

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF



The origins of the network lie in the European Commission's PETRA programme. In 1992 this programme was in its 2nd phase, PETRA II and was divided into 3 parts or "Actions". Actions I and II were concerned with mobility for young people in initial vocational training and for those training them. Action III was concerned with support measures, and itself was subdivided into parts, part B being the creation of a network of "National Resource Centres for Vocational Guidance". It was this network that later became to be known as Euroguidance.

Initially the network consisted of centres in the then 12 Member States of the EEC / European Union and was run under the direction of Directorate General 22 of the Commission. Its original remit was to support exchanges of information concerning education and training opportunities across the EU, particularly with the perspective of EU mobility. From the very beginning the network embodied the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity, with each country adopting a model of operation that met the requirements of the network while reflecting the different national structures for delivering guidance. These different national models could be broadly grouped into 4 groups:

- a single centre approach with one unit delivering the Euroguidance function for the whole country.
- the multi centre approach with several centres operating in a country. These were often tasked with co-operating with specific other member states and co-operating nationally.
- the labour versus education split. In some member states two centres were set up, one operating under the Ministry of Labour and concerned with vocational guidance and one operating under the Ministry of Education and concerned with educational guidance.
- finally, there was a mixed approach with two networks, operating under the two Ministries and each consisting of several centres.

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From these beginnings the network has grown and changed over the years. The growth has come, naturally, from the subsequent enlargements of the European Union, with the number of Member States climbing from 12 in 1992 to 27 currently. Further growth came from the inclusion of EEA Member States plus, at various points, the pre-accession countries and the special relationship with Switzerland.

Other developments have come from the changes to the sponsoring programme, and also from developments initiated within the network itself. In terms of the sponsoring programme the changes have been:

1992 – 1994 the Petra programme

1995 – 1999 Leonardo da Vinci I

2000 – 2006 Leonardo da Vinci II

2007 – 2013 Lifelong Learning Programme

2014 – 2020 Erasmus +

2021 – 2024 Erasmus +



The change from LdV I to LdV II was of particular interest in terms of the development of the network. In the year prior to the change a number of centres felt there was a need to establish the need for the Euroguidance network in a more concrete fashion, and to promote the development of the network and its activities. To enable this a number of centres met and developed the "Euroguidance Charter", a document defining the basis for the centres and their remit of operation. The concept of working groups, responsible for different areas of activity and for the overall direction of development also came from this meeting. The charter and working group structure were proposed to the Commission at the next full network meeting and, with some modification, was adopted.

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The basic premise of this internal structure has continued ever since, being most recently updated through acceptance of the 'new ways of working' proposal in 2019.

The Network has grown and changed over the years alongside the European Union. Today, there are over 42 centres in 33 European countries. Today, Euroguidance is mentioned in the Erasmus + 2021-2027 programme guide as a "Knowledge and expert network" sharing following common goals:

- cooperation and support at Union level to strengthen policies, systems and practices for guidance within the Union (the development of the European dimension of lifelong guidance).
- support competence development of guidance practitioners.
- provide quality information on lifelong guidance
- promote European opportunities for learning mobility and career management (through the Europass portal).

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## References (and with thanks to):

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- [2021 – MTG1 – Mobility Advice Interview Booklet \(to be published\)](#)