



# Education and career counselling



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## Education and career counselling

“Education and career counselling” is written by two Danish career and education counsellors based on their many years of experience in Denmark, combined with the feedback and input they gained from two workshops, held in Peje, Kosovo and in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2022.

Teachers, counsellors and psychologists from six different VET school in Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro participated in the two workshops, where they not only received training but also willingly shared their professional knowledge as well as presented the challenges and obstacles they face in their daily work. Besides they contributed with concrete cases and best practices.

## Introduction

For several years, vocational educational institutions in large parts of Europe, including the Western Balkans, in general have been challenged when it comes to attracting young people to the VET educations. The tendency is that the majority of young people, who leave primary school choose a general secondary education and not a vocational training.

In June 2023, in Denmark, 19.4% of the youth group that graduated from primary school chose a vocational education, whereas 72.6% chose a general upper secondary education. It is a serious imbalance, and the tendency in many European countries is the same.

In Albania, in the school year 2022-2023, the percentage of the students registered in the VET schools was 17,5%, while 82.5 % of the students were registered in the general secondary schools. This was actually an increase in the percentage of students in VET schools compared to 2020-21, when it was 16,6 % and to 2021-22, when it was 17%. However, even though the percentage of students in VET school is increasing, unfortunately, the number of students is decreasing, which is due to massive migration of population towards Western Europe. There is decrease in number of students in all levels of the education system, not only in VET.

For Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the percentage of young people attending VET schools is higher than in Albania and according to the statistics from Education Ministry in Kosovo, in the school year 2022/2023: 20.328 students graduated, and from them 38% from vocational schools.

A very worrying trend is that in Western Balkans, many young people between the ages of 15 and 29 are not in employment or education. In Kosovo, according to the statistics of 2018-2019, 43% of the young people 15-29 were unemployed.

According to the preliminary data from Agency for statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, (March, 2024.), 30% of young people (ages from 15 to 24) in Bosnia and Herzegovina were unemployed in 2023, while data for 2022 showed that 35 % young people (ages from 15 to 24) were unemployed. If

we only look at the numbers, we can get the impression that the rate of unemployed young people is lower in 2023, however, the explanation could also be that a large number of them have moved out of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to get jobs and that could be the reason why the current rate of unemployed young people is lower.

On the other hand, Albania has a seasonal labor shortage. Over the last 3 years, the tourism industry has increased drastically and during the summer time there is a great need for young people in the tourism sector. The tourism business cannot cover the needs with Albanian employees. It has started hiring people from other countries such as from the Philippines, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

## Counselling for VET

Denmark has a long tradition of qualified counselling for young people, who are about to finish primary school. In recent decades, the training to become an education counsellor has gone through several reforms. New research, knowledge and new theories have been included, supplemented by experience from many years of work with guidance for the youth group.

Historically, the public employment service originally played an important role in delivering career counselling. In the early days, career counselling was seen as the job of an information specialist, rather than of an educationalist, but this changed during the years. From the late 1950s, a basically *educational approach* to careers counselling took over, which gained momentum during the 1960s and 1970s with teacher-counsellors. Since then, counselling has flourished in the sense that the numbers of counselling experts have increased dramatically, and counselling has taken an integrated approach in both educational and employment measures. This learning material is therefore, has been developed in the light of the Danish counselling tradition and continuously adapted to current issues in collaboration with the schools in the 4 countries in the VET4WB project.

# Three kinds of guidance

This material will present three levels of guidance that can be easily implemented at a vocational school that has not previously practiced education and career counselling.

1. **Guidance for education – entering education/recruitment**
2. **Guidance during education – retention/support/prevention of dropout**
3. **Guidance after education – job orientation/further education/career**

*Reflection: Consider whether the 3 forms of guidance differ from each other and if so – how?*

## 1. Guidance for Education – entering education/recruitment



Guidance for an education/vocational training can have many facets and face many obstacles, as there are many factors that influence the young person's choice of education. The choice can be influenced by traditions in the family, finances, distances to the place of education, the choices of peers and the choices and attitudes of parents and siblings. There are many similarities between the challenges in the Balkans and in Denmark. However, the cultural and economic conditions are very different from country to country, and it can therefore be difficult to find a common solution for all countries and schools. However, it is in any case a great gain for everyone to share knowledge and pick from the best ideas and experiences across schools and countries.

### a) Cooperation with primary schools

In Denmark, VET schools' cooperation with primary schools begins early in the school process. Experience shows **that the earlier you inform about op-**

tions other than the traditional and perhaps most well-known, the greater the interest in vocational training.

### EXAMPLES OF COLLABORATION WITH PRIMARY SCHOOLS:

**DENMARK:** The Vocational School visits the primary school with dedicated students, who come in their work clothes that match their subject, and with pride and commitment talk about the education they have just chosen: What are the prospects of the profession, how is the salary, etc. This form of young-to-young guidance is a good and rewarding experience for everyone.

**DENMARK:** The primary school visits the vocational school for a tour and is presented with small tasks that represent the subject in the class they are visiting. Here, it would also be a good idea for the vocational school students to be actively involved, show, and tell, so that young-to-young guidance is maintained.

**DENMARK:** Municipal education fairs where vocational school students participate in working stands. The 8th, 9th and 10th grades of primary schools are invited to these fairs, where they can ask questions about the subjects that are represented at the fairs.

**ALBANIA:** The school business coordinator, in collaboration with the career coordinator, invites a business representative to be part of a very crucial process: profilization. It happens with the students of the 11th grade, who have to choose a profile for the 12th grade. In order to have a diverse school offer, there must be some activities accomplished such as: to have correct information about the school profiles, information on job promotion, salaries, vacancies, labour market needs and so on. Business representatives are a good source for the students to do the right choice, and all this is done through open classes, consulting, workplace visits, fairs etc.

**KOSOVO:** The primary school 9 graders visit professional schools during a week in May which is called “Opened doors week”. They have the opportunity to see the school the workshops and also a mini fair is



presented to them with practical projects that are made by our students (meaning professional schools ongoing students). Also, career centers together make a promotion marketing to inform the 9 graders what we offer as schools and what perspective they will have if they come to VET schools.

**MONTENEGRO:** In Montenegro, cooperation between primary and secondary schools takes place continuously throughout the school year. At “Vaso Aligrudic”, collaboration is achieved both through joint activities within the classroom and extracurricular activities.

However, we mostly cooperate with students who are in the final grades of primary school (7th, 8th and 9th grade). In particular, visits of teachers and students of our school to elementary schools are organized through workshops and introductions to our school and the programs we offer. During these workshops, the educational programs that are implemented in our school are presented, students are discussed about the way in which teaching is implemented, they get to know the employers with whom the school cooperates, and the next steps after they graduate from our school are explained in detail. They get to know how they can continue their professional development.

**MONTENEGRO:** Also, “Vaso Aligrudic” organizes the Open Days activity for all elementary school students who want to visit our school. On this occasion, students visit our school individually or in groups, get to know the school, employees, the teaching process, but also extracurricular activities, as well as the workshops offered at the school. There is also the possibility of attending classes. On this occasion, students stay in the classes themselves, talk with their peers and get to know the school environment itself. Also, they have the opportunity to talk to all the teachers and ask anything they want. A very important segment is the fact that students are given information about all the employers with whom “Vaso Aligrudic” cooperates, and the possibility of attending the practical part of classes at the employer’s place is discussed.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** The School “Srednja škola metalnih zanimanja Sarajevo” every year creates a large number of activities intended for students in the final grades of primary school, in order to increase the number of enrolled students. One of these activities is visiting schools - teachers and dedicated students visit lots of primary schools in Sarajevo in order to present our school – school programs, excursions, gatherings, duration of schooling and presenting the benefits that students can have during and after education. Another activity, which aims to promote the school, is the participation of our school in the high school fair that is organized every year. The fair is organized by the Ministry of Education, which takes place in May, and every year manages to gather a large number of primary school students and their parents.





**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** Almost every year, “Srednja škola metalskih zanimanja Sarajevo” organizes an event “School open door day”. That event is an opportunity for young people and their parents to get to know the teachers, to see the appearance of the school, to see the equipment of the classroom, the organization of classes and all other relevant information. This activity is very important because the young people and their parents can get information about the programs and eventually get positive impressions of the school.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** This year, for the first time, “Srednja škola metalskih zanimanja Sarajevo” creates an event that will be visited by a large number of primary school students. As part of this event, our school will provide transport for final grade students from several primary schools in Sarajevo. In this way, the students will participate in fun and interesting activities (music, dance, art) and the ultimate goal is to present the school to the students and make it easier for them to decide which school to enroll in. The event will be attended by representatives of the ministry and principals of other schools. On this occasion, the students will visit the school, socialize with our students and find out all the important information about the school.

**DENMARK:** Every year, the Danish Skills Championships are held, a large nationwide event. The primary schools are invited to this competition, where they can see all the many different programs that are contested.

**ALBANIA:** Every November there is “SKILLS’ WEEK”. It is focused on activities which bring the students and the business partners together, know each other, focus on their main goal: apprenticeship. There are some info sessions from the business at school or at the company, parents may visit companies, older students may be mentor for one day for the young ones at the company.



**DENMARK:** Vocational schools hold an open house once or twice a year, where, among other things, special invitations are made to primary schools, and ESPECIALLY the young people’s parents. It is very important that the parent generation get the opportunity to see the place of education, get information about and insight into the programs and get positive impressions of the place.

## b) Social media

**DENMARK:** Social media play a particularly significant and weighty role in relation to young people. TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, X, and other social platforms are used daily and to an ever-increasing extent to pass on information and advertisements. Advertising campaigns on TV, in cinemas, newspapers and magazines are increasingly falling out of the information picture, as young people do not orientate themselves via these sources of information.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** Social media and TV campaigns play an important role in relation to young people. “Srednja škola metalskih zanimanja Sarajevo” almost daily uses platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and others to pass on interesting information and advertisements. Advertising campaigns on TV, newspapers and magazines are important sources that are used to reach parents of young people. Parents’ generations are the ones, who are still loyal to this type of media.

### c) Cooperation with other institutions, municipalities, private partners etc.:

**DENMARK:** As a vocational school, it is important to have a large network of business partners. Cooperation with other educational institutions in one's own municipality or neighboring municipalities can be of great importance.

Every year, many students change education and school because they find that the chosen education is wrong and want to change to something completely different.

Schools that prepare for vocational education are an important and significant partner. A collaboration with these schools can help to create a common thread from preparation to education, over the education course to a successful completed education.

**DENMARK:** The municipalities have guidance centers and job centers that have initiatives aimed at young people. A close collaboration with these centers is of great importance. The centers have daily contact with the municipality's citizens and can often provide the first information about the start of education and which education programs may lack students, which subjects lack skilled labor or vice versa, where the search is too great, and it is therefore difficult to get an internship or occupation.

**ALBANIA:** In Shkodra municipality, there has not been organized education fairs till now. Some of the activities that focus on the collaboration between Hamdi Bushati school and the municipality consist in Hamdi Bushati students serving food and drinks in different events that the municipality organizes.

**ALBANIA:** "Hamdi Bushati" school, Shkodra, has got a large network of business partnerships. It may be considered as one of the strengths of this school. Business representatives are more and more integrating their professional skills into the school's life. Recently, they visited the school as an evidence of the intense collaboration. Except for the interviews done in order to have students as apprentices and later future workers, they go to school to meet 9 graders to show them some future

opportunities that these students may have: salaries, job vacancies etc. This is a very effective approach towards bringing more students into the VET system since these meetings help boost the campaign.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** This year, "Srednja škola metalnih zanimanja Sarajevo", organized the conference "IMPORTANCE AND POPULARIZATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION" within the VET4WB Project. The aim of this activity was to present the current state of vocational schools in Sarajevo Canton, and to show which challenges vocational schools face and to open up new collaborations and opportunities that this type of school will place in its spot in the educational system that is suitable for them. The participants were the ministers of economy and education, associates from the economy, students, teachers, principals of secondary and primary schools. This event is also one of those designed to present the school in its best light.





### REFLECTION

#### *We need to attract students to our educations:*

- ▶ *Is that your job?*
- ▶ *Who are you addressing?*
- ▶ *How do you do it?*
- ▶ *What are the main obstacles you meet?*
- ▶ *Anything else?*

## 2. Guidance during education – retention/ support/prevention of dropout



Politically, in several EU countries, the focus has been on the drop-out problem for many years. It costs educational institutions and society a lot of money, when a student suddenly stops education.

It can also have major consequences for the student to accept that it was not the right education. Often this realization result in a lack of self-confidence, broken dreams, poor self-esteem, illness, financial problems and much more.

*Guidance and follow-up on students' well-being and daily life* is an important part of the young people's education and help to ensure that they succeed in completing the chosen education.

**KOSOVO:** In Kosovo the number of drop-out is not that tragic as in other countries, because first by law secondary school is obligative. Even the mentality of the community is that if you don't have a secondary school then you can't have a regular job of any kind. The dropouts are mainly by roman children who are a minority in Kosovo. So, the focus of the state and schools is in their community to help them understand the value of school and being educated.

**MONTENEGRO:** There is a possibility of retraining, which is implemented in accordance with the legal regulations. Namely, the modularized programs that are implemented in Montenegro leave the possibility that if the student drops out of school at some point, a certain level of the qualification level that he has acquired is recognized. Also, a large number of students of our school, for example, after completing the III level of the qualification level, at our school, take a differential exam and requalify for a specific title of the IV level of education.

**MONTENEGRO:** In particular, the number of students who leave "Vaso Ali-grudic" is relatively small, so the drop out is at the level of the last school year 2022/2023. amounted to 2%, which is very encouraging data for the school. A percentage of 2% did not take the class exam, and the reasons are professional sports (participation in the national team/renowned world clubs and the decision to continue their education part-time). The fact that these students continued their education in another school and in the educational program they wanted is also a very significant fact.

## Cooperation among the school's departments/staff:

A close and trusting collaboration among the various departments at the vocational school is required. This concerns both subject teachers, basic subject teachers, education supervisors, education managers and educa-

tion managers. The collaboration must have a high priority regarding the class and the individual student.

Approx. every 3 weeks a meeting between the subject teacher, education counsellor and other people involved in the class should be held, to be able to evaluate each individual student in that way. This is an opportunity to quickly form an overview and support the student or students who have challenges and need help.

**KOSOVO:** About the guidance during the education, every teacher has a close cooperation with career center and psychologist of the school so the students with special needs not only physically but also those with emotional special needs (here we can put also the talented students) they all get help to find themselves in school programs.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** At "Srednja škola metalskih zanimanja Sarajevo", a close and trusting collaboration between subject teachers, class teachers, pedagogue, psychologist, social worker and principal have a high priority and takes place almost daily. In addition to this individual cooperation, there is also another one, which includes group cooperation (once every two months, and if necessary, more often) where important issues related to students are discussed. Various factors affecting student well-being are monitored: results in achieving academic goals, compatibility of the student's abilities and the chosen program, psycho-physical health as well as family circumstances.

During monitoring, special attention is paid to recognition of risk that could have a negative impact on the student. If we recognize these risks, we organize additional meetings where we consider which forms of support are necessary to provide to the student in order to meet all his/her needs.

When we are programming support, we assess which experts from the community are necessary to include (for example, we include sport clubs' trainers, a clinical psychologist/ psychiatrist, the support of social welfare institutions and others). Associates of these institutions provide occasional support to the students and their parents, while they receive continuous support at the school level (classroom teacher, teachers, pedagogue, psychologist and social worker).

## Special educational support and other support:

**DENMARK:** Many students may have various challenges that make their everyday life difficult and that affect their chances of being able to complete an education. Therefore the counsellor is an extremely central person who, with his knowledge and experience, can initiate the necessary support options. The earlier the support is implemented, the better the chances are of completing the education.

**DENMARK:** Special educational support is typically given to students who are challenged by dyslexia (reading/writing difficulties) or psychological diagnoses that can be a block in their daily life. The counsellor knows about the relevant aids and can ensure that extra support hours are applied for, so that he/she can get a structure and overview of his/her education and thus avoid dropping out of the education.

**DENMARK:** During the education there may be challenges in relation to the student's internship. Here, the education counsellor must be helpful and provide support.

**DENMARK:** It can be a BIG motivating factor for the student that the theoretical part of the education is supplemented with relevant internships / visits to companies that use the latest modern technology within the subject. In this way, the student is introduced to new technology and developments within his field of study, which the vocational school may find difficult to match due to financial constraints and the student gets in touch with customers who appreciate being served with the latest equipment and state-of-the-art solutions. Such internships can help to keep the student in the chosen education, as the student has something to look forward to after the education.

**KOSOVO:** Being part of internships in companies is an opportunity that stimulates students and makes them be a part of the school. Since for some of the profiles there are few private companies (e.g. CNC, telecommunications) that students compete somehow between them who will go to the company or who will stay longer.

**MONTENEGRO:** The Employment Service of Montenegro is an institution that offers all citizens additional qualification programs, various training

programs and trainings for mastering certain skills in order to increase the number of employed citizens and make them competitive on the labor market.

### REFLECTION

#### *We sometimes need to support our students during their education:*

- ▶ *Is that your job?*
- ▶ *What kind of support is needed?*
- ▶ *What kind of counselling/guidance/support is provided?*
- ▶ *Is drop-out a problem. Is anything in general done to prevent drop-out?*
- ▶ *Anything else?*

### 3. Guidance and counselling after education – job orientation/further education/career

After graduation, there are many choices and options in relation to the future. Should/can the new graduate continue at the workplace where he/she had an internship?... Will a new workplace be found?... Does he/she want to continue studying at a higher level, or perhaps just want to do something completely different?

It is important that the program counsellor visits the class or the individual students when they are about to finish their education and tells/informs them about options regarding jobs, labor market and further education.

Many higher education institutions hold open houses several times a year, and it is necessary that the counsellor has an overview of these arrangements, so that he/she can inform the students.

The labor market changes all the time, and it is therefore extremely important that the counsellor stays informed about the job situation and, for example, knows where there is a shortage of labor. In this way, the counsellor also has an important social function, as he/she can draw attention to industries that lack labor and where there are good opportunities to improve skills in new job functions. A close interaction between education and business and between the supervisor and relevant companies is therefore important to be able to guide the students after graduation.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** At the vocational school “Srednja škola metal-skih zanimanja Sarajevo”, counselors (pedagogue, psychologist, social worker) visit the class, when they are about to finish their education, and tells/informs them about options regarding jobs, labor market and further education. Before that class counselors collaborate with the Employment office of the Sarajevo Canton in order to obtain the latest data of professions that are most in demand by employers and the current state on labor market. During this presentation students get information about soft skills and the importance of developing them.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** Career counseling is often implemented as part of an individual session (pedagogical -psychological support) with final grade students.

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:** In recent years a large number of higher education institutions have initiated to present their work to our students and thus increase enrollment. Some of these institutions organize an “Open door day” and invite our students to visit and participate in an interactive tour.

**KOSOVO:** Education ministry in Kosovo in cooperation with career centers across the state are using a platform that helps to track students after graduation. It is called Tracking (Gjurmimi). This way we have the data about our ex-students, which we also use for further cooperation with them (of course if they have a job) to exchange their experience with ongoing students, to organize meeting with them, sometimes if they own their company we make internship agreements for ongoing students. But there are cases where ex-students are unemployed and we contact them when there are job opportunities also but helping them with some references.

**KOSOVO:** Some of the ongoing students, during the internship, if the company sees potential in them, keep them for themselves. In some cases, school negotiates with the company to wait for the students just to finish the last school year and graduate, which usually happens, companies are understanding.

**MONTENEGRO:** “Vaso Aligrudic” organizes visits to various seasonal employment fairs during the school year and acquaints students with opportunities on the labor market. Also, visits to various institutions for higher education are organized and the promotion of them is realized in our school, as well as cooperation and joint activities.

**MONTENEGRO:** For “Vaso Aligrudic”, cooperation with employers is very important, where our students do the practical part of the teaching and with whom we provide various types of support, participation and competition for our students. The stay of our students with employers and working with people from their profession represents an immeasurable experience for our students. Also, a segment that we are particularly proud of is the fact that our students found employment with those employers after graduating from high school.

**MONTENEGRO:** It is very important that schools in Montenegro insist on analyzing and collecting data for all students who graduate from our school. These analyzes provide an insight into the quality of the education system itself and represent the basis for choosing a future profession by elementary school students.

### **REFLECTION**

***We should support our students' career opportunities:***

- ▶ *Organizing work practice during education?*
- ▶ *Giving general information about the job market?*
- ▶ *Information about vacancies?*
- ▶ *Establishing contact with future employers?*
- ▶ *Anything else?*

# The guidance framework

*„Give a hungry man a fish and he is full for the day.  
Teach him to fish and he will be full tomorrow too.”*

*(Chinese proverb)*

That's what an old proverb says, and it is, in all its simplicity, about helping people to help themselves, and thus the proverb also contains the purpose of any form of guidance.

## The guidance framework – 4 important conditions

It is crucial for a guidance process that the framework surrounding the guidance is determined and agreed, so that both the counselor and the student know these. Establishing a guidance framework must relate to the following 4 conditions:

1. **The switch.** The relationship between the counselor and the student is a crucial prerequisite for any form of guidance. The very relationship between the supervisor and the student is important for the guidance process – the more secure and open the atmosphere is, the better the opportunities to jointly investigate the student’s opportunities and problems.
2. **The contract.** This is the agreement between the counselor and the student when the contact is established. It is important that both agree on basic premises for the guidance – i.e. goals, means and time frame for the course and a final evaluation.
3. **The context.** All guidance takes place in a context. It is the counselor’s task to be aware of the framework in which the guidance takes place, both organizationally and physically. The counselor must ensure that the student is aware of the context in which the guidance is part of and what expectations are on the part of the guidance institution. The supervisor must also consider how he/she will signal the given context – e.g. where the guidance takes place, how the room is arranged.
4. **The control** may come into question in certain forms of guidance such as e.g. in connection with internship guidance, where the counselor must follow up and assess the student during the internship, and here too it is important that the counselor clearly formulates the criteria that form the basis of assessment and control.

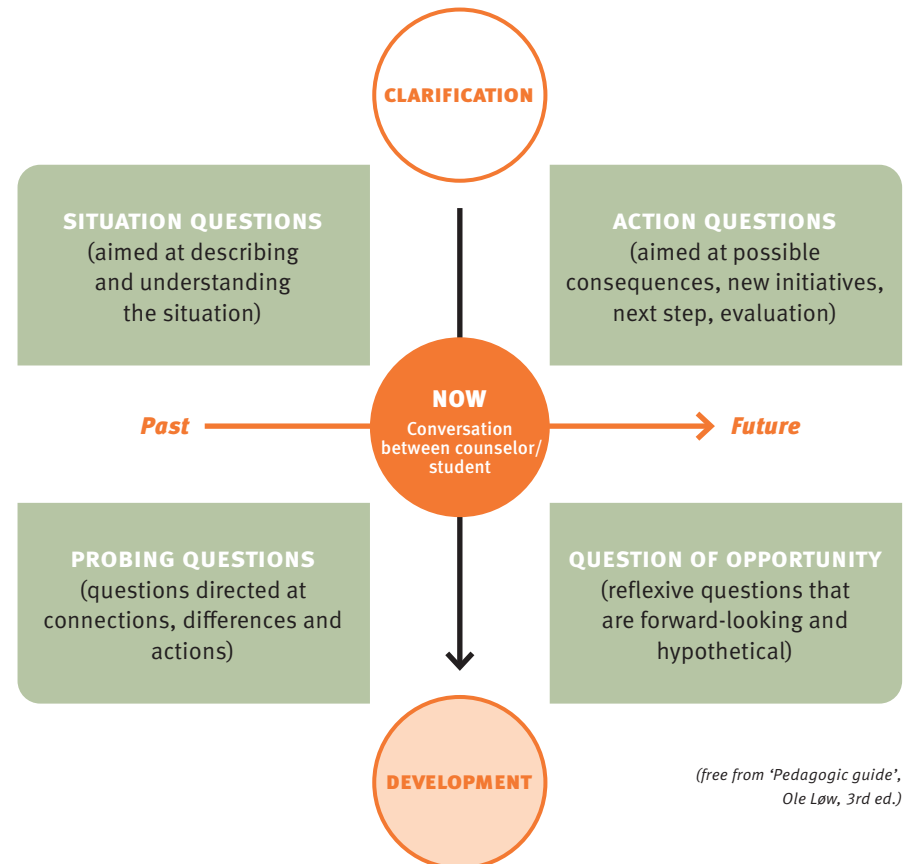
### The guidance situation

*Guidance situation can be seen as the guidance counselor’s pedagogical and psychological help to solve a given challenge or situation together with the student through conversations.*

## Questions

One of the counselor’s most important tasks is therefore to be able to ask questions from different angles that can help the student to understand himself, his situation, his competences, his possibilities, in order to ultimately be able to make one or more choices in relation to the future.

The counselor must therefore be able to ask questions from many different angles, as in the model below, where guidance questions are divided into 4 categories:



*(free from 'Pedagogic guide', Ole Løv, 3rd ed.)*

## Communication – verbal and non-verbal –

Communication - conversation and dialogue are the starting point for the contact and meeting between counselor and student, and the counselor's communicative abilities are therefore crucial guidance tools. The counselor must master both verbal and non-verbal communication, and must be aware of both forms of communication both in relation to himself/herself and to the student:



### Verbal communication

- ▶ ask open-ended questions that require reflection rather than yes/no questions.
- ▶ be aware – pay attention to the student's reactions.
- ▶ summarize – make a continuous summary of the dialogue.
- ▶ rephrase, mirror, and repeat key words – repeat the student's statements and words either directly or rephrase in different ways.
- ▶ take breaks - give time to think.



### Non-verbal communication:

- ▶ Body language – pay attention to your own and the student's body language, does the student seem tense, nervous, relaxed, at ease? The counselor must signal a relaxed atmosphere and calmness.
- ▶ gestures and facial expressions – pay attention to both parts of the student and support the student with encouragement,
- ▶ facial expressions and hand movements
- ▶ eye contact – maintain eye contact during the conversation.
- ▶ tone of voice – calm tone of voice promotes a safe atmosphere.
- ▶ silence - allow time for pauses and reflection in the conversation.

## Counselor roles and competencies

Counselors have many roles in a guidance process, and although the ability to communicate is essential, they must master a number of other skills in order to fulfill these roles.

### THE COUNSELOR'S MANY DIFFERENT ROLES IN THE GUIDANCE PROCESS:

#### Stage 1

The counselor is **a mediator of information and knowledge.**



#### Stage 2

The counselor is **a sparring partner** who helps uncover wishes, needs and possibilities and **a resource person** who knows the possibilities for realization.



#### Stage 3

The counselor is **a catalyst** or a kind of can opener that for the student's self-insight, understanding of the outside world, decision-making competence, and ability to implement decisions.



#### Stage 4

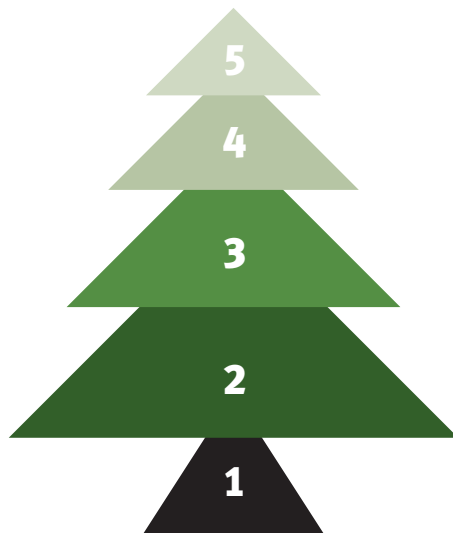
The counselor is **an integrator** who brings about the best possible combination of educational/business opportunities and the student's skills and resources.





## A guidance model – Five steps in counselling –

In addition to establishing the framework for the guidance and facilitating the dialogue with the student via a number of skills and roles, the counselor must also have tools to plan and manage the guidance process. An example of a guidance model in 5 steps is presented below:



### FIVE STEPS IN COUNSELLING

- 1) Clarify the situation, identify the problem (establish relationship).
- 2) Widen out the perspective.
- 3) Formulate aims and sub-goals.
- 4) Make an action plan and carry it out.
- 5) Evaluate and follow up.

1

## Clarify the situation, identify the problem. (establish relationship)

- ▷ The list
- ▷ Ask questions
- ▷ Reflect
- ▷ Encouragement
- ▷ Summarize
- ▷ Clarify
- ▷ Concretize
- ▷ Focus
- ▷ Use activating materials and exercises (questionnaires, job cards, tests)

Keep a balance between being too busy and talking too much about problems/challenges and why they are there. Not too much about “why”.

Everything so far is seen from the student’s point of view.

Don’t give good advice. Do not start making interpretations.

2

## Widen out the perspective.

- ▷ Summarize from the counselor’s perspective.
- ▷ Confront (were there any contradictions? Was there an inconsistency in spoken words and body language)
- ▷ Give information (sufficient, not too much – no advice)
- ▷ Interpret and see patterns (does not want to her info that does not fit with dreams, very high ambitions, low self-esteem)

3

### Formulate aims and sub-goals.

- ▷ Set clear, concrete, measurable, realistic goals – WHAT and not HOW to get there.
- ▷ Use brainstorming, dream technique.
- ▷ Identify advantages and disadvantages for each goal.

4

### Make an action plan and carry it out.

- ▷ Find alternative ways to realize aims and intermediate aims.
- ▷ Select the best ways.
- ▷ Who can help and support me.
- ▷ Are there places I could go.
- ▷ Predict barriers and find out how to overcome them.
- ▷ Make an agreement /a contract.

5

### Evaluate and follow up.

- ▷ The student: Was the aim reached?
- ▷ The counsellor: What did promote/advance the handling of the - problem and what did impede it?
- ▷ The counselling: What happened during the counselling?

## Action plan – from clarification to decision to action.

As seen from steps 1 and 2 in the guidance model above, the counselor and student jointly clarify a series of introductory questions that guide both counselor and student into the student's current life situation, thoughts about the future, skills, resources, wishes, goals and opportunities:

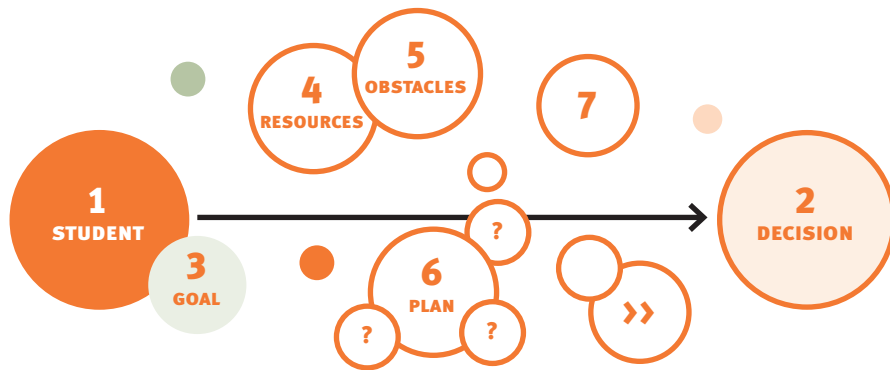
- ▷ **What is your current situation?**
- ▷ **What results would you like to achieve?**
- ▷ **What personal resources do you have that you can bring to the situation?**
- ▷ **What obstacles do you see that could get in the way of carrying out your decision and your plan?**
- ▷ **What is still missing?**

The next important steps in the process are steps 3 and 4, which concern the formulation of an action plan, which can be done in different ways and with different tools. Below are presented 2 models for preparing an action plan as well as tools for clarifying goals and priorities during the work with the action plan.

## Make an action plan – 2 models.

### 1. Action plan – Draw a map of the future

The counselor gives the guidance seeker paper and pencil and guides him/her through the following steps:



**STEP 1.** Draw a circle in the middle of the paper and write your name in the middle. Here you are now.

**STEP 2.** Give your decision a name and place it in another circle on the paper. Connect the 2 circles with a line, now you have a sketch for a plan.

**STEP 3.** Write your goal – something you want to achieve or an industry you want to be in – and place it in a circle on the page. This is the future you want.

**STEP 4** and **STEP 5.** We clarify several questions together. What resources do you have that can lead you to the

goal? Need more resources? What obstacles are you likely to run into? As each resource and obstacle is identified, we place it on the paper where we see fit and connect it to other entities on the paper.

**STEP 6.** Once goals, resources and obstacles are described and/or any other factor that one or both of us deems relevant to the action plan, we discuss whether the plan looks realistic. Here we look at whether the action plan meets the 3 criteria:

- ▶ Preference - can you see yourself in the plan? Does the plan match your needs and skills?

- ▶ Feasibility – is the plan feasible? Is it realistic in terms of resources, skills, and time?
- ▶ Relevance – Is the plan relevant? Does that make sense to you?

**STEP 7.** Once we agree that we have developed the best possible plan and described a workable personal project, we agree on the next step. It is important to define this first step clearly so that you are both fully aware of what needs to happen and know how to take this next step. If you need help with the next step, we'll put that on paper as well.

**STEP 8.** When the planning is over, the card is copied so that both supervisor and student have a copy for any conversations in the future.

### Set concrete goals in the action plan.

It is crucial for the success of an action plan that the goals are concrete, realistic, and achievable for the guidance seeker. Each goal must therefore be described so that it is:

**SPECIFIC** – describe the goal as concretely as possible, so that it becomes possible to assess what is needed to achieve it and plan the way to the goal

**Measurable** – describe the goal so that it can be measured. It must be possible to assess both whether you are on the way to the goal and whether the goal has been reached.

**ACHIEVABLE** - the goal must be relevant and achievable for the person who must fulfill it based on his/her current and potential skills, resources and opportunities.

**REALISTIC** – the goal must be within the framework of possibilities, it must be challenging, but not so ambitious that the student becomes paralyzed because he/she does not feel able to achieve the goal.

**TIME-BOUND** – it can be difficult to set a precise time frame around action plans that include education and jobs, as many different factors can have a decisive influence on the course of time in the form of fixed admission deadlines for education or



vacancies within current industries. Still, deadlines are an important and decisive motivating factor. The counselor can therefore, together with the student, divide the goals into different time categories:

- ▶ **short-term goals:** tasks that can be completed in a few days or weeks.
- ▶ **medium-term goals:** tasks that take from a week to half a year.
- ▶ **long-term goals:** tasks that require half a year to a full year. adaci za koje je potrebno od pola godine do pune godine.

As a supervisor, you must help the student set a time frame that balances time, so that on the one hand he/she has enough time to achieve his/her short, medium, and long-term goals, but on the other hand does not have so much time, that he/she does not feel it is necessary to work on fulfilling them.



### Scale questions – assess and prioritize goals.

Draw a line on a piece of paper and divide it into 10 points.

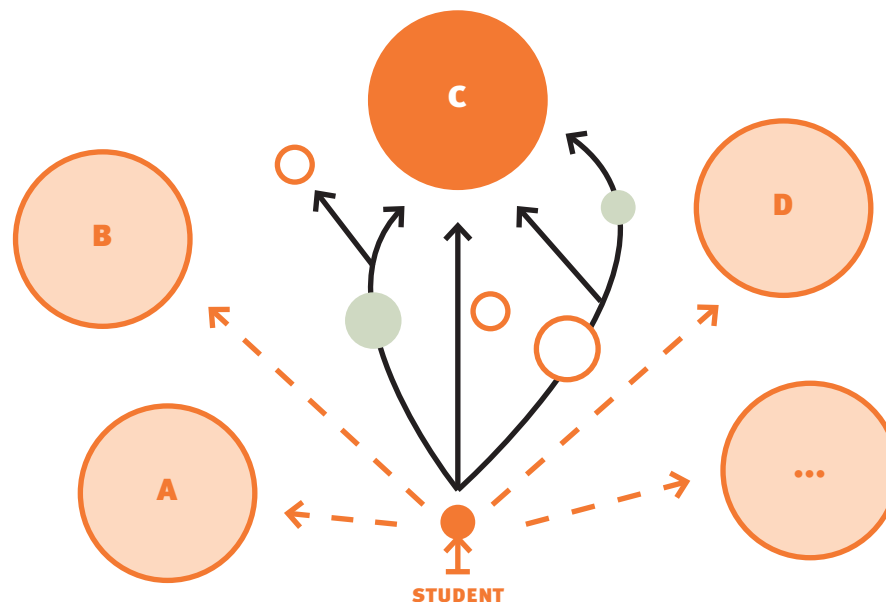


The student decides where a given goal lies on a scale from 1-10, where 1 is the most important and 10 is the least important. In this way, questions of scale can be a tool to determine how important a goal is, or how important several different goals are in relation to each other, which can be helpful in planning what needs to be done when in connection with the action plan and its course. This method can also be used to prioritize different actions in relation to each other in terms of time.

## 2. Action plan – Draw the guidance path.

The guidance path is a model that can be used to determine the action plan and visualize it.

The counselor gives paper and pencil to the student and guides him/her through the following process:



1. Draw a person in the lower left corner and write 'here I stand' and then draw several circles at the top of the paper and write possible futures above them. The counselor supports the student in concretizing the various possible future scenarios, after which keywords for each scenario are written down in each circle.
2. Through the conversation, the student clarifies which scenario he/she prefers. The student then writes preferred future above this circle.
3. Now the counselor and the student jointly explore the paths that can lead to the preferred future.
4. The main road with milestones and steps on the road is described and drawn.

5. The counselor and students then investigate whether there are alternatives to the main road. If there are side roads or detours, they are drawn on the map and briefly described.
6. Finally, counselor and student look together at the map and the guidance path that has been described and consider whether there may be completely new goals or perspectives have appeared along the way, which must be added to the map.
7. The card is copied so both have a copy for future use.

## Cases – types of guidance seekers/ situations

Guidance seekers and guidance situations can be very different and difficult to put into a formula – below, these have been tried to be collected in 4 different categories:



### A student who knows what he/she wants:

In this guidance situation, the tutor can challenge the student in his choice, i.e. by asking

- ▷ How can it be that you want that?
- ▷ Have you considered other options?
- ▷ Etc. etc.

It is not about making the student doubt, but in fact the conversation can result in the student being strengthened in his choice. Subsequently, the counselor

can help to investigate practical matters regarding the chosen education (admission requirements, where the education takes place, finances, transport, etc.)

### BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM MONTENEGRO:

For students who have a clearly defined goal of what they want to do in the future, self-confidence strengthening workshops are held, as well as familiarization with the real work environment. Namely, in the specific example, we are doing the workshop “me in ten years...” This workshop is done in groups,



but everyone writes for themselves and answers the requests. The workshop is designed in such a way that the students are asked to close their eyes and relax while listening to the requirements set before them by the workshop leader. Students need to answer questions about what they will do in ten years, who they are, what they do, what their day looks like, what their environment looks like, who they work with, what their colleagues are like, etc. After everyone writes their own answers, a discussion follows, which can be very interesting and motivating for everyone present.

For these students, one of the workshops that is implemented is CV writing. This workshop is important for the reason that young people get to know their qualities, but also learn which qualities are important to emphasize and have when establishing a working relationship.

Also, an example of good practice for these students is the workshop “Simulation of a job interview”, where a working environment is created and the individual is asked to have a conversation exactly like the one they have with the employer. This conversation tests the individual’s desire and motivation to get the job he wants to do, reveals how ready he is to fight for that job, but also work habits, way of functioning in a team, speed of reaction, willingness to help, etc. During the conversation, test situations and often questions that may be uncomfortable for the individual are asked. In this way, an individual’s self-control and willingness to react adequately in a certain situation is tested.

With this workshop, we introduce students to the difficulties that may arise in performing a job, but also through the game we present some “less beautiful” things related to choosing a future profession. It often happens that students give feedback after these workshops that they are very glad to have learned about some of the difficulties they may face, but of course they still stick to their chosen profession.

#### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM KOSOVO:**

A student came to us and said that he loves computers and he determined to be an IT student. We talked to him and showed other possible profiles that he could fit. Also, we provided him with some materials with projects that were made by students of other profiles like (telecommunication, CNC, etc.). showed him all the possibilities that he can have when he finishes school in any of these profiles. He went home, and after two days he came to school and decided to register for the CNC profile. Now he works at the company (factory) and he is a manager in some department there.

#### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:**

Within pedagogical support (which aims to increase students’ motivation to attend classes more regularly), the counselor asked the student (18 years old) about his plans after finishing high school. The student replied that he plans to enroll in the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in Sarajevo. The counselor asks the sub-question what results the student achieved in mathematics, physics and certain vocational subjects during schooling and whether he had difficulties in mastering the criteria of these subjects, to which the student replied that he always responded gladly and successfully to the requests made within these subjects and that he wants to further improve in this field. Since there is great interest in this faculty, the counselor asked the student what he would do if he was not admitted to the chosen faculty. The student replies that, if that happens, he will enroll in a private faculty.

The goal of the question was to look at all the possibilities and open up other options that will enable the student to reach the desired goal with alternative solutions. The counselor informed the student about the pos-

sibilities and conditions of part-time study, which gives young people the opportunity to study but also to be employed at the same time. She considered that this information is important because she knows that the student’s parents are not able to finance his studies. At the end of the conversation, the counselor informed the student at which private faculties in Bosnia he can study the desired program and gave him detailed information on how to make direct contact and get more information. Among other things, the goal of the pedagogical support was to point out to the student the negative effects of absenteeism and the eventual unsuccessful completion of the school year with the plans he had outlined in the near future. Another consultation was held with this student, the aim of which was to search together for information about faculties that have a hidden mechanical group of subjects in their programs.



#### **A student who does not know what he/she wants:**

Many young people are in doubt about which education they should choose. As a counselor, it is important to create a safe framework for the supervision situation, so that the student feels comfortable and can share thoughts and ideas. The supervisor should **NOT** initially make suggestions for education but ask open-ended questions.

- ▷ What are you good at (not so good at)?
- ▷ Do you know someone who has an exciting education?
- ▷ Can you work with other people?
- ▷ Are you technically savvy?
- ▷ Etc. Etc.

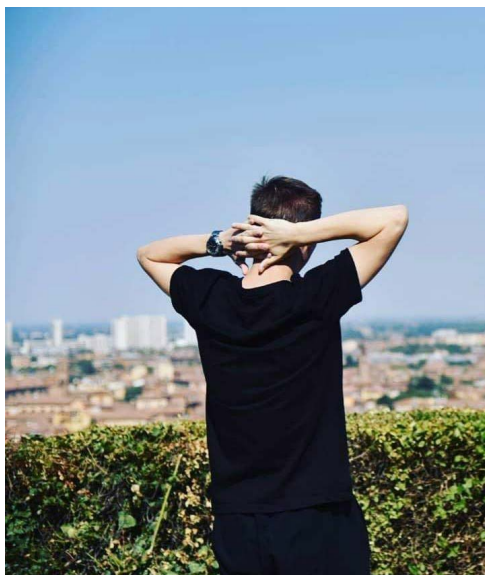
Remember to write down everything that comes up. Gradually, a picture may emerge of the direction in which the student should go. In collaboration with the student, you can now go a little deeper. Agree a new time for a guidance meeting and give the student the task of thinking about some possible programs to be discussed at the upcoming meeting.

The student has now begun to consider selection AND opt-out, and the situation may be more clarified at the next guidance meeting

### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM MONTENEGRO:**

These cases are very common when working with young people. Very often young people come to the pedagogic-psychological service looking for concrete help in choosing their future professions. Practice has shown that young people enroll in certain schools precisely because of the influence of their peers, and that they themselves are often not sure what they really want. In these cases, an individual program is made for each student, where at the very beginning, a self-assessment, or “Self-image”, is done through a conversation. In this way, we find out what young people think about themselves, how they perceive themselves as an individual, but also in a group, how confident they are, how mature they are, how they think and what is important to them.

After that, a questionnaire is prepared in which the individual answers about his interests, motivation, and personal achievements. Then, there is a questionnaire in which the student has the occupations offered, but also the necessary knowledge, skills, qualities, etc. for each occupation. The result of this questionnaire is three occupations that are related to the traits, interests and characteristics of the individual. It is interesting that young people are often surprised by the occupations they get from this questionnaire and how they say “I never thought I could do that”.



In this way, self-knowledge occurs where students get new ideas about what they could do and where they could make the greatest contribution. The recommendation is that it would be best if, after this type of support, the student is given a simulation of the work environment or a realistic one-day stay in the place of his choice. In this way, he would get to know the people who do what he wants, the work environment and the demands that lie ahead of him. This would be the entire process that would greatly help students when choosing a future profession.

This process takes time, but it is the focus of both the student and the Team members who work with him. The greatest success is when, right after the process is completed, the student discovers what he wants to do and what he has a talent for.

### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM KOSOVO:**

A student who just came to our school with his elementary school certificate, but he didn't have any idea of what he likes, what his future profession will be.

First, we provided too him general information about the school and its profiles, then talked to him about his favorite subjects so we can get an idea of his preferences. He said that he is interested in science, but he also likes to experiment with different things. According to his preferences, we proposed to him electronics and construction. Before starting school, he visited the two profiles and met some of our existing students from those profiles. He has seen their perspective and the opportunities that school provides to them so he had it easier to decide what he wants. When a school year started, he went to construction and thanked us for helping him in this process.

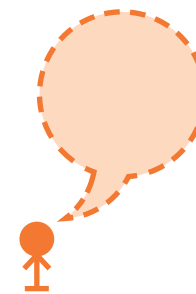
### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:**

The student (17 years) completes a program that lasts three years. During the counseling, the student emphasizes that he is not sure what he wants after high school. He considers the possibility of employment and, on the other hand, the possibility of continuing his education at a higher education institution because that is the wish of his parents. He is uncertain about making that important decision for himself.

The counselor tried to guide and help him to get an objective look at his own learning habits, academic ambitions, level of motivation to acquire new knowledge in the next four years. On the other hand, the counselor asked questions that enabled the student to gain insight into several important questions: what were the results in terms of success in theoretical subjects during the past years of schooling, does he feel satisfaction while doing the practical part of the classes, does he see himself in the future as having every day works in a company doing exactly that job, is it important for him to start earning his own money in the near future or does his parents' financial situation allow him to devote the next four years to science. The student was instructed to answer these questions on a sheet of paper in order to get a visual impression and to make a more effective comparison.

During the conversation, the student emphasized that he always had difficulty answering tasks that involved learning theory. He said that he barely met the criteria in those subjects. Also, he said that he managed to complete his education precisely because the program he chose included a large number of hours of practical classes. On the other hand, he understands his parents' desire for him to enroll and finish university, because they believe that one person cannot be respected in society if he/she doesn't have an university degree.

Counselor discussed with the student about the advantages of starting a job with a high school diploma as well as the advantages of employment after graduating from college. Since the student stated that he prefers practical work, the student was advised that it is important to choose an option that will be in line with his affinities and aspirations when making a decision. Attention was drawn to the fact that according to the current grades, he does not meet the criteria for admission to the faculty, but that he can enroll fourth year as a part-time student, and then, if he achieves good results, he can apply to the faculty. During the interview, the student pointed out that during the counseling he strengthened his own competencies that will help him make a decision. This is an example of a situation in which the student is torn between his own wishes, the wishes of their parents, society's expectations and a lack of information, and in which the support of counselors is of great importance. After the first consultation we realized two more things in order to search for information about schools that offer completion of the fourth grade and to consider which colleges would suit the student's affinities. It was also considered how much is currently offered on the labor market for employment that suits the student.



### **A student who wants something that is *factually* impossible:**

It is a difficult guidance situation to have to extinguish hopes or dreams for a student. In this situation, it is important that the counselor comes up with alternatives that are possibly close to what cannot be done for one reason or another. Some educations and jobs have special requirements, and therefore there may be factual obstacles such as:

- ▷ Special requirements for height, weight, physique, or psyche
- ▷ Physical disabilities (e.g. missing limbs, impaired hearing, vision, mobility, fitness, allergies, etc.)
- ▷ Mental disorders

It is important that the dialogue with the student is open and safe. Investigate alternatives thoroughly so that the student maintains faith in and hope for an exciting educational and job future.

### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM MONTENEGRO:**

During the workshop in the final grade department, the student expressed his desire to enter the Police Academy after finishing high school. Since we are familiar with the criteria that are required to enroll students in this academy (rigorous requirements regarding the height and weight of students), we were skeptical and invited the student for an interview to find out if the student has information about what is necessary to enroll to the desired academy. During the conversation, we learn that the student has incomplete information regarding enrollment, that he thinks he will be able to enroll even though he is shorter than the required height. We come across a student who is quite persistent in making his wishes come true, however, the criteria are clear and impossible



to change. The student leaves after the interview and is scheduled for the next appointment. During the next meeting, self-awareness is done with the student, where we discover that the student really wants to work in the Police and that all plans are related to this institution. Then, we inform the student



that he can work in the Police even if he graduates from another faculty and not just the Police Academy. The student was given an insight into the faculties after which he can be employed in the Police, and that when establishing an employment relationship he should undergo training for Police Officers.

The student was very pleased when he found out that there is a possibility to be employed in the Police, even though at this moment he does not meet the requirements for attending the academy. The student has chosen to enroll in the Faculty of Law, after which he will apply to the Competition for filling positions in the Police, and when establishing an employment relationship, he will attend training for Police Officers.

### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM KOSOVO:**

A girl came to us with the desire to become a car mechanic, but with her physical abilities it was impossible for her to practice the profession. So, we proposed to her that she can be part of textile design profile or architecture profile. She was obsessed with cars. We helped her understand that even with these profiles she can be a part in car world, better to say in car industry. She could use architecture and designing basic skills to design future cars, or she can use skills she could get from textile profile to design car interior. We succeeded, she decided to be in architecture profile. She finished her studies; she is in her field and she is very thankful to our team.

### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:**

Student of the first grade of secondary school (16 years old). Two months after the start of the school year, the teachers noticed that the student was not cop-

ying text from the blackboard, and informed the pedagogic and psychologist about behavior they had observed. The boy struggled with all the assignments in class and gave the impression of being lazy and incompetent. First counseling was with the student, and other with his father. In that collaboration we find out that the student has a medical condition that was characterized by progressive vision loss. Neither the student nor the parent was ready to share that information with us when enrolling in school (possibly due to stigma). The program that the student attended at our school was not adapted to the student's individualized educational needs, nor were assistive technologies available in the school that would allow the student to participate in classes as successfully as his peers with typical development. During counseling to the student and his father, it was emphasized that it is very important for the student to attend a program that, after finishing school, will provide him with a job and livelihood, and which he will be able to perform despite his health issue. The counselors pointed out that the program that the student is currently attending does not have these characteristics and recommended a change to a program that meets all the mentioned criteria. The student and his father accepted the proposal, the student was transferred to another program. This process involved a large number of conversations with the student, his father, doctors, and associates of the school that educated students with visual difficulties. As part of the counseling, we arranged a visit to another school for the student and enabled him to assess whether he likes the other school and whether he likes the new program. After a few years, we received information that our student completed his education with the best grade.



### **A student who wants something that the counselor finds unrealistic:**

This tutoring situation can be very challenging for both the student and the counselor, and the counselor must have empathy for the student.

The dialogue must be open and factual data must come to light, and it is important that the counselor does not take away the hopes and dreams of the student. The counselor may have experience that the student's wishes and dreams cannot be fulfilled immediately, while the student may have a different attitude or may be determined to improve his/her opportunities to fulfill his/her own educational or job wishes.

Obstacles that can eventually be removed can e.g. be:

- ▷ Low grades
- ▷ Lack of skills
- ▷ Lack of experience
- ▷ Bad physics
- ▷ Mental challenges
- ▷ Moving to other parts of the country or abroad

Often the student must go through detours and perhaps difficult challenges to get to the goal, but fortunately many counselors have been pleasantly surprised when a student fulfills his/her own dream through his efforts.

### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM MONTENEGRO:**

An example of this case is the situation we had when a student with special educational needs visited our school during the Open Day. During the conversation with the parent and the student, we learn that the student has a Decision on Orientation - a diagnosis of learning difficulties (mental problems, with an emphasis on alienation and insufficient socialization). The student's parent points out that the most important thing for them as parents is for the student to socialize, socialize and interact with people from his environment. When we heard the parents' wishes, we started a conversation about how much the parent knows about the educational programs offered at our school and what we can offer the student. The parent is presented with the curriculum, the requirements that are placed before the student, but also the environment in which the students work and the way in which the interaction is achieved. The parents and the student were told that they certainly have the legal right and that since they have a decision on the student's orientation,

the curriculum will be adjusted/shortened. After a detailed introduction to the school and the conditions offered in our school, we subtly suggested to the student's parent that we believe that the problem could arise in part of their expectations regarding the socialization of the student.



Namely, the student's parent insisted on the student's socialization and insisted that he be provided with interaction, for which the student has an expressed need and desire. On that occasion, we introduced the parents to the profile that we educate at the school, and since we are a school that educates IT experts, we are very specific. The conversation continued with getting to know the working habits of IT workers, the conditions in which they work (usually individually and at the computer, and interaction is very often reduced to a minimum). It is common knowledge that people in IT are often focused only on working on a computer and a specific task, and that communication and soft skills are problematic for them. We raised concerns about how this student would fit into this environment and whether staying in this environment would be supportive for him.

After our suggestion, the student's parent asked for help and suggestions on what would be best for his child, since he is not independent in his work, and on the other hand, they want a supportive atmosphere and communication with people. Then, together with the parent and student, we found occupations in the informant that the student could choose and where progress could be seen both in achievements and in socialization. Of the three proposed occupations that are the most acceptable for the student, the student ultimately chose the occupation of assistant hairdresser. By choosing this profession, the expectations are fulfilled both in the sense that the student is not independent and will work with someone, as well as the criterion of socialization, where he will have the opportunity to communicate and interact with other people every day.

This example showed us that very often we have students and parents who do not have complete information and where it is necessary to pres-

ent and provide complete and accurate information about the occupation. Also, we must emphasize that this case was successfully resolved because the student and parent were open to cooperation and acceptance of the suggestion.

#### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM KOSOVO:**

A student, who was in the first grade in construction profile, came to the career office to look forward to changing his profile, to continue with architecture. We knew that the reason why he wanted to be in that profile was a girl and, we knew that he didn't have best performance to be in architecture. We decided between us to give him a chance for a month to be in that class because we knew that he won't fit. We talked to him and explained that he can start in that class but it's just a trial time for himself and to us. If after a month he won't fit with the subjects or anything, he can return to his construction class.

After a month he just came to us and said: "You were right, I'm not born to draw, I'm a field person". And he returned to his first choice. He is now in the third grade and he is one of the best students in the internship process.

#### **BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:**

Student of the first grade of high school (16 years old). After the first quarter of the school year, teachers noticed that the student was not doing her homework and was getting bad results on knowledge tests. The student attends classes regularly, copying everything the teacher dictates or writes on the board. The student was invited to counseling, leading interview was applied, and after which it was established that the student does not have adequately developed study habits. During counseling the student said that while in primary school she got good grades with very little effort, based on having everything written down in the notebook and because she often cheated during the tests. She also says that online classes during the corona period (three years) suited her because it was much easier to get good grades. When the counselor asked how much time per day she devotes to studying, the student answered that she does not study at all, but rather

spends her time playing video games and hanging out with her peers. The counselor worked with the student with the aim of more effective adaptation needed for the transition from primary to secondary school (emphasizing the differences in terms of criteria and curriculum demand), also, during the next five meetings, we wanted to improve the student's skill in planning daily activities and the skill in planning learning and making study schedules. The student's mother was also involved in the advisory sessions she was suggested in which ways she could support her daughter in fulfilling her school duties. Adopting new habits required several months of continuous work and self-effort. At the end of counseling she was able to organize her day and make an effective study plan and stick to it. All the measures that were taken have resulted in better academic results.



The texts are written by **Bjarne Lauridsen**, education and career counsellor at TRADIUM, Denmark and **Rie Vestergaard**, consultant at Tango Consult.

They have received feedback and input from teachers, counsellors and psychologists from the following VET schools: “**Alternative Pro**”, Albania, “**Hamdi Bushati**”, Albania, “**Hysen Çela**”, Albania, “**High School of Metalworking Crafts, Sarajevo**”, Bosnia and Herzegovina, “**Rifat Gjota**”, Kosovo, and “**Vaso Aligrudić**”, Montenegro.

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