

Reorganizing professional and scholar guidance: educational and vocational guidance services under one roof

Throughout their lives people have to manage periods of change whether through choice or circumstance. These periods constitute in practical terms transitions from school to employment, from employment to unemployment, from unemployment to employment or transitions between employers or schools. Transitions always lead to questions of varying degrees of difficulty about the direction your career is taking. Guidance can serve as a tool to optimize training pathways and improve access to employment for young people, as well as facilitate the professional mobility of adults and career change during working life.

In the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Guidance Forum (FORUM Orientation), which is made up of stakeholders in the field including ministries, social partners, stakeholders on the ground and from the world of education and training, has adopted the following definition of guidance : "*Guidance refers to a series of activities that enable the citizen, at any time in his/her life, to identify his/her abilities, skills and interests, to make informed decisions as regards his/her studies and training choices as well as his/her professional activities, with the shared goal of fostering personal fulfillment and the development of society.*"

It was with this in mind that the House of Guidance was created in 2012. It brings the educational and vocational guidance services together under one roof :

- Psycho-social and Educational Accompaniment Centre (Centre psycho-social et accompagnement scolaires - CPAS)
- Local Action for Young People (Action locale pour jeunes - ALJ)¹
- National Youth Service (Service National de la Jeunesse - SNJ)²
- Department for Schooling of Foreign Children (Service de scolarité des enfants étrangers - SECAM)³
- ADEM's Vocational Guidance Service (Service d'orientation professionnelle de l'ADEM - ADEM-OP)⁴

¹ The purpose of the ALJ is to create a supervised space in which young adults can find the conditions necessary to succeed in their transition from school to working life, and integrate a stable educational and professional life. The ALJ provides individual mentoring to help achieve career and educational plans.

² The SNJ was created with the aim of supporting young people. It is made up of six units, including the 'Transition' unit which is responsible for all projects targeted at young people in a period of transition between educational and working life.

³ The SECAM is for young people between the ages of 12 and 24 who have recently moved to the Grand Duchy and wish to enter the school system to continue their studies. The SECAM also provides assistance to teachers, and intercultural mediation.

Other partners, including the Higher Education Documentation and Information Centre (Centre de Documentation et d'Information sur l'Enseignement Supérieur - CEDIES) and the Studies and Student Life Service (Service des Etudes et de la Vie Etudiante - SEVE) collaborate closely with the various departments of the House of Guidance.

Everyday management and coordination at the House of Guidance falls within the remit of the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth; they have been entrusted to a Coordination Department.

On May 11th 2017, the Chamber of Deputies voted a law that aimed at providing the House of Guidance (Maison de l'orientation) with a legal basis and a clear organizational framework and at ensuring the coherence of professional and educational guidance. With this law, the House of Guidance becomes a unique office and common platform for the stakeholders in professional and scholar guidance. The law also states the creation of a coordination service for the House of Guidance and a National Council (Conseil national), named Forum orientation. It is in charge of defining a national strategy on information and scholar and professional orientation.

⁴ The purpose of the ADEM's Vocational Guidance Service is to help young people and adults with their career choice. Young people and adults are offered guidance interviews to provide them with information about jobs/professions, and initial and adult apprenticeship placements.