visits on our website a month, tens of questions on our website a week and several personal visits a week.

We find it interesting that more young women reach through the website and more young men visit us personally.

### **In England - Bradford**

In England the introduction of the Connexions service and the development of the new profession of “Personal Adviser” is based on the fact that “the best defence against social exclusion is having a job and the best way to get a job is to have a good education, with the right training and experience”. The service aims to provide “ a radical new approach to guiding and supporting young people through their transition to adult hood and working life”. The service is delivered through a network of personal advisers linking with specialist support services, which are drawn from a range of existing public, private and voluntary and community sector services. The offer to young people is that the personal adviser can deliver, or gain access to any form of help that they need.

### **In Slovenia**

In Slovenia, there is a wide range of activities aiming at assisting young people up to the age of 26 to make personal, educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. For example activities within schools to help students clarify their goals and understand the world of work; personal or group-based assistance with decisions about initial courses of study, courses of vocational training, further education and training, initial job choice, job change, or work force re-entry.

The principal providers of career and education guidance services in Slovenia are schools and Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS). In both settings professional counsellors are employed. In addition, there are special counselling services organised which offer in-depth counselling and also therapy in their respective area: substance use issues, emotional well-being, identity and self-image questions. These agencies are: counselling services for young people (also organised locally, the main staff employed are psychologists and social pedagogs).

A wide range of information to young people regarding education, training, employment as well as cultural, leisure and sport activities are provided also by youth centres. The concept of information and counselling for the next years predict their bigger role also in the area of counselling on the broader issues.

### **In Italy-Rome**

The counselling “advice-guidance” is a supporting strategy for individuals who are devoting themselves to develop plans for their career.

The counselling service supports young people on how to manage difficult decisions related to career choice, which includes the research of all necessary information, to make a diagnosis and to foresee any possible alternative, the planning of the action and the checking of the outcome. The service is generally offered to young people (until the age of 35) in the Youth Information Center. In the Job Guidance Offices and in the Social Health Care Services there is no age limit ; the High School Guidance service is available for young people until the age of 19-20 years, and University Counselling is obviously connected with enrolment onto University courses.

The services offered provide help in making young people personal, career, educational, training and occupational choices. They include a wide range of activities, for example, activities within schools to help students clarify their goals and understand the world of work; personal- or group-based assistance with decisions about initial courses of study, courses of vocational training, further education and training, initial job choice, job change, or work force re-entry.

## “WHY TOTAL COUNSELLING?”

The principal providers of career and education guidance services in Italy are: Councils, Regions, Provinces and State, throughout the Youth Information Centres (Councils); the Schools and Employment Services (Provinces), Social Health Care Centres (Regions), Cultural and University Guidance Services (Minister of Education and University).

In all these different offices professional counsellors and less skilled social workers or assistants are employed. Guidance in schools is provided by school counsellors who work in the school counselling services. Guidance counsellors are employed in practically all levels of studies: primary and secondary schools (personal, social, vocational). Guidance in the Employment Service is carried out by career counsellors working in local (Provinces and Town) and regional offices. The co-ordination is done by the Minister of Welfare. The main service of personal- and social guidance is provided through the social welfare system and the centres for job guidance are organised locally.

Guidance is provided mostly by social workers, psychologists, social assistant, but also initial services are usually provided by clerical staff. The services include counselling services for young people (also organised locally, the main staff employed are psychologists and social workers). Information for young people regarding education, training, employment as well as cultural-, leisure- and sport activities are also provided by Youth Information Centres.

# Total Counselling as a Means of Combatting Social Exclusion

## Background

The drive towards a holistic – ‘Total Counselling’ - model of support for young people reflects a recognition that the resolution of young people’s problems needs to address all the interrelated factors that underlie them. For example, drug dependency may well have a genesis in relationship difficulties, a career choice problem may be influenced unduly by family/ cultural factors or it may not be possible to achieve any lasting solution to an employment problem without finding suitable accommodation first.

The idea of a ‘Total Counselling’ approach to supporting young people is not new. Charles Chen<sup>9</sup> wrote about a holistic approach to career counselling in an article published in 2001. In developing his argument he drew on the work of Donald Super, Tony Watts, Charles Jackson and many others in the 1980’s and 1990’s. He went on to suggest that, as effective career counselling had to deal with individuals’ barriers to progress, career counsellors had to be competent to address these barriers. Career counselling was strongly linked to counselling for life. He then argued that the response should include a re-examination of the role of the career counsellor.

Similarly, discussion of the problem of unemployment in Europe has become more sophisticated. We now talk about “social exclusion”, recognising that there are many and varied social and psychological, as well as economic, reasons for unemployment.



## Social exclusion

Social disadvantage has a crippling effect on almost every aspect of life, including life expectancy, earnings potential, qualifications, achievement, teenage pregnancy, infant death rate and entry into higher education. What makes the problem so intractable is that individual difficulties are frequently linked with others so that solutions have to be sought on several different fronts. Geographic areas as well as individuals can be affected so that whole communities can sometimes be described as socially excluded. Here are some examples from Government research in the UK:

- 1 There is a significant association between parental income and children’s education, and subsequent earnings. Children growing up in low-income households are likely to earn lower wages as adults.
- 2 A baby boy born into the professional classes can expect to live over seven years longer than one born into the bottom social class. (8.5/6.5 year difference between the best & worst areas).
- 3 Of all children receiving free school meals (a means tested benefit), 23 per cent gain five or more GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education. Age of 16) at A\*-C, compared with 54 per cent of all children. That is the social excluded perform less than half as well as the general population, as measured by this criterion.
- 4 The likelihood of becoming a teenage mother was almost ten times higher for a girl whose family was in the lowest social class in 1999 compared to the highest social class.
- 5 The death rate for the babies of teenage mothers was 60 per cent higher than for babies of older mothers and they are more likely to have low birth weights.
- 6 Only 15 per cent of young people from unskilled social backgrounds begin higher education by the age of 21, compared with 79 per cent of young people from a professional background. These are real and dramatic effects of social exclusion that demonstrate the need to address the needs of the poor.

<sup>9</sup> Chen C.P, (2001) Career Counselling as Life Career Integration, Journal of Vocational Education and Training, Volume 53, Number 4, 2001

### Career Guidance and Social Exclusion

Two studies, one in Wales and one in North East England in the early 1990s, emphasised the degree of alienation of young people at that time from the formal systems of support. In Wales up to 23 per cent of 16-17 year old young people were "Status Zero" (that is, not in education, employment or training (nowadays shortened to NEET)) and many more were not recorded in the statistics. By comparison 64 per cent were Status Zero (NEET) in the north east of England and 39 per cent of them were not recorded in the official figures.

The official figures show that the overall numbers of Status Zero/NEET young people has remained stable at 9 per cent for the last 10 years until recently. Gathering accurate statistics by traditional large scale survey methods was problematic – and this was recognised by the Bridging the Gap report<sup>10</sup> that led to the establishment of the Connexions Service in England.

The four countries involved in the Total Counselling project all have challenging issues with young people not in education, employment or training. Iceland has the highest percentage of dropouts from secondary (post compulsory) education. A report by Gerður Óskarsdóttir<sup>11</sup> showed that 32 percent of young people dropped out of secondary education in 1991, in addition to 13 percent who did not enter secondary education. That is a total of 45 percent of young people dropped out of secondary education (15-19 years). According to Eurostat<sup>12</sup>, that figure had fallen to 32 percent of young men and 23 percent of young women by 2004.

In the United Kingdom, the corresponding figure has fallen from 34.7 percent in 1992 to 16.7 percent in 2004. The corresponding Italian figures are 27 percent (males) and 20 percent (females). In Slovenia the drop out rate from secondary education (15-19 years) is of particular concern. The latest figures show it at 11.6 per cent. In the same period (1998), the drop out rate from vocational education was 14 per cent.

In his report, *Guidance Policies in the Knowledge Society*,<sup>13</sup> Ronald Sultana draws an important terminological distinction "between guidance on personal issues – often captured by using the word counselling, which denotes a more therapeutic function – and educational or career guidance".

He went on to state that, "Many respondents to the guidance survey noted it was difficult to disentangle the two terms. This is partly because clients themselves do not necessarily draw the distinction between guidance for different aspects of life tasks which they experience holistically; partly because life challenges are complex affairs that impact on various overlapping concerns in a seamless fashion; and partly because guidance services targeting the different aspects of life concerns and transitions are often delivered by the same person or category of professional".

Member states have taken different approaches. The Sultana report noted that Ireland, Malta and Norway have recognised that there is a need to differentiate between guidance and counselling in the education sector. Norway is moving towards having different categories of staff addressing the career and general counselling needs of young people. The Netherlands has already adopted this approach.

It has been noted in several countries that personal counselling issues are crowding out career guidance (e.g. Czech Republic, England, Iceland, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia). Practitioners in Iceland also recognise this as an issue.

<sup>10</sup> Bridging the Gap: new opportunities for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training: Presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister by Command of Her Majesty, July 1999.

<http://www.asylumsupport.info/publications/social-exclusion-unit/the-gap.pdf>

The Bridging the Gap report can also be found at

<http://www.social-exclusion-unit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp>

<sup>11</sup> Óskarsdóttir, G.G., *The Forgotten Half*, University Press, University of Iceland, 1995

<sup>12</sup> Eurostat Year Book 2004, European Commission 2004, [http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-CD-04-001-2/EN/KS-CD-04-001-2-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-CD-04-001-2/EN/KS-CD-04-001-2-EN.PDF)

<sup>13</sup> Sultana, S. *Guidance Policies in the Knowledge Society*, Cedefop, 2004 [http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/etv/publication/download/panorama/5152\\_en.pdf](http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/etv/publication/download/panorama/5152_en.pdf)



Norway's school counsellors report they spend as much as 80 % of their time on personal guidance.

England has adopted the holistic approach, too. Personal advisers of the Connexions Service consider the whole range of a young person's needs – focusing particularly on the group not in education, employment or training (NEET).

There has been a vigorous debate particularly amongst career guidance professionals on whether the focus on the NEET group has reduced the ability of the Connexions Service to address the career guidance needs of the rest of the cohort of young people.

The trend towards holistic counselling is not limited to Europe. For example in New Zealand, the Careers Service has reported on a pilot programme in the North Island called 'Moving On Up'<sup>14</sup> developed specifically to help at-risk teenagers make the move from the margins of society back into the community. The practitioners involved have the sensitivity and the skills to win the trust of their young clients and to support them in a practical way. As a result, they are able to deal with the fundamental factors – lack of self-esteem, absence of family support, significant learning difficulties – which stand in the way of meaningful or sustainable employment for these people.

The "Total Counselling" Project described in this Handbook, is a pilot project funded by the European Union's Leonardo da Vinci programme. It provided an opportunity to evaluate the approaches taken in four very different contexts in the four

partner countries. The common theme is a desire to help young people on their terms, i.e. in a holistic manner. A detailed description of the Project and the Handbook is given in the Introduction to the Handbook and Why Total Counselling from page 5.

The Total Counselling project provides an opportunity to evaluate the approaches taken in four very different contexts in the four partner countries. The common theme is a desire to help young people on their terms, i.e. in a holistic manner.

In their synthesis of the findings of the career guidance surveys by the OECD, European Commission and the World Bank,<sup>15</sup> Watts and Sultana identified three public policy goals for career guidance: learning, labour market and social equity. The latter is about promoting equality of opportunity and social inclusion. The balance between these goals varies from country to country, but in the four countries involved in the Total Counselling project – England, Iceland, Italy and Slovenia – combatting social exclusion is a high priority. The methods employed vary, but the aims are the same.

The surveys also show that there is an increasing recognition of the outcomes of guidance – particularly in relation to learning and behavioural outcomes. This is because the process is about helping people address their problems rather than telling them what to do.

The completion of the Total Counselling project follows closely on the publication of the OECD/European Commission Handbook for Policy Makers<sup>16</sup> on career guidance.

<sup>14</sup> Career Edge magazine, July 2003, Careers Services Rapuara  
<http://www.careers.govt.nz/PDF/Career%20Edge10.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Sultana, S., and Watts A.G., Career Guidance Policies in 37 Countries: Contrasts and Common Themes, International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, Volume 4 Nos.2-3, 2004, pp.105-122.

<sup>16</sup> Career Guidance A HANDBOOK FOR POLICY MAKERS, OECD & EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2004 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/53/34060761.pdf>

## Total Counselling as a Means of Combatting Social Exclusion

The Policy Handbook notes that services designed to re-engage school drop-outs into learning are not always well developed or do not include career guidance as part of the service mix. Communities' capacity to support early education leavers is also important. In terms of possible policy responses to high education dropout rates, the Policy Handbook emphasises the value of integrated approaches to delivering support.

On the other hand, the Watts and Sultana paper does emphasise the danger inherent in a holistic approach of marginalising any one element of expertise – in their case career guidance. The four projects within the overall Total Counselling Project will provide an opportunity to examine these issues as they progress over time.

The genesis of the four projects that make up the Total Counselling project is described below.

### England

The UK Government's Social Exclusion Unit's 'Bridging the Gap' Report (1999)<sup>17</sup> painted a picture of young people with multiple disadvantages being excluded from society. The downward trend in Status Zero/NEET young people had reversed and so the Government accepted the recommendation of the report to establish a new youth support service, based on a holistic approach to solving young people's problems. Chen had proposed personal counsellors; the new Connexions Service for England would have Personal Advisers who would be a single source for young people.

The Service has been rolled out across 47 partnership areas since 2001. As the Handbook shows, there is plenty of innovation at local level – not least in the Bradford area of West Yorkshire. A very strong feature of Connexions is that young people are involved in the design, management and monitoring of the service. A recent survey of quality assurance arrangements across Europe revealed that this aspect of service development is generally at an early stage.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Bridging the Gap: new opportunities for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training: Presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister by Command of Her Majesty, July 1999. <http://www.asylumsupport.info/publications/social-exclusion-unit/the-gap.pdf>

The Bridging the Gap report can also be found at <http://www.social-exclusion-unit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp>

<sup>18</sup> Henderson et al, Preliminary Study on Quality Guidelines and Criteria in Guidance, FINAL REPORT, Cedefop, May 2004,

### Iceland

Iceland's response to the difficulties of young people has come from the diametrically opposite direction – the community. Whilst Iceland rates above the OECD average in employment rates – including for young people – the impact of social exclusion is felt at community level. The very high dropout rates referred to above emphasise the need that was felt at community level to help a significant number of young people who were not in education, employment or training. As a result, Hitt Húsið ('the Other House') and then Miðberg Community Centre in Reykjavik saw the need to respond to young people's needs by providing a holistic response to their problems, no matter how large or small. The research carried out in Iceland amongst young people showed that they reported problems such as anxiety and depression, shyness, financial difficulties, smoking and bereavement. Here the service is small scale and responsive, but nevertheless it relies on practitioners working together to find innovative solutions just as much as the infinitely larger Connexions Service.

## Total Counselling as a Means of Combatting Social Exclusion

### Italy

Italy's 2003 National Action Plan for Social Inclusion<sup>19</sup> showed that poverty is still on the rise, especially in the Centre and the South. It also emphasised the rapid decentralisation process from the central government to the regions, and noted the effect that this was having on service delivery.

The Review of Italian Career Guidance Policies – which was part of the Cedefop survey – also noted the impact of the decentralisation process that was underway and that more importance is being attached to guidance practices. Increased attention is being paid to the socially disadvantaged.

Against this background, a Guidance Network of Experts proposing a Total Counselling Service in the Rome area bringing several public services together to deliver more coherent, holistic, services to young people. As shown on page 20, there are many access points to support for Italian young people with the risk that they will experience duplication of services rather than a progressive approach to solving their problems.



<sup>19</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/nap\\_incl\\_0305\\_it\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/nap_incl_0305_it_en.pdf)

### Slovenia

According to the Joint Memorandum of Social Inclusion in Slovenia<sup>20</sup>, the overall unemployment rate in 2002 was lower, at 6 percent, than the EU average. However youth unemployment is still high especially for young women. The Memorandum noted the low educational level of the unemployed. Among the registered unemployed there are around 27 per cent without any basic vocational education, of which 3 percent with no school education and 24 per cent without elementary education.

Of particular concern is the drop-out rate from secondary education. The latest figures show it at 11.6 per cent. In 1998, the drop-out rate from vocational education was 14 per cent. The latest Slovenian National Action Plan on Social Inclusion<sup>21</sup> sets a target of reducing the drop-out rate to 5 percent by 2010. The Slovenian research<sup>22</sup> is particularly interesting because 50 percent of the sample reported that they had received a lot of encouragement from their parents and another 32 percent had been moderately encouraged

The Slovenian priority, therefore, was to target young people who had dropped out of education, but who were not currently receiving counselling support. A new service has been designed on holistic counselling principles.

As described later in this Handbook, the Slovenian plan is introducing a Total Counselling or holistic counselling service in six regions from early 2005, which will target young people who have dropped out of education. The aim is to meet them in their homes – to meet them on their terms. In contrast to the Icelandic and Italian approaches, the Slovenian project is a Government initiative, along with the English Connexions Service. Therefore the four projects can be categorised as voluntary for young people in the case of Iceland and Italy, whereas in Slovenia and England there is a degree of official encouragement to use the service - at least for the declared target groups for both services.

<sup>20</sup> Joint Memorandum of Social Inclusion on Slovenia, 2003, European Commission and Government of Slovenia [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/soc-prot/soc-incl/si\\_jim\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-prot/soc-incl/si_jim_en.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (2004-6), [http://www.sigov.si/mddsz/pdf/nap04\\_05\\_en.pdf](http://www.sigov.si/mddsz/pdf/nap04_05_en.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Research quoted in Hrafnisdóttir, S., Evaluation Report Total Counselling Leonardo Project, 2004. See Appendix ?

# A - The target group

The Total Counselling (TC) approach targets young people who have need of guidance or counselling to make progress or develop further in their lives. It provides young people with access to grown-ups, a single person or a team of experts, that know how to advise and counsel young people in a way that is understandable and appropriate to the many difficulties that young people can face in today's society. The nature of the service and the people that deliver it means that anyone from outside the target age group asking for help would be given at least some kind of basic response and advice on where to find more detailed help.

It can be that a young person has a single question that he or she cannot answer alone or get answers for in their immediate circle, or it can be a complex group of interrelated questions/problems that need answering at the same time to be able to help the young person to move on in their lives and find meaning in it. The Icelandic research<sup>23</sup> in particular revealed that young people can be deterred from seeking help because they assume that their problem is too trivial to raise. A critical issue for all services is to create an atmosphere of trust and unconditional positive regard so that young people feel that they can discuss anything no matter how large or small they might feel it to be.

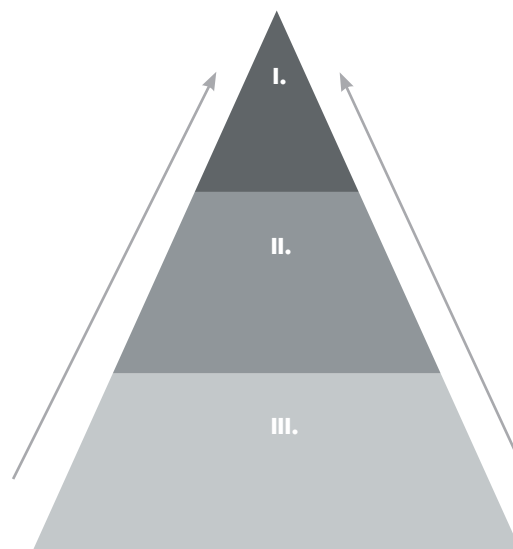
The aim of the counsellor through this approach is to consider the whole life-situation of the young person when giving out advice and to acknowledge the fact that all the different areas of our lives are inter-connected. So when

advice is given related to a certain area of life, it is done with a concern for the other facets of life that may or may not directly influence the decisions and/or advice taken for a specific problem.

Diagram A.1 illustrates a response pyramid. Depending on the resources available to the service, this pyramid can illustrate either a differentiated response according to need or simply to show the broad range of responses to individuals according to their need. For example, in Iceland, the aim is to provide a personal response to all young people whereas in England, the policy is to encourage young people with more "straightforward" issues to use the Connexions helpline or website wherever possible.

The aim of the Total Counselling service (TCS) is to be accessible to individuals in the defined target group, whether they have a single "small" problem or question, or for a single piece of information, or a crisis that threatens the existence of the individual. The TCS aims to bridge the gap between provision of information and the rest of clients' needs – whatever the size of the client's problem. For the service to be successful, young people need to believe that the service really can address their problems, no matter how large or how small.

The Handbook highlights the issues and approach for each of the partners – Iceland, Italy, Slovenia and the United Kingdom (England).



**DIAGRAM A 1**

**I. INTENSIVE SUPPORT**  
SUSTAINED SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH MULTIPLE PROBLEMS

**II. SOME SUPPORT**  
IN-DEPTH GUIDANCE AND HELP FOR THOSE AT RISK OF DISENGAGEMENT

**III. UNIVERSAL SERVICE**  
INFORMATION, ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND REVIEW OF CHOICES

<sup>23</sup> Research quoted in Hrafnisdóttir, S., Evaluation Report Total Counselling Leonardo Project, 2004. See Appendix ?

### Questions to think about regarding the target group

- 1 What age of young people would you like to offer this service to?
- 2 Is it a service available to all young people or just to some young people?
- 3 How are young people identified for the total counselling service?
- 4 What are the characteristics of this group?
- 5 Why choose this group?
- 6 What age if support available from the national employment service?
- 7 What support services are available in schools?
- 8 What financial support will be available? Are resources available to offer the service to all young people?

The Total Counselling project provides an opportunity to evaluate the approaches taken in four very different contexts in the four partner countries. The common theme is a desire to help young people on their terms.

Further information about the Total Counselling services developed in the partner countries follows.

### AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CLIENT GROUP AND NEEDS IN EACH COUNTRY

#### England

The Connexions Service provides young people between the ages of 13 and 19 with guidance, advice and support on a wide range of issues including, careers education, training drug abuse, sexual health and homelessness.

Personal Advisers working within the Connexions Service provide advice and support on issues such as support general careers advice to intensive support for those who are facing such issues as drugs/alcohol/mental health issues/homelessness.

All young people in mainstream or further education automatically have a named Personal Adviser allocated to them to offer advice and support.

However additional support is available to young people who have additional needs or face significant barriers to enter the education, training or the labour market. The Connexions Service is fully inclusive but support is differentiated according to the variety of needs facing individual clients and also has the flexibility to take into account how the needs of the individual can change over time.

Once a client leaves full-time education and is identified as 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) – they may access support in their locality through Personal Advisers based in their community or alternatively, if registered with their local Connexions Centre, they will be allocated to the most appropriate Personal Adviser who can provide support.

When a young person progresses into a learning, training or employment option – they can opt to have continued support from their original Personal Adviser, but is also given the alternative of receiving support from the Personal Adviser linked to the learning or training option they has accessed.



### Iceland

Clients of the TCS in Iceland are between 13 and 25 years of age. Much of the traffic on the web site is the age group 13-18, where the girls are more active. The most frequented pages are those concerned with sexuality and family planning, communication and concerns about mental health.

The aim is to reach youngsters between 16 and 25 years that are in a socially weak position and those who are dropping out, or about to drop out, of the school system. The most vulnerable group is aged between 16-18 yrs. This group has not yet reached the statutory age of independence (legally the age of 18) but have left the compulsory education system. Normally they do not receive social or employment benefits and so are totally dependent on their families. As pointed out in the Introduction to the Handbook, the number of education dropouts in Iceland is very high and the prime aim is to reduce the number of dropouts by responding in the way emphasised in this section.

### Italy

Clients of the proposed Total Counselling service in the Rome region can access it through a variety of agencies.

In the Youth Information Centres, young people have usually experienced the Guidance Services in High Schools and/or University. The problem is that a large number of young people fall through the net of services organised by Education and Social Departments.

#### THE COVERAGE OF THE DIFFERENT AGENCIES IS:

1 Youth Information Centre:	14 to 35 years old.
2 High School Guidance Service:	13 to 20 years old.
3 University	18 to 35 yrs (and older).
4 Social Service	12 to 18 yrs (and older).
5 Other Services	14 to 25 years old.

Clients' needs for correct information and guidance increase with age and include: school and university opportunities, vocational education, job and career, psychological and health care issues.

### Slovenia

The clients of the Total Counselling service in Slovenia will be young people between 16 and 25 who have dropped out of the educational system and haven't registered at the employment service.

Guidance in schools is provided by school counsellors who work in school counselling services. Guidance counsellors are employed in primary schools (age 6-15) and secondary schools (age 15-19). They provide broad range of guidance services (personal, social, vocational). According to research carried out in the education sector, school counsellors spend about 30% of their working time for tasks related to vocational guidance. In secondary schools this percentage is lower (about 11%). Schools have at least one school counsellor; bigger schools have two or three counsellors. The Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) provides support for career guidance in schools, including career information<sup>24</sup>.

ESS is responsible for providing career counselling to young people after they have left school.

We believe that these young people frequently have greater levels of need than their peers who are still in education. According to the research carried out by the Institute of Social Sciences (Ule, 2004) the factors that contributed to the early school leaving of the young people without acquiring basic qualifications are multiple and can be structured into four main categories:

1. Needs related to their education.
2. Personal needs.
3. Needs related to the family background.
4. Socio-environmental needs.



<sup>24</sup> Niklonavic, S., Review Of Career Guidance Policies -Final Report-Slovenia, European Training Foundation, 2003 [http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Projects\\_Networks/Guidance/Career\\_Guidance\\_survey/national\\_responses.asp](http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Projects_Networks/Guidance/Career_Guidance_survey/national_responses.asp) registration required.

## B - The Total Counselling Service for Young People

Total Counselling (TC) provides a portal for young people in need where they can access advice, guidance and counselling, and where different services can work together on common principles.

TC is an open service where the Total counsellors can be met or communicated with in person, directly off the street or through referrals, by phone, by letter or through a website. The fundamental principle is that the portal is accessible through any means, is free of charge and there is a speedy and appropriate response to the needs of young people.

### WHAT IS NEEDED TO ATTRACT AND ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE IS:

1. To advertise the service commercially in relevant places that young people frequent, especially those who have dropped-out of the most important systems (like education and work).
2. To promote a positive reputation of the service for quality and speed, so that its quality and availability is disseminated and spread by word of mouth by positive "users".
3. To connect with all relevant services, like the welfare system, schools and employment centres, for referrals and interchange of skills and competences.
4. To link the website up with as many "help" pages on the internet as possible, and to "meta-tag" the website as well and thoroughly as can be, so that all relevant search-engines latch on to it.
5. To work towards "raising awareness" with young people that it is OK or even "cool" to ask someone responsible when you have questions or need help, even if it is only with "small" matters!

The key task is to engage with young people in ways that will ensure that they are in their "comfort zone", that they feel in control of the process and that any problem they might have is appropriate for discussion and resolution, no matter how small or large it might seem to be. This issue is dealt with in more detail in Section C, but should be a prominent part of the promotion of the service and of related information materials.

### Questions to think about regarding service development

- 1 What services would you like to provide to young people?
- 2 Are these services already within the same organisations?
- 3 Should this be done locally, regionally or nationally?
- 4 Is it necessary for policy makers to be involved in developing the links?
- 5 Are formal, written contractual agreements required?
- 6 Are there existing networks already in place for these organisations?

### Transnational Summary

Perhaps the key point when thinking about encouraging young people to access Total Counselling services is to ensure that advertising messages and service provision start from where they are in terms of attitudes as well as social habits. This means ensuring that services are open outside the usual office hours, that services reach out to young people either by having premises that are really attractive to them (not necessarily simply modern and upmarket) or by having counsellors visit them where they are.

Even where it is not possible to change the location of premises, as in Italy, there can still be moves to ensure that counsellors in different offices can provide a coherent, collaborative service open at least part of six days per week.

The Slovenian approach is based largely on outreach by meeting young people in their homes. The hours of operation will reflect the need to engage with young people at the best time for them. The Connexions approach in England also includes outreach especially for the most excluded young people. The origin of the English and Slovenian services in Government policy, implies that ultimately there is, or can be, a degree of compulsion to use the service under certain circumstances or the possibility of sanctions in the event of not cooperating with it.

Marketing services to young people needs to be based on sound evidence of the messages and media that they will respond to. Engaging the attention of young people is a challenge in the face of fierce competition. The key is to understand the needs of the client group through focus group work or other qualitative research methods. A result of gathering such evidence in Iceland has been the realisation that a high proportion of young people go to the cinema and thus that may be a good medium for advertising. The same happens in England. That is not to say that expensive solutions are always the best. The “branded coins” used by Hitt Húsið and Miðberg in Iceland may be just the eye-catching idea that will be cost effective.

An interesting idea from Italy is the “Controguides” – “simple guides” - produced by young people for young people. Young people can be involved in the development of a service in variety of other ways such as providing an input into service design and feedback on service delivery. In England young people are directly involved in management structures in many cases. More information on the Connexions model for involving young people can be found in the England section of the folder under ‘Practice’.

Clearly, information on the service should be distributed through all other contact points for young people, including youth centres and clubs, doctors’ surgeries, shops and libraries. The ubiquitous Internet has to be a central feature of reaching young people as reflected in the Icelandic and English strategies.



### PRACTICE IN PARTNER COUNTRIES -

#### On the following topics:

- HOW DO YOUNG PEOPLE ACCESS THE TOTAL COUNSELLING SERVICE
- PROMOTION OF THE TC SERVICE - INCLUDING ADVERTISING
- WHICH INFORMATION MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

### HOW DO YOUNG PEOPLE ACCESS THE TOTAL COUNSELLING SERVICE

#### England

Connexions aims to build on the work of a wide variety of existing agencies in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors. Therefore young people can gain access to a Personal Adviser through any of the organisations - which offer the PA function.

Young people can access the services of a total counsellor – called a “Personal Adviser” - in a number of ways. Personal Advisers are based in Connexions Centres, Schools, Colleges, Training Centres, Community Centres and Projects. There are two Connexions Centres in the Bradford Metropolitan District, with one based in Bradford City Centre and one in Keighley. Connexions Access Points have also been established throughout the district at a variety of bases.

The Voluntary and Community sector offer young people a broad variety of provision including –youth clubs, information, advice/counselling, outdoor activities and community centres.

As well as providing sporting and leisure activities – educational activities and projects are also available. As part of this network, detached and outreach workers also provide services to young people on their own doorstep, which often gives the opportunity to support those at most risk of drifting into anti-social activities.

### INFORMAL SETTINGS

Particularly when endeavouring to engage the most vulnerable young people, it is important that Personal Advisers are flexible and innovative in their approaches. When working with a client who has been identified as needing intensive support - the first point of contact will normally be through an informal interview and should be in a venue the client feels comfortable with.

All Personal Advisers, whatever their background need to be prepared to work outside of their traditional centre bases, and prepared to meet clients on their own territory. This could be in their homes, or in a voluntary or community centre.

### CONNEXIONS DIRECT

Young people can also gain access to the Connexions Service through Connexions Direct. Connexions Direct is a service that offers quick access to information and advice on a wide range of topics through one easy to use website.

Connexions Direct advisers can offer confidential advice and practical help and can also refer young people to specialist help.

It is possible to speak to a Connexions Direct adviser by telephone, email, or text message.

Young people can also choose to take part in a “Web-Chat” with an Adviser.

Connexions Direct advisers are available seven days a week from 8.00 am to 2.00 pm. Further information is available from the Connexions Direct website at <http://www.connexions-direct.com>

### CAREERS DIRECT

Young people can also contact Connexions locally for enquiries on, Careers Information/ Vacancies/Apprenticeships/ Volunteering or any other issues they may feel they need help with. They can do this by a number of methods: Or alternatively they can chose to visit the website: <http://www.careersdirect.org.uk>

## B - The Total Counselling Service for Young People

### Iceland

The service is located in Reykjavic, the capital of Iceland, at Hitt Húsið (information- and cultural centre for young people) and in Miðberg (a community centre), where young people also access different kinds of cultural and leisure facilities and offers.

The services can be reached on the website 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Counsellors work from 09.00 to 18.00.

The service is advertised in all clubs, centres and offices run by the Youth and Sports Council and Social Welfare Service in Reykjavík. It has been introduced to advisers and counsellors through presentations within these organisations; through the channels of the guidance counsellors' and prevention officers' networks within the school system; on the internet; in cinemas. Icelanders are big movie-goers and research has shown that 65% of those out of education and /or employment go to the cinema at least once a month and those in employment or schools go more often. (No other area showed a higher score!), with brochures and other PR material and last but not least by word of mouth.

We think that it will be necessary to develop ways to reach out to young people with the service as many are at risk and are not motivated to approach counsellors or guidance workers of their own accord. And in future structuring of the service we will look to the Connexions model and others with regard to working with clients in informal settings.

Another way (used in Slovenia) of working with the young people could be contracting with them (and their families) about "being in touch" at certain intervals after their leaving compulsory education or the 10th grade. It would also show them that society is concerned about their welfare.



### Italy

In Italy, there is some way to go before the Total Counselling service is being delivered in the way that the Network of Experts aspires to.

The aim is to encourage the Youth Information Centres and Job Guidance Centres to recognise the role of the Total Counsellor and to deploy staff with TC competences in all the agencies referred in Section Section D-2, page 40.

The project aim is to locate the Service in each "Guidance Centre" at least in a big town or city, one in each Municipality (for example Rome has 20 districts); and perhaps one in each province (about 200 – 300 thousands inhabitants).

The service is planned to be delivered possibly six days per week, for a minimum of 25 hours.

Advertised through all the possible channels (media, school, leaflets and especially through all the public services).

### Slovenia

The Total Counselling service in Slovenia is going to be provided at the Centres for information and career guidance (CIPS), which are the main institutions in the region providing advice and counselling on educational options and opportunities at the labour market.

The service will be delivered from six different locations in Slovenian regions; five at CIPS, and one at the independent institution responsible for counselling and adult learning. All institutions are located in areas which are easily accessible (this was one of the preconditions for the selection of tenders). We assume that a high proportion of the work will be done outside the office which means that the young people are going to be met at their homes.

Only one counsellor can be guaranteed at the five locations in the region. It is planned that he/she is going to work normal working hours 4 days a week (8.00-16.00) and working 10.00-18.00 once a week.

The service is going to be advertised at all the places where young people are gathering (schools, youth centres, sport clubs, social services...) and also via media in selected region as well as at the national level.

### **PROMOTION OF THE TC SERVICE - INCLUDING ADVERTISING**

#### **England**

The Connexions Service is promoted and advertised in a number of different ways. As it is a national service, which was launched in 2001, a national £2.2 million (Euro 3.2 million) advertising campaign took place during 2003. Research by the Department of Employment and Skills (DfES) showed that 70% of young people have a basic awareness of the Connexions Service.

The advertising and marketing campaigns took a number of different formats, including television and cinema advertising, a billboard (road side and telephone kiosks) campaign and also word of mouth campaigns.

#### **Iceland**

The Icelandic approach has been based on market research – which showed for example that 65% of dropouts and unemployed go to the cinema at least once a month. It is even higher for those studying or working. The research showed that no other activity had as high a percentage of young people engaged in it.

Promotion of the TC service is through a variety of methods including advertisements, brochures, posters and leaflets, visit cards and in cinemas. One method of gaining attention is glueing stickers with the website link to the smallest Icelandic coin (1 kroner = Euro 0.12) and throwing it on the ground at open-air concerts and in the streets in the centre.

Direct presentations to important players in the field and on radio and tv are also used. For the website, the team's internet experts have created meta-tags so that the website comes up to a variety of questions and/or keywords when clients are using internet search engines.

Icelandic research also showed that a lot more needs to be done in promotion before one can say that the service is generally well known.

#### **Italy**

In Italy the promotional strategy will target schools and people using existing services. There will need to be heavy promotion of the new integrated service to all potential users, their families as well as other relevant practitioners.

#### **Slovenia**

The TC service will be advertised firstly at the places where young people gather: schools, youth services, sport clubs, libraries, social services, and also more generally throughout each region. The service should be advertised also in the places where parents might see it including newspapers, TV and radio. Each regional TC provider will create its own promotional plan under the overall plan designed by the National Unit.

### WHICH INFORMATION MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE TO YOUNG PEOPLE?

#### England

The Connexions Service provides a wide range of information to young people. Publicity booklets, leaflets posters aim to promote the Connexions Service to young people

The Connexions Direct Website <http://www.connexions-direct.com> provides young people with information on careers, work, learning, money, health, housing, free time, relationships, young people's rights and travel.

The Careers Direct website <http://www.careersdirect.org.uk/> also provides information on careers opportunities as well as giving young people direct access to job vacancies in the Bradford area.

The Connexions Service, both locally and nationally also provides a wide range of publications for young people on a wide range of issues such as careers, work, learning, money, health, housing, free time, relationships, young people's rights and travel.

For example, the Working in Series is a series of over 40 booklets covering many work sectors, subjects and careers. Each book contains case studies showing people in a variety of jobs and the books tell you how it is - including the good things and the bad. Additionally local and national publications are produced on careers and options choice in areas and for example the "Which Way" now publication aims to assist young people making options choices at the age of 14 and the "Its your choice" booklet aims to provide assistance for those aged 16 and above on the choices they face.



Locally, Careers Bradford with the support of Connexions produces the Decisions booklets, which also aim to provide local information about the options open to young people

It is an essential feature of the Connexions Service that young people should have access to information and support on all the issues that they may face.

#### Iceland

Brochures, posters, table game, visit cards, postcards, very small coins with a TC-sticker glued to it and thrown in the streets. And the website which provides much information about the service, articles written by members of the TC team, summaries of "frequently asked questions", links to sites with a lot more relevant information and other services that provide specific services.

#### Italy

Institutional information for young people is still scarce. Some leaflets are produced by the City of Rome with basic information pointing young people to the Guidance offices. At this point the priority is to spread information among the experts and the advisors to orientate them to the new service.

There are also examples of "Controguide" (simple guides). These materials including webpages are normally self produced by young people (student unions, or politically active groups), group belonging to the catholic structure and other private-religious-social young peoples' groups.

## **B - The Total Counselling Service for Young People**

### **Slovenia PROMOTIONAL OUTPUTS**

Information on the counselling services for young people has been made accessible on various web pages, which concern the young people (schools in regions which are included in our programme), young job seekers pages, VIRTU portal (information about all educational options in Slovenia) and our Centre's homepage. In addition, a separate web page has been issued, which is designed especially for young and holds all information on the counseling services we offer. It offers the possibility to the young, which can actively take part in some areas of counseling and informing.

We developed a special overall image, based on the research conducted on our target group (gathered data concerns identifying a narrow target group and the needs of the young). This overall image is representing the national total counseling services for young people and is use as a kind of a trade mark – a common recognition image.

Other promotional materials that are available: leaflets, brochures, now and then published articles in the magazines for young and cooperation with the social workers on schools which promote our services to the young in danger of dropping out of school.

# C - The role of the Total Counsellor

The counsellor (in the Total Counselling (TC) approach) aims to offer holistic counselling for young people and therefore aims to work across existing professional boundaries and provide support services for young people across these boundaries.

## **THIS ROLE THEREFORE HAS A NUMBER OF ADVANTAGES:**

- 1 The counsellor is able to establish an overarching view of the needs of the young person. However they cannot be expected to solve all of the client's problems. Networking and knowing who can provide specialist support, ensures a pool of expertise can be brought into play (e.g. drugs counselling, housing support etc;) to address the most immediate needs of the client.
- 2 Information available from other agencies helps in establishing a more holistic approach towards the individuals need.
- 3 All agencies involved with young people can help to play a proactive role in identifying clients who may benefit from one-on-one support and the intensity of support this warrants from a counsellor.
- 4 More effective referral systems - Protocols and referral systems already in some cases have been established to ensure a more integrated and formal approach to addressing the needs of the client. Connexions, for example, is recommending that all organisations offering Personal Adviser support set up their own formal referral systems to ensure effective communication between agencies to address the needs of young people.



## **General Approach**

A distinct feature of Total Counselling methods is that they take place in informal settings. This section<sup>25</sup> looks at the key issues to be borne in mind.

A critical point is that the counsellors are responsible for making contact with young people in a variety of ways including meeting them in a range of informal settings. This can include the home and community and youth centres. From the outset, the young person must be convinced that the principle of "unconditional positive regard" holds sway. That is, regardless of what the issues are, helping the client to move forward in a positive frame of mind is all that matters

The first substantive point of contact with the client will normally be through an informal interview. The knowledge and skills of the Counsellor during the initial engagement can have a positive effect on the assessment of a young person's need and the overall long-term outcome.

## **INTENSIVE SUPPORT OF CLIENTS**

It is important to provide a service to clients who would not normally access counselling or guidance services. In the past these young people might not have engaged with any agencies and would have finished school with no one knowing where they went. Alternatively they might not have been in school for a number of years or have dropped out the system.

For example, with this in mind Careers Bradford in the UK has set up a team of community staff for post 16 years old clients, who provide regular drop-in services at local venues e.g. Community Centres, Housing Support Agencies and Refuges. Other agencies also link into these settings e.g. community groups, voluntary sector agencies, which has meant that there has to be close liaison between organisations to avoid duplication of services.

<sup>25</sup> Adapted from the Personal Handbook produced by Careers Bradford in England. See England - Research

## C - The role of the Total Counsellor

The Personal Advisers from different organisations, for example, Youth Service, Independent Living Team, Careers Bradford have found it beneficial to talk to each other and set up systems to identify who is the most appropriate person to follow up the client and provide on-going support.

Counsellors can also arrange to meet clients in less formal venues and will do home visits with the client's permission. This flexibility is important as it ensures that the client is given choice about where they access help to make them more at ease- which hopefully contributes to the individual feeling more in control than they would at an unfamiliar venue. Taking the service out to the client as much as possible ensures any young people who may have dropped out of education get the support they need to address barriers and ultimately make an effective transition to employment/training or college options.

### WORKING TO ENGAGE WITH THE YOUNG PERSON

The first point of contact with the client will normally be through an informal interview. The knowledge and skills of the Total Counsellor during the initial engagement can have a positive effect on the assessment of a young person's need and the overall long-term outcome.

To engage the young person, the counsellor will need the skills to create the right environment to make the young person feel comfortable. The counsellor needs to negotiate with the client a suitable time and place to meet. Different counsellors will have different styles and techniques to work to engage with the client but key to any interaction is to try to establish rapport with the client by actively listening to her or him and showing respect and empathy to their situation. This will involve use of verbal and non-verbal cues and feedback. Posture (Body language), eye contact and facial expression are very important. Also the counsellor needs to summarise what the client is saying to show he/she is listening to the young person and check her/his understanding of what is being said.

In order to be productive, the interview needs to be a purposeful discussion. The counsellor should work with the young person to identify their perception of their current situation and their future needs. The client needs to have an understanding of what the interview is for - this should include:

- 1 Contracting the purpose of interview with the client including what will be the main focus of discussion
- 2 A two way exchange of information
- 3 Some agreed and recorded outcomes - N.B. It is better to set small steps which are achievable than to try to be over-ambitious and rush the client towards achieving an outcome they are not ready for
- 4 An agreed time and date to meet again and review progress

Having built up rapport and established a basis of trust with the client, the counsellor may feel it is appropriate to undertake some agreed diagnostic assessment.



### The Key Elements of the Total Counsellor role

The key elements of the role of the Total Counsellor therefore are:

- A The roles which support the work with young people
- B Direct work with the young person

#### A

##### THE ROLES WHICH SUPPORT WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.

- 1 **NETWORKING** (with specialist support services dealing with young people in the region) and can be also with other TC services. The counsellor may need to build these local networks.
- 2 **MONITORING AND PROCESS OF WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE** (with the aim to improve the professional work).
- 3 **TO BE FAMILIAR** with the databases concerning personal, educational and professional development of young people.
- 4 **TO REPORT** to the responsible body (the financial authority) about the work.

#### B

##### 1 THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE POINT OF CONTACT WITH THE CLIENT WILL NORMALLY BE THROUGH AN INFORMAL INTERVIEW.

The knowledge and skills of the Total Counsellor during the initial engagement can have a positive effect on the assessment of a young person's need and the overall long-term outcome. Achieving real engagement with the young person can take one or several meetings and the following are important issues to be developed:

- The assessment of the current situation regarding personal development as well as those related to educational and professional development, assessment of other needs, the planning, implementation and review of the process.

- To establish a contact: first contact should be take place in the right environment to make the young person feel comfortable or to be in 'their comfort zone', rather than the counsellor's – including home visits where appropriate
- Counselling work with the young person: to explore his or her needs (any personal problem can be addressed), to explore the young person's wishes, aspirations and positive and exciting new ways of developing talents and interests, for example volunteering, community projects, the arts, sport or other local leisure activities, to assess the options available and to realise what can be achieved, to support the young persons in getting there, getting feedback
- Supporting the young person to work with other support services to gain help for any issues which need further specialist support

##### 2 The meetings with young people need to be purposeful discussions.

- Contracting the purpose of interview with the client including what will be the main focus of discussion
- A two way exchange of information
- Some agreed and recorded outcomes - N.B. It is better to set small steps which are achievable than to try to be over-ambitious and rush the client towards achieving an outcome they are not ready for
- An agreed time and date to meet again and review progress.

##### 3 During the process agreed ethical principles should be respected:

The ethical principles listed in the Career Guidance Policy Makers' Handbook<sup>26</sup> are given below. The culture and language of different countries may encourage them to use other wording. For example in the Connexions Service in England, the principle of 'unconditional positive regard' features prominently.

<sup>26</sup> Career Guidance A Handbook for Policy Makers, OECD 2004  
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/53/34060761.pdf>



**THE POLICY MAKERS' HANDBOOK** identifies the following principles as underlying the provision of guidance:

### **CENTRALITY OF THE BENEFICIARY**

**INDEPENDENCE** – the guidance provided respects the freedom of the career choice and personal development of the citizen /user;

**IMPARTIALITY** – the guidance provided is in accordance with the citizen's interests only, is not influenced by provider, institutional and funding interests, and does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, social class, qualifications, ability etc;

**CONFIDENTIALITY** – citizens have a right to the privacy of personal information they provide in the guidance process;

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES** – the guidance provided promotes equal opportunities in learning and work for all citizens;

### **HOLISTIC APPROACH**

– the personal, social, cultural and economic context of a citizen's decision making is valued in the guidance provided.

### **ENABLING CITIZENS**

**ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT** – guidance is a collaborative activity between the citizen and the provider and other significant actors (e.g. learning providers, enterprises, family members, community interests) and builds on the active involvement of the citizen;

**EMPOWERMENT** – the guidance provided assists citizens to become competent at planning and managing their learning and career paths and the transitions therein.

### **IMPROVING ACCESS**

**TRANSPARENCY** – the nature of the guidance service(s) provided is immediately apparent to the citizen;

**FRIENDLINESS AND EMPATHY** – guidance staff provide a welcoming atmosphere for the citizens;

**CONTINUITY** – the guidance provided supports citizens through the range of learning, work, societal and personal transitions they undertake and/or encounter;

**AVAILABILITY** – all citizens have a right to access guidance services at any point in their lives;

**ACCESSIBILITY** – the guidance provided is accessible in a flexible and user friendly way such as face to face, telephone, e-mail, outreach, and is available at times and in places that suit citizens' needs;

**RESPONSIVENESS** – guidance is provided through a wide range of methods to meet the diverse needs of citizens.

### **ASSURING QUALITY**

**APPROPRIATENESS OF GUIDANCE METHODS** – the guidance methods used have a theoretical and/or scientific basis, relevant to the purpose for which they are used;

**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT** – guidance services have a culture of continuous improvement involving regular citizen feedback and provide opportunities for staff for continuous training;

**RIGHT OF REDRESS** – citizens have an entitlement to complain through a formal procedure if they deem the guidance they have received to be unsatisfactory;

**COMPETENT STAFF** – staff providing guidance have nationally accredited competencies to identify and address the citizen's needs, and where appropriate, to refer the citizen to more suitable provision/service.

### 4 Engagement with a young person

The process of engagement is key to the relationship between the adviser and young person. The counsellor will be aware that the process does not occur in a vacuum and needs to be developed at every interaction opportunity, with the young person. Engagement in its truest form may result in a positive and fruitful relationship that enables the young person to develop trust and confidence in the adviser and vice versa. We consider the process to involve a number of key elements:

**INDIVIDUAL APPROACH** - each young person is individual and will possess their own unique characteristics. The counsellors must ensure that they recognise this and that the one size fits all approach is harmful to a learner.

**NON JUDGEMENTAL** - our starting point has to underline the value and importance of being non judgemental- nothing is more likely to hinder the engagement process than a counsellor who presents or imposes his or her value base on that of the young person. It is possible to see and define young people terms of their level of motivation, for example, X is highly motivated and Y is lowly motivated. Such branding of the young person is based on our perceptions and at best is misguided.

**UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE REGARD** - developing the relationship with the client relies on much more than simply creating a functional relationship. It is imperative that the counsellor remains unconditional in the regard for the client. Conditional regard requires a contract of some nature which if broken could result in negative regard, for instance the client misses an appointment in this case the counsellor may feel the client is untrustworthy or reliable. Young people are often very susceptible to negative reactions and can easily detect disapproval or critical feelings. Unconditional positive regard is a state of being where the adviser places no strings on their

expectations on the behaviour of the clients.

**HOLISTIC APPROACH** - The holistic approach requires the counsellor to work in a wholesome way with the client by taking account of their psychological, social, emotional, physical, personal, intellectual, social and economic needs. This approach has gained favour with professionals in a range of social and welfare agencies, simply because it makes good sense. The concept behind Total Counsellor work readily embraces this approach. When working in a holistic way there is an opportunity for developing real trust, understanding and awareness of the young person. Conversely, there are also limitations to the approach if the counsellor or adviser sets out to meet all the needs of the young person without acknowledging the important role other agencies and professionals can play in meeting their needs. It is important to keep in mind that it is a professional rather than a personal relationship designed to bring all the necessary resources to bear to take the young person forward.

### 5 Exit Strategy

#### DECIDING WHEN THE CLIENT NO LONGER NEEDS THE HELP OF THE TOTAL COUNSELLOR

It is important that the counsellor does not create a dependency culture with their clients. At some point there is a need for an "Exit strategy". This is a reminder that the ultimate role of the counsellor is to move a young person forward into a learning, training and/or working option. Having achieved this objective this should not normally signal the cut off of contact but the counsellor will need to work to gradually withdraw as the clients situation becomes more established. Usually the counsellor should adopt an approach that phases the frequency of contact out over time. This exit period will vary with each client.

## C - The role of the Total Counsellor

The Total Counsellor will use their professional opinion to decide when this will be appropriate. A number of factors need to be taken into account:

- 1 The client should be established in full-time mainstream provision e.g. job/college/training.
- 2 The client should feel they have been able to overcome or be in the process of addressing the issues that were forming barriers to accessing employment/training.
- 3 The client should have an idea of their next step if they are in training or at college.
- 4 The client should know how to access the support of their counsellor if they require help in the future.



### Summary Of The Role Of The Total Counsellor

TABLE C.1

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TOTAL COUNSELLOR	WHAT IS NOT THE ROLE OF THE TOTAL COUNSELLOR
Empowering – giving information and support	Endless resource
Listening – gaining trust/hearing views	Counsellor/Social worker
Advocating – supporting needs	Surrogate parent/friend
Friendly/ professional	Decision maker
Multi-agency worker – referring where appropriate to other specialist agencies	Last resort for other agencies / Dumping ground for others unwanted clients
Negotiator for needs of client	To guarantee everything client needs
Motivating client to find meaning, achieve goals and develop skills	24 hour service
Supporter to help client achieve positive outcome e.g. employment/training	To be all things to all people

The approach can be summarised as:

**“WE BEFRIEND RATHER THAN ARE FRIENDS”**



### **The remit of the Total Counsellor's Role**

Table C.1 above outlines the factors a counsellor needs to bear in mind when defining their boundaries and limitations to clients and other agencies. The counsellor needs to have the ability to try to understand the young person's viewpoint while remaining objective to their needs.

When offering a holistic approach to guidance it is important that the counsellor does not feel that they have to do everything or fulfil every role for the young person. Referrals need to be made to specialists (e.g. drugs counsellors) as appropriate. The counsellor is expected to provide additional support where appropriate but is an enabler and part of the role is to help the client become more independent and not cultivate a culture of dependency.

It is important that the counsellor takes a co-ordinating role and hence can make sure that the young person doesn't "get lost in the system" and appropriate action is taken to move the client forward. This is vital to avoid duplication of work by separate agencies with one agency thinking another agency is delivering action for the client, which results in no one taking responsibility to check how the needs of the client are being addressed. The counsellor keeps an overview of the situation to avoid the pitfalls of delivering a piecemeal response to client need.

# D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

The development of a Total Counselling service (TCS) is likely to commence in one of two ways.

## **National or Regional Policy - The “top down” approach**

A TC service can be initiated by policymakers and can therefore be directed from national or regional organisations. This can be seen as a “top down approach” and the developments are as a result of the identification of the need of improved services from national, regional or local government.

In the top down model, the need for a holistic guidance service is recognised nationally. It is likely to have been identified as a result of research undertaken both into the needs of young people and with the existing services for young people into their attitudes into how services can be improved.

## **Local Initiatives - The “bottom up” approach**

A TC service can be initiated through a practitioner led approach. This can lead to joint working at a community level on a local basis. This means that the service is developed at “ground level” as a result of the identification of needs by local advisers, which can be described as a “bottom up” model.

In the bottom up approach the service is emerging based on the needs of young people that regularly come to already existing organisations. Counsellors start to cover a broader range of issues following the needs of the clients within the organisations, which are already offering a service for young people.

The needs of clients require organisations / providers / advisers to make certain changes in the organisation in order to better meet their needs. The new type of work demands changes in the organisational structure of the service. The managers of the service should follow the developments and assess, at which point the new, holistic approach should be integrated as a regular activity of the service, they should specify the differences between the TC approach and the existing services.

## **Organisational Models**

Depending on the range of guidance services covered by the total counselling delivery model, the following organisational models could be adopted:

1. The Total Counselling service is the main activity of the organisation. The organisation is established specifically for delivering the TC service or changes its role to become a TC service.
2. The organisation has a special unit for TC services, where one or more experts are working as total counsellors.
3. The organisation has one guidance worker working as a total counsellor within a wider network.
4. The organisation has a guidance worker who also works half time as a total counsellor.
5. No one in the organisation is specifically responsible for Total Counselling service delivery: TC delivery is a part of the role of each guidance worker (depending on his/her judgement of clients' needs).

### Questions to think about regarding organisational structure

The “the top down” and “bottom up” models are of equal merit in principle but they raise different issues. However, sustainable funding will be more problematic in the bottom up approach unless policy makers or other funding sources can be persuaded to take a serious interest in the development of the TC service. Given the core aim of a TC service in providing a holistic response, it is vital to ensure that all stakeholders have been identified and involved in the development and delivery process to an appropriate degree.

**TOP DOWN** - If a top down approach is to be followed:

1. How will the service ensure the support of those working in the field?
2. How will it be ensured that the service is not imposed on existing providers of services for young people and ensure that the existing providers also have an ownership of the service?

**BOTTOM UP** - If a bottom up approach is followed:

1. How can support and finance be gained from policymakers to further develop the service?

**BOTH BOTTOM UP AND TOP DOWN** - If both approaches are followed:

1. Has an assessment of the relevant national policy priorities been made?
2. Have policy makers been informed about the project?
3. Will a new organisation be set up for the delivery of the TC service or will existing services be used?
4. Will staff work only on Total Counselling or will it be in addition to their existing work?
5. What resources are available, locally, regionally and nationally for the service?
6. What additional resources are required to develop the service e.g. human resources, IT, offices?
7. Is it necessary for policy makers to be involved in developing the links?
8. Are formal, written contractual agreements required?
9. Are there existing networks already in place for these organisations?
10. Is TC service the main activity of the organisation offering the TC service? Is the organisation established specifically for delivering the TC service? (In this case the organisation should cover the demand for total counselling in the whole region).
11. Should a special unit be set up to offer a total counselling services, where one or more experts are working as total counsellors?
12. Should an organisation have one specialist guidance worker working as a total counsellor?
13. What new or amended training will be required?

### Transnational Summary

In England, the Government developed the Connexions Service after the publication of the Cabinet Office report, "Bridging the Gap" in 1999<sup>27</sup>. The new service replaced the Careers Service that had been delivered through private companies since 1974. The holistic approach also encompassed the Youth Service, elements of Social Service Departments, Drug Action Teams and Youth Offending Teams.

Slovenia is in the process of setting up a new service based on the Total Counselling concept as a result of a policy decision to address the needs of young people that have dropped out from education.

The Icelandic experience is an example of the practitioner-led approach. – as is the Italian initiative. However, the two are markedly different in that, in Iceland, joint working has already begun at community level as a "proof of concept" exercise.

In Italy, the project is attempting to bring a complex network of government agencies together by promoting collaborative working. The task is a challenging one with two government ministries and regional, provincial and municipal authorities involved.

Slovenia and England are examples of the 'top-down' model whereas the Italian and Icelandic projects are clearly examples of the 'bottom-up' approach.



### Practice in partner countries

1. THE ROLE OF TC SERVICE DELIVERY IN PARTNER COUNTRIES
2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
3. OTHER ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY
4. WHAT IS THE BASIS FOR COOPERATION
5. METHODS OF COLLABORATION
6. HUMAN RESOURCE AND NATIONAL SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

### 1 - THE ROLE OF TOTAL COUNSELLING SERVICE DELIVERY WITHIN PROJECT PARTNERS

#### England

Careers Bradford Ltd is a partner in the delivery of the Connexions Service in West Yorkshire. The Company contracts with West Yorkshire Connexions for the delivery of the service. It employs Personal Advisers working in schools, colleges, and also working with the community.

Careers Bradford Ltd is also represented on the Management Board for the Connexions Service in Bradford and also employs a number of the coordinators for the service in Bradford. For example, the Connexions General Manager, the Personal Adviser Network Coordinator, and the Young Persons' involvement officer. More information on the Connexions model for involving young people can be found in the England section of the folder under 'Practice'.

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.asylumsupport.info/publications/social-exclusion-unit/the-gap.pdf>

## D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

### Iceland

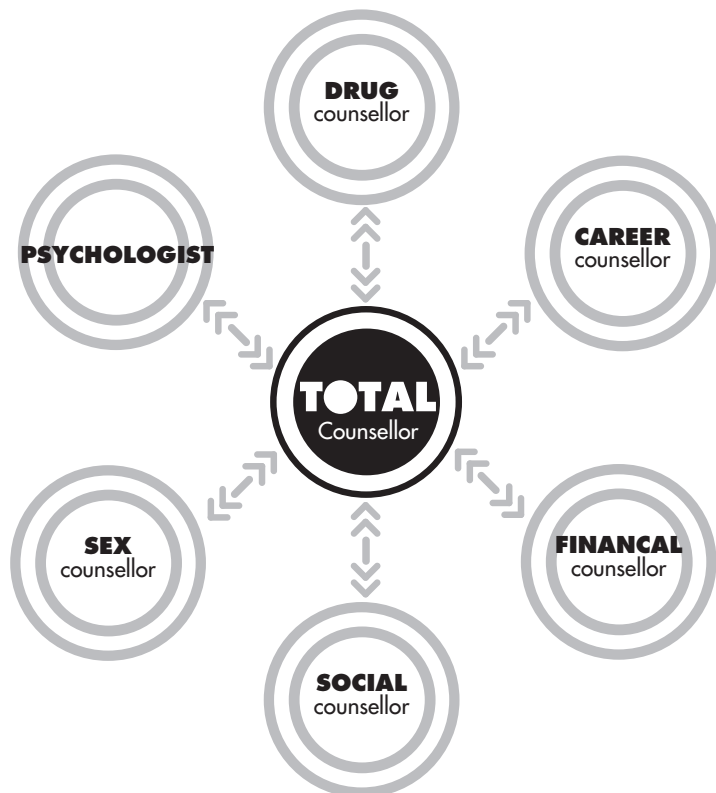
The Icelandic organisation is a combination of the second and third models (see model p. 36). Hitt Húsið is an organisation that deals with all areas of youth support. The Total Counselling service is therefore an integral element of the ethos of the service. Hitt Húsið and Miðberg have TC only as a small part of their operation along with other activities such as culture, information, etc and other social projects. But it has been seen as a strength that TC is integrated with other kinds of activities, as there is no stigma related to going there.

Hitt Húsið and Miðberg in Reykjavik have taken upon themselves the responsibility of delivering a TC service and are the only organisations in Iceland doing so. The project includes maintaining the website, to operate the physical base, i.e. house, where total counselling is delivered, to delegate the work between the different partners and to take care of and maintain the total counselling team.

To maintain the TC team means also training and keeping the network of participating companies, organisations and NGO's together and up to date. This networking activity has a number of benefits:

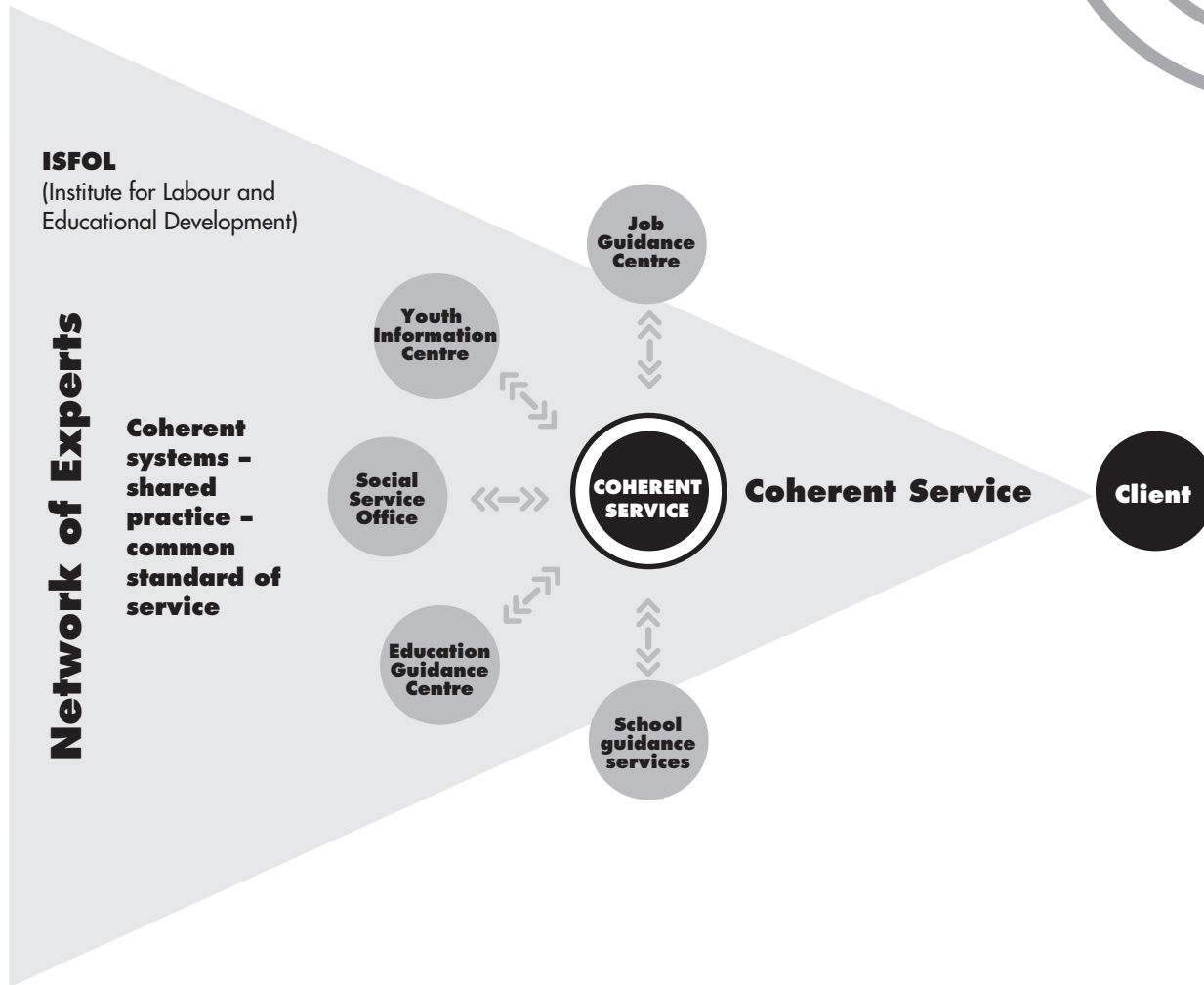
- 1 The mutual learning and creativity achieved is powerful.
- 2 It is an inexpensive exercise – although it does take time to manage effectively.
- 3 Counsellors' effectiveness is increased through better understanding of the roles and issues of other colleagues.

DIAGRAM D.1 ICELAND: MEMBERS OF THE TC – TEAM



## D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

DIAGRAM D.2 ITALY: NETWORK OF EXPERTS AND ADVISERS



### Italy

The “Total Counselling service” concept, as demonstrated through the project provided the opportunity to present examples of good practice, including methodologies and organisational structures, from other European countries, new examples of methodology, organisation and exchange of methodology. As a result, the idea of a coordinated, rational and efficient service to meet the real needs of the young is taking shape in the Lazio region, on the lines of the fifth model on page 36.

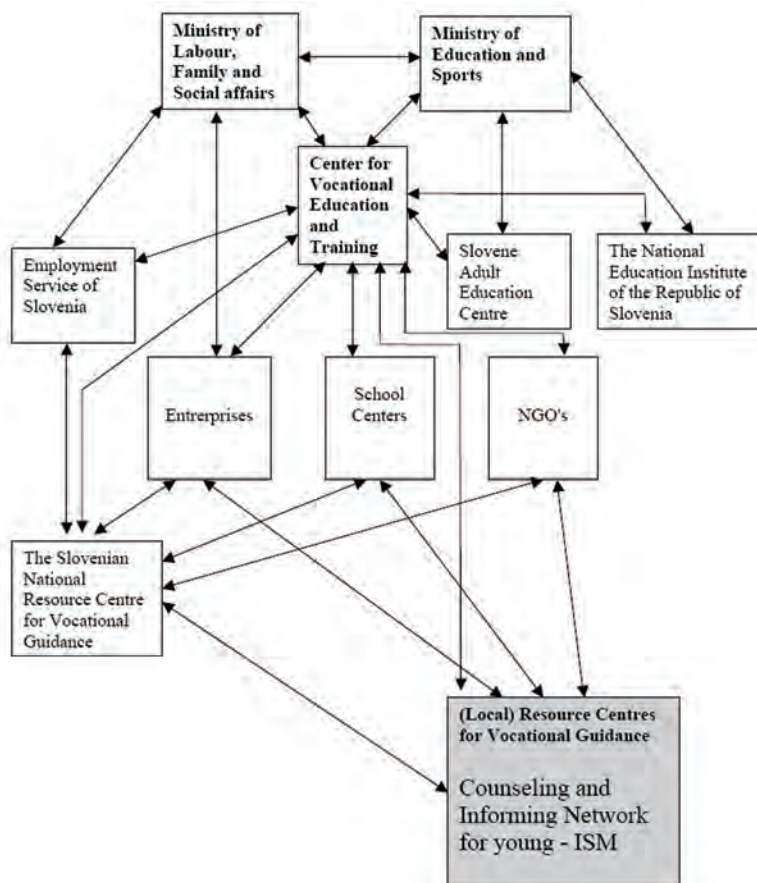
Work is underway to create a network of experts and advisers. It has been less straightforward to introduce the same concept at the policy maker level, but the interesting models and possible evolution of the project is giving an interesting impetus to the implementation of the Total Counselling Service in Italy in the future.



### Slovenia

The Total Counselling service will be organised on the lines of the model described under '3 - Other Organisations Involved in the Delivery of Total Counselling'. And in Diagram D.3 below. The service will be delivered by one advisor in five regions, based in the Information and Counselling Centres (CIPS) that are responsible for career guidance provision and are units attached to the Employment Service of Slovenia. In addition in one region the TC adviser will be working in one private training provider, which is also responsible for the career and educational guidance. All organisations have been selected by tender.

**DIAGRAM D.3 SLOVENIA: ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY OF TOTAL COUNSELLING**



The TC adviser in each region will be supported by other colleagues in the team, especially those working with young people - so called first job seekers.

The Ministry of Education Science and Sport (MSZS) is responsible for the funding of the service. CPI is responsible for strategy of the service delivery in cooperation with other organisations, which have the representatives on the expert body. The representatives are from the following institutions: MSZS, Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS), Slovene Adult Education Centre, Institute of Education, and representative of social workers.

## 2 - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE DELIVERY OF TOTAL COUNSELLING

### England

The Connexions Service (model 1, see p. 36) was launched from 2001 and replaced the Careers Service and elements of the Youth Service. It is managed by the Supporting Children and Young People Group of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) which works with five other government Departments, together with private and voluntary sector groups and youth and careers services.

The Service is delivered through 47 local partnerships. These vary in structure. Some deliver the service directly, employing their own staff, whereas others contract out the service to a range of other providers. The West Yorkshire model is a contracted out one. A prominent feature of the Connexions model nationally is the active involvement of young people in the design, management and quality improvement of the service<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> More information on the Connexions model for involving young people can be found in the England section of the folder under 'Practice'.

In October 2002 Connexions West Yorkshire was set up for the delivery of the Connexions Service within West Yorkshire. Connexions West Yorkshire follows a sub-contracting model, which means that Connexions West Yorkshire does not deliver services themselves but subcontracts with other organisations in the West Yorkshire area to deliver the services.

Connexions West Yorkshire are based in Brighthouse in West Yorkshire and have responsibility for the delivery of the Connexions Services across the West Yorkshire region including Bradford, Leeds, Huddersfield, Halifax and Wakefield.

Connexions West Yorkshire in turn contracts each year with the Department for Education and Skills to deliver the services.

The Government has set targets for Connexions organisations to reduce the number of young people registered with Connexions as being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). Although the Connexions Service aims to deliver an holistic approach to the needs of clients, there is still the emphasis to ultimately achieve a positive outcome by moving young people when appropriate into a suitable learning, training and/or work option. The Connexions Service has set targets to reduce the NEET group in West Yorkshire during 2003-4 by 9.3% and to reduce the number of unknown destinations for clients by 8.8%. These figures had to be achieved by November 2004.

Other cross agency partnership targets for West Yorkshire are to:

- 1 To place 75% of 19 year old care leavers into EET (Education, Employment, Training) during 2003-2004.
- 2 To place 60% of 16 –19 year old mothers into EET by 2010.
- 3 To place 90% of 13-18 year olds supervised by the Youth Offending Team, into EET.

### Iceland

Hitt Húsið and Miðberg in Reykjavik have taken upon themselves the responsibility of delivering a Total Counselling (TC) service and are the only organisations in Iceland doing so. The project includes maintaining the website, to operate the physical base, i.e. "house", where TC is delivered, to delegate the work between the different partners and to take care of and maintain the TC-team. To maintain the TC-team means also keeping the network of participating companies, organisations and NGO's together and up to date.

Therefore the Total Counselling concept is not just a delivery model for providing better, holistic, services for young people, it is also a means of bringing counsellors from different disciplines together. Doing this increases the dynamism of the service through increased mutual understanding and by creating innovative solutions.

One of the things we have noticed when working in cross-disciplinary teams or groups is that they quickly develop into information-meetings where the partners are not really developing teamwork. In the TC-team it has been discussed how to counter this tendency. What we aim to do is to consider the counselling team as any other group of people and to be aware of the group's process and work with the dynamics of that particular group, i.e. the TC-team.

## D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

### Italy

The Region involved in the project in Italy is Central (Lazio), which has Rome as the regional capital.

Whilst the Minister of Welfare (Labour and Social Service) is the main agency responsible for guidance services, in reality there is not a single agency responsible for the central planning for the Total Counselling project at this stage. However in Rome a group of agencies involving the Municipality, the Region, the Province and the Minister through the Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione Professionale dei Lavorati (Institute for Labour and Educational Development - ISFOL).

The aim is to develop a "Possible Unique Future Service" coordinated by the Minister of Welfare centrally.

The context is a rapid change in regional government in Italy. Provinces and municipalities tend to be centre-left politically whereas the central and regional governments are centre-right at the present time. If a project that involves all the different levels of local and central government is to succeed in this context, then it is probable that it can only do so with the active support of the relevant ministries.

The vision is a TC service in which the main role for the scientific coordination should be taken by "ISFOL" under the general direction of the Social Service Department, but on the basis that advisers are employed by and working in Youth Information Centre, the High School Guidance Service, University Guidance Services, and Social Service Guidance Offices.

The role of the "Scientific Coordinator" (Minister of Welfare, ISFOL Minister of the Education and the University) should be to develop and plan common methodology in the Country, giving to the local Institution (Town, Region, Provinces) the direct responsibility for driving the Total Counselling services. There are important exceptions such as in Rome as it has more than half population of the Lazio Region

### Slovenia

The planned Total Counselling service is a new counselling model in Slovenia, which was launched early in 2005.

There will be regional delivery organisations in each of six regions – five resource centres and one independent organisation. The organisations were selected on the basis of open tender based on the following criteria:

- The organisations have to be already working in the field of guidance.
- They have to come from the regions with the highest percentage of education drop outs.
- They have to already have an existing infrastructure for the provision of guidance and information.

The Total Counselling service is going to be placed within the existing structure of the regional resource guidance centres (CIPS), but it is going to be considered as a separate and new task for the organisation.

## D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

### 3 - OTHER ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY OF TOTAL COUNSELLING

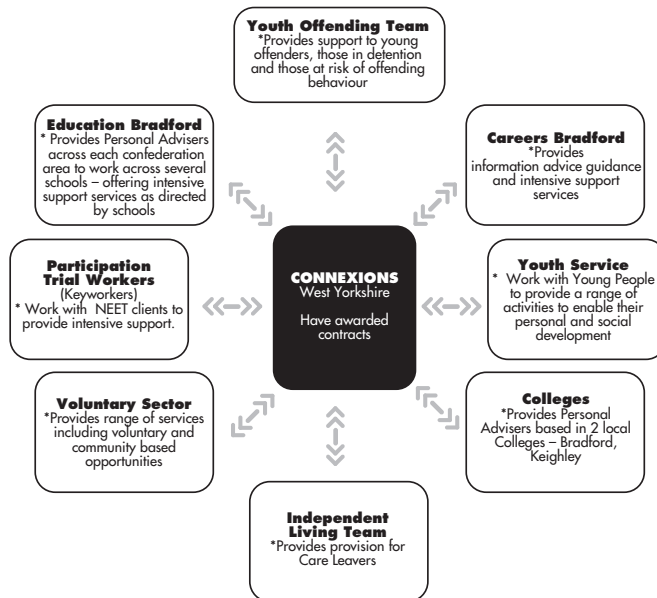
#### England

To date the West Yorkshire Connexions has contacts with the following organisations to deliver the Connexions Service in the Bradford area:

- Careers Bradford	- Education Bradford
- Bradford/ Keighley Colleges	- LSC Participation initiative
- Independent Living Team (Social Services)	- LSC Participation initiative
- Voluntary Sector – e.g. Bradford Foyer City	- Centre Housing Project
- Joint Activities Service	- Lighthouse Outreach
- Police Club for Young People	- Bradford YMCA/Prince's Trust
- Bangladeshi Youth Organisation	- Russell Street Project
- West Yorkshire Youth Association	- Youth Development Partnership
- Youth Offending Team	- Youth Service

West Yorkshire Connexions follows a sub-contracting model of delivery. This means that a large number of organisations are involved with staff engaged in the Personal Adviser role. Whilst maintaining their specialisms e.g. social work, careers guidance, youth work etc -workers also take on the Personal Adviser function.

DIAGRAM D.4 ENGLAND



Connexions decided to award the contract to the above organisations. \*Other agencies are likely to take on the Personal Adviser role in the future as Connexions evolves across West Yorkshire e.g. Surestart Plus (Teenage Pregnancy – Parental support). Contracts may be revoked from organisations if they are not seen to be delivering quality services to young people.

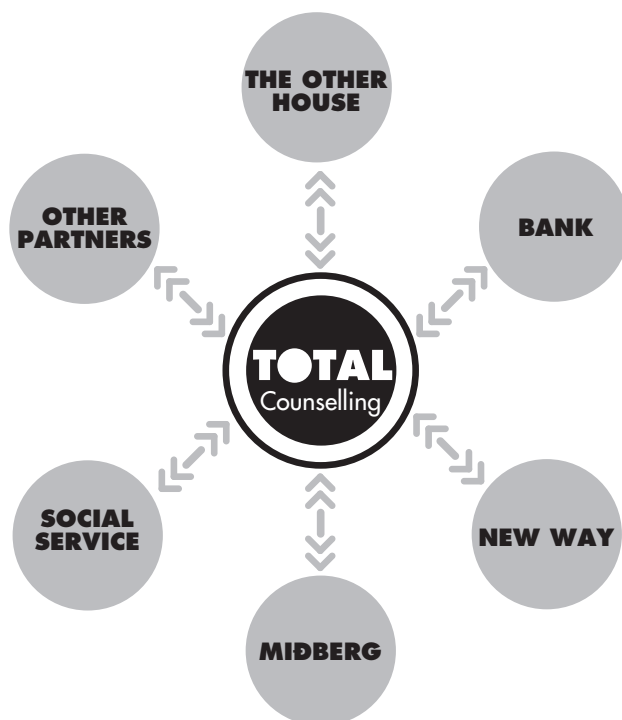
## D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

### Iceland

The core TC-team consists of members from the Social Welfare Department of the Reykjavík Municipality who provide social counsellors and psychologists, the Youth- and Sports Council of the Reykjavík Municipality provide leisure experts and front-line total counsellors in Hitt Húsið and Miðberg, Landsbanki Íslands (Bank of Iceland), a private bank provides financial guidance, Fræðslusamtök um kynlíf og barneignir –FKB- (volunteer association of health workers for sexual education and family planning) which provide sexual advisers, The vocational school of Reykjavík (Iðnskólinn í Reykjavík) provides guidance counsellors and Ný Leið (New Way Ltd., a private company contracting social work) provide psychologists and other experts in matters of substance use and matters concerning abuse in relation other areas of life.

The 'outer circle' of the network consists of other organisations that provide other kinds of counselling and advice, like AA (alcoholics anonymous), Sorrow and Sorrow Reactions, Association of '78 (gays), etc. Diagram D.4 below illustrates the network.

**DIAGRAM D.5 ICELAND: THE TC NETWORK**



### Italy

For the City of Rome the main Departments in charge for the Total Counselling Services are:

#### TOWN (ROME):

- Department of Labour (Guidance Job Centre)
- Department of Culture (Youth Information Centre)
- Department of Social Service (Municipality Social Service Office)
- Department of Education (Guidance Services)

#### PROVINCE (ROME):

- Department of Labour (Job and Career Guidance Centre)
- Department of Education (School Guidance Services)

#### REGION (LAZIO):

- Department of Social Service (Social Service Guidance Counselling)
- USL (Social Service Office)
- Department of Labour (Job and Career Guidance Centre)
- Minister of Education/University (Guidance Services High School University)
- Minister of Welfare (ISFOL, Social and Welfare Office)



### Slovenia

The following organisations are responsible for delivery of the TC service in the regions/local level:

1. The TC Unit within CIPS in each region.
2. The following organisations will also cooperate within the regions.

The Social Service agency, the youth information centres, the school and other providers of education, local enterprises, and health institutions.

### 4 - THE BASIS FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ORGANISATIONS

#### England

The Government's Social Exclusion Unit<sup>29</sup> identified the fragmentation of personal support for young people as adding to the barriers to their progress. The role of the Personal Adviser should form part of an integrated approach to help clients overcome issues.

In Careers Bradford - the original team with responsibility for working with Intensive Support clients carried out a mapping exercise to identify, which local agencies existed in the area to help young people. The team contacted as many agencies as possible to form working links and established partnerships with both statutory and voluntary agencies.

This partnership approach has continued to develop under Connexions and partnership agreements as well as formal protocols and referral systems have been negotiated between agencies to improve service delivery to clients.

To this effect a Personal Adviser Network Co-ordinator has been appointed, to work on behalf of Connexions West Yorkshire with all the agencies employing Personal Advisers. The Bradford district is subdivided into different Confederation areas based on geography. Regular monthly meetings take place in each Confederation area - for Personal Advisers across the range of agencies to keep lines of communication open and allow Personal Advisers to develop better working links as well as share best practice. A similar meeting takes place for managers.

The Connexions West Yorkshire Personal Adviser Network Co-ordinator, hosted by Careers Bradford, has a key strategic role to play by:

- 1 Capacity building Networks with all Personal Advisers in Bradford and District
- 2 Facilitating a virtual multi-agency team approach to delivery in confederation areas
- 3 Linking with the Connexions Good Practice Forum to facilitate/share good practice across the district
- 4 As new Personal Advisers are employed facilitating and managing new and existing Personal Advisers
- 5 Maintaining an overview of young people's needs and an overview of targets
- 6 Feeding back any ideas and issues through the relevant Connexions meeting in Bradford and District

<sup>29</sup> Bridging the Gap: new opportunities for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training: Presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister by Command of Her Majesty, July 1999.

<http://www.asylumsupport.info/publications/social-exclusion-unit/the-gap.pdf>

## D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

### IDENTIFYING WHICH PERSONAL ADVISER WILL WORK WITH A CLIENT

From age 13 years plus, if a young person is in mainstream or further education, they will automatically have a named Personal Adviser allocated to offer support. This is recorded on either WebCore or CORE (see page 61 for more information). For young people who do not attend school Personal Advisers working out in the Community provide intensive support to try to re-engage these young people and help them plan for their future. There also other ways clients can directly access the Connexions Service, which are recorded later in this section.

Some clients may be given support from a number of different agencies e.g. Housing, Social Services, Careers, Education Bradford. In such cases it is important that one of the Personal Advisers involved takes the lead role to co-ordinate help for the client.

Once a client leaves full-time education and are identified as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) – they may access support in their locality through Personal Advisers based in their community or alternatively if registered with their local Connexions Centre they will be allocated to the most appropriate Personal Adviser who can provide support.

When a young person progresses into a learning or employment option – they can opt to have continued support from their original Personal Adviser, but is also given the alternative of receiving support from the Personal Adviser linked to the learning or training option they have accessed.

There are so many different organisations offering Personal Adviser support - it is essential those involved with helping a client talk to each other, in order to make effective use of resources and avoid duplication.

### CLIENTS NEEDING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Some young people are clear about their goals and may only need information and advice from their Personal Adviser to help them achieve their long-term career aims through identifying suitable education or training. Other Personal Advisers provide intensive support to address the needs of young people who are facing multiple barriers preventing them from entering a learning option/training/ or employment.

### Iceland

#### AN OVERALL DELIVERY PLAN DOES NOT EXIST AT THE MOMENT<sup>30</sup>

The basis for cooperation is that all these services would like to be more effective and to reach more of the young people that are in need of better guidance and advice. The contracts between different partners in Iceland are agreements that were reached in the following manner: Hitt Húsið met with the directors and managers of the participating partners in meetings where they were introduced to the idea of Total Counselling, i.e. the idea of holistic counselling for young people, and it was discussed how they could participate in the experiment.

When the directors and managers had decided that they wanted to participate, it was negotiated what would be their contribution. For the partners it was mainly a question of allotting time and personnel to the project. The arrangement has been that the experts from different partners deal with all inquiries that are sent to them immediately, they are available for young people at Hitt Húsið for two hours a week and they attend team meetings for 2-3 hours a month.

In the case of private counsellors (New Way Ltd.) an agreement was made about payment for the participation. Hitt Húsið provides staff, facilities, website, advertising and management of the service and the team.

At the moment and for the past two years these agreements have been verbal. When and if the concept of TC will be adopted by the Municipality the whole arrangement will have to revised and formalised with written contracts of financing and managing of the TC service.

<sup>30</sup> See the Iceland Section (Other) for an outline proposal for future development. See Appedix in folder.

### Italy

Basically the cooperation between the various existing guidance and counselling services will be based on the previous experience of the "informal" exchange of information and contact between the practitioners involved.

There are few legal agreements between State and Region (conferences have been organised to bring practitioners together), in the Lazio Region we are still using some "protocols" signed between the Region and the Province of Rome about counsellors' function in education and career guidance (with another protocol - some functions are especially delegated to the town of Rome from the Province – such as the Job Guidance and Counselling Career Centre-).

#### IN THE CITY OF ROME:

1. Youth Information Centre (Municipalities), Job Guidance Centre (Department of Labour), Social Services (Municipalities and Department of Health Care) are all coordinated through the City Government These agencies are responsible for providing basic information and guidance concerning jobs, vocational education, holidays, social and cultural life, health care.
2. The High School Guidance Centre, University Guidance and Career Offices are coordinated by the Minister of Education (Guidance Department); ISFOL (an agency of the Minister of Welfare) is the scientific coordinator. ISFOL is primarily responsible, for guidance and counselling for learning and work.

All the partners in our, "Total Counselling" Project are having regular meetings first to plan and coordinate their activities. It has provided the opportunity to bring an inter-disciplinary group of experts together to identify good practice to keep in contact with each other's work.

### Slovenia

#### MSZS IS THE CONTRACTING AND THE FUNDING ORGANISATION.

The responsibilities of local/regional organisations have been defined as follows:

The TC providers at the local level are responsible for the following:

- 1 To provide Total Counselling to young people in the region who have dropped out from school and have not entered the scope of the employment service.
- 2 To create and manage the network of organisations dealing with young people at the local level
- 3 To cooperate with the MSZS to provide the activities required by the contract
- 4 To cooperate in the provision of the training at national and local level,
- 5 To organise and maintain the database of young people in counselling,
- 6 To promote the activities of the TC service in the local community.

The other organisations in the region, which are also responsible for the counselling service, cooperate in the local network. It is planned to formalise the cooperation.

The CPI is the expert co-ordination body at the national level on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (MSZS). The following organisations cooperate in the national expert group: MSZS, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs (MoLFSA), the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) and the Slovenian Institute of Adult Education (ACS).

### THE TASK OF THE CPI AND THE EXPERT BODY IS:

- a. To form the expert basis for the development of the TC service,
- b. To take care of the regulation and the placement of the service in the national guidance system,
- c. To cooperate in the implementation of the activities at the regional level,
- d. To be responsible for the provision of training,
- e. To create links between providers of TC coming from different regions,
- f. To prepare the material for the needs of regional providers of TC,
- g. To create links with the international environment,
- h. To develop the data and information support for the service.
- i. To coordinate the work of regional providers of the service,
- j. To be responsible for the evaluation and provision of external supervision.

## 5 - THE METHODS OF COLLABORATION AND REFERRAL BETWEEN THE ORGANISATIONS

### England

Most organisations employing Personal Advisers have established their own referral systems. Connexions recommend using a formal referral form as this has advantages over informal verbal referrals - which can lead to misunderstandings of a young person's need and is generally less effective. Referral forms can enable discussions with the client to ensure they have a better understanding and ownership of any request for help and support by another agency.

The Personal Adviser Network Co-ordinator takes responsibility for allocating referrals between the different organisations employing Personal Advisers.

### Iceland

In our case we (the mother organisation, the Youth and Sports Council of the Municipality (ÍTR) and Hitt Húsið – Miðberg) provide;

- The premises from which the service is delivered,
- Counselling facilities,
- The website,
- The front-line workers and
- Day-to-day management.

The partners provide their counsellors for agreed hours in Hitt Húsið, so clients can walk in and meet them, for team meetings and also time to respond to clients using the website.

One of the positive affects of the counselling team and the partnership is that it provides direct access into the respective services, therefore helping the young people to gain access more quickly.



The bottom-line in the partnership is that the service is based on "active networking". The size of the Icelandic community is so small that with active networking it is possible to service and act at a speed that conforms to the concept of "holistic and quick".

Principally this is a free service and reliant on the users' own initiative, but again almost anyone (and definitely all the partners) can refer to it. But it is also seen as a support service for guidance counsellors and others working in the school environment (in Iceland there are one or more counsellors in each school, depending on the size of the school and the caseload for each counsellor is ca 400-450 students) and they, of course, can refer directly to the different services.

### Italy

Referral and collaborative working have been weak until now, and this is a prime reason why we need an effective Total Counselling system. As outlined on page 53, the collaboration and referral has depended completely on goodwill and relationships between the partners.

The TC project provided the opportunity to extend the network of partners and to develop knowledge and understanding of their competencies and specialisations.

Telephone calls, planned meetings, e-mail contact and specific educational conferences organised for the Advisers by the Institutions (ISFOL, Municipality etc.) are the main means of coordination and development for the "groups".

### Slovenia

The referral system between the different organisations that are responsible for the young people in the region has been relatively weak to date. The schools are obliged to inform the Employment Service when young people are dropping out from school, however they have to get the written confirmation of the student or his/her parents and often they don't get it. Another problem is that young people do not come to the employment office when they are invited.

The Total Counselling system will introduce a more intensive cooperation between organisations in the region (each of the TC-team is going to spend first two months of their work in other organisations in the regions). In addition there are regular meetings planned (every 14 days) between schools advisers, and social workers responsible for young people. We assume that regular cooperation will speed up the information flow and will also improve the referral system.

## 6 - HUMAN RESOURCE AND NATIONAL SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

The kind of work undertaken by Total Counsellors with young people that are often socially excluded is labour intensive. According to the UK National Audit Office's (NAO), [http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao\\_reports203-104/0304484.pdf](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports203-104/0304484.pdf), report on the English Connexions Service<sup>31</sup>, the service has nearly twice the budget of the old careers service and yet has far less resources than were originally estimated to be required. The Connexions seeks to provide a service to all young people whilst taking particular care of the NEET group. The result is that, according to the NAO, the universal service suffers whilst the size of the NEET group is being reduced.



31 [http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao\\_reports/03-04/0304484.pdf](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/03-04/0304484.pdf)

## D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

As shown in Section G, p82 "Supervision", there are significant person management needs in this kind of work that need to be designed-in from the outset. The exchange and evaluation of good practice is also an essential element of support for total counselling services – whether in a small community such as Reykjavik or a more widely spread structure such as in Slovenia (where counsellors will be working in isolation). Total Counselling is challenging for practitioners, being intensive and essentially a giving process. Counsellors need to be able to find assurance that they are being effective, to be able to discuss difficult issues and to undertake professional development activities.

In other words, there has to be sufficient non-contact time, if the service is to be sustainable.

### England

It was originally envisaged that the caseloads for Personal Advisers working with young people with substantial and multiple problems would be between 20 and 30. For Personal Advisers working with "young people at risk of dropping out or making unrealistic choices" would be between 250 and 300. Caseloads for Personal Advisers working with young people at low risk would be between 800 and 1000.

Early estimates were that 15,000 Personal Advisers would be required, 9,000 of whom would be required to support those requiring intensive support. However the recent National Audit Office report showed that in fact currently there are 7,700 Personal Advisers employed across England.

This means that currently the case loads for Personal Advisers "working with young people with substantial and multiple problems" is 40-50+, and the caseloads for Personal Advisers working with "young people at risk of dropping out or making unrealistic choices" is between 400 and 500. Caseloads for Personal Advisers working with young people at low risk are also higher than originally envisaged.

### Iceland

Until now the TC service in Iceland has been an initiative of Hitt Húsið, Miðberg and the Youth- and Sports Council of Reykjavík Municipality and our partners, so it is not a national or even regional strategy, it is still an experiment.

At Hitt Húsið and Miðberg this service is run by the people there who already work with counselling and support for young people in various projects. In our estimate and in view of the fact that these workers have other projects to work on, at least two people are needed to ensure that at least one is always available to receive young people during opening hours. Also there is the website and delegating of tasks to partners to be considered.

In cases where one of the other counsellors of the TC-team are needed, at short notice because of a need for their particular field of expertise, the agreement is that they can be called (phoned or reached by e-mail) for immediate counselling or to make an appointment.

If the TC service were adopted by the Municipality of Reykjavík as a service for counselling and supporting young people a system of training and active networking would need to be devised.

### Italy

The Italian approach is to use existing staff with the necessary training and back-up systems. It means creating a new process to empower the existing specialists drawn from many different fields. The cost could be partially covered from the already existing budget. National level organisation/s should cover the further investment to support the development of effective coordination of a Total Counselling service.

### Slovenia

The number of Total Counsellors required should be based on the needs as well as the number of young people in the region. The Slovenian team is currently considering the standards and norm for individual guidance worker. However the experience from other countries will be also be instructive in calculating the final requirements. It is important to focus on qualitative outcomes needed for success.

The support needed from national agencies is defined as follows:

- a. To provide the expert basis for the development of the field of TC in Slovenia
- b. To take care of the regulation and the placement of the service in the national guidance system
- c. To support the implementation of the TC service at the regional level,
- d. To be responsible for the provision of training
- e. To create links between providers of TC from the different regions
- f. To prepare the material for the needs of regional providers of TC service
- g. To create links with the international environment
- h. To develop the data and information support of the activity
- i. To coordinate the work of regional providers of the service
- j. To be responsible for evaluation and provision of external supervision

### 7 - FINANCIAL ISSUES

#### EACH COUNTRY IS AT A DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT STAGE IN ITS TC DEVELOPMENT.

The resources required will depend on the organisational model adopted and the scope of the service. A prime policy decision is whether the service is to be universal or targeted on specific groups.

Clearly the scale of the individual projects varies enormously. However, it is clear from the experience in England and Iceland that budgeting has to be based on the assumption that counsellors will need adequate management and/or peer support so that they can deal effectively with complex issues brought to them by clients. This has an obvious cost implication, regardless of the size of the operation being developed. There are also the obvious fixed costs in terms of premises, equipment and line management that will apply regardless of service size.

However, it is important to stress that Total Counselling services do not always need major resources. The model which is being developed in Italy for example aims to build networks between the different services for young people and therefore there are very few additional costs to make these additional improvements. These networks will allow for referrals between services.

Conversely the national approaches to Total Counselling taken in the England and Slovenia require major additional resources. In England for example, significant additional government resources have been put into the Connexions Service, whilst in Slovenia the development of a Total Counselling service has come about only as a result of a successful European Social Fund bid.

The model in Iceland has been that local resources have been allocated to the existing services for young people in order to create local Total Counselling services. The further development of these services across Iceland would be dependant on further funds being allocated from the City Council of Reykjavik Municipality and/or the Icelandic government.

## D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

### England

The Connexions Service is funded nationally across England with an annual budget of £450 million. The funding is from the Department for Education and Skills to the 47 Connexions Services across England. This figure is around 100% more than the annual budget for the Careers Service from which the Connexions Service developed. The Connexions Service does have a wider remit with its role in providing a wider range of support services for young people and also targeted additional support for those young people with additional needs.

However Connexions Services do also have the possibility of obtaining additional funds through external sources such as European funds and national regeneration funds.

### Iceland

Total Counselling in Iceland is a “bottom up” service at this stage and the main funding has come from Hitt Húsið and the City Council out of a pool of money earmarked “16+ measures”.

Other funding is indirect in the form of volunteer-work from the counsellors of FKB (volunteer association of health workers for sexual education and family planning) and from the other partners, which redefine the work of their counsellors to include their participation in the project.

If the TC service were adopted by the Municipality extra funding would need to be added to the project to cover the restructuring of the service and to develop other measures and structures that need to be placed (i.e. training scheme, monitoring, quality measures, research, etc).

### Italy

The focus of Italian policy in this field is to significantly reduce the unemployment rate. Therefore youth policy is related to reducing youth unemployment. The Ministry of Welfare, which is responsible for employment policy, distributes funding at the national level. At the same time, municipalities and provinces are seeking to maintain as much autonomy as possible and therefore have their own motivation to support local initiatives.

The result is that young people can become victims of this “political” conflict unless collaborative programmes such as the Total Counselling project can be established and sustained.

It is clear that there are a number of policy making bodies with an interest in guidance<sup>32</sup>. This makes it important that initiatives such as TC promote best practice in collaborative working in the interests of better services to young people.

### Slovenia

The funding organisation is the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (MSZS). All the organisations, providing TC at the local level, have contracts with the Ministry and have to send reports about the implementation of the Total Counselling Service to the MSZS every four months. A member of the MSZS is also a member of the expert body that is responsible for creating the strategy and implementation of the action plan into the practice.

### 8 - THE ROLE OF AND THE LINKS WITH FUNDING AND POLICYMAKING ORGANISATIONS

#### England

The Connexions Services is funded and coordinated nationally with a regional and local delivery mechanism. Connexions was launched in 2001, with a phased introduction across the country.

The main objective for the introduction of the Connexions Service for the first two years was to reduce by 10% the numbers of young people between the ages of 16 and 19 not in full time education, employment or training. It is estimated that achieving this reduction may result in short term benefits to the individual young people, the taxpayer, business and the wider economy of Euro 262 million (£180 million) and medium and longer-term benefits of over Euro 2 billion (£1.4 billion).

#### Iceland

The TC service in Iceland has been an experiment until now, when the Leonardo project is drawing to a close. The project has been embraced by the Youth- and Sports Council of Reykjavík and to a degree by our partners through their participation. We hope that with the dissemination of this project and with the new model of delivering social service through Community Centres in the Municipality of Reykjavík, that the TC service will be made a part of the city's policy of providing guidance and counselling to young people in Reykjavík. And if that policy decision is taken on the political level, the service organisations of the City (Youth - and Sports Council, the Social Welfare Service and the Educational Board will follow through with the funding needed to operate the TC service<sup>33</sup>.

The TC-team meetings were an important development in their own right. All the partners have had a voice to suggest policy and to improve the service. The Leonardo project has also added and developed many new ideas on how to develop and what is important to develop in a TC service and many of these are transferable, even if the TC service itself does not continue in its current form.

#### Italy

The challenge is to convince policymakers of the benefits of the Total Counselling approach so that a national rollout of the service can be achieved. There is some doubt that expert group meetings as such have a significant real influence on the politicians and the Administration of the financing Institution. More evidence such as demonstrations of the impact of better coordinated services will be needed.

#### Slovenia

The project is steered by the Expert Group which has representatives of all relevant institutions of guidance providers to the young people are in membership. It is planned that the Group will meet every 14 days. Their cooperation is crucial especially in the initial phase of the project.

### 9 - INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY (ICT) REQUIREMENTS

An essential element of a Total Counselling service is communication between counsellors - especially where several could be involved centrally or peripherally in helping a young person over time. Therefore the adoption of appropriate ICT systems to support the service are very important to the success and sustainability of a quality service. ICT systems such as databases can also ease the tension between a service highly focused on the individual's needs and the requirements of management information and quality assurance systems for quantitative data.

The experience of all the project partners indicates that the basic tool is to have a database, even if as in Slovenia it cannot be connected to other ones outside the service itself. A database would be a powerful tool to bring agencies together in Italy, when the decision to go ahead has been taken.

For larger scale projects, a bespoke customer information system could perhaps be justified, as in England.

The design and operation of databases must include safeguards in the interests of confidentiality and transparency and be consistent with the principles mentioned in Section C.

<sup>33</sup> See the Iceland Section (Other) for an outline proposal for future development.

## D - The Organisation of Total Counselling

### England

The development of I.T. systems has proved integral to the work of Personal Advisers within Bradford. Over the last year many changes have taken place to existing I.T. systems in order to accommodate the changing role of the Personal Adviser and record factors relating to interagency work. In addition to local developments there are also national and global developments that impact on how we access information.

#### CCIS WEBCORE

This is the Connexions Customer Information System, which Connexions specifies as the way all client information should be recorded and ideally held by Personal Advisers. For further information on the features and highlights of this system, which is used widely by Personal Advisers visit: [www.careervision.co.uk/](http://www.careervision.co.uk/)

#### CAREERS OFFICE RECORD ENVIRONMENT (CORE) / CAREERS BRADFORD INTRANET

CORE is the Careers Bradford client database. All Personal Advisers working within Careers Bradford will be familiar with the CORE system. IT CORE is used to track clients and maintain information records on clients as well as producing management information and statistical returns. Personal Advisers who use CORE will be appropriately trained and can refer to the CORE manuals available.

Through the use of the CORE system it is possible to identify which young people in the Bradford and District area who are not currently engaged in Education and Training.

### Iceland

The TC project in Iceland does not have a central database where different partners and organizations have access. At Hitt Húsið records of all interviews are kept in an Access database. There is a statistics program connected to the website and visitors are requested to provide anonymous personal information to help us develop the service and to define the client group.

If the TC service is adopted in Reykjavík as a general service for young people, the question of a central database will be one of the policy decisions the needs to be made, but with regard to the data security law framework in the country.

### Italy

A common database for the different services involved is being planned, based on the English experience. The aim is that young people using the different agencies, to do so without having to have a new first interview on each occasion. Using the data from the school system, and later on from the Social Services offices/departments, will improve inter agency and inter practitioner communication that will be essential to deliver a coherent service under this model.

### Slovenia

Work has started on the creation of the database for regional as well as national needs. In Slovenia it is not possible to have one database for young people as, for example, it is in UK, since the Slovenian data security act does not allow it.

The first stage was to prepare the young persons' database with main demographical data, followed by the action plan, and review of the action plan. However the project is still in its early stages, so it is still too early to draw any firm conclusions. At the same time an internet page with an open forum for experts is under construction.

# E - The Assessment of Young People's needs in the counselling process

The most common form of initial assessment of young people is the interview; the Total Counsellor can gather a great deal of information about the client by adopting a relaxed approach that is open and non-judgemental. By gaining the client's confidence and using their own sensitivity a counsellor can obtain the kind of objective information that would be provided by more formal approaches inappropriate for this client group. This method can also present a 'softer' assessment allowing the counsellor to build up a fuller picture of the client, taking into account motivation, interpersonal skills, maturity etc.

Accurate assessment of young people's needs is critical to the success of a Total Counselling service. Slovenia is basing its methodology on the Choice Theory of William Glasser, whereas in England the Connexions Service works with its own assessment, planning, implementation and review (APIR) framework.

In Iceland, assessment processes are informal but based broadly on experiential learning concepts. These take whole family relationships into account as a prominent causal factor in relationship and behavioural development.

Whatever methodology is employed, it is vital to the success of any assessment process to establish a trusting relationship with the young person, assuring him or her that s/he is at the centre of the process.

## Questions to think about regarding the assessment of young people

1. Is there a defined stage in the process of dealing with clients where assessment would be appropriate? Initial contacts may necessarily be informal, whereas any kind of assessment requires a degree of formality, such as a structured discussion/interview?
2. Do the potential outcomes of the support process, such as further support options (partially) define the assessment process?
3. On what basis (principles) should the assessment process be based?
4. Do the partners in the Total Counselling process have suitable assessment processes? If so, is it necessary to agree one or more to be recognised as suitable for Total Counselling clients?

## Transnational Summary

The assessment methods employed in the four project countries vary widely from the informal and individual (to the counsellor) to more formal systems based on nationally agreed models. Slovenia has made the decision to base its assessment processes on William Glasser's Choice Theory®, whereas the Connexions Service in England uses the Framework for Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Review (APIR) as its primary assessment tool. The Italian approach is more flexible and relies on the training and approach of individual counsellors.

However, all the assessment methods are based on the requirement to establish the needs of young people as they see them, taking their family circumstances and relationships into account, based on the principles outlined in Section C pages 31 -35

## PRACTICE IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

### England

The following section forms a brief guide to currently available methods of assessment and their uses in England.

There are a number of informal and formal methods of assessment currently available to Personal Advisers. A specific distinction should be made between:

- 1) **ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTIONS** - using approaches to enhance communication between Personal Adviser and client, which have in the main been derived from theories of counselling. These 'soft' assessment tools provide a means of information gathering and allow a certain level of self-assessment on the part of the client.
- 2) **PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT** – assessing the aptitude, ability and skills of the client – the client is asked to undertake formal psychometric tests, which must be delivered in controlled environments and for which the Personal Adviser must be specially qualified to administer.

## E - The Assessment of Young People's needs in the counselling process

### 1) ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTIONS

The key example of a tool for assessment within Connexions is the Framework for Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Review (APIR). In order to be able to complete APIR with a client the Personal Adviser needs to have undertaken a training course to deliver APIR. It is a one-day course delivered by Connexions West Yorkshire.

The APIR process has been developed to provide Personal Advisers with a holistic framework and integrated approach to put the client at the centre of the process and all work undertaken to help the young person move forward with their plans for their future.

Therefore making use of the APIR Framework is now part of the mandatory requirements set out by the Supporting Children and Young Persons' Unit of the Department for Education & Skills (DfES).

Making use of the Framework is necessary for a number of reasons:

- 1 To ensure that there is a standardised and consistent approach by all Personal Advisers providing one to one interventions with clients.
- 2 To promote cultural change and ensure co-ordination of action from professionals working to support a young person and thus promote efficient use of resources and co-operation amongst agencies.
- 3 To help reduce 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) figures by encouraging organisations to focus their resources to meet the needs of specific target groups who may require more intensive support to achieve a positive outcome.
- 4 To enable Personal Advisers to meet the requirements of the Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED)<sup>34</sup> and their responsibilities under Section 140 of the Learning and Skills Act.

### 2) PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT USING THE APIR STRATEGY

The Connexions Service aims to deliver coherent, co-ordinated and consistent support for young people. The APIR process has been developed to provide Personal Advisers with a holistic framework and integrated approach to put the client at the centre of the process and all work undertaken to help the young person move forward with their plans for their future.

Previously, although a number of agencies may have been supporting a young person, this has not always been co-ordinated and the issues faced by the client may not be seen as a whole by any one professional. This can lead to duplication of work or worse still the young person feeling confused and pulled in different directions by a range of professionals – rather than an integrated approach planned to mutually supporting the client.

By making use of the APIR Framework it is hoped that assessment and planning will become a joint process for the wide range of professional working within the Connexions Service as Personal Advisers.

The APIR system was originally a paper based system but is now available on CD and the internet.

The APIR system has identified 18 factors which have the potential to impact on a young persons participation and progression in learning. They are:

#### EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

- 1 Participation
- 2 Achievements
- 3 Basic Skills
- 4 Key Skills
- 5 Life Skills
- 6 Aspirations

<sup>34</sup> All education institutions in England are inspected by independent inspectors against a published framework of criteria. Connexions partnerships are part of the process. The OfSTED website is at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>

### **FAMILY AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

- 1 Capacity of parents/carers
- 2 Family History and Functioning
- 3 Social and community factors
- 4 Housing
- 5 Income

### **SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 1 Identity and self image
- 2 Attitudes and motivation
- 3 Relationships with family and society
- 4 Risk of (re-) offending

### **PERSONAL HEALTH ISSUES**

- 1 Physical Health
- 2 Emotional well being
- 3 Substance use issues.

### **REVIEW**

Although this can be seen as the final stage of the APIR process it is vital that frequent reviews take place between the Personal Adviser and client to monitor progress and address any unforeseen problems.

It may be at this stage that a young person reveals previously undisclosed issues and so the process of APIR begins again. APIR IS NOT A ONE OFF EXERCISE. The Personal Adviser needs to be persistent and innovative in trying to move a young person forward.

APIR through review offers the opportunity for the Personal Adviser and young person to celebrate success and build on any progress made by using this as a catalyst for future work. It is at this stage the profile should be updated and the client encouraged with the support of the Personal Adviser, to revisit their goals and revise the action planned to enable the young person to achieve their goals.

Personal Advisers using APIR in Careers Bradford have reported that clients find the process of being able measure even small steps of progress a positive one. Plus clients seem to relate well to the visual nature of the profile, which tracks any movement on their issues.

Personal Advisers come from a wide range of backgrounds and there is the opportunity as the Connexions Service develops, to learn from best practice across different agencies and to improve delivery of services to clients. By making use of the Framework mandatory, supplying the profile kit in various formats including adaptations for specific client groups, it is hoped that assessment and planning will become a joint process for the different professionals that work within the Connexions Service as Personal Advisers.

## E - The Assessment of Young People's needs in the counselling process

### Iceland

In the TC-team the partners have different backgrounds, education, training and experiences, and each counsellor is a product of these factors. All the partners embrace a common attitude towards guiding and counselling young people that could be defined as the holistic counselling philosophy of the total counselling service.

The following statements define the direction of the assessment of our work and the principles that drive it:

- 1 The client is the centre of our attention and the interview is the initial meeting place of the young person and the counsellor.
- 2 The client (like the rest of us) is always faced with choices and chooses, whether he is aware of it or not, and is responsible for his choices. Helping the client to uncover his/her choices (supporting the "positive" ones) and to find meaning and motivation in life is our aim.
- 3 We want to empower the young person to act on his/her choices and decisions responsibly, giving the right amount of advice and support for them to succeed in their life on their own terms.
- 4 Respect and trust are integral parts of an effective working relationship, and both need a certain amount of time to be established.
- 5 Time is important; allowing time for matters to progress and that sometimes time moves differently for young people than grown-ups and that has to be taken into consideration when making action-plans.
- 6 Taking into consideration the maturity, capacity and needs of the young person when taking action on behalf of or with the client.
- 7 Breaking the action-plan into sections that are understandable and applicable for the client, in a language that is understandable to them.

### Italy

As in many guidance services, advisers use the interview as a first moment for initial assessment; the expert gets a lot of information about the client from it. Gathering clients' basic information can be more effective using an informal approach, considering the age and stage of development of young people. This methodology is also a first step in preparing a real full assessment normally built into a certain number of meetings / interviews with the client (the number of meetings depends on the situation).

### Slovenia

The assessment of young people's needs is going to be based on the principles of William Glasser's Choice Theory®. The assessment of young peoples needs have the following steps:

1. The present situation of young people where the adviser gets the information about the young person's life and the issues related to education and work,
2. Search for the quality and values of the individuals (what is important to individual). The assessment of which needs are met successfully and which not, and from this step on the action step follows.

The assessment process itself is currently under development as part of the new service.

# F - Monitoring, Evaluation and Quality

Quality assurance is a particular challenge for the total counselling approach, where a collaborative model may be used involving several agencies. In England, the Connexions Service is now well established with its own quality framework, combining a framework for continuous quality improvement, self-assessment and external inspection. In other countries, quality assurance systems are under development. The issues and questions identified thus far are outlined in this section.

CEDEFOP has recently published a Preliminary Study on Quality Guidelines<sup>35</sup> and Criteria in Guidance, which sets out a proposed set of quality criteria for career guidance across Europe. These are worth considering for the total counselling context and provide a framework for the development of specific quality standards that are relevant to national structures. The full list of the criteria is given in Annex 3 of 'Career Guidance: A Handbook for Policy Makers'<sup>36</sup>:

1. Citizens and User Involvement
2. Practitioner Competence
3. Service Improvement
4. Coherence
5. Independent Provision (i.e.. not state funded).

No matter what combination of monitoring, evaluation and quality standards are adopted, the aim should be for the organisation(s) to internalise the processes - even if they are a national policy and/or contractual requirement. If this is not achieved then, although externally imposed requirements may be met, the real objective of continuous quality improvement will not be achieved. In this regard it is important that a 'no blame' culture exists in the organisation. Only in that way can the causes of shortfalls in performance be addressed and the creative energies of the whole team be brought to bear to overcome them.

A common difficulty in building effective quality assurance regimes is the failure to allow enough time for essential non-contact time to allow for (a minimum of) records to be kept. Equally, it is vital to ensure that only the key critical success factors for the service are measured.

Most quality assurance systems will include requirements to ensure that monitoring and evaluation systems are effective and the outcomes reviewed in the interests of continuous quality improvement.



<sup>35</sup> Henderson et al, Preliminary Study on Quality Guidelines and Criteria in Guidance, FINAL REPORT, Cedefop, May 2004, <http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv> (registration required)

<sup>36</sup> Career Guidance A HANDBOOK FOR POLICY MAKERS, OECD 2004 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/53/34060761.pdf>

### MONITORING

**1 MONITORING THE SYSTEM OR THE SERVICE** – is the service reaching or being reached by the young people? What happens when young people leave compulsory education, are they being followed through until adulthood? What kind of support do front-line (those in direct contact with the young people) counsellors and advisers need to be able to meet the needs of young people?

These are questions related to monitoring of the system and its fulfilment of the needs of young people (and society).

**2 MONITORING YOUNG PEOPLE** - where and what young people are doing - is done differently from country to country depending on the legal framework and priorities defined by each society.

In this case it is important to know (or find out) where young people in the target age defined above are. Of special concern are the young people who are not enrolled in the educational system and are not found within the employment sector.

This is the group that is hardest to reach and/or monitor and often has the greatest need for proper counselling and advice. Within this group is a second one that is especially vulnerable and hidden. It is the group of young people that has dropped out of the school system, is not working, but is too young to claim employment- or social benefits (typically the age group of 16-18 year olds) because of their social status as “children”, dependent on their parents’ financial support.

The TC service is aimed at all young people within the defined age group, in general, but at the group that isn’t within the employment sector or the educational system, in particular.

### EVALUATION

#### WHAT NEEDS TO BE EVALUATED?

- 1) The needs of young people for counselling and advice need to be assessed. That means identifying the areas where the need is greatest, what group/groups of young people have this need(s), how to reach those groups and then how to deliver the service.
- 2) What do counsellors and advisers need to ensure that they can deliver the best service possible. For example, what needs to be added, in terms of training and/or facilities, so that they can deliver holistic counselling and advice to young people? What services need to be represented in the core counselling team; in the secondary counselling ‘outer’ circle, etc.
- 3) How and where is it most effective to deliver the service?
- 4) Where and when is it taken into consideration how/ where young people want this service delivered?

The service needs to be evaluated on a regular and scientific basis to check that the aims for delivering a holistic service; if the young people’s needs and counsellors’ needs for training and tools are being met.

#### QUALITY

Criteria for quality need to be developed for a/the holistic counselling service, both on the delivery side and from the client’s point of view. However, there may already be criteria in place for some or all of the partners in the service and these may be obligatory. If the quality system is to be effective and inclusive (and this is the same for monitoring and evaluation), it is essential that it is simple and focuses on critical success factors for the service. Reaching agreement with partners on a single system will be critical to the success of the service. Clearly these issues will particularly affect ‘bottom-up’ developments where the initiative comes from practitioners and/or local managers.

Delivery measures could include overall numbers such as, drop-out percentage, number of young not included in the workforce or school system, number of customers receiving the service and not returning or satisfied. Another way is research into the client and counsellor groups to see if quality criteria are met.

Monitoring and evaluation can be seen as the main mechanisms of the quality assurance and future development of the service provision. Quality standards are a set of agreed criteria against which the service can be monitored and evaluated.

The criteria can be grouped under broad headings such as those given in the Policy Makers' Handbook referred to in Section C, page 32.

### Questions to think about regarding quality assurance

1. What national/regional/local systems exist within the Total Counselling partnership?
2. To what extent are these systems a contractual requirement (including management information (monitoring) systems)?
3. What, if any, are the conflicts in the requirements of the systems? Can they be resolved?
4. How are staff and service users involved in the quality assurance process?
5. Can agreement be reached on adopting one system for the TC service?

### Transnational Summary

The research undertaken for the Cedefop quality criteria for career guidance revealed that very few countries had any systems in place to engage service users in the design, monitoring and evaluation of services. A common theme in any discussion of quality assurance in counselling and related services is how to measure 'soft' outcomes (see page 64). In such circumstances, it is self-evident that service users have the information on how they view the service and, as a result, how it could be changed to improve. Measuring the effectiveness of the service can also only be done by assessing the progress of users against, frequently qualitative, criteria.

### PRACTICE IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

– concerning monitoring, evaluation and quality

#### 1 - MONITORING

##### England

All clients not in Education, Employment or Training (the NEET group) are contacted by Personal Advisers on a two weekly basis. In the majority of cases this is done on a weekly basis. This contact with young people should be made either in a Connexions Centre or in a Community setting.

All staff have 6 weekly reviews by their managers. This 6 review includes formal and informal discussions about clients. During this meeting managers discuss and monitor statistical information. This includes checking that clients have been contacted on a regular basis and also that they are making progress into education, training or the workforce. The main aim of the monitoring of the statistics is to reduce the number of young people not in Education, Employment or Training (the NEET group).

### Iceland

Accessibility is as open as could be devised when we were starting out, with a website on the internet, front-line people receiving telephone, letters and drop-ins, and certain hours when clients can meet certain experts.

Monitoring is mainly through the information received through the website, information received in interviews and information received from our research into “young people’s needs” so that we know what issues are important to young people.

Information is gathered in interviews and stored on an Access database and includes personal information, reasons for using the service, how did you gain knowledge of the service, action notes, etc. This information is dealt with and discussed by the counselling team.

When visitors on the website bring a question to the counselling team, a page pops up asking them if they would volunteer anonymous information about themselves. This information or questions is used to help us define what issues and age group represents the users. The information asked for is along the lines of the information collected in interviews for the Access database.

### Slovenia

The monitoring approach is through sheets recording the service delivery to each young person including their age, educational background and gender, the date, place and duration of the interaction. Assessment tools and action plan sheets are also under preparation.

## 2 - EVALUATION

### England

One of the eight key principles of the Connexions service is “Evidence – Based Practice” (EBP). The concept of EBP originated in the field of medicine and has been adopted by other professions including those in the field of education and social work.

One of the key ideas is the importance of research and evaluation in the development of an evidence based culture. Research and evaluation can help determine what does and does not work in delivering services to clients.

Personal Advisers come from a range of backgrounds and identifying best practice across different agencies can enable improvements in the delivery of services to clients. Evaluation allows us to investigate “what works best” to influence future delivery of services and provides a framework to build on good practice to empower practitioners.

There are a wide number of strategies that Personal Advisers can use to assess work undertaken with clients and each organisation may chose

For example -two strategies Personal Advisers may choose to evaluate their work are:

1. Establishing a baseline and distance travelled
2. Outcomes and Indicators

### ESTABLISHING A BASELINE AND DISTANCE TRAVELLED

In order to measure what progress a client has made as a result of Personal Adviser intervention it is important to know where the client's starting point was at the point of the initial engagement.

APIR can be used as a tool to enable the Personal Adviser and the client to establish as part as the initial engagement process - an overall picture of what the client sees as his/her priorities and issues, before planning any action together to help the client address these.

APIR also provides the framework to plan and review action together – thus enabling the Personal Adviser and the client to measure the distance the client has travelled from his starting point- which both adviser and client can see visually from changes in the client's profile. A formal "SMART" Action Plan also helps to provide evidence of how useful any interventions have been and also the opportunity to evidence the client's views throughout the process as a whole.

### OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS

There are two kinds of outcomes:

#### 1 SOFT OUTCOMES

#### 2 HARD OUTCOMES

Indicators are partial measures that suggest progress is being made towards the outcome.

### 1. SOFT OUTCOMES

These are outcomes from guidance and support, which cannot be measured directly. Such outcomes can indicate positive changes and progress made by the client e.g. attitudinal changes – increased confidence, motivation, and improved levels of self-awareness.

Indicators of progress can also inform soft outcomes. For example increased attendance at appointments and arriving on time to any meetings with the Personal Adviser could be seen as indicators of improvements in motivation and engagement.

### 2. HARD OUTCOMES

These are easier to measure as they are much more tangible E.g. Quantitative, Statistical data.

Examples of hard measures of success include:

- Entering employment/training/college
- Gaining qualifications.

There is a danger in just using a hard outcome as a measure of success - as a statistic on its own does not necessarily tell the whole story. In order to get the bigger picture it is essential to develop a number of "indicators of success" and "points of reference" to help measure the distance a young person has travelled. The key to working more effectively with a young person is to listen to them and help address what they see as key issues.

APIR can again be used as a tool to help a young person to identify their priorities, so any significant barriers can be address that are preventing the client entering a learning option, and longer term hopefully achieve a more sustainable outcome.

### ASKING YOUNG PEOPLE WHAT THEY THINK OF THE SERVICE

Another key element of the evaluation of a Total Counselling Service is actually asking young people themselves about what they think of the Total Counselling Services and also involving them in the management of the service.

**“YOUNG PEOPLE ARE AT THE HEART OF THE SERVICE SO IT IS ESSENTIAL TO OBTAIN FEEDBACK AND INVOLVE THEM IN ANY DECISION MAKING ABOUT SERVICE DELIVERY.”**

All staff have a role to play in evaluating their work and obtaining feedback from clients. Careers Bradford host a Personal Adviser appointed by West Yorkshire Connexions who has specific responsibility for Youth Involvement. This encompasses:

- 1 Encouraging young people to take an active part in having their say in the way Connexions is run in their local area.
- 2 Empowering young people to put their ideas across and ensure their ideas are listened to and taken forward to influence future provision.
- 3 Establishing a range of methods to ask young people what they want – E.g. Focus groups/Steering groups/Surveys/Marketing groups.

### Iceland

In this country the TC service grew out of counsellors' perceptions of young people's need for a transparent counselling service with easy access. It has been funded from the budget of the "Trojan Horse" – cooperation project for advise and support for young people (a department of Hitt Húsið) and yearly grants from the mother organization, the Youth- and Sports Council of Reykjavík Municipality. With our limited budget we do not have other evaluation methods or plans than bringing our experiences and findings of the TC service to the TC team. They are experts with their own professional experience, principles and standards. It is by comparing our experience with findings from other researchers in the field, that evaluation is done.

If the TC service were to be adopted by the Municipality, this side of the service would need to be worked on and developed professionally.

### Slovenia

A self evaluation methodology will be used. The notes of possible self evaluation questions are being prepared for each counsellor, including preparation for the initial interview, the review of the interview, and he/she will be able to assess the process. CPI will undertake the external evaluation of the provision of the services in the regions annually.

### **3 - QUALITY ASSURANCE**

#### **England**

Quality standards and procedures are set by Careers Bradford Ltd in line with the contractual requirements set out by West Yorkshire Connexions. All those contracted by West Yorkshire Connexions are required to maintain show how they will meet the quality standards required.

Careers Bradford Ltd follows the Quality Management Systems (QMS) procedures. This system covers a wide range of procedures within Careers Bradford.

However within the professional practices of Personal Advisers, there is also the "Evaluation of Professional Procedure" (EPP). This ensures that Personal Advisers interviews are observed by managers every 6 months. All Personal Advisers also have 6 weekly reviews during which they are given key performance indicators and these indicators form the basis of how the work of the Personal Advisers are monitored during the reviews. Included in the 6 weekly reviews is the possibility for professional discussions about the best ways to work with specific clients.

#### **Iceland**

As stated on earlier paragraph on this page about evaluation in Iceland, the project has been run on an experimental level with limited funding until now. The way that quality has been assured during that period is by the fact that all the members of the TC team are well trained counsellors with years of experience of working with young people in their particular field.

So one might state that basic standards are in place in Iceland but they need to be formalised before any further roll out of the service. But before that can happen it has to be decided on the highest political and institutional level of the Municipality whether a TC service will be adopted as a delivery model on a larger scale.

However, statements have been made many relevant parties in the field of advice and guidance, about how the content of the education and the experience required by counsellors needs to be adapted to the nature and promptness of a counselling service to young people.

#### **Slovenia**

The quality standards for the TC service are under development in Slovenia

# G - Training and Supervision

## TRAINING

The training of Total Counsellors will depend on the Service delivery model. For example, the training requirements for counsellors in Hitt Husid in Iceland will be different from those for the new Slovenia service. The fundamental principles will be similar - such as working within the principle of 'unconditional positive regard' - but the policy and delivery context will be quite different.

Training can also be for the counsellors' networking organisations and are closely connected to the provision of Total Counselling.

In addition some training can be provided also for other professionals who need to know about the service (even if they are not directly involved, for instance school teachers).

The training required by counsellors does depend on the level of service delivery for young people. Services offering for example intensive support to young people will require higher levels of training for their staff than those which offer more of a signposting service.

Training may also be required to assist counsellors in the creation of related networking organisations that are closely connected to the provision of holistic counselling, i.e. Total Counselling.

## SUPERVISION

Although very rewarding, over time the demands of helping clients with a combination of complex personal issues can be very exhausting for any individual. Therefore it is important that the Total Counsellor has a non-threatening mechanism to discuss and offload some of the issues and concerns that they may have come across in their day-to-day work.

As well as having the opportunity to get a second opinion, it gives the counsellor a chance to talk about what may be very harrowing cases for anyone to deal with. It may also be in some cases that a client's experiences may relate to something that raises an issue with the counsellor, which has some special personal significance.

In England, Bradford's Community team has set up a regular supervision session for all Personal Advisers, and has already established a more informal "buddy" system of supervision where the Personal Advisers can discuss situations informally to gain support from other colleagues.

The new role of Total Counsellor continues to embrace some of the best traditional practices, but gives the opportunity to be involved in a more holistic approach towards the client. This gives great opportunities for future developments as the perimeters of the role are not set, which helps put the client at the centre of the process. However, as the role is still developing many questions will still need to be addressed over time as the TC services develop and evolve.

### Questions to think about on training and supervision of Total Counsellors

1. Has the role of a counsellor been agreed with stakeholders?
2. Have job and person specifications been agreed with all stakeholders?
3. Have the boundaries and linkages between the counsellors and other roles in the network been agreed?
4. Have the professional support needs of counsellors been identified and appropriate arrangements made?
5. What are the information needs of other members of the network to ensure that appropriately sensitive referral to and from the service can be made?
6. Do the training, information and supervision arrangements ensure continuity and progression of care for young people?

### Transnational Summary

A common theme of the entry requirements for Total Counsellors in Slovenia, Iceland is the possession of a bachelor's degree. The Connexions Service in England looks for people to degree level or the equivalent. There is a recognised equivalence between degrees and other qualifications at 'Level 4'<sup>37</sup>. In Iceland, Total Counsellors are already working as counsellors, drawn from other disciplines whereas in Slovenia the service is completely new, filling a previously unmet need and therefore the counsellors will be newly recruited.

The situation in Italy is rather different. The project has been about identifying the common denominators in pre-existing services and the additional training requirements have yet to be agreed. About 85 percent of counsellors are graduates.

In England and Slovenia, structured training programmes are already in place, or about to be introduced. Providing training on and raising awareness of Total Counselling amongst other organisations in the network is seen as being important in England, Iceland and Slovenia. Information materials have been produced in England and Slovenia.



<sup>37</sup> Vocational qualifications in the United Kingdom are grouped into four levels. Level 4 is regarded as being the equivalent of a bachelor's degree.

### PRACTICE IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

#### 1 - THE TRAINING AND SUPERVISION OF TOTAL COUNSELLORS

##### England

The role of the Personal Adviser in England is a relatively new one and therefore the profession of Personal Advisers is also a new one. The first Personal Advisers began work in 2001 and therefore the training of Personal Advisers is also relatively new. For a new profession, clearly training is a very important issue.

Most Personal Advisers are trained and qualified professionals in fields such as Careers Guidance, Youth Work or Social Work. To then qualify as a Personal Adviser, they will undertake the "Diploma for Connexions Personal Advisers"

This is the qualification for those practitioners who work with young people who need in-depth support, as they are facing significant barriers to learning. The course runs over a period of 10 months and comprises of live training, distance learning and four assessed assignments.

##### Iceland

All the counsellors working with the TC-team have university degrees in social science or other, related to their chosen field, and have considerable experience of having been trained and working in this field. Most of them are also experienced and especially interested in working with youth. Further education is through Faculty of Social Science at the University of Iceland and centres of continuous education at the University and through organisations run by unions of social workers.

The TC counsellors have not received special training, apart from the networking and peer-education that participating in the TC-team provides.

After the first phase of running the TC operation finishes in spring of 2005, we will need to evaluate the whole operation and restructure it if the model is to be adopted by the Municipality. A part of the future planning and restructuring will be devising a training element. The training structure for Personal Advisers in the Connexions training pyramid is one model that seems to be transferable and is along the lines that the ideas for training are going in Iceland.

In future the plan is to work a lot more with the training of counsellors with specific training on different methods and techniques, like "motivational interviewing", in depth work with clients, etc.

At the moment there is no external supervision. It will be necessary to establish one as the project develops and if TC will be adopted as a / the model for delivering advise and counselling for young people. The existing supervision comes from within the TC-team itself and through the monthly meetings. There are good connections to the senior officers in the participating structures, but as to the work of the TC service it has rested in the hands of the TC-team and the ones who run the service in Hitt Húsið. This goes also for the question of connection between the supervisors and providers of training.

### Slovenia

The entry requirement for Total Counsellors will be a bachelor's degree in one of the following fields of education: social work, special pedagogy or sociology. A training programme of 112 hours is under development based on the following topics:

- 1 Introduction to holistic counselling:
  - The introduction of system of guidance services for young people
  - Understanding of national and local strategies for TC, legal background etc.
- 2 Young people's needs
- 3 The introduction of the assessment system of young people's needs (the interviewing skills, planning and reviewing system)
- 4 Networking

The TC qualification is not inserted into the national system yet, however there are plans to make connections. At the least it will be integrated into the career counselling training that is also under development.

Total Counsellors will be able to continue their training through the other modules for Careers Counsellors.

CPI is going to be the provider of the training. However, other organisations are cooperating in designing the training, namely, the Ministry of Education Science and Sport, a representative of the Social services, the Institute for Education, Slovene Adult Education Centre and the Institute of Social Science.

No further, follow on, training is planned so far, but this will be reconsidered if there is a demand.

There will be two overall supervisors; one which is going to be appointed by the CIPS (and will also be responsible for the training programme) and an external supervisor from the Faculty of Pedagogy. Internal supervisors will be provided by local organisations themselves.

There will be a two-day training programme for managers of the other organisations which are dealing with young people locally and nationally. The only requirement is going to be that the person has the managing position within the organisations working with the young people.

The programme will focus on an introduction to holistic/ total counselling and will last 16 hours.

There will also be a two-day, 16 hour programme for counsellors in other organisations, which will focus on the role of the Total Counsellor and networking.

The participants will receive an attendance certificate; no accreditation is planned. CPI together with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and Employment (MSZS) service of Slovenia and Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) will provide the training.

### 2 - TRAINING FOR OTHER ORGANISATIONS IN THE NETWORK

#### England

Other courses are available for organisations working within the Connexions partnerships.

The Understanding Connexions Training Programme reflects the universal nature of the service and allows for progression to the Diploma if appropriate. The practitioner will be working with clients who are at risk of disengagement but need less intensive one to one support than those clients at the top of the pyramid. This course is delivered over ten days and requires the completion of an assessed assignment.

It is a 10-day programme for practitioners and managers working within Connexions but who will not be Connexions Personal Advisers working intensively with young people.

The main learning outcomes are that the participants are able to:

1. Define and analyse the young person centred approach that Connexions promotes
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of the Connexions Strategy and Service on young people other organisations and society
3. Demonstrate understanding of the importance of reflection and evidence based practice in the Connexions context
4. Define and analyse effective interagency working in the Connexions context

The “Introducing Connexions” course is a 2-day course and is aimed at all partner agencies and those working within the Connexions Service who Partnerships feel would benefit. It is aimed at those who need to know some basic information about the Connexions strategy and service.

In addition, this course would be compulsory for those who have had no experience of Connexions but who wish to attend any of the other programmes within the Connexions training framework unless they could otherwise demonstrate learning outcomes.

The course consists of four sessions on the following subject areas.

1. The Connexions Strategy – Strategic context values and principles
2. The role of the Connexions Personal Adviser
3. The Connexions Services – Structures and Functions
4. Connexions and the opportunities for interagency working

The Connexions APIR Framework: A course for practitioners, supervisors and managers. This is a one or one and a half day course for practitioners who need to use the Connexions APIR framework and the managers and supervisors of practitioners.



### Iceland

At the moment, no other training is planned. It will need to be developed if policy makers in Iceland decide to adopt this model of delivering counselling service to young people. A holistic model of counselling or TC may well be adopted as a Municipal policy as a consequence of this project.

### Slovenia

At the moment no other training has been organised, but links are being established with the school counsellors and consideration is being given to inserting a two-hour introductory module into their training.

### 3 - WHICH INFORMATION MATERIALS ARE DEVELOPED FOR THE SUPPORT OF TOTAL COUNSELLORS WORK?

#### England

The Supporting Children and Young Persons Group of the DfES has produced a wide range of support materials for Personal Advisers. This is very important due to the fact that the role of Personal Adviser is a new one.

In addition to support materials available for the training courses there are also readers produced on the following topics:

- Careers Education and Guidance
- Leaving Care
- Youth Justice
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Community Resources
- Bullying
- Post 16 Opportunities
- Sexual Health
- Guide to Special Educational Needs
- Skills for Life

### **Iceland**

We have not developed special materials for supporting the service yet, only the material being prepared for the LdV project Total Counselling, i.e. this Handbook. But next in line is a guide to different provisions available for support and counselling for young people.

### **Italy**

There are a certain number of publications developed from the different institutions (Ministries, Regions etc.). All these are the result of different projects. ISFOL has concentrated on the developing tools for Counsellors Advisors, producing information materials generically for all kind of experts in guidance. The actual project "Total Counselling" is currently producing the first leaflets and with the TC Handbook going to be distributed to the counsellors. As a result new tools should be produced over time.

### **Slovenia**

Since the service started at the beginning of 2005 we have prepared the information for schools, in addition we are printing leaflets with information on the introduction of TC. However there are a few information materials already published, mostly giving information about guidance and counselling which is already at place at Information and Counselling Centres (CIPS)



# H - Future development and Sustainability

Sustainability is a critical issue for any project. If the evaluation shows that the public benefits from the new development, and it demonstrates value for money, then clearly to lose the project because of a change in policy or because the project in question is not regarded as a high priority by policy makers is unhelpful.

It is incumbent upon project leaders to think about how the investment of frequently significant amounts of human capital and public funding can achieve a long term return. It is very important that policymakers are aware of the project, and how it fits into the national or regional scene, well before its end. To achieve this, it is desirable to brief relevant policy makers and other stakeholders from the outset of the project. This could involve researching relevant policy developments across the European Union. In the case of the Total Counselling Project, these policy developments would include social inclusion policy – such as the National Action Plans produced by Member States of the European Union<sup>38</sup> – and the surveys of career guidance policy conducted by the European Commission (as well as the OECD and the World Bank using the OECD's questionnaire).

There have been some other significant developments in international guidance policy that project promoters should be aware of.

**THE FIRST** is the Resolution on Guidance adopted by the Council of the European Union in 2004<sup>39</sup>. The Resolution recognised the place that guidance has in meeting the European Commission's priorities to combat social exclusion. Promote lifelong learning and to develop a world class knowledge-based society by 2010.

## THE RESOLUTION INVITED MEMBER STATES TO:

- 1 "To examine, where appropriate, existing national guidance provision in the education and training and the employment sectors, in the context of the findings of the Commission, OECD and World Bank reviews of policies for guidance;
- 2 To seek to ensure effective co-operation and co-ordination between providers of guidance at national, regional and local levels in the provision of guidance services, in order to widen access and to ensure the coherence of provision, especially to groups at risk<sup>40</sup>;
- 3 To encourage schools, institutes of further and higher education, training providers to promote reflective learning techniques and autonomous learning, in order to enable young people and adults to self-manage their learning and career paths effectively."

<sup>38</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/news/2001/jun/napsincl2001\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2001/jun/napsincl2001_en.html)

<sup>39</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004_en.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> (Our emphasis)

**THE SECOND** development was the launch of the Policy Maker's Handbook on Career Guidance<sup>41</sup>. Based on the international surveys, the Handbook deals with a comprehensive range of topics such as guidance for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, improving support systems for guidance and funding guidance. Whilst the Handbook is about career guidance, it takes a broad view of individuals' needs, in keeping with the notion of "career" being a pathway through life rather than being simply about occupations and jobs.

By demonstrating the coherence of the project with national and/or regional policies, the potential for continuing the project beyond the EC funding phase will be enhanced. However, it is equally important to ensure that good practice and learning outcomes from the project developed in the project are disseminated.

The European Commission has adopted a policy of valorisation<sup>42</sup> which can be described as a process of exploiting project learning and outcomes (training products and processes, methodology, course materials etc) with a view to optimising their value and impact in existing and new contexts (target groups, companies, sectors, training institutions and systems etc)."

### England

As explained in Section D, Career Bradford is a subcontractor to Connexions West Yorkshire. The development of the TC Personal Advisers' (PA) Handbook within this project is therefore an example of local good practice. The dissemination process will include sending a copy of the PA Handbook to the Children's and Young Person's Support Unit of the Department for Education and Skills which is responsible for the Connexions Service nationally.

The original case for what became the Connexions Service was made by the Cabinet Office (a central government department). Although the reservations of some practitioners have been noted in the Introduction to the Handbook, the long term sustainability of the Connexions Service is a matter of Government policy. It is unlikely that any different 'bottom-up' approach would be sustainable in the English context unless and until there were to be a change in policy.

### Iceland

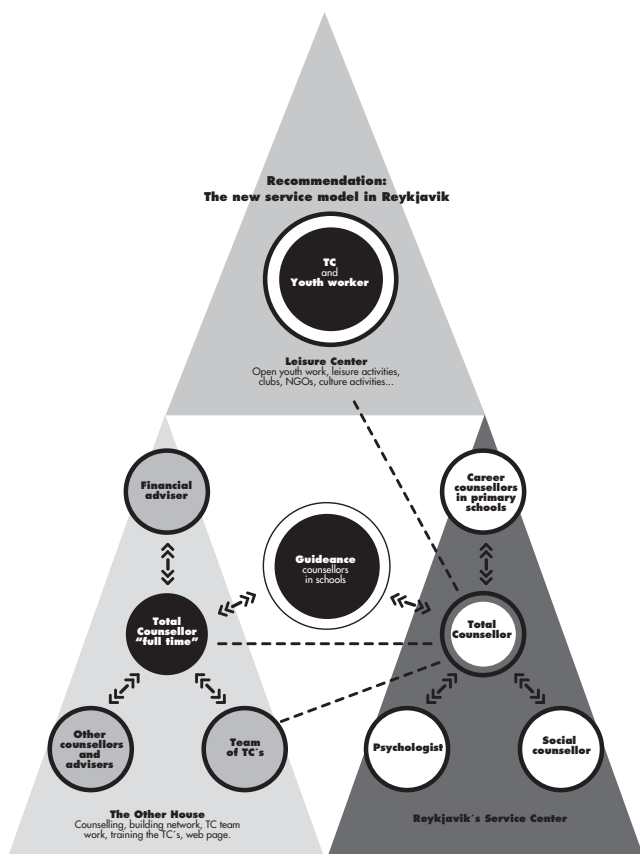
As an example of practitioners developing a "bottom-up" approach, the Iceland team needs to "sell" the TC concept as a value for money approach to supporting young people. Two conferences have been held with this as part of the objectives. The first was held in October 2004, called "Back on Track", and it was organised by the National Agency of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme, the Leonardo guidance project "Spidersweb" and TC team, on "Prevention of Social Exclusion in Iceland" and the second was the final dissemination conference on the TC Project held at the end of January 2005. The outline proposal for future development is included in the Iceland Section of the TC folder under "other".

<sup>41</sup> Career Guidance A HANDBOOK FOR POLICY MAKERS, OECD 2004  
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/53/34060761.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> European Commission leaflet on valorisation:  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/valorisation/doc/leaflet\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/valorisation/doc/leaflet_en.pdf)

## H - Future development and Sustainability

### THE PROPOSED MODEL FOR ICELAND IS CAPTURED IN THE FOLLOWING DIAGRAM H.1:



The organisational changes that are being made in the delivery of social service in Reykjavík aim at bringing the service closer to the citizens or customers through Community Centres. In the new Community Centres professionals from different services will be represented, such as the Social Welfare Service, Youth and Sports Council, Educational Board, Police, etc., so already there the key elements of TC-teams that can work on a community level are in place. But as some elements of the TC service are central, like the website, training, maintaining the network, etc., that particular part of the operation needs to be organized centrally. That central organization could be Hitt Húsið or another central organisation within the system. But whether this model of counselling will be adopted by the Municipality has yet to be decided.

The benefits of an Icelandic TC Service can be summed up with the following key points:

- 1 The TC concept offers a single platform where young people can access several lines of advice, counselling and support, thus increasing the transparency and accessibility for the young person
- 2 TC is an opportunity to deliver a holistic service to the young person. The time spent on referrals, finding the right service, publicity and waiting is cut down considerably for the young person. Often time, to deliver service quickly, is crucial when dealing with young people in crisis
- 3 Working in a dynamic team gives unique opportunities for professionals to share work cultures, methodologies and know-how, and can lead to innovation
- 4 TC is cost effective in the new system of delivering social service and education through Community Centres in Reykjavík Municipality, as most of the key players will be situated in these centres. It means that a defined part of their working time can be allotted for the TC teams and a special new service need not be created.

### Italy

The successful roll out of the project in Italy is probably more dependent on external factors than for the other transnational partners. The aim of the Italian Government, as expressed in the latest National Action Plans for Social Exclusion and for Employment, is to introduce more coherent services managed at regional and local level. The Italian TC model could provide an example of effective collaborative working between the various agencies described in Section D. The next stage will be to encourage the Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione Professionale dei Lavoratori (ISFOL) (as policy and practice coordinator at the National Level), to work with the Region to plan and organise a meeting amongst the group of experts to agree a common model with an exchange of competencies. With the idea, where possible, to offer a single platform for young people to access, counselling and support and to deliver a holistic service to them

## Slovenia

The rollout of the Slovenian service is already part of national policy and as such it is assured of its continued development, subject to the usual conditions of funding that apply to any publicly funded service. The TC project is part of the Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational, Education and Training's (CPI) programme for achieving its objectives for 2004-2007.



### Questions to think about regarding a sustainable Total Counselling Service

1. Do you have a clear understanding of the needs of young people (or other target group) for support?
2. What evidence do you have?
3. Have you shared the vision with (potential) partners and stakeholders?
4. How will your project add value to existing provision? What are the innovative aspects?
5. Do you have a clear understanding of the policy context within which you would be working? Have you looked at:
  - a) The National Action Plans for Employment and Social Exclusion for your country? (These are available from the Europe Website: <http://europa.eu.int/>)
  - b) The relevant Country Notes from the OECD/EC/World Bank surveys<sup>43</sup> of your country – and the relevant synthesis reports<sup>44</sup>?
  - c) The Handbook for policy makers on career guidance<sup>45</sup>?
6. How will you interact with policy makers, other key decision makers and other stakeholders? Methods could include:
  - a) Invite appropriate representation on a steering group
  - b) Include relevant policymakers on project briefing circulation lists
  - c) Arrange an initial briefing meeting followed by one or more of the above
7. Have you planned in independent evaluation/mentoring of the project from the outset?
8. Do plan you to have a dissemination strategy? Such a strategy could include:
  - a) Policy makers
  - b) Social and educational policy development organisations (“think-tanks”)
  - c) Professional institutions and associations
  - d) Trade and other magazines – including those aimed at your target audience
  - e) Your country's Euroguidance Centre
  - f) Relevant professional training institutions.

### Clearly the overall aim should be to ensure that:

- 1 You have the widest possible support for the project by the time decisions on its continuation have to be made
- 2 The good practice developed by the project is accessible to as many practitioners as possible.

<sup>43</sup> Available from the OECD website: <http://www.oecd.org>

<sup>44</sup> Sultana, R. Guidance policies in the knowledge society Trends, challenges and responses across Europe A Cedefop synthesis report, Cedefop 2004 [http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/etv/publication/download/panorama/5152\\_en.pdf](http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/etv/publication/download/panorama/5152_en.pdf) Sultana R, and Watts, AG, Career Guidance Policies in 37 Countries: Contrasts and Common Themes, International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, Volume 4 Nos.2-3, 2004, pp.105-122.

<sup>45</sup> Career Guidance A HANDBOOK FOR POLICY MAKERS, OECD 2004 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/53/34060761.pdf>

# I – RESEARCH EVALUATION

## TOTAL COUNSELLING LEONARDO PROJECT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In this report the Total Counselling Leonardo Project is evaluated. The evaluation is divided in two parts, research undertaken across countries on the one hand and process evaluation on the other hand. This part includes the evaluation of research. The evaluation is carried out by Steinunn Hrafnisdóttir, Assistant professor in social work, Faculty of Social Sciences. University of Iceland.

#### **THE AIM OF THE EVALUATION STUDY IS, ACCORDING TO A CONTRACT WITH THE OTHER HOUSE (HITT HÚSIÐ):**

- A)** to evaluate research undertaken in each country. The quality of the research is evaluated such as problem formulation, research design, measurement, sampling, data analysis, conclusion drawing and data reporting.
- B)** to evaluate the process of the co-operation. This is done by identifying learning points from the projects overall approach. How the transnational/national partnership operated and whether or not this co-operation was useful and beneficial for the project and the beneficiaries. Furthermore, what approaches were developed in the co-operation and key lessons from it.

### 2. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Total counselling Leonardo project addresses the need for guidance services and guidance counselors to address the needs of young people for holistic counselling. It is based on the ground that there is a need for a methodology that takes into consideration the individual's whole life-situation and approaches it with urgency in a flexible way. Many young persons have a crisis of some kind or another on their way to adulthood where they have a need of professional advice or counselling (Total Counselling application form p.11). The aim of the project is to develop methodologies and tools so that existing information and counselling practices can be developed into a more holistic services taking into consideration the clients whole life situation and delivering better service and counselling for young people (Total Counselling application form, p. 12).

#### **THE PARTNERS IN THE PROJECT ARE:**

- A)** Iceland: The Other House, Information and Cultural Center for young people and Miðberg Community Centre.
- B)** Italy: Associazione 3001 ONLUS, Roma, Italy.
- C)** Slovenia: Center of the RS for Vocational Education and Training
- D)** UK: Careers Europe-Careers Bradford LTD



### **3. PROGRAM EVALUATION DESIGN FOR THE RESEARCH**

#### **3.1. Data collection instruments**

In the evaluation of research, existing reports and written material was thoroughly examined, besides telephone interviews and e-mail were used to obtain further information.

It must be emphasized that some limitations appeared in evaluating the research from each country. It was difficult to get access to all the original data from the research. The reason was that some of the countries only provided summaries of research in English. Other material was in the national languages of the partners' countries. Therefore the evaluation could only be based on summaries of research in some cases and that did limit the reliability of the evaluation of research. However, the summaries were generally well written and emphasized the main points of the research in each country.

#### **3.2. Data analysis**

In the beginning all material from the Total Counselling Leonardo project was read. In work package 3 in the application it is clearly stated what the aim of the research in all of the countries should be, that is:

“ Each country will use quantitative and qualitative research methods to ascertain that the needs of young people 16-25 years old for counselling and advice is expressed, by using for example, in-depth interviews, focus groups, evaluation groups, customers' surveys, questionnaires and comparing the findings with national surveys. Methods will be based on national and cultural tradition, with a common denominator where applicable” (p. 27).

All the research results were compared to this aim by analyzing the research summaries, research reports and other written material from each country.

In the process evaluation the data analysis was as follows: All the answers from the open-ended questionnaires were read several times to get an overall impression. Then key themes from each answer were compared and similar themes/answers were categorized together. Similarities and differences in views of the respondents were compared.

### **4. RESULTS FROM THE EVALUATION OF RESEARCH**

In this section, a general overview will be given on what surveys were carried out in each country, how they were carried out (research aims, sample, methodology etc) and the main findings. Each research will be evaluated and similarities and differences between countries will be discussed.

## 4.1. Overview of research country by country

### Iceland

Two research were carried out in Iceland to cast a light on the needs of young people for counselling and guidance.

**A) A QUANTITATIVE SURVEY** was carried out that had two main research questions:

- 1) What is the nature of the difficulties young people in Iceland are experiencing?
- 2) Is the counselling environment equipped to meet the needs of young people?

The sample consisted of 609 individuals between the ages of 16-25 years old, 351 (58%) girls and 258 (42%) boys. It was a convenience sample and the aim was to find young people with the most diverse background. The respondents answered a structured questionnaire mostly with closed-ended questions. Although, they also had an opportunity to answer some open-ended questions. The results were analyzed by using SPSS.10 statistical software. Two students in education and social work carried out the research with a grant from The Icelandic Student Innovation Fund. The research was supervised by an Assistant professor in social work at the University of Iceland.

### Summary of main results

The difficulties the young people said they experienced were manifold. The six most common difficulties were anxiety and depression, shyness, financial difficulties, learning difficulties, smoking and the loss of a loved one. It was interesting that the difficulties seemed to be gender based. Depression and anxiety was more common among girls than boys and they also considered themselves more shy compared to the boys. On the other hand the boys had more learning difficulties compared to the girls. Drug abuse and unemployment was also higher among boys than girls.

The respondents were asked if questions about some issues had come up in their minds last year. According to the findings the young people mainly had questions about work, choosing education, financial matters and communicating with the opposite sex. When asked about access to counselling it was quite clear that participants sought counselling that was free and/or inexpensive such as at school and at health care centers. The results indicated that counselling on the Internet have not yet reached young people in Iceland. Possibly this service needs more introduction and marketing to gain trust from the users. 42.6% of the respondents said that they did not need professional counselling. A large part did not seek counselling when they needed it because they did not think their problems were large enough, did not have the courage, did not know where to find it or thought it was too expensive.

**B) QUALITATIVE RESEARCH.** Focus groups among young adults aged 16-24 years were carried out. The main objective was to get in-depth information about young people's opinions on the need of counselling, what kinds of problems young people were facing, best ways to provide counselling and which kind of counselling was needed. IMG Gallup carried out the focus groups. Contacts with the young people were made through The Other House. Four different target-groups among young adults participated. The groups consisted of: The drop out-group: Young adults, who have dropped out of schools. The treatment group: Young adults who have had treatment or therapy and are functioning today, The invisible group: The "ordinary" young adults, who are studying and working but neither, participating in any organized social activity nor are leaders in any groups. The socially active group: Young people, who are active in organized social groups and are or have been leaders in their group.

### **Summary of main results**

When respondents were asked about the problems that were facing young people today, young people from all the groups mentioned alcohol and drug abuse. Self-identity problems, lack of values, financial difficulties, mobbing, social pressures and perfectionism were also mentioned. Certain differences emerged between the groups. It was more common that people from the drop out-group mentioned financial difficulties compared to other groups. People from the invisible groups mentioned rather social pressure than the other groups. When asked about counselling for young people it was mentioned that there was a need for a community centre for young people and it was expressed that The Other House had to be more effective in marketing. The social active group mentioned that access to information about young people's problems were better now than before. They mentioned that health care centers, total counselling, family, friends and the Internet among other organizations provided counselling for young people. Many were although not sure were to seek professional counselling and that the problems they were facing were not serious enough. It was considered important to change the attitude towards professional counselling so it would be more acceptable for people to seek it. The young people were asked about if they had heard about Total counselling. Only the young people that had worked in or with The Other House had heard about it. Everybody thought that there was a need for total counselling for young people, although they did not necessarily think that they needed it. It was considered a good idea to provide a holistic counselling for young people.

### United Kingdom

Two surveys were carried out at two consultation events in Bradford and District area (Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield). Both surveys addressed the needs of young people for counselling and guidance. Both surveys were conducted as a part of the annual series of surveys of young people aimed at providing an input from young people into the development of Connexions services. Personal advisers promoted the events to young people. The aim of the survey process was also to promote awareness of the Connexion service among young people. Emphasis was put on needs assessment and the importance of taking into consideration the views of young people about the services. The research was carried out by young people themselves. A structured questionnaire was developed and young people that needed support in filling out the questionnaire got it from other young people who acted as monitors. 278 young people aged 13-19, participated in the surveys.

### Summary of main results

Majority of the participants in all areas had heard about the Connexion service. 68% of participants in Bradford knew where the nearest Connexion service was. However, higher proportion in the other areas did not know it or 56% in Kirklees and 60% in Wakefield. Young people from Leeds were not asked this question. The participants were asked what services they needed most from Connexions. The picture that emerged differed slightly between areas. Career/job training was most needed in all areas. The second most popular need was money advice in Bradford and Wakeley, but drugs advice in Kirkley and Leeds. Other popular needs were relationship advice, pregnancy advice and homework. The final part of the consultation involved asking young people what they felt needed to be improved at Connexion. The most mentioned factor was more publicity of what and who Connexions are, 28% of respondents mentioned this. However, many young people were satisfied with the service and did not feel that anything had to change. Other mentioned that there needed to be better accessibility, as well as more services and activities. The picture was slightly different between areas. Other suggestions from all areas included Connexions needing to work more closely with schools, as having more advisers' available and better accessibility to centers.



## **Slovenia**

The total counselling project in Slovenia was primarily focused on the population, which has dropped out from schools and has not entered the labour market. The main research problem was the school drop outs. More precisely to find out the reasons and indicators of why these young people do not use their capabilities, skills and creativity. The survey focused on:

- A)** Socio-economical status of the family, interpersonal relations in the family, encouragement of the parents and educational level of the parents
- B)** Perception of the school environment such as subjects, teachers and studying
- C)** The status of the young people after they dropped out of school. Special topics included what they did after dropping out and if they wished to return to school. The population consisted of 50 drop outs from school between 15 and 26 years who came to advisors at the Employment service, department of first time job seekers. The data was collected by interviewers with an anonymous questionnaire. The data was analyzed by using SPSS.10.0. statistical software

## **Summary of main results**

### **A) SOCIO ECONOMICAL STATUS OF THE FAMILY**

Almost half of the interviewed persons (48%) came from families from the middle class, 26% of the participants come from financially stable families and 24% from financially badly situated families. The majority of the respondents said that they came from families with good or very good family relations. 50% of the respondents claimed that they were offered a lot of encouragement by their parents, 32% were offered a moderate encouragement and 14% had little encouragement. The majority of parents had elementary education or less, 60% had finished vocational school and 18% had finished high school or technical school.

## **B) PERCEPTION OF THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

Over half (56%) of the students thought that teachers had lesser attitudes towards less successful students. The respondents did not think that the educational subjects were too pretentious, so the reasons for their drop out are to be found somewhere else. The majority of respondents (56%) had not participated in a help course, while 46% had done so. The respondents mentioned various reasons for signing in the school program. 38% of the respondents said that they had signed in the educational program on their own wish and 28% had no other option, because they did not get accepted on the program of their choice and 24% signed in because it was the only occupation, which they knew well. Other reasons were less common. More than half (52%) claimed, that they had invested an average amount effort into studying, 32% responded that they had invested little effort and 14% claimed they had invested a large amount of effort into studying. More than half of the respondents thought that their behavior at school was appropriate while 48% did not think so. 42% of the respondents had dropped out in the first year of vocational education and 32% did so in the last year, while 26% dropped out in the second year.

## **C) THE STATUS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE AFTER THEY DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL**

It was quite clear that the respondents experienced bad feeling when they dropped out of school. The most common feelings mentioned were: Loosing self respect, loneliness, freedom, loosing self-confidence, inability to act, anxiety and fear for the future, feeling guilty because they did not try really hard. None of the respondents got a regular job after leaving school, only 8% had found an alternative way of life or work and 26% began to work temporarily. Many (42%) had stayed at home, unemployed. A majority (60%) of the respondents wanted to complete their education in an adult education program. 14% wished to return to regular school and 22% wanted to get employment. Only 4% did not know what to wish for.

### Italy

Two researches were carried out in Italy.

**A)** A survey of young people who were clients at the Youth Information Centre. The aim of the survey was to collect data on the background and needs of young people who were attending the 6 offices of the Youth information centre in Rome and the two information buses that the Youth centre uses. The research was carried out over a two week period. The data was collected by "advisors" with a semi structured interview questionnaire. Respondents were 225, 15-29 years old, 135 female and 90 male. The response rate was 93%.

### Summary of main results

All of the respondents had finished primary school and 92% had finished secondary school and 82% vocational education. 65% had high school certificate and 35% had undergraduate education. Only 15% had postgraduate education. When asked what field they were most interested in the picture that emerged was diverse. Many mentioned health and psychosocial-pedagogical studies. Other mentioned Economy and science, environment, architecture, humanistic studies and administration. A majority of the respondents (77%) were registered at the employment office, 61% had written "curriculum vitae" 48% had never had a job interview. Only 35% of respondents had any work experience and 78% had some extraprofessional activity, voluntary work or hobbies.

**B)** A survey of counselors and guidance experts. The main aim was to collect basic data about counselors and guidance experts in the field. The purpose of this was to build a data base of experts working in this field to be able to get an evaluation of the actual situation in the Region. A questionnaire was developed where it was asked about their education and qualification, professional experience and other general information. 75 answered the questionnaire or 83%.

### Summary of main results

A majority (58) of the counselors had psychosocial and/or pedagogical training and 14 had training in health related fields. Other training mentioned was in the legal field/political science, art, finance, science/technology, humanistic studies and administration. 17% were working in an employment office and 40% in the Youth Information Centre. Others were working in school guidance services, social and health care centers and University Guidance Services. When asked whether they did work with specific methodology, 35% claimed that they did.

## **5. CONCLUSION OF THE EVALUATION OF RESEARCH**

In this section similarities and differences between research in each country will be discussed and the quality of each research will be evaluated. Then it will be addressed if the research in different countries met the research aims that were set out in the beginning of the Total counselling Leonardo Project. Lastly, some recommendation will be put forward regarding future research and co-operation.

All of the countries carried out research on the needs of young people or assessment of clients groups. However, each partner tailored the research to the situation in their countries. In Iceland there seemed not to have been carried out any research on the needs of young people for counselling, what kind of counselling they needed, what they knew about where to seek counselling and what problems they were experiencing and therefore the research was targeted at young people in general. In Iceland total counselling in The Other House has already been established so the client group is well known and therefore it was not considered necessary to research the client group at this particular time.

The UK had already started total counselling services for young people based on a research produced by the Social Exclusion Unit in 1999. Bridging the Gap: New opportunities for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training. Therefore they concentrated their research on the Connexion service and what the young people thought about it. In Slovenia there have been extensive surveys on the needs of young people in general. As already mentioned, they decided to concentrate on drop-outs from schools and their needs, perceptions and backgrounds. In Italy there also seemed to be extensive research on the needs of young people in general and therefore it was decided to gather data on the backgrounds of young people that used the Youth Information Centre in Rome and get experts views from counselors and advisers. It must be emphasized that a total counselling service has not been established in Italy and Slovenia. Therefore the outcome of the research can be used to establish holistic services. In Iceland and UK the research results will be used to improve the services. Therefore it is difficult to compare the research results between countries. However, some comparison can be made, especially between Iceland and the UK, although the samples and methodology of the research were not similar. For example young people in Iceland and UK seemed to have a need for counselling on some similar topics such as career and education, and financial advice. They also wanted the services to be more accessible and more advertised.



### **5.1. STRENGTHS OF THE RESEARCH**

Research questions in each country were clear and precise. Each country provided information on how the research was carried out, although this information could have been more detailed in some cases. All the countries put forward aims of the research and carried out research accordingly to that. Scientific methods were used in data analysis of the findings in each country. Different methodology was used such as interviews, questionnaires and focus groups. All countries tried to assess the needs of young people and/or their clients groups. The research summaries were mostly well written and clear and gave an overall picture of the research in each country. The outcome of the research can be used to improve services or establish new services based on the total counselling ideology.

### **5.2. WEAKNESSES OF THE RESEARCH**

It would have been more productive to carry out similar research in each country. Particularly, to use similar research questions, methodology, samples and age groups of young people, so the research findings could be compared in a direct way. It must also be mentioned that none of the institutions that took part in the project are research institutions. Therefore, the quality of some of the research suffered because of that. It would have been interesting to have more detailed information about the needs and situations of the young people who used the services in Slovenia and Italy. It is also questionable to use young people to gather scientific information, unless they have training to do that as was the case in the UK. A convenience sample was used in the Icelandic study, where it would perhaps have been more appropriate to use a coincidental sample to get a more mixed group of young people. However, the research was done with severe time limits and in the summer time when it is difficult to reach young people. The research summaries could have been more detailed in some of the countries. It was difficult for the evaluator in some cases to evaluate the quality of the research findings because information was lacking on some of the results and background variables. This is probably due to the fact that in the cases of Italy, Slovenia and UK only research summaries in English were provided. Iceland provided research reports in English.

### **5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the Leonardo application it was stated that each country would use quantitative and qualitative research methods to ascertain that the needs of young people 16-25 years old for counselling and advice was expressed. Furthermore that the research methods would be based on national and cultural traditions, with a common denominator where applicable. On the whole the research from each country met the aims that were put forward in the beginning, although the research aims differed according to the situation in each country. Most of the research can be used to evaluate existing services or establishing new services based on the total counselling ideology. Although, further research would be needed in some countries on the potential client group and what kind of counselling they need. It is recommended that in future projects and further co-operation more care is put into administrating what kind of research is carried out across the partners' countries, so comparisons would be more relevant. It must be mentioned that the research seemed to differ in quality. Iceland provided detailed research reports in English and it seemed that the research carried out there were most scientific. However, it must be emphasized that Italy, Slovenia and UK provided research summaries not research reports, therefore it was more difficult to evaluate the quality of their research. Therefore it is suggested that in the future qualified researchers should be recruited to carry out the scientific research. It is also recommended that means will be provided so that not only research summaries, but research reports will be available in English from all countries.

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Reykjavík, 15. December, 2004  
**STEINUNN HRAFNSDÓTTIR**

# Glossary

<b>ACS</b>	Slovenian Institute of Adult Education. <a href="http://siae.acs.si/">http://siae.acs.si/</a>
<b>ADVICE*</b>	Helping individuals and groups to interpret information and choose the most appropriate options.
<b>APIR</b>	Framework for Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Review (Connexions, England)
<b>ASSOCIAZIONE "ARCA 3001 ONLUS",</b>	The Association was especially created to drive the Total Counselling Project. It is linked with the Network of the Youth Information Centre of Rome (Italy). The aim is to develop new services aimed at young people and professionals, promoting good practice and exchanges of new methodology.
<b>CAREERS BRADFORD</b>	A contracting partner within the West Yorkshire Connexions Partnership in England. <a href="http://www.careersb.co.uk/">http://www.careersb.co.uk/</a>
<b>CEDEFOP</b>	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Education and Training. <a href="http://www.cedefop.eu.int/">http://www.cedefop.eu.int/</a>
<b>CIPS</b>	Centres for information and career guidance (Slovenia)
<b>CONNEXIONS</b>	An holistic youth support and counselling service in England. <a href="http://www.connexions.gov.uk/">http://www.connexions.gov.uk/</a>
<b>COUNSELLING*</b>	Working with individuals to help them discover, clarify, assess and understand their own experience, and to explore alternatives and their possible implementation.
<b>CPI</b>	Centre for Vocational Education and Training (Slovenia). <a href="http://www.cpi.si/default.asp?languageID=2">http://www.cpi.si/default.asp?languageID=2</a>
<b>DFES</b>	Department for Education and Skills (England). <a href="http://www.dfes.gov.uk/">http://www.dfes.gov.uk/</a>
<b>ESF</b>	European Social Fund. <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/esf2000/index-en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/esf2000/index-en.htm</a>
<b>ESS</b>	Employment Service of Slovenia. <a href="http://www.ess.gov.si">www.ess.gov.si</a>
<b>ETF</b>	European Training Foundation. <a href="http://www.etf.eu.int/">http://www.etf.eu.int/</a>
<b>FKB</b>	Volunteer association of health workers for sexual education and family planning (Iceland). <a href="http://www.mmedia.is/fkb/">http://www.mmedia.is/fkb/</a>
<b>GUIDANCE*</b>	Guidance refers to a range of activities that enable citizens of any age, and at any point in their lives, to: identify their capacities, competencies and interests; make meaningful educational, training and occupational decisions; and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competencies are learned and or used. Guidance is provided in a range of settings: education, training, employment, community, and private .
<b>HITT HÚSIÐ</b>	Hitt Húsið or the Other House is a cultural and advisory centre for young people aged 16-25. It is run by the Youth and Sport Council of Reykjavík Municipality. <a href="http://www.hitthusid.is">www.hitthusid.is</a>

<b>HOLISTIC</b>	An approach to counselling that deals with the whole person, rather than starting from pre determined specialisms such as drug, relationship or career counselling
<b>IAEVG</b>	International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance <a href="http://">http://</a>
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technologies
<b>ISFOL</b>	Institute for Labour and Educational Development (Italy). <a href="http://www.isfol.it/">http://www.isfol.it/</a>
<b>ÍTR</b>	The Youth and Sports Council of the Municipality (Reykjavik, Iceland)
<b>MIDBERG</b>	Midberg is part of the sports and leisure department of Reykjavik city. It is located in Breiðholt, a suburb with 22.000 inhabitants. Its main focus is on pedagogical and youth work with children and young people in the age range of 6-20 years. <a href="http://www.midberg.is">www.midberg.is</a>
<b>MOLFSA</b>	Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs (Slovenia). <a href="http://www.gov.si/mddsz/english.htm">http://www.gov.si/mddsz/english.htm</a>
<b>PERSONAL ADVISER</b>	The title of a total counsellor in the Connexions Service (England)
<b>MSZS</b>	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport <a href="http://www.mszs.si/eng/">http://www.mszs.si/eng/</a>
<b>OECD</b>	The OECD groups 30 member countries in a unique forum to discuss, develop and refine economic and social policies. <a href="http://oecd.org">http://oecd.org</a>
<b>OFSTED</b>	Office for Standards in Education (England). <a href="http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/">http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/</a>
<b>STAKEHOLDERS</b>	A person or organisation with a direct interest in the effectiveness of the service
<b>TOTAL COUNSELLOR</b>	The Counsellor (in the Total Counselling approach) aims to offer holistic counselling for young people that takes into account the young person's whole life situation. This could mean creating links from existing guidance counselling services to other support services for young people or could lead to the development of new services
<b>WORLD BANK</b>	The World Bank's mission is to fight poverty and improve the living standards of people in the developing world. It is a development Bank which provides loans, policy advice, technical assistance and knowledge sharing services to low and middle income countries to reduce poverty. <a href="http://www.worldbank.org/">http://www.worldbank.org/</a>

\*The use of terms to describe support services to individuals can be controversial amongst practitioners and the definitions are offered here as a guide.

The National Institute for Careers and Educational Counselling produced a briefing paper (in the context of guidance for adults in England) , which has a helpful section on the activities of guidance. [http://www.crac.org/nicec/publications/pdfs/guidance\\_for\\_adults.pdf](http://www.crac.org/nicec/publications/pdfs/guidance_for_adults.pdf)