



Lárionad Náisiúnta um Threoir san Oideachas  
National Centre for Guidance in Education



An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna  
Department of  
Education and Skills

# NCGE Strategic Plan 2019-2020



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



## NCGE Strategic Plan (June 2019-December 2020)

### Preamble

The Department of Education & Skills (DES) has informed NCGE of the Minister's decision to extend the term of the current NCGE Management of Guidance Committee (MGC) to **31/12/2020** with the possibility of further extension as appropriate.

The NCGE MGC agreed to extend the NCGE Strategic Plan 2015-2017 to end 2018 pending the outcome of the DES Indecon<sup>1</sup> Review of Careers Information and Tools.

The DES Action Plan for Education 2019 outlines in:

Goal 4- Action 55: *“Establish an implementation task force within the DES to drive the proposed reforms arising from the career guidance review”*

Action 55.2: *Prioritise which of the other actions in the Indecon report on the review of career guidance might be progressed and progress implementation of priority actions.*

Following the DES publication of this Review Report in April 2019, the MGC awaits the decisions of the DES Task Force on the priorities agreed. In this context, the MGC is fully aware that a review of this current plan may be required pending the decisions of DES.

### Government of Ireland Sustainable Development Goals

Lifelong Guidance, by definition, supports the individual to make appropriate choices and decisions for their career, education and life path. Core principles of guidance ensure impartiality and supporting equal opportunities for all.

Eu Council Resolution 2008<sup>2</sup> on **better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies** states:

*“... the definition of guidance as referring to a continuous process that enables citizens at any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which those capacities and competences are learned and/or used..”*

In accordance with Government of Ireland requirements and to contribute to achieving the *UN Sustainable Development Goals*, the NCGE Strategic Plan 2019-2020 supports the development of sustainable guidance policy and practice specifically in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, SDG 5 and SDG 8, outlined below, as appropriate.

- **Goal 4.** *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*<sup>3</sup>
- **Goal 5.** *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*<sup>4</sup>
- **Goal 8.** *Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Indecon won the DES tendered contract in 2018 to complete the DES required review of Careers Information and Tools

<sup>2</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ%3AC%3A2008%3A319%3A0004%3A0007%3AEN%3APDF>

<sup>3</sup> <https://sdg4education2030.org/the-goal>

<sup>4</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>

<sup>5</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg8>

## **NCGE STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2020**

NCGE Strategic Plan will cover the timeframe of **June 2019–December 2020**.

The following is the Vision, Mission and Aims elements of the NCGE Strategic Plan as revised and agreed by DES and the MGC.

### **VISION**

Leading and shaping guidance **policy and** practice to enable the learner to make informed and appropriate life choices.

### **MISSION**

Develop, support and influence **guidance policy and** quality guidance provision in the education and training sector as part of lifelong learning in accordance with national and international best practice.

### **AIMS**

The National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE), an agency of DES, was established in 1995 and operates under the aegis of Léargas.

The aims of NCGE, as outlined by DES, include:

- promoting the implementation of best practice in guidance counselling in schools, centres for education, and Further Education and Training (FET) settings
- promoting the implementation of best practice in guidance counselling in non-formal settings in accordance with national priorities
- advising on policy and strategies for the promotion of a continuum of guidance in the context of lifelong learning
- providing advice, support, materials and resources for guidance counselling in education and FET
- advising on high quality and relevant initial guidance counselling education and training and to provide continuing professional development (CPD) for guidance practitioners
- organising the provision of guidance to Irish nationals in European Schools
- contributing to the exchange of information on guidance counselling provision and practice with other guidance and employment services, through the National Resource Centre (Euroguidance Centre) both in Ireland and in other Member States of the EU

In fulfilling its aims and as a constituent part of Léargas, NCGE is committed to working in collaboration and partnership with relevant stakeholders including DES, SOLAS, the Directors of Studies of Guidance Counselling (DSGC), the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC), the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), the Adult Guidance Association (AGA), the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD), the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) and other Government Departments and National and Employer agencies where appropriate.

### **DES - Léargas/NCGE Performance Delivery Agreement**

In light of the main aims of NCGE, the DES Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA), agreed with Léargas/NCGE in December 2019, outlines the following:-

- The DES PDA clearly states that DES is responsible for overarching policy for the FET Sector, including guidance
- SOLAS will oversee the development and evaluation of guidance provision and fund NCGE work in supporting implementation of the strategic priorities of the FET Strategy as relates to Guidance. This includes agreement of annual funding and work plans

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- NCGE will be responsible for the following: -
  - acting as a centre of excellence for guidance, in particular in relation to Post-Primary and Further Education
  - participating in any successor meetings to the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) Meetings, or other EU Commission meetings relating to lifelong guidance
  - continuing with the coordination, development of resources and delivery of supports in Whole School Guidance (WSG) Planning Programme in light of DES Circular 09/2012
  - continuing as an active member of the Euroguidance network activities
  - developing a Strategic Plan for NCGE for 2019 - 2020
  - coordinating and hosting further meetings of the National Forum on Guidance
  - delivering key actions outlined in the Action Plan for Education

### **NCGE Strategic Plan 2019-2020**

*To inform the policy of DES and support the development and implementation of quality guidance practice in Post-Primary and FET in accordance with national and international good practice.*

#### **Key Objectives**

- Inform, influence, facilitate and support the development of the DES Lifelong Guidance Policy
- Inform, influence, facilitate, develop and support the implementation of quality guidance practice in post-primary schools and FET Sector
- Provide guidelines, resources and materials to support quality guidance practice and policy development
- Promote and support a National and EU focus to Guidance Policy Provision and Practice
- Coordinate and deliver continuing professional development to guidance practitioners in schools and FET in collaboration with stakeholders
- Adhere to DES Governance and Compliance Requirements

#### **The NCGE Key Strategic Activities for 2019-2020 include:**

##### **1. General Guidance Policy**

- i. Inform and collaborate with DES on prioritised actions agreed from the recommendations of the DES Review of Careers Information and Tools
- ii. Inform and collaborate with DES on prioritised actions of ongoing national guidance policy and practice across the Education and FET sectors
- iii. Participate and represent DES at EU and International level on the development of Lifelong Guidance Policy to inform national policy decisions
- iv. Support DES in the continued process of the Programme Recognition Framework
- v. Liaise on behalf of DES, with the Department of Health on the CORU registration for Counsellors and Psychotherapists
- vi. Explore and inform DES on evidence-based and evidence-informed planning to include research and pilot projects as appropriate

##### **2. General Programme**

- i. Convene, host and chair various committees on behalf of DES to inform guidance policy (e.g. the Advisory Committee on Psychometric Tests; Committee of the Directors of Studies of Guidance Counselling)
- ii. Convene, host and chair various working groups, as appropriate, with DES and relevant stakeholders to inform and develop quality guidance practice
- iii. Coordinate and host the National Forum on Guidance twice per year
- iv. Inform, influence, advise and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to support the development of quality guidance practice in Education and FET sectors
- v. Provision of Continuous Professional development programme to support quality guidance delivery for guidance practitioners in schools and FET

### **3. Post-Primary Guidance**

- i. Roll out nationally of CPD programmes on WSG Framework to post-primary schools
- ii. Implement Phase 2 of the Pilot Project on WSG
- iii. Develop further online resources for Post-Primary Guidance Policy and Provision
- iv. Establish links with relevant agencies to further develop supports and resources for schools
- v. Consider and explore the development of a data-gathering system for guidance in post-primary, in collaboration with DES
- vi. Promote European mobility in schools through *Euro-Quest* modules for TY in collaboration with Euroguidance
- vii. Consider and explore pilot project with DDELTB regarding guidelines for EAL links to Guidance in schools

### **4. FET Guidance**

- i. Inform and influence DES and SOLAS on the FET Guidance Strategy including exploration of wider FET sector guidance needs
- ii. Collaborate with ETBI and ETBs on the support and development of quality guidance provision in line with the FET Guidance Strategy
- iii. Review, revise and redevelop the Adult Guidance Management System (AGMS) as a FET Guidance Management System to include proposal for funding and national development, as agreed with SOLAS
- iv. Provide online resources for FET guidance policy and provision
- v. Promote European mobility in FET sector in collaboration with Euroguidance
- vi. Consider and explore pilot project with DDELTB regarding guidelines for EAL links to Guidance in FET
- vii. Inform the development of appropriate guidelines for collaboration of guidance and RPL

### **5. European Programme**

- i. Deliver Euroguidance activities and report in accordance with EU Commission requirements
- ii. Collaborate with QQI – EUROPASS as per EU Commission guidelines and national priorities
- iii. Participate in EU Commission EUROPASS Advisory Group, in collaboration with QQI
- iv. Promote European mobility in collaboration with Post-Primary and FET Programmes in NCGE
- v. Participate actively in EG Network activities through working groups, hosting and attending study visits
- vi. Coordinate and deliver the guidance service to European Schools, on behalf of the DES Inspectorate, to include an overarching Review and Recommendations report for the development of the Service from 2020

### **6. NCGE Communications**

- i. Provide online resources through websites (NCGE and Euroguidance)
- ii. Deliver NCGE monthly Bulletin
- iii. Inform stakeholders and clients on International, European and National issues of guidance policy and practice through general reports and the twice-yearly online magazine 'Guidance Matters'
- iv. Maintain NCGE contact database of guidance stakeholders nationally and internationally

### **7. Staffing, Governance and Administration**

- i. Support NCGE Staff to include an appropriate Performance Management System, CPD and succession planning
- ii. Adherence to and completion of reports for DES in compliance with DES procedures
- iii. Collaborate within Léargas to ensure compliance with and adherence to administration, financial and HR policies, including Internal Audit
- iv. Upgrade NCGE ICT office systems to Microsoft 365
- v. Ensure Risk Compliance is explored at all convened MGC meetings
- vi. Report to Léargas Board as appropriate