



# **20 Years National Forum Lifelong Guidance Austria**

## **Notes on**

**History and development of the Forum**

**Contribution to National Developments in Lifelong Guidance and Lifelong Learning**

**European and International Context**

**IBOBB as a "Brand"**

**Challenges and Perspectives**

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*There is only one thing that is more expensive than guidance: no guidance.*

*(adapted version, based on John F. Kennedy)*

## A Milestone

Austria's Lifelong Guidance Strategy was a landmark. Finalized by a working group of the Lifelong Guidance Forum in October 2006 under the leadership of Gerhard Krötzl, reported jointly by bm:ukk and BM.W\_F<sup>a</sup> to the European Commission in April 2007, it was the first component of the later "Strategy for Lifelong Learning in Austria, LLL:2020", adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2010.

Lifelong Guidance was integrated into this strategy as one of the five central guidelines and was also an element in seven of the ten action lines, linked to concrete targets, indicators and benchmarks.

Moreover, this Austrian Lifelong Guidance Strategy with its five "Cornerstones" anticipated the four focal points that were to be postulated one year later by the Resolution of the European Council and the European Commission in their Second Resolution on "Lifelong Guidance". Incidentally, Austria had played an active role in this as part of the ELGPN - European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network.

A few years before, the topic of "Lifelong Guidance" was less present in Austria. This forum "Lifelong Guidance" and its pre-history played a major role in changing this.

Above all, its mentor, Gerhard Krötzl.

A lot of things came out of it. Developments on a national and regional level were promoted as well as a supportive exchange on an European and international level.

Some of this will be described in the following.

## Note to this Article

This article does not claim to be a comprehensive "History of the National Forum Lifelong Guidance Austria". This is a presentation from the subjective point of view of Peter Härtel and Michaela Marterer, and their involvement in parts of this history of the last 20 years, and the time before, also with considerations for the future. In particular, European and international participation and cooperation and their relation to the development in Austria are addressed.

This is written in the awareness that many actors, institutions and persons have made decisive contributions.

All of them are invited to write this down and document it! Not out of "nostalgia" but as an incentive to continue to bring about sustainable developments with common understanding, awareness and will, in consideration of what has been created and achieved so far, as well as what is still to be done.

## 1. Historical

### 1.1. To „Lifelong Learning“

"Lifelong Guidance" is based, already conceptually, on at least two roots: the idea of "Lifelong Learning" and "Guidance", each in various differentiated meanings.

Worldwide, the topic of "lifelong learning" – in German: „Lebenslanges Lernen“ - came up in terminologies such as "Éducation Permanente", "Recurrent Education" "Lifelong Education", "Lifelong Learning", etc. at the beginning of the 1960s, articulated by UNESCO, the OECD and the Council of Europe. The "Faure Report" is often referred to as the beginning of the more intensive debate.<sup>1</sup> In the majority of cases, these terms, which were hardly clearly defined, covered phases of post-school education and learning, i.e. adult education. This was also expressed, for example, in the position of the Council of Europe.<sup>2</sup>

In Austria, the Adult Education Promotion Act 1973 came into force in 1973, which is still valid today.<sup>3</sup> The international debate played a rather minor role in the following 20 years.

This changed with the beginning of the 1990s, when the debate on Austria's membership in the European Community, then European Union, got underway. Even though "education" per se was not a Community topic, with the exception of vocational training, not because of ignorance of the European Community per se, but because of the resistance of the countries to give up competences here, one could not escape the European discourse.

The White Paper of the European Commission "Teaching and Learning"<sup>4</sup> and the "Delors Report"<sup>5</sup> were effective instruments to articulate the topic of "Lifelong Learning" broadly. The proclamation of the "European Year of Lifelong Learning"<sup>6</sup> challenged Austria, now already a young member of the European Union, to take up this topic comprehensively.<sup>7</sup>

This also happened. After intensive activities in 1996 and 1997, the first European Conference on July 2/3, 1998, during Austria's first Council Presidency in the second half of 1998 - one day after the takeover of the presidency - was dedicated to the topic of education. Significant was also the programmatic title of the conference "Education is more". Austria did not want to limit education to "vocational training" even in the European context, but to address the whole scope of education.

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO: Learning to be: the world of education today and tomorrow [Faure report]. Paris 1972.

<sup>2</sup> Europarat: „Permanent Education. Fundamentals for an Integrated Educational Policy. Straßburg 1971.

<sup>3</sup> Bundesgesetz vom 21. März 1973 über die Förderung der Erwachsenenbildung und des Volksbüchereiwesens aus Bundesmitteln StF: [BGBl. Nr. 171/1973](#)

<sup>4</sup> Europäische Kommission: Lehren und Lernen. Auf dem Weg zur kognitiven Gesellschaft. Weißbuch zur allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung. 1995.

<sup>5</sup> Jacques Delors: *Learning: The Treasure within. Report to the UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century* Paris 1996.

<sup>6</sup> Europäische Union: *Europäisches Jahr des lebensbegleitenden Lernens (1996)*. 26. Oktober 1995.

<sup>7</sup> Eine Übersicht über zahlreiche relevante europäische Dokumente von 1999 – 2010 findet sich u.a. in: Schlögl P., Irmer M.: *Bildungs- und Berufsberatung im Europäischen Kontext*. Wien 2012. S. 54 ff.

## 1.2. Memorandum on Lifelong Learning of the European Commission

This approach was continued and strengthened with the "Memorandum on Lifelong Learning"<sup>8</sup> in 2000, which led to a comprehensive discussion of this topic throughout Europe and Austria.

This was also - for Austria - the first approach to linking "Lifelong Learning" with "Guidance".

The fifth of six core messages in this memorandum was:

Message 5: Rethinking career guidance and vocational counseling.

*Goal: Ensure easy access for all to high quality information and guidance on learning opportunities across Europe and throughout life.*

## 1.3. To „Guidance“

For a long time, the topic of "guidance" in the European Union was only articulated in connection with vocational training. The first evidence of this can be found in European documents from 1972<sup>9</sup>, where the first comparisons of strategic national approaches from Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands were presented and suggestions derived from them. These were already at that time: More resources, better qualification, and, essentially: "...advice work will have its place in the permanent education machine".

Today, this would probably be formulated differently. But this seems to be the first European approach to link lifelong learning with guidance - to lifelong guidance.

However, since the 1960s, the topic of "guidance" has been established in the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian areas in various forms in the academic field, at universities, in science.<sup>10</sup> In that time, this was hardly noticed in Austria.

The approaches to the topic of "guidance" in Austria developed rather selectively and sectorally.

In the school sector, the 4<sup>th</sup> amendment of the school organization act in 1971 added a passage to § 3 stating that "... pupils and parents ... are to be informed about the ... different types of schools and (are) to be advised in particular in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades about the ... further educational path."<sup>11</sup>

This was the legal basis for the introduction of student and educational counseling. Educational and career guidance as a "subject" was first introduced as a "non-binding exercise" in 1987, and more than ten years later, in 1998, it was established as a compulsory exercise in all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, combined with developments in curricula and training for teachers.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Labor Office offered tests and counseling for study and career guidance, especially at secondary schools - the term "career guidance" was not yet in use at this time - but

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<sup>8</sup> Europäische Kommission: *Memorandum über Lebenslanges Lernen*. Arbeitsdokument der Kommissionsdienststellen. SEK (2000) 1832. Brüssel 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Commission of the European Communities: *Vocational Guidance in Community Countries (1968 – 1970)*. In: *Information Social Policy COMEUBRU*. Brussels 1972.

<sup>10</sup> Vgl. Watts A.G.; Sultana R.G.; McCarthy J.: *The involvement of the European Union in career guidance policy*:

<sup>11</sup> BGBl 68. Stück Jahrgang 1971

discontinued these services in the 1980s in order to devote itself to its core statutory task of counseling, and especially placement, of the unemployed. In the 1990s, a development began with the establishment and expansion of vocational information centers, which also provided services for schools again. At the end of the 1990s, the Ministry of Social Affairs launched a training program for so-called "BOBIs," who were then called „educational and vocational guidance pedagogues“, and financed their deployment in schools for three years, but discontinued this service again because activities in this direction had developed within the Ministry of Education itself in the meantime.

In the field of adult education, counseling was primarily the responsibility of the institutions offering it, and counseling services independent of providers did not develop until much late

## 2. Impetus through International Activities and Cooperation

For further development, international occasions gave essential benefit. First of all in brief:

In May 2000, at the invitation of the Ministry of Education, Peter Härtel was asked to represent Austria at the final conference of the OECD "Transition from Initial Education to World of Work" with a practical contribution on the topic of "BerufsFindungsBegleitung". This contribution attracted the attention of the chair of the project and the conference, Richard Sweet, Australia, as well as the workshop leader Steffen Svendsen, Denmark.

In summer, Peter Härtel presented this practical project at the worldwide conference of the world's largest association for educational and vocational guidance in Berlin. Here Gerhard Krötzl and Peter Härtel met for the first time - significantly not at the ministry in Vienna, or anywhere else in Austria, but at an international, worldwide event. This was to become the starting point for a pleasant, effective, and in many ways expanding cooperation in the following years.

In the same year 2000, the OECD launched a large-scale international project on "Career Guidance Policies".

Austria was not particularly active in participating in international surveys in times before that. But, alongside the emerging PISA surveys, the Ministry of Education could not and did not want to avoid this broad-based project. The fact that Austria participated in this project was probably also due to previous experiences - for example, from the OECD project "Transition from Initial Education to Working Life" mentioned above - from which Austria could take away significant positive findings.

Now, however, this project "Career Guidance Policies" started.

And thus also the "history" of this "National Forum Lifelong Guidance Austria".

### 2.1. The OECD „Career Guidance Policies“ Project

As a follow-up activity to the "Transition..." project, the OECD launched a project "Career Guidance Policies", which was to deal with questions of "guidance" - at that time mainly translated as "counselling" in German-speaking countries - in the context of lifelong learning. In the initial phase, 14 nations participated; subsequently, 27 to 36 OECD countries were involved.<sup>12</sup>

Federal Education Minister Elisabeth Gehrler commissioned a steering group to coordinate this project in Austria, initially for a period of three years, Josef Neumüller, Reinhard Nöbauer, Peter Härtel, headed by Gerhard Krötzl. Peter Härtel was asked to write the National Report Austria to the OECD. This also marked the beginning of the now over 20 years of cooperation between Gerhard Krötzl and the Styrian Association for Education and Economics STVG. This resulted in the establishment of the steering group of the National Lifelong Guidance Forum Austria, first as a "Platform Lifelong Guidance", since 2004 co-supervised and facilitated by Michaela Marterer, in connection with many accompanying and complementary national and European activities. This

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<sup>12</sup> OECD: Career Guidance and Public Policy. Bridging the Gap. Paris 2004.

cooperation, together with all actively involved institutions and persons, continues in various active and effective ways until today.

The OECD had developed a questionnaire as a basic structure for the National Reports, it was available in English, which formed the frame for the reporting of the national systems, structures and situations. Of course, this questionnaire had to be translated.

But what does "translating" mean? Which words - terms - mean something similar in one language or another? Even more - in the respective terminology? In Germany, until today, "guidance" was translated as "Beratung". We found that term too narrow. We had to find another, broader terminology.

It was the clear position of Gerhard Krötzl, and also of Peter Härtel, and the common approach in the steering group, not to carry out the preparation of the country report as pure "desk research", but to invite representatives of all the institutions at the federal level affected by the issue to come together at one table, ministries, social partners, labor market service, research institutions, practitioners' associations, etc. The report was then presented to the steering group



### 3. Emergence of the "IBOBB Brand - Information, Guidance and Counselling for Education and Career".

#### 3.1. Discourse about Words, Terms, Expressions for "Guidance – Beratung“

The discourse in this round was not only the birth of what we are today already 20 years as "National Lifelong Guidance Forum", but also the starting point of the brand "IBOBB" - Information, Guidance and Orientation for Education and Career"(in German: Information, Beratung und Orientierung für Bildung und Beruf“. Officially the first time this term was used as the title of the National Report.<sup>13</sup> The acronym came into use soon after.

The discussion about the word "vocational orientation" alone showed that, depending on the organization and profession, completely different meanings and conceptualizations stand behind individual terms. An employee in the employment market service, who is responsible for the most effective "placement" possible, must understand something completely different as a teacher who teaches the subject, at that time already obligatory, "vocational orientation and educational information". This had to be agreed upon, and not just for this one term, but for the entire catalog of questions.

Already the discussion about this was a process, without which the further development of "Guidance" in Austria would not be understandable, up to the "Lifelong Guidance Strategy" 2006<sup>14</sup>, the integration of Guidance in the "Strategy for Lifelong Learning in Austria LLL:2020"<sup>15</sup> and for the development of the National Lifelong Guidance Forum.

The title of the Austrian National Report for "Career Guidance Policies" was finally "Information, Guidance, Orientation for Education and Career" – In German: „Information, Beratung, Orientierung für Bildung und Beruf“ - starting point and basis for today's "Brand IBOBB".<sup>16</sup>

In this project we were even more thorough than most of the countries involved in this project. Austria is a federal republic, most of the participating institutions at this "common table" have well developed state structures. Thus, we not only translated the OECD questionnaire into "Austrian German", but also created a shorter version that could also be completed by organizational units in the federal provinces with reasonable effort. This provided enormous added value in the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, but also, of course, a considerable amount of extra work in the preparation of the National Report. But, it paid off.

The process of these OECD projects followed a structured workflow. On the basis of preliminary work by OECD experts, background papers are written, the relevant topics and questions are worked out,

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<sup>13</sup> Härtel P. STVG (Autor); Krötzel G. BMBWK (Hrsg.): Länderbericht Österreich. Information, Beratung, Orientierung für Bildung und Beruf. Angebote, Entwicklungen, Strategien. Wien, Graz November 2001.

<sup>14</sup> [https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/euint/eubildung\\_abb2010/abb2010\\_zwb07\\_dt\\_15320.pdf?68yv1m](https://bildung.bmbwf.gv.at/schulen/euint/eubildung_abb2010/abb2010_zwb07_dt_15320.pdf?68yv1m)

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.qualifikationsregister.at/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Strategie1.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Härtel P. STVG (Autor); Krötzel G. BMBWK (Hrsg.): Länderbericht Österreich. Information, Beratung, Orientierung für Bildung und Beruf. Angebote, Entwicklungen, Strategien. Wien, Graz November 2001.

coordinated with the participating countries and condensed into a survey form that is equally binding for all.

The answers to the comprehensive questions are summarized by each country in a national report and submitted to the OECD.<sup>17</sup> This report provides the basis for the evaluation by the OECD and a Country Review on site, in which the consistency of the facts presented in the report is checked by proven OECD experts on the basis of numerous interviews, visits and investigations, and open and critical questions are asked and answered.

The results of this country review are summarized in a country note with all positive and critical points, from which recommendations for the further development of relevant policy areas are derived. The final step is an overall report, in which the common and different findings of all participating countries are summarized.<sup>18</sup>

The Austrian National Report was very positively received by the OECD. Richard Sweet and Steffen Svendsen were nominated as OECD review experts for Austria, i.e. those experts who in their respective roles had already drawn attention to Austrian examples and developments at the final conference of the OECD "Transition" project in Budapest.

The experts expressed their wishes in advance, and the steering group then put together an intensive program for an entire week, which was completed in May 2002.

Discussions at the Ministries of Education, of Economics and Labor, of Social Affairs, at the Public Employment Service, with the social partner organizations and practitioners' associations were on the agenda, as was a visit to BeSt3, the largest fair for career orientation in Austria, in the Vienna Exhibition Hall – that was an argument for scheduling the review visit - as well as excursions to the provinces, to Lower Austria, to Burgenland and to Styria, combined with numerous reflections and debriefing discussions.

### 3.2. Results and Findings from the OECD Review

In March 2003, the OECD's Country Note, written by Richard Sweet and Steffen Svendsen, was submitted as a basis for further discourse and strategic and operational developments in Austria.<sup>19</sup>

In this Country Note, besides numerous remarks, hints and recommendations, two outstanding examples of information, guidance, orientation for education and occupation were highlighted in separate "boxes": one for the field of "adult education" from Burgenland, and one for the field of "transition" from Styria, the "BerufsFindungsBegleitung".

Of the many suggestions, very expertly and substantially argued, some are highlighted here.

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<sup>17</sup> Härtel P. STVG (Author); Krötzl G. BMBWK (National Co-ordinator): National Report – Austria. Career Information, Guidance and Counselling. Graz, Wien 2001.

<sup>18</sup> OECD: Career Guidance Policies. Bridging the Gap. Paris 2004.

<sup>19</sup> OECD: Review of Career Guidance Policies – Austria. Country Note Information, Guidance, Counselling. Paris. March 2003.

The approaches, efforts and activities in the field of guidance in Austria were perceived and appreciated in many areas.

Above all, the commitment and dedication of practitioners in the field of "guidance", even under difficult conditions, was emphasized.

The systemic approaches, such as the "three-step model" in schools - compulsory vocational orientation lessons in the 7th/8th grade, student and career counselors, school psychology - were cited as exemplary. Especially the already obligatory and curriculum-based educational and vocational orientation lessons in the 7th/8th grade were positively noted, as this was not yet a standard in many other OECD countries.

However, the reviewers did not miss the sometimes imperfect implementation of the legal and decreed rules.

They raised questions about the "resources" available to the advisory practitioners, not only financially, but also in terms of time.

It was noted that in Austria a predominantly "punctual" understanding of "guidance" prevailed. Events such as the Best3 career orientation fair were an example of this. It could not be credibly shown that this effort was matched by an equally great effort to prepare, accompany and follow up on such an "event".

The commitment, the dedication, the effort for guidance and orientation of practitioners in the guidance professions was decisively emphasized. Both in the field of schools, tertiary education, and in the sector of the labor market, the question of "professionalization" was raised, which seemed to be capable of development in comparison to European standards. This question about "professionalization", does not mean that persons do not act "professionally", but whether they are qualified and trained in a "professionalized" way.

Also the relations of the number of "practitioners" and supervised persons, in school, university, labor market, the financial, personnel, time conditions were critically questioned.

And, last but not least, it was emphasized that the OECD Reviewers had experienced strong personal contacts and cooperation between the institutions from guidance and counselling for education and career at regional and at local level, but that this form of cooperation was not noticeable on the national level.

These comments of the OECD Review were again presented by the steering group of the Austrian project team to the joint national "forum" for discussion. The reactions, some of them strong and even defensive, were quite surprising.

However, the joint discourse could be conducted to the effect that the external consideration of the OECD expertise can indeed be a lever to substantiate concerns and demands, some of which have been articulated by the professions for years, with incontestable international expertise,

This was the basis for the further development of the "National Lifelong Guidance Forum Austria" as well as the "National Lifelong Guidance Strategy", as the first building block for the later strategy for lifelong learning in Austria LLL:2020.<sup>20</sup>

### 3.3. Flashlight on the Situation regarding "Guidance" in Austria from an European Perspective

In 2002, the European Commission published a report on "Quality Indicators for Lifelong Learning", in which 34 European countries participated, including Austria.<sup>21</sup> In area D: "Strategies and system development", the heading of point 13 is: Guidance and counselling. For the identification of this quality indicator in Austria it was stated: Definition: not available. Data source: Not available.

This should change soon. The OECD project "Career Guidance Policies" and Austrian activities in this area played a major role.

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<sup>20</sup> BMUKK, BMWF, BMASK, BMWFJ (Hrsg.): Strategie zum lebensbegleitenden Lernen in Österreich. Wien 2011.

<sup>21</sup> Europäische Kommission: BERICHT ÜBER DIE QUALITÄTSINDIKATOREN FÜR DAS LEBENSLANGE LERNEN IN EUROPA. FÜNFZEHN QUALITÄTSINDIKATOREN. Bericht auf der Grundlage der Ergebnisse der Arbeitsgruppe „Qualitätsindikatoren“. GD Bildung und Kultur. Brüssel Juni 2002.

## 4. On the Occasion of „20 Years National Lifelong Guidance Forum Austria“

It was Gerhard Krötzl's initiative to invite the entire "Forum", which was involved in the preparation of the country report on the OECD project, again for reflection. In this intensive discourse, increasingly beneficial exchange, growing common understanding for the overall approach of "Lifelong Guidance" and IBOBB took place.

Above all, and this is still noticeable today, an attitude developed to see the activities set in the individual facilities and institutions as part of an overall development of IBOBB-Lifelong Guidance, to see and classify the respective other achievements, and to recognize approaches for interfaces and cooperation possibilities.

This is the basis for the joint communication, cooperation and coordination in the "National Forum Lifelong Guidance Austria" until today. The "historical" dating of the "establishment" to the year 2001 is also derived from this. The documentation of the 20th meeting of the Steering Group of the National Lifelong Guidance Forum Austria clearly shows how lively and effective the Forum still is today.<sup>22</sup> As a basis for further future development!

### 4.1. National, European and international aspects

In these times, the topic "Guidance" received more attention in the European and international context than on the national level. In 2003, the European Commission issued a call for projects in the "Joint Actions" program with the aim of establishing "National Forums for Lifelong Guidance". At that time, Denmark was the only member country of the European Union that had formally established such a forum. John McCarthy, former Director of the National Agency for Guidance in Ireland, at this time was responsible for this call in the European Commission, DG Education, took the Danish example as a model for other European member states.

In Austria, we already had something like this, at least informally. But we were not so aware of it. And it was not perceived nationally or in Europe at that time. It was the initiative of the Styrian Association for Education and Economics (STVG) to apply for a project in response to this call. Of course, you can't do that without "government". Some people were hesitant, even in the Ministry of Education.

Who supported us in this? Gerhard Krötzl. He knew John McCarthy, who was responsible for this agenda in the European Commission at the time. In an event at Bifeb, the Austrian National Institute for Adult Education, we had a personal contact - from that moment on, John McCarthy was also a supportive partner. We all had a lot to learn, but, the Austrian project in the program "Joint Actions" was accepted as one of two European ones, coordinated by the Austrian partner organization STVG, with partner organizations from Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Poland. Unforgettable,

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<sup>22</sup> Marterer M.: Dokumentation des Nationalen Forum Lifelong Guidance 20. Treffen der Steuerungsgruppe. 13. Dezember 2021. Online 2021.

when we proposed to involve a renowned, nationwide consulting institution from France, with which we already had good contacts. Reaction of the Commission, John McCarthy: NO! They all had to be authorized government organizations. That we - the STVG - could be that at that time, as the coordinating institution of this Joint Actions Project, with support from the Ministry of Education through Gerhard Krötzl and Anton Dobart, Head of Section, we are still grateful for that today.

We chose an ambitious title: "European Guidance Forum". This was meant programmatically. If cooperation on lifelong guidance should be strengthened at the national level, then the same applies at least at the European level. This very quickly led to further European integration.

Shortly before, in 2002, the "European Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance" was established by Gordon Clark, Head of the Policy Unit responsible for Lifelong Learning in the European Commission. Gordon Clark was also guiding the two Council Resolutions for Lifelong Guidance in 2004 and 2004 through the diplomatic process with the Member States. This Expert Group comprised both representatives of European member states delegated by governments and experts from the field of guidance, all of whom had first-class international reputations. With members of the Expert Group, Peter Plant, Ronald Sultana, Raimo Vuorinen, Tony Watts, we were also to work together intensively later on.

The Austrian representative was initially Anton Dobart from the Ministry of Education; after his appointment as Head of the Department „General Education“ in the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, he handed over this mandate to Gerhard Krötzl in 2004. At the same time, Peter Härtel, as coordinator of the Joint Actions Project "European Guidance Forum" was invited as a permanent member of the European Expert Group, with the mandate to report regularly on developments in the Joint Actions Project. Again there were regularly meetings with Gerhard Krötzl, at international place, in Brussels. And, from this, many things again arose in Austria.

Chair of this "European Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance" was first John McCarthy, responsible in DG Education of the Commission for Career Guidance Provision. The chairmanship later passed to Roger O'Keefe. Especially John McCarthy played an important role in the further development of Lifelong Guidance and the involvement of Austria.

Much discussed, but concretized from the "Joint Actions" projects, was the conclusion: it is not enough if there are "Forums for Lifelong Guidance" on the national level, this must also be reflected on the European level. The Joint Actions Project "European Guidance Forum", coordinated by Austria, provided a rich and substantial basis for this.<sup>23</sup>

We do not claim that Austria and the project coordinated by Austria alone were decisive. But, Austria has contributed decisively to the establishment of the ELGPN - European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network. Years later, John McCarthy stated that the role of the Joint Actions Projects, especially the one coordinated by Austria, is "very underestimated". Personally, he emphasized that the preliminary work of the Joint Actions Project "European Guidance Forum" coordinated by Austria played an imported role for the establishment of the ELGPN - European Lifelong Guidance Network.

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<sup>23</sup> STVG (Hrsg.): Final Report Joint Actions Project „European Guidance Forum“. Graz 2006.

## 4.2. ELGPN - European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network 2007 - 2015

Both the process of the emergence of this network, and then, above all, the cooperation in this network, first with 26, later with up to 33 nations, with the most distinguished experts from practice, politics, science, with European and international institutions and organizations such as CEDEFOP, ETF, IAEVG, ILO, OECD, PES and others, expanded the wealth of experience for Austria enormously. But Austria was also able to contribute to this process. This was already evident in the early stages of the project's development.

During its EU Presidency, Finland held its Education Presidency Conference under the theme "Conference on Lifelong Guidance Policies and Systems - Building the Stepping Stones", November 2006, Jyväskylä. Minus 20°Celsius, but constructive European mood. Austria was represented with a delegation, from the Federal Ministry of Education Gerhard Krötzl, National Agency Lifelong Learning Ernst Gesslbauer, Federal Institute for Adult Education Ingeborg Melter as well as Styrian Association for Education and Economics Michaela Marterer and Peter Härtel. In this conference, the main results and findings from the Joint Actions Projects were presented to the plenum. In coordination with the EU Commission and the Austrian Ministry of Education, Peter Härtel, with a mandate from Republic Austria, also supported the proposal in his plenary contribution to put Finland in charge with the coordination of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, which is to be established further on.

## 4.3. Preparation of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network

Based on the European Commitment at the Finnish Presidency Conference in Jyväskylä, the European Commission invited to a "Preparatory Meeting Establishment of a European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network" in March 2007 in the impressive "Robert Schuman Room" Berlaymont Building. The first item on the agenda was the presentation of the results of the Joint Actions projects. Peter Härtel presented, with mandat of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education as well as with the participating partner countries, the conclusions of the work on the "European Guidance Network".<sup>24</sup>

After a general discussion, a kind of "estimation survey" took place. Which countries could imagine to participate in an "European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network"? Of course, this was not a "binding vote", the mandates for this were not given throughout. But, an assessment of this was to be explored. In a kind of "quick scan", three categories of answers were collected: "We will participate"; "We want to, but still have to obtain a decision"; "Not yet".

In personal preliminary discussions with Gordon Clark, his position was that if 15 of the 30 invited states indicate their willingness, then we can proceed.

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<sup>24</sup> European Commission DG Education and Culture: Draft Agenda Preparatory Meeting. Establishment of a European Lifelong Guidance Network. 9 March 2007. Brussels.

After the general discussion and initial general positioning of the delegates, I met Gordon Clark outside in the foyer. I wonder how many countries will express their readiness in principle? He said: I think 12. My estimate was: 16. It was then 17. We could move on.

At the "Inaugural Meeting of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network" in May 2007 in Helsinki, under the chairmanship of the Finnish Ministry of Education, the essential preparations for the establishment of the ELGPN were made. This included agreements on the Work Programme 2007 - 2008, the assumption of responsibilities by the member states of the network, the role of stakeholder networks, etc. The coordination of the future network by Finland was also discussed.

The coordination of the future network by Finland had already been agreed, Raimo Vuorinen was designated as the person for it, with whom Austria had already cooperated well in the Joint Actions project. The other tasks and functions in the network were up for discussion. The principle for the delegation to the network from the participating member states was one government representative each from the areas of education and labour and social affairs, depending on the respectively ministry constellation, as well as delegation of a person from a NGO, which is however well integrated in national agendas for guidance. We gratefully accepted the willingness of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education to nominate the Styrian Economic Society for this purpose.

Austria was represented in this Inaugural Meeting by Peter Härtel, well coordinated in advance with Gerhard Krötzl and the Austrian Ministry of Education. Austria was ready to take over essential tasks. On the basis of the good pre-coordination with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and the mandate given by this, Peter Härtel as NGO delegate from Austria was able to point out, Yes, No, for every relevant question and to articulate Austria's interest in a binding way, for the lead of Workpackage 3 "Strengthening representative structures at national level", also for the responsible participation in Workpackage 2 "Support for policy development and implementation at national level", which was accepted throughout.

Finally, the composition of the network's steering group was also up for discussion. Gordon Clark, the Head of the Policy Unit for Lifelong Learning in the European Commission, asked who would be willing to participate in the steering group. First, after that question, it was quite silent.

Then the first direct question from Gordon Clark, was: Would Austria be willing to participate in the steering group? We can interpret this as a clear recognition of Austria's contribution to the preparation and implementation of the European Network for Lifelong Guidance. Of course we accepted that. Also the willingness to organize one of the two big content-related peer learning conferences in the first project year of the ELGPN in Vienna was expressed, and accepted.

On the basis of these consultations, the proposal of the Finnish authority for the establishment of the steering group was then made, in which Austria was represented together with the coordinating country Finland and with Ireland, Germany, Portugal, Slovenia, France and Great Britain.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Meeting Report: Establishment of a European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network. Helsinki 7-8 May 2007



This resulted in manifold and intensive European activities in the following years, which are not described in detail here. That is worthy of its own consideration. In any case, Austria's position on the subject of lifelong guidance has been decisively consolidated in the European environment.

The first meeting of the ELGPN took place in December 2007 under the leadership of Helena Kasurinen, Finnish National Board of Education, in Amsterdam, with whom we had already worked well together in the Joint Actions project. The venue was the Conference Center near Schiphol Airport, very lively. Unforgotten was the grateful exclamation of Bernhard Jenschke, President of IAEVG - International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance, at breakfast, "Thank God, you're here, it's the third time I've changed my table, every time I go to the buffet it's been cleared and reoccupied."

But, the meeting was focused and effective. Regarding Workpackage 3, Peter Härtel chaired a session, with representatives from 21 member states of the ELGPN, together with the expert Tony Watts and Gordon Clark from the European Commission, in which the work program for the next two years, especially also the Peer Learning Meeting in Vienna for April 2008 were discussed and prepared.<sup>26</sup>

The cooperation in the following eight years in the ELGPN continued intensively, with manifold contacts and occasions that arose beyond that. In each of the five project phases, Austria took responsibility for symposia, work packages, policy review groups and thematic task forces. The milestones, dates, publications are well documented on the ELGPN website.<sup>27</sup> Austria was substantially involved in all events and most documents and publications, especially through Gerhard Krötzl, Michaela Marterer, Peter Härtel.

For Gerhard Krötzl, European and international commitment was never an purpose in itself. It was always his intention to derive added value for developments in Austria. This coincided with the attitude of the Assoziation for Education and Economics, STVG. Seeking and using contacts in order to learn from them for the work in one's own sphere of activity.

The development, elaboration and implementation of the national "Strategy for Lifelong Learning in Austria LLL 2020"<sup>28</sup> is a good example of this.

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<sup>26</sup> ELGPN – Work package 3: Strengthening representative structures at national level. Minutes from the meetings in Amsterdam, December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2007

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.elgpn.eu/> abgerufen 05.12.2021

<sup>28</sup> Republik Österreich (BMUKK, BMWF, BMASK, BMWFJ) (Hrsg.): Strategie zum lebensbegleitenden Lernen in Österreich LLL 2020. Wien Juli 2011.

## 5. Lifelong Guidance as an Element of the Strategy for Lifelong Learning in Austria LLL:2020

It was the declared goal of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, under the leadership of Gerhard Krötzl, to make the results and findings from the OECD project "Career Guidance Policies" usable and effective for Austria. For this purpose, all participants in the survey and review process were involved in the joint development. The discourses from the European context, Expert Group, Joint Actions, preparation of the ELGPN, offered additional suggestions. Additional input was provided by two surveys commissioned by Gerhard Krötzl.<sup>2930</sup> From these, further conclusions could be drawn for the design of an Austrian Lifelong Guidance Strategy.

In 2006, the overarching goals and programmatic approaches of the LLG strategy became more concrete. These were agreed upon during the Austrian EU presidency and reported for the first time by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education in preparation for the Presidency Conference in November 2006 in Finland, which took over the presidency from Austria in July 2006.

The core objectives of this strategy were:

- Implementation of basic competencies in all curricula
- Focus on process optimisation and support
- Professionalization of counsellors and trainers
- Quality assurance and evaluation of provision, processes and structures
- Widening access - creating provision for new target groups

At that time, Austria was one of the few European countries that had already developed a Lifelong Guidance Strategy based on broad discourse and approved by the government. A short time later, in April 2007, this strategy was also officially reported to the European Commission as part of the "Implementation of the Education and Training Work Programme 2010" jointly by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science.<sup>3132</sup>

Again, a little later, in 2008, the European Council and the European Commission adopted the second joint resolution on Lifelong Guidance, with the following priorities<sup>3334</sup>:

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<sup>29</sup> Krötzl, Gerhard, Bmbwk (Hrsg); Passer C. (Autorin): PROJEKTE ZUR SICHERUNG VON INFORMATION, BERATUNG UND ORIENTIERUNG FÜR BILDUNG UND BERUF IN ÖSTERREICH Band I – Analysen. Wien Jänner 2006.

<sup>30</sup> Krötzl, Gerhard, Bmbwk (Hrsg); Passer C. (Autorin): INFORMATION, BERATUNG UND ORIENTIERUNG FÜR BILDUNG UND BERUF IN ÖSTERREICH Band II – Rechtliche Grundlagen. Wien Jänner 2006.

<sup>31</sup> bm:bwk, STVG: Austrian National Guidance Strategy. Gerhard Krötzl, Peter Härtel. Wien Juni 2006.

<sup>32</sup> bm:ukk, BM.W\_Fa: AUSTRIAN NATIONAL REPORT 2007 ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING 2010 WORK PROGRAMME. Vienna April 2007.

<sup>33</sup> Council of European Union: Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies. Brussels 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Zitiert nach Götz et al. in [https://erwachsenenbildung.at/themen/bildungsberatung/llg\\_europa/politik.php#resolutionen](https://erwachsenenbildung.at/themen/bildungsberatung/llg_europa/politik.php#resolutionen) visited 05.12.2021

- - Encourage the lifelong acquisition of career management skills;
- - Facilitate access by all citizens to guidance services;
- - Develop the quality assurance of guidance provision;
- - Encourage coordination and cooperation among the various national, regional and local stakeholders.

This correlates almost 1:1 with the priorities of the Austrian LLG strategy, which was developed two years earlier. And there was something else that fit well with the Austrian development, namely the approach to integrate lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies. This was exactly the endeavor that was also pursued by Gerhard Krötzl, accompanied and supported by the Austrian National Forum for Lifelong Guidance.

Since several years ago the European Commission had commissioned the countries to develop National Lifelong Learning Strategies.<sup>35</sup> This had stalled somewhat in Austria. Again, European education programs offered suitable levers to get the processes going again at the national level. Within the framework of specific "Transversal Programme" calls, the opportunity arose to promote developments also in international exchange. The projects "Cross Border Improvement of Lifelong Learning Strategies - CBI -LLL"<sup>36</sup> with a follow-up project "CCBI- LLL - Continuous Cross-Border Improvement"<sup>37</sup> contributed significantly to this. Both projects were created and coordinated by the Styrian Association for Education and Economics, in close commitment with the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education and the concerned Ministries of the partner countries Slovak Republic and Hungary. They should be mentioned here above all because they also made a decisive contribution to the fact that "lifelong guidance" could be anchored as one of five guidelines in the "Strategy for Lifelong Learning in Austria - LLL:2020"<sup>38</sup> adopted by the Austrian government in 2010, and "guidance" was explicitly established as a task in at least seven of the ten action lines within the Lifelong Learning Strategy.

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<sup>35</sup> European Commission. (2001 a). Communication from the Commission: Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality. Brussels: COM(2001)678 final. Brussels 2001.

<sup>36</sup> STVG (Hrsg.): CBI – Cross Border Improvement of National Lifelong Learning Strategies der Länder Österreich, Ungarn und der Slowakei. Graz 2010

<sup>37</sup> STVG: (Hrsg.): CCBI – Continuous Cross Border Improvement of National Lifelong Learning Strategies. Graz 2011.

<sup>38</sup> Republik Österreich (BMUKK, BMWF, BMAK, BMWFJ) (Hrsg.): Strategie zum lebensbegleitenden Lernen in Österreich LLL 2020. Wien Juli 2011. S.9.

## 5.1. National and Regional Activities on Lifelong Guidance

In addition to the transnational projects, the calls also offered opportunities for national activities. These were intensively used in Austria. Always in coordination and cooperation with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Gerhard Krötzl, the Styrian Association for Education and Economics was again the applicant and coordinating organization for national multiplication activities.

For the first time in this form, regional, cross-state information and discussion events could take place with this program, in 2008 for example in Salzburg for the provinces Salzburg, Tyrol and Vorarlberg, in Graz for the provinces Burgenland, Carinthia and Styria and in Vienna for the provinces Burgenland, Lower Austria and Vienna. Prepared and Facilitated by Michaela Marterer, in addition to inputs from Gerhard Krötzl and Peter Härtel on IBOBB in Austria, Jos Noesen from the Ministry of Education Luxembourg, a trusted partner from the ELGPN, was a key-speaker in all these conferences. The priorities of lifelong guidance on the European level as well as the Austrian priorities and their consequences for the individual fields of education within the framework of lifelong learning were discussed.

These series of events were continued in 2009 and 2010, supplemented and expanded from 2009 onwards by annual conferences on lifelong guidance organized by Euroguidance, always in close coordination with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Gerhard Krötzl, and the STVG was also able to contribute to them continuously.<sup>39</sup> A special value was that in many of these meetings further excellent experts from the ELGPN could be invited, such as Anne Froberg, DK, Raimo Vuorinen, FI, Deidre Hughes, GB, Peter Plant, DK, Ronald Sultana, MT. In this way, the results and findings of the European cooperation could be brought to the attention of those responsible for policy and practice in all areas of education in an authentic and direct way.<sup>40</sup>

## 5.2. Lifelong Guidance Community

This presentation of occasions, events, conferences on aspects of Lifelong Guidance does not claim to be complete, as there were many other occasions on national and regional level, from different institutions and associations, which dealt with topics on Lifelong Guidance. In any case, Lifelong Guidance has become a nationwide topic in the past 20 years, also across sectors, not just limited to individual educational areas, life phases or sectors.

This was and is also a decisive effect of the cross-sectoral and cross-regional meetings of stakeholders, experts and practitioners from different fields of IBOBB - Lifelong Guidance. People get to know each other, personally and with regard to the respective work approaches, from early childhood, elementary education, school, tertiary sector, labor market, general adult education and lifelong learning in adulthood. This did not exist before.

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<sup>39</sup> STVG, gemeinsam mit BMUKK, OeAD, Euroguidance (Hrsg.): Dokumentation Lifelong Guidance Fachtagung: „Career Management Skills in allen Lebensphasen“. Graz September 2010.

<sup>40</sup> Dokumentationen zu den Euroguidance Fachtagungen unter [Produkte | Nationalagentur Erasmus+ \(erasmusplus.at\)](#) visited 06.12.2021

The National Forum Lifelong Guidance at the federal level and the recurring meeting and regular exchange in the steering group has been a nucleus for this for 20 years, under the leadership of Gerhard Krötzl, supported in preparation, moderation and documentation by Michaela Marterer, Styrian Economic Society. The accompaniment and recurring host role of the OeAD and Euroguidance is to be emphasized, also the content-related support of this topic by the National Agency, Ernst Gesslbauer and the conducive, active and competent role that Carin Dániel Ramírez-Schiller, Eva Baloch-Kaloianov and the entire team of Euroguidance took and take sustainably, that extends the effectiveness of the agendas of the National Lifelong Guidance Forum in an multiplikative way.

Equally noteworthy is the willingness and active contribution of information and professional, institutional background of many participants from all nationally effective fields of responsibility for IBOBB and Lifelong Guidance. This exchange is not only effective at the federal level, but is also reflected in a lively and active way in the federal provinces and and at regional and local level. This would be worthy of a detailed description in its own right.

### 5.3. Effects and Developments in the Field of IBOBB and Lifelong Guidance

Apart from the important community building: What has happened in the field of IBOBB - Lifelong Guidance? What has developed, what has emerged from the strategic positions?

Here is an attempt at a sketchy list of developments in recent years, some of which seem self-evident today, but which would not have come about in this form without the thematization of IBOBB and Lifelong Guidance.

It is undisputed that the early childhood and elementary education sector already lays an essential foundation for the further development of children. Whether this is called "career management skills" or simply "personal and social development" is not decisive. What is decisive is that later careers in education and work can already be fundamentally promoted here. A great deal of awareness of this has emerged, and much still needs to be implemented.

At school, the further structuring and specification of career guidance in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades should be emphasized. An interministerial and interinstitutional task force, headed by Gerhard Krötzl together with Augustin Kern, has been working intensively on this topic since 2009 for several years.

Two circulars have been developed and effectively implemented, the site-specific location concept and the Vocational Orientation BO-coordination at school has been introduced, the - partial - anchoring of Vocational Orientation BO as a "subject" has been implemented, the individual career orientation has been anchored, the training and further training of career orientation teachers has been expanded, The training and further training of career guidance teachers, student and educational advisors and Vocational orientation BO coordinators was expanded and broadened - "BOLE, SBB, BOKO", career guidance is a topic of quality management in the administrative and pedagogical units „Educational Regions“, the Vocational Orientation BO tool was developed and piloted, the orientation phase and curriculum in the PTS – Polytechnical School 9<sup>th</sup> grade - were reorganized, IBOBB at the secondary level was further developed as a study and career orientation

and much more. The Austrian Federal Ministry of Education's first-ever survey, description and documentation of psychosocial support systems in and for schools should also be noted here.<sup>41</sup>

In addition, other initiatives of Gerhard Krötzl are to be emphasized, such as the founding of the association ÖZGPS - Austrian Society for Psychological Violence Prevention in Schools in 2011 (from 2016: psychological health promotion), the ESF projects on school social work, initiated by Gerhard Krötzl and coordinated by Michaela Marterer, Styrian Association for Education and Economics STVG, which have been running for eight years since 2010, accompanied and supported by Karin Waska and Sevim Aksakalli<sup>42</sup>, as well as the developments in the field of "Early School Leaving", supervised by Andrea Fraundorfer, also in coordination with other Federal Ministries.<sup>43</sup>

In addition, offers from other sponsors for the school have developed and spread. The introduction of Youth Coaching, now integrated into the NEBA (Network for Vocational Assistance) system, also with „Training up to 18“, offers from the social partners, such as the WKO TalentCenters, the many offers in "my future", etc. from the Chambers of Labour, etc., etc., etc. It would take too long to list everything here; much of this is documented in the minutes of meetings of the steering group of the National Forum in last years.<sup>44</sup> Regional offers, such as the BerufsFindungsBegleitung (career guidance) in Styria since 1999, provided by Styrian Association for Education and Economics STVG should also be mentioned here as examples.<sup>45</sup>

In the field of adult education, a nationwide network for provider-independent guidance was established for the first time in 2011, using funding from the European Social Fund. Previously, there had only been regional approaches to this. The "Graz Declaration in 1999 had demanded exactly that, with the project "Career Coaching", parts of it were implemented by the Styrian Association for Education and Economics STVG.<sup>46</sup> <sup>47</sup>This also attracted European and international attention. However, this approach only became effective throughout Austria through developments that were initiated with the Lifelong Guidance Strategy.

The bifeb - Federal Institute for Adult Education of the Ministry of Education - also took on essential tasks, through conferences, such as in 2012: "Future Field of Educational and Vocational Guidance" as well as with courses for educational and vocational counselors, also those of a university character.<sup>48</sup> And Gerhard Krötzl has always played a leading role in development and implementation.

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<sup>41</sup> Bundesministerium für Bildung Abteilung I/8 Schulpsychologie (Hrsg.): Beratung an und für Schulen. Unter Mitwirkung von Michaela Marterer, STVG. Wien 2016.

<sup>42</sup> STVG, BMUKK (Hrsg.): Schulsozialarbeit in Österreich. Status, Zwischenbilanz und Perspektiven. Graz, Wien 2012.

<sup>43</sup> BMB (Hrsg.): Nationale Strategie zur Verhinderung frühzeitigen (Aus-)Bildungsabbruchs. Wien 2016.

<sup>44</sup> Marterer M. (Moderation und Zusammenstellung): Dokumentation des Nationalen Forums Lifelong Guidance. 19. Treffen der Steuergruppe. Dezember 2020. Wien, Graz 2020.

<sup>45</sup> <https://bfb.berufsorientierung.at/> visited 11.12.2021.

<sup>46</sup> Erwachsenenbildung in der Steiermark. Grazer Erklärung der ARGE – Steirische Erwachsenenbildung vom 8. Juli 1999. In: Förderungsstelle des Bundes Für Erwachsenenbildung (Hrsg.): Erwachsenenbildung Nummer 79 August 1999 Graz.

<sup>47</sup> NICEC: Career Development at Work. A Review of Career Guidance to Support People in Employment. A Report for Cedefop. Jackson et al. Cambridge 2007. pg 92 ff.

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.bifeb.at/bildungszentrum/programmgebiete/beraten-coachen-supervidieren> abgerufen 11.12.2021.

Academic training courses have also been developed and offered at Danube University Krems, leading in a modular system to certificates up to a Master of Arts degree.<sup>49</sup> The wba - Academy of Continuing Education, which is supported by the Cooperative System of Adult Education, has certified and graduated adult educators since 2007; one of the four focal points of the diploma, which has recently been classified at Level 6 in the NQF, is Guidance.<sup>50</sup>

There are many more developments and trainings in the field of higher education, in the field of labour market oriented counseling in the AMS, in their career information centers, in educational institutions such as WIFI, BFI, powered by social partner organizations.<sup>51</sup> The examples mentioned above show that concepts, positions and strategies were not just "desk and meeting papers", but were always drawn up and pursued with the aim of deriving concrete effects at national and regional level.

How this is to be evaluated exactly, we can read with Deidre Hughes and Tristram Hooley, two of the outstanding international experts from the ELGPN, who also contributed in Austrian events and conferences.<sup>52</sup> „What we know for sure" - and what has been developed in the ELGPN. We must continue to work on this.

Finally, we would like to refer to the nationwide Work Conferences IBOBB, organized by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education in cooperation with the Pedagogical University Salzburg, supported and facilitated by Michaela Marterer, Styrian Association for Education and Economics STVG 2019 and 2021, which were able to make the Guidance Community in Austria clearly visible and noticeable. The international participation, Ronald Sultana, MT in 2019, Peter Plant, DK and Jennifer McKenzie, IR in 2021 were again important parts of the meetings, also the participation of Wolfgang Bliem, who since 2017 is represented as an Austrian expert in CareersNet, a kind of European Lifelong Guidance experts platform after ELGPN, located in CEDEFOP, but with a different structure, tasks and working methods.<sup>53</sup>

## 5.4. International Positioning of Austria

All these developments have been and will continue to be reflected in European and international exchanges. In addition to numerous activities in European programs, first for Lifelong Learning, then in Erasmus+, which also dealt with information, guidance and counselling for education and careers, Austria's involvement in the ICCDPP - International Center for Career Development and Public Policy should be mentioned here.

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<sup>49</sup><https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjr3o6h1NH0AhVkhP0HHYBJAI0QFnoECAQQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.donau-uni.ac.at%2Fdam%2Fjcr%3Af4bab92f-5504-4786-907f-17758d48454b%2FFolder%2520Bildungs-%2C%2520Berufs-%2520und%2520Karriereberatung.pdf&usg=AOvVawODJN31qClgC6EOcwV7DdvM> abgerufen am 07.12.2021.

<sup>50</sup> <https://wba.or.at/de/was-wir-tun/ablauf-diplom.php> visited 11.12.2021.

<sup>51</sup> Vgl. auch: <https://www.euroguidance.eu/guidance-system-in-austria> visited 07.12.2021.

<sup>52</sup> Hooley T.: The Evidence Base on Lifelong Guidance. A Guide to Key Findings for Effective Policy and Practice. ELGPN Jyväskylä 2014.

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/networks/careersnet> visited 08.12.2021

The history of the ICCDPP goes back more than 20 years. Starting in 1999, international meetings were held in Canada, which also served to prepare the OECD project "Career Guidance Policies", which was carried out from 2000 - 2003 and in which Austria also actively participated.

To disseminate the results of this OECD project, an international symposium was held in Toronto in 2003, in which Austria also actively participated through the presence of Gerhard Krötzl as head of the Austrian steering group for this project.

Since then, Austria has been actively represented and contributed in all further symposia, on almost all continents worldwide - 2006/2007/2009/2011/2015/2017/2019.

These were and are not only "participations", these are always active preparations, elaboration of country papers, reflection on the synthesis papers prepared from them, interactive participation in the symposia, presentations in working groups and in plenary and thematic panels.

The key messages from the work in the symposia and the action plans derived from them at the national level were consistently introduced into the discourse in Austria. Participation in these symposia is well documented from an Austrian perspective.<sup>54</sup>

In connection with the manifold European and international contacts, cooperations, projects and networks with OECD, with ELGPN-European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, with accompanying projects on the Lifelong Learning Strategy for Austria with neighboring countries, with regional events in which international experts were involved, and many more, results and conclusions were consistently introduced into Austrian developments.

Many things would not have come about in Austria without these contributions. The National Forum Lifelong Guidance, the National Strategy for Lifelong Guidance 2006, whose five strategic core statements already anticipated some of the European Resolution 2008, and the Strategy LLL:2020 have also built substantially on insights and experiences from international contacts.

In the course of the years, Austria's role and significance in relation to lifelong guidance could be made much more present. The ICCDPP has always been concerned with the broader context of career development and public policy. Questions of the labor market, vocational training and the interaction of education, counseling, business and companies were always present. If one compares Austrian situations with those in other regions of the world, then one must consciously perceive and appreciate what qualities and potential there are in these fields in our country, just as many things could be improved. Details on this can be found in the reports of the symposia.

The intensive, often self-evident cooperation between education and business, including the position of vocational education and training, in Austria received increasing attention. In the Synthesis Paper for the ICCDPP Symposium 2017 in Seoul /South Korea, Austria was ranked first out of 27

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<sup>54</sup> Härtel P.: Report Austria to the Symposium: Leading career development services into an uncertain future: Ensuring access, integration and innovation. Tromsø, Wien, Graz 2019.  
[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwiltcDFv9L0AhVP8LsiHZhvC5sQFnoECAYQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fstvg.at%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2019%2F11%2F19\\_11\\_Report\\_Troms%25C3%25B6\\_BMBWF\\_STVG\\_FINAL\\_en.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3tP7KFZIElfKasisJGWK6](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwiltcDFv9L0AhVP8LsiHZhvC5sQFnoECAYQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fstvg.at%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2019%2F11%2F19_11_Report_Troms%25C3%25B6_BMBWF_STVG_FINAL_en.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3tP7KFZIElfKasisJGWK6) visited 07.12.2012.



participating nations from all over the world in terms of involvement of business and industry in tasks and topics of Lifelong Guidance.<sup>55</sup>

In addition, cooperation in the field of lifelong guidance and career development is being closely observed internationally: The well-established Austrian National Lifelong Guidance Forum, which actively involves the variety of Austrian Lifelong Guidance stakeholders, is today considered a European and international example of good practice. Lynn Bezancon, CAN, commented on this in a synopsis in preparation for the symposium in Tromsø as follows:

"Austria's National Forum has been in existence for 17 years and has strong connections with social partners and the entire guidance community ... cooperation is an essential element of the social fabric and culture of Austria ... Many countries might wish for this to be bottled and sold!" (Lynn Bezancon, Chair of the ICCDPP Symposium in Tromsø, 2019).<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> McCarthy J., Jeong J.V.: Synthesis Paper Improving career practitioner training and practice. Seoul 2017.

<sup>56</sup> <https://erwachsenenbildung.at/themen/bildungsberatung/governance/llg-forum.php> visited 08.12.2021.

## 6. Perspectives for Future Tasks concerning Lifelong Guidance in Austria

It is precisely from this that the motivation should be derived to consistently drive forward further developments in those areas of design where Austria has a need for development.

Some of these will be mentioned briefly.

- In early childhood and elementary education, the growing awareness of the importance of this phase of development and education must lead to consistent, nationwide action. This begins with the gradual raising of the qualifications of elementary teachers to tertiary level, continues with the professional framework conditions and extends to consistent quality development in the regions. Career management skills - in the broadest sense - begin here at the latest.

- In the school sector, the basic structures for IBOBB are well developed in principle, but are still under-resourced, both financially and in terms of time, personnel and professionalization. This is something that will have to be worked on in the future, also in conjunction with other psycho-social support systems. It is obvious that the transitions, often also "breaks" at the 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> school level as well as at the 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> school level/school year still represent challenges. The fact that essential areas of education - here the General Education Upper Secondary school AHS - Gymnasium is to be mentioned - still close their minds to some requirements today, requires further convincing and implementation work.

- In recent years, a lot has been done in the field of Pedagog Training NEW „PädagogInnenbildung NEU“, especially at the universities of teacher education, where there exist a high awareness, competence and commitment and mindset to cooperate in broad networks in the academic field if teacher training. In universities, too, researchers and teachers in the fields of education, vocational training and psychology are dealing with the topic of guidance. In many institutions, public and private, from bifeb<sup>57</sup> to abif<sup>58</sup>, from IBW<sup>59</sup> to ÖIBF<sup>60</sup>, there is competence, capacity and commitment. But, the topic "Career Guidance" as a multidisciplinary subject of study and research is not anchored in the Austrian academic sector. In other countries in Europe and the world, this has been a matter of course for decades. In Austria, there is no basic academic education for career counselors, no publicly funded tertiary education or training for school counselors or other guidance professions in lifelong learning, no sufficient quantitatively broad, relevant research community that would be in constant mutual exchange, also with Europe and the world.

This could be further elaborated in detail. But, these will be, among others, tasks for the next years, decades.

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<sup>57</sup> <https://www.bifeb.at/> visited 11.12.2021

<sup>58</sup> <https://abif.at/de/akademie/> visited 11.12.2021

<sup>59</sup> <https://ibw.at/> visited 11.12.2021

<sup>60</sup> <https://oeibf.at/> visited 11.12.2021

## 7. Comments on the Role, Performance and Work of Gerhard Krötzl

And these are all tasks that cannot be handled by one person, one department, nor by one ministry alone.

Knowing the multi-layered formal, informal, also "hidden" structures, agendas and processes that touch and are touched by "IBOBB" and "Lifelong Guidance", there are tremendous achievements that Gerhard Krötzl has initiated, shaped, helped to influence in his functions, tasks and areas of responsibility. By far not all of them are listed here.

Those who know how to estimate deadlines, development speeds, and design dynamics, even under changing personnel, political, and programmatic conditions, can only be impressed by the long-term, sustainable determination with which Gerhard Krötzl has acted and continues to act since joining the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education in 1993 and taking over as head of the Department of School Psychology in 2011.

The cooperative integration of persons and institutions, of formal responsible persons as well as of other stakeholders and actors, within and outside the "systems" was and is a consistent feature of this, in the best sense of the word, "policy making".

The work of the "National Forum Lifelong Guidance Austria", which has now been active for 20 years, is a living example of this attitude of involvement, cooperation and joint shaping.

Here, once again, an international voice has its say:

At a worldwide symposium of ICCDPP (International Center for Career Development and Public Policy) 2015<sup>61</sup> in Des Moines, Iowa, USA, John McCarthy, the doyen of Career Guidance in Europe and beyond, expressed it this way:

"Austria is the country that has benefited most from international collaborations over the past 15 years. And the leading figure in government in this is Gerhard Krötzl".

For anyone who follows, in whatever role, this is a standard that must not be undercut.

From the point of view of the Styrian Association for Education and Economics STVG we are grateful to have been able to accompany this path for over 20 years, together with many others, and to have helped shape it.

The roles change. We assure, in each possible way, further commitment for common concerns. And we are sure that there will continue to be opportunities for good things together!

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**Graz, Vienna, Austria**

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<sup>61</sup> <https://www.iccdpp.org/> visited 11.12.2021