



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Survey of perceptions of activities and benefits of membership among members of four career guidance associations

**Project CEEGAF
1st Activity**

Prague, April 2025

Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
1.1	Survey, respondents and their characteristics	3
2	Association activities.....	5
2.1	Overall rating of activities fulfilment	5
2.2	Overall rating of activities importance	6
2.3	Gap score between activities fulfilment and importance	7
2.4	Rating individual activities from both fulfilment and importance	9
2.4.1	Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals	9
2.4.2	Sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches and topics in career guidance.....	10
2.4.3	Providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)	10
2.4.4	Providing supervision, intervision, mentoring	11
2.4.5	Providing accreditation/certification of career professionals (e.g. accredited training, recognition and/or validation ...)	12
2.4.6	Supporting high quality service delivery (e.g. through ethical standards, professional guidelines ...).....	13
2.4.7	Participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...)	13
2.4.8	Promoting career guidance and career guidance providers	14
2.4.9	Helping practitioners implement policies into practice (information/training about new legislation, norms ...)	15
2.4.10	Shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...)	15
2.4.11	Shaping guidance system on the national level (advocacy, participating in legislative process, communicating with ministries ...)	16
3	Associations' Board activities	18
3.1	Channels of Association's Board communication.....	18
3.2	Provision of information by the Association's Board	18
3.3	Recommendation to Association Board on its communication with members	19
3.3.1	Communication with members.....	19
3.3.2	Events for members	21
3.3.3	Associations' Board activities.....	22
3.4	Currently underrepresented topics in the association's activities	22
3.5	Main benefit of being an association member.....	26
3.6	Possibilities for improving association life for more active member involvement	29
3.7	Final members' comments to Board	32
4	Conclusion	34
4.1	Strengths.....	34
4.2	Weaknesses	34
4.3	Communication.....	34
4.4	Events and Activities	35
4.5	Strategic planning	35
4.6	Recommendations	36

1 Introduction

This document was prepared under ERASMUS+ project “Central and Eastern European Guidance Association Forum” (CEECAF). The project aims to foster cooperation and dialogue among the professional associations of the participating countries from the CEE region Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania. The project will provide a platform for exchanging ideas, best practices, and recommendations on the most pressing issues and challenges facing professional associations in the field of career guidance.

- To strengthen the collaboration of the CEE professional associations in the field of career guidance and education.
- To compare activities that address common needs and priorities of the involved associations and their members, identify best practices, leading to an increase in the quality of services provided.
- Enable transformation and change leading to improvements in the functioning of professional associations by fostering the transfer of best practices among associations.
- Contribute to internationalisation strategies of participating organisations through identification of mobility opportunities.
- Create a sustainable platform for exchanging best practices and fostering dialogue among professionals from the involved countries.

1.1 Survey, respondents and their characteristics

Survey of members' opinions on the functioning of their association was conducted in the first months of 2025. These associations include:

- SK: Združenie pre kariérové poradenstvo a rozvoj kariéry / Association for Career Guidance and Career Development)
- CZ: Sdružení pro kariérové poradenství a kariérový rozvoj / Association for Career Guidance and Career Development
- HU: Magyar Pedagógiai Társaság / Hungarian Pedagogical Society
- RO: Asociația Consilierilor Romani / Romanian Counsellors Association

Member's questionnaire was sent by e-mail to all members (337 people), of which 20,5% members responded (tab. 1). Although the number of respondents in individual countries is relatively small and not a representative sample, this number is sufficient for the needs of a critical view of associations' functioning and their activities.

Tab No 1: Overview of addressed members and respondents

Country	Number of addressed members	Number of respondents	% of return
SK	200	27	13,5
CZ	36	10	27,8
RO	48	20	41,6
HU	53	12	22,6
Total	337	70	20,5

Among the respondents, there are slightly more members with a membership period of over three years (53%) than those with membership of up to three years (47%). New members with a membership period of up to one year accounts for 14% of all respondents (tab. 2), of which the largest number are members of Slovak association.

Tab No 2: Length of respondents membership

Membership length	CZ¹	HU	RO	SK	Total
less than 1 year	1	2	0	7	10
1-3 years	1	4	5	12	23
3-5 years	1	2	5	3	11
more than 5 years	8	4	10	4	26
Total	11	12	20	27	70

Most respondents consider themselves to be passive members participating in association activities (55%). Slightly more than a quarter of respondents are actively involved in association activities (27%) and slightly fewer respondents (18%) consider themselves to be members actively participating in association life (tab. 3).

Tab No 3: Active membership

Members' activities	CZ	HU	RO	SK	Total
I actively contribute to the life of the association (voluntary work, organisation of events/workshops, lecturing, collaboration on projects, publishing...)	2	3	8	5	18
I do not contribute nor participate on the activities of the association (I receive the information about association activities, newsletter etc...)	3	1	4	7	15
I take part on the activities of the association as participant	6	8	8	15	37
Total	11	12	20	27	70

¹ CZ: Czech Republic, SK: Slovakia, HU: Hungary, RO: Romania

2 Association activities

The questionnaire specified 11 areas of activity that can be considered as general goals for fulfilling the mission of career guidance associations. Respondents rated these 11 areas by a six-point scale from two perspectives:

- **Fulfilment:** how their association fulfils the given activity (tab. 4), scale: 1: does not fulfil at all, 6: fulfils it fully.
- **Importance:** how important they consider the given activity to be in the association's activities (tab. 5), 1: not important at all, 6: crucial importance)

2.1 Overall rating of activities fulfilment

The average rating of the implementation of activities (tab. 4) in the respondents' answers ranges from weak fulfilment (2,91 points)² to very good fulfilment (4,24 points). The four best-rated activities include "Sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches and topics in career guidance" (4,24 points), "Providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)" (4,04 points), "Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals" (3,94 points) and "Participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...)" (3,9 points).

On the contrary, respondents gave relatively low ratings to the implementation of "Shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...)" (3,14 points), "Providing accreditation/certification of career professionals (e.g. accredited training, recognition and/or validation ...)" (3,04 points), "Providing supervision, intervision, mentoring" (2,91 points).

Tab No 4: Respondents' opinion on how the association implements various activities

No.	Fulfilment of activities	Average points	%
2	Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals	4,24	10,7
3	Providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)	4,04	10,5
1	Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals	3,94	10,0
7	Participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...)	3,9	9,9
8	Promoting career guidance and career guidance providers	3,8	9,6
9	Helping practitioners implement policies into practice (information/training about new legislation, norms ...)	3,61	9,1
6	Supporting high quality service delivery (e.g. through ethical standards, professional guidelines ...)	3,58	9,0

² To compare the ratings of individual associations, we use a weighted arithmetic mean, where a score of 6 is awarded 6 points, a score of 1 = 1 point, etc. Answer "I don't know" receives 0 points.

No.	Fulfilment of activities	Average points	%
11	Shaping guidance system on the national level (advocacy, participating in legislative process, communicating with ministries ...)	3,21	8,1
10	Shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...)	3,14	8,0
5	Providing accreditation/certification of career professionals (e.g. accredited training, recognition and/or validation ...)	3,04	7,7
4	Providing supervision, intervention, mentoring	2,91	7,4
	Total	-	100,0

2.2 Overall rating of activities importance

The second aspect was the assessment of 11 association activities in terms of their significance (tab. 5). Among the four most important association activities, respondents mentioned “Sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches and topics in career guidance” (5,64 points), “Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals” (5,61 points), “Providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)” (5,5 points), “Promoting career guidance and career guidance providers” (5,24 points).

Among the three least important activities, respondents mentioned “Participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...)” (4,77 points), “Providing accreditation/certification of career professionals (e.g. accredited training, recognition and/or validation ...)” (4,75 points), “Shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...)” (4,73 points).

Tab No 5: Respondents' opinion on the importance of the given activities

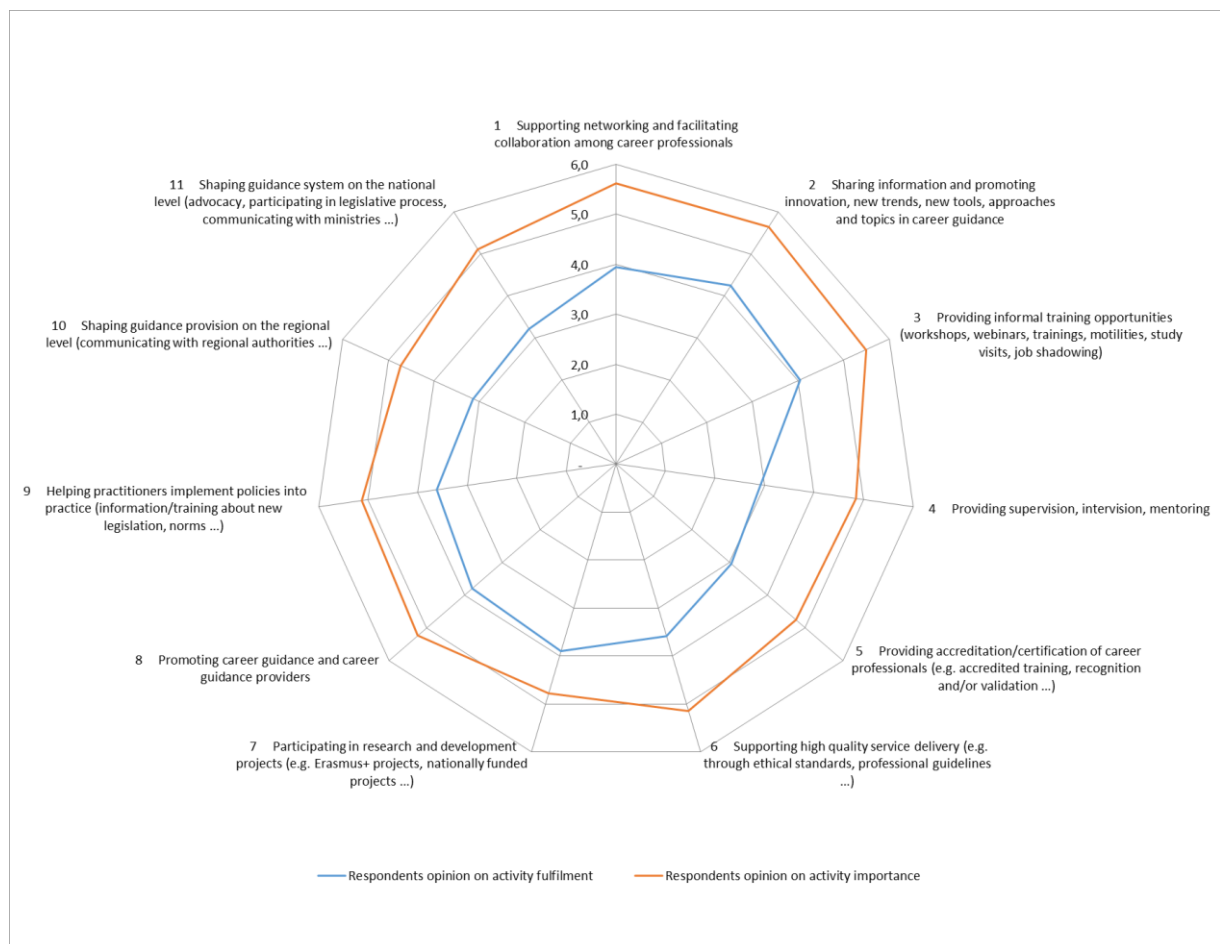
No.	Fulfilment of activities	Average points	%
2	Sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches and topics in career guidance	5,64	10,0
1	Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals	5,61	9,9
3	Providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)	5,50	9,7
8	Promoting career guidance and career guidance providers	5,24	9,3
6	Supporting high quality service delivery (e.g. through ethical standards, professional guidelines ...)	5,14	9,1
9	Helping practitioners implement policies into practice (information/training about new legislation, norms ...)	5,13	9,1
11	Shaping guidance system on the national level (advocacy, participating in legislative process, communicating with ministries ...)	5,10	9,0
4	Providing supervision, intervention, mentoring	4,84	8,6
7	Participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...)	4,77	8,5

No.	Fulfilment of activities	Average points	%
5	Providing accreditation/certification of career professionals (e.g. accredited training, recognition and/or validation ...)	4,76	8,4
10	Shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...)	4,73	8,4
	Total	-	100,0

2.3 Gap score between activities fulfilment and importance

By comparing the respondents' opinions (chart 1) on a) the association fulfilment of above mentioned 11 activities and b) on the importance of these activities in association life, we gain an overview of which activities respondents consider important in the association's activities and to what extent these activities are fulfilled.

Chart No 1: Comparison of respondents' opinions on the fulfilment and importance of 11 activities



The “Gap score” (the difference between the achieved average importance and fulfilment of activities) reaches values from 0,87 to 1,93 points (tab. 6). Activity with smallest gap score (0.87 points) is “Participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...)”, activity with the highest gap score is “Providing supervision, intervention, mentoring” (1.93 points).

Associations should pay particular attention to those activities for which respondents indicated **high importance** (>5), **low implementation** (<3,5), and high gap score (>1,3), such as the following activities:

- “Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals” (fulfilment 3,9 - importance 5,6; gap score 1,67)
- “Sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches and topics in career guidance” (fulfilment 4,2 - importance 5,6; gap score 1,4)
- „Providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)“ (fulfilment 4,0 - importance 5,5; gap score 1,46)
- “Promoting career guidance and career guidance providers” (fulfilment 3,8 - importance 5,2; gap score: 1,44)
- „Helping practitioners implement policies into practice (information/training about new legislation, norms ...)“ (fulfilment 3,6 - importance 5,1; gap score 1,51)
- „Supporting high quality service delivery (e.g. through ethical standards, professional guidelines ...)“ (fulfilment 3,6 - importance 5,1; gap score 1,67)

Tab No 6: Gap score from comparison of respondents' opinions on the fulfilment and importance

No.	Activity	Average fulfilment	Average importance	Gap score
7	Participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...)	3,9	4,8	0,87
2	Sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches and topics in career guidance	4,2	5,6	1,40
8	Promoting career guidance and career guidance providers	3,8	5,2	1,44
3	Providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)	4,0	5,5	1,46
9	Helping practitioners implement policies into practice (information/training about new legislation, norms ...)	3,6	5,1	1,51
6	Supporting high quality service delivery (e.g. through ethical standards, professional guidelines ...)	3,6	5,1	1,56
10	Shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...)	3,1	4,7	1,59
1	Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals	3,9	5,6	1,67
5	Providing accreditation/certification of career professionals (e.g. accredited training, recognition and/or validation ...)	3,0	4,8	1,71

No.	Activity	Average fulfillment	Average importance	Gap score
11	Shaping guidance system on the national level (advocacy, participating in legislative process, communicating with ministries ...)	3,2	5,1	1,89
4	Providing supervision, intervention, mentoring	2,9	4,8	1,93

2.4 Rating individual activities from both fulfilment and importance

In this chapter, opinions of respondents (members of the participating associations) on 11 association activities are described from two perspectives: fulfilment of activities and their importance. The order of activities is taken from the questionnaire. For evaluation we use the weighted arithmetic average method, which is mentioned in the note on page 4. For opinions on fulfilment, chart state ratings of national associations, while for importance the overall opinions of the respondents was used.

2.4.1 Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals

Supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals (chart 2) can be considered as one of the basic functions of associations. The fulfilment of this activity is evaluated as excellent by Romanian (54%), Slovak (38%), and Hungarian (8%) respondents. On average, Romanians awarded fulfilment of this activity by 4,3 points, a little less Slovaks (4,1 points), Hungarians (3,9 points), and Czechs the least (3,2 points).

Chart No 2: Fulfilment of supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals

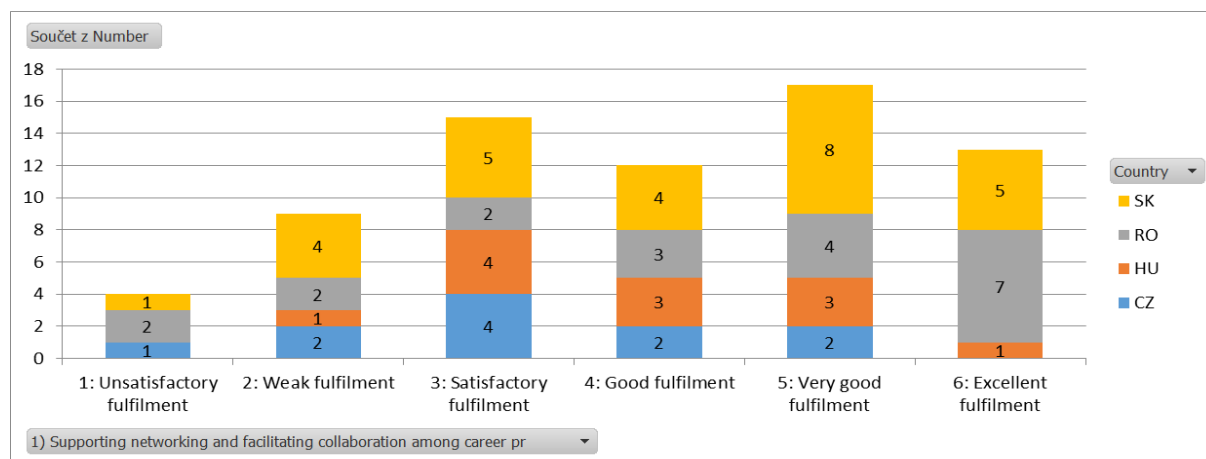
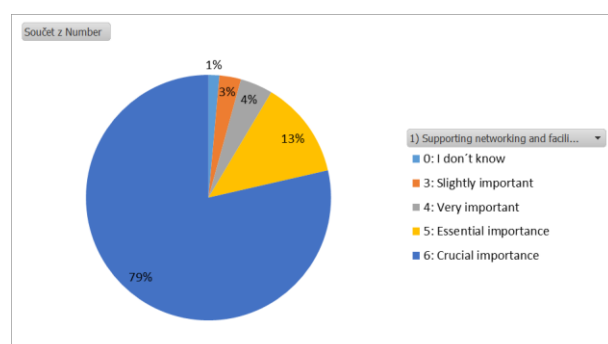


Chart No 3: Importance of supporting networking and facilitating collaboration among career professionals



The majority of respondents, regardless of country of origin, unanimously consider supporting networking and facilitating collaboration (chart 3) to be crucial (79%) and essential (13%), which demonstrates the importance of networking and establishing cooperation between career guidance counsellors.

2.4.2 Sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches and topics in career guidance

Sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches and topics in career guidance (chart 4) can also be considered an essential activity that its membership expects from the association. The fulfilment of this association activity is rated as excellent by respondents from three countries (Slovaks and Hungarian identically 36,8%) and Romanian 26,4 %). On average, Hungarians awarded fulfilment of this activity by 5,2 points (i.e. between evaluation point excellent and very good), Romanians 4,3 points, Slovaks 4,2 points (both between good and very good), and the Czechs 3,4 (between satisfactory and good).

Chart No 4: Fulfilment of sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches ...

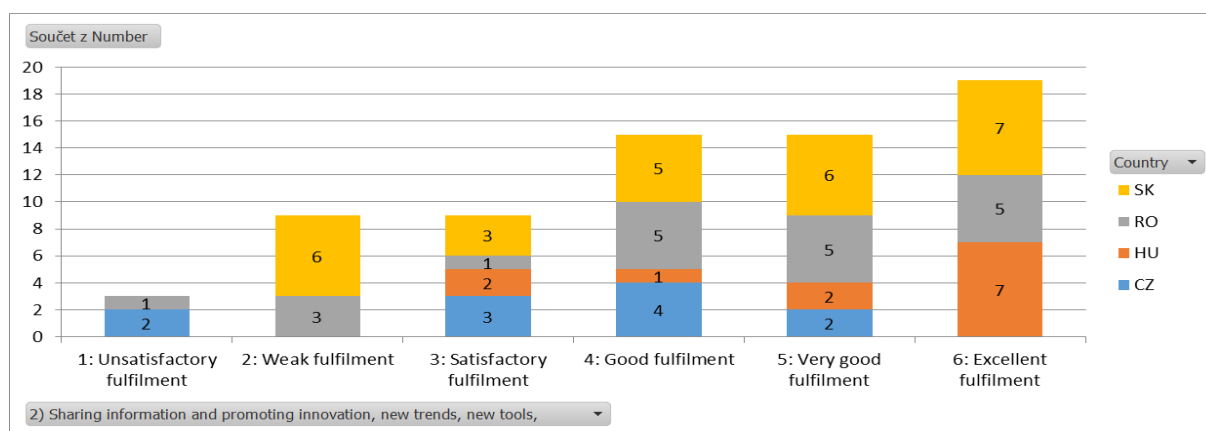
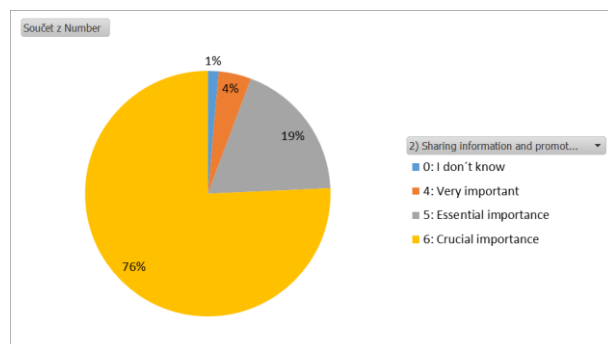


Chart No 5: Importance of sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches ...



A clear majority of respondents, irrespective of their country of origin, agree that importance of sharing information and promoting innovation, new trends, new tools, approaches and topics in career guidance (chart 5) is crucial (76%), essential (19%), and very important (4%). 1% of respondents did not know how to rate this activity.

2.4.3 Providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)

Fulfilment of providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing) (chart 6) was rated by respondents of three countries between good (4) and very good (5), i.e. Romanians gave this activity an average of 4,4 points, Hungarians 4,25 points, Slovaks 4,07 points. The exception is again the Czechs with 3,09 points (rather good).

Chart No 6: Fulfilment of providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)

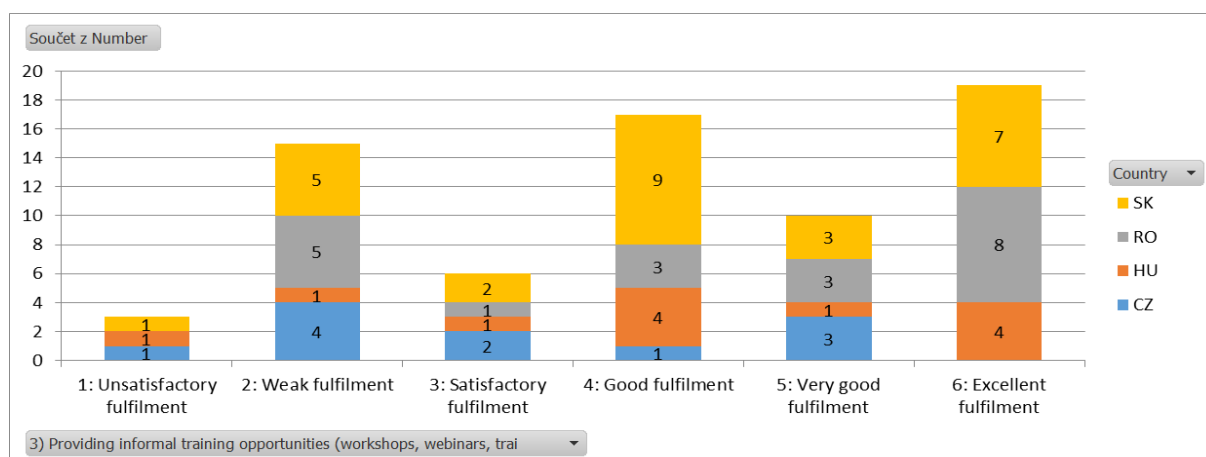
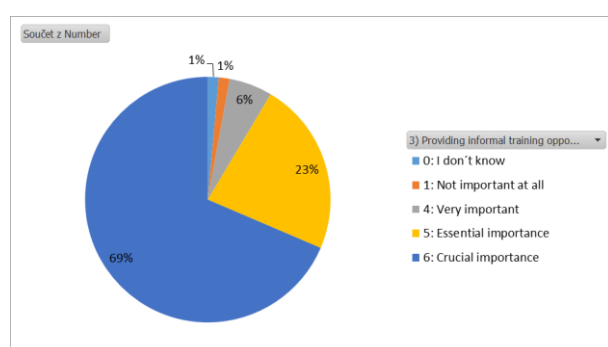


Chart No 7: Importance of providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing)



For most members, regardless of their country origin is importance of providing informal training opportunities (workshops, webinars, trainings, motilities, study visits, job shadowing) (chart 7) crucial (69%), essential (23%), and very important (6%). Only small number of respondents (2%) do not consider it important or did not answer.

2.4.4 Providing supervision, intervision, mentoring

On average, the fulfilment of providing activities like supervision, intervision, and mentoring (chart 8) is evaluated by respondent a little less than satisfactory by an average score 2,91. Provision of these activities is rated the worst by Czechs with 2,27 points, slightly better by Hungarians (2,67 points), Slovaks (2,7 points) and best by Romanians between satisfactory and good (3,7 points).

Chart No 8: Fulfilment of providing supervision, intervision, mentoring

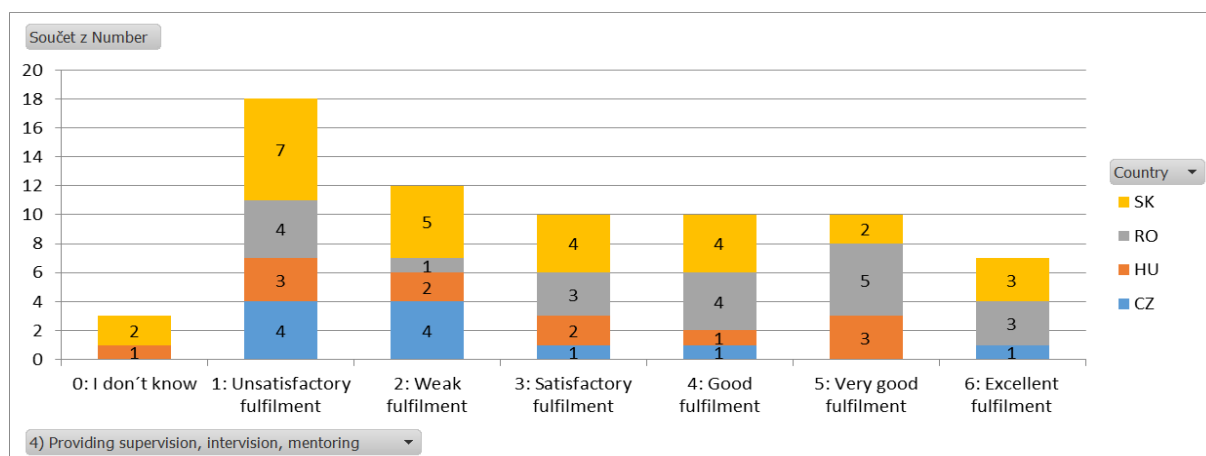
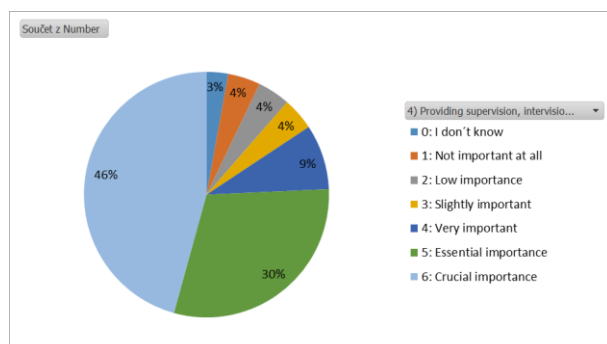


Chart No 9: Importance of providing supervision, intervention, mentoring



Importance of providing activities like supervision, intervention, and mentoring (chart 9) is evaluated quite positively. Less than half of respondents consider its importance as crucial (46%), essential (30%), and very important (9%). Slightly, low and not important contribute equally to 12%. Category "I don't know" also appears here (3%).

2.4.5 Providing accreditation/certification of career professionals (e.g. accredited training, recognition and/or validation ...)

Fulfilment of providing accreditation/certification of career professionals (e.g. accredited training, recognition and/or validation ...) (chart 10) is in average considered by respondents less than satisfactory (2,86 points). This activity is rated exceptionally positively by Slovaks (between good and very good - 4,68 points). Romanian (2,95 points) and Hungarian (2,1 points) respondents rate its fulfilment among weak and satisfactory, and Czechs between unsatisfactory and weak (1,73 points).

Chart No 10: Fulfilment of providing accreditation/certification of career professionals

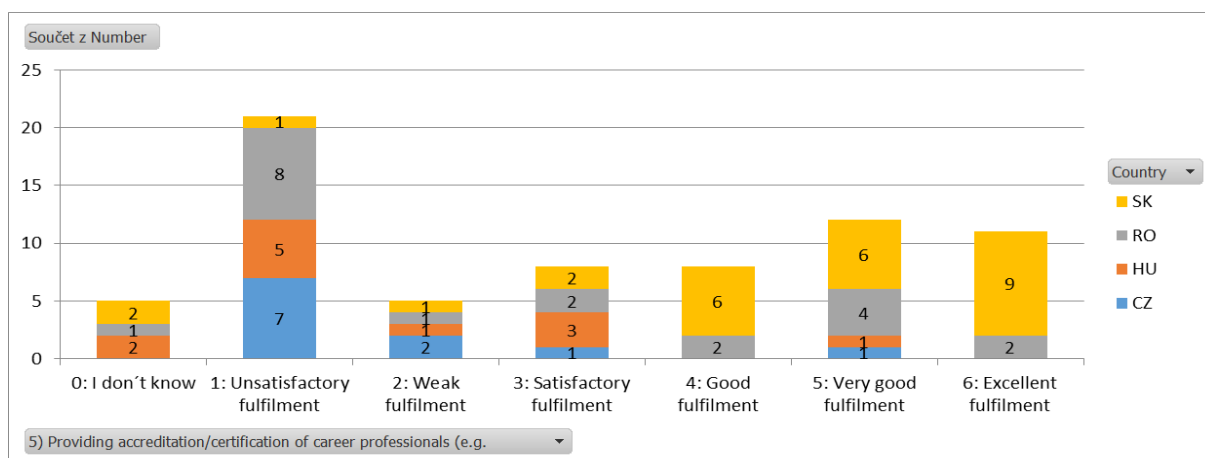
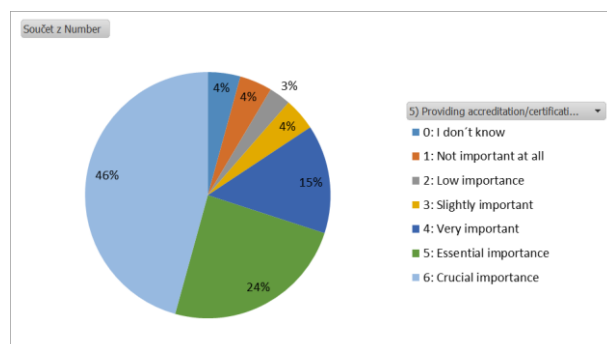


Chart No 11: Importance of providing accreditation/certification of career professionals



Respondents expressed their opinions on the importance of providing accreditation / certification of career professionals (e.g. accredited training, recognition and/or validation ...) (chart 11) very similarly to the previous activity. Less than half of the respondents consider its importance to be crucial (46%), essential (24%) and very important (15%). Slightly, low and unimportant contribute almost equally to rest 11%. The category "don't know" also appears here (4%).

important (15%). Slightly, low and unimportant contribute almost equally to rest 11%. The category "don't know" also appears here (4%).

2.4.6 Supporting high quality service delivery (e.g. through ethical standards, professional guidelines ...)

Fulfilment of supporting high quality service delivery (e.g. through ethical standards, professional guidelines ...) (chart 12) Romanian respondents rated at the highest by 4 points. Other national respondents consider the fulfilment of this activity to be in range between good to satisfactory (Slovaks 3,92 points, Hungarians 3,55 points, Czechs 3,45 points).

Chart No 12: Fulfilment of supporting high quality service delivery

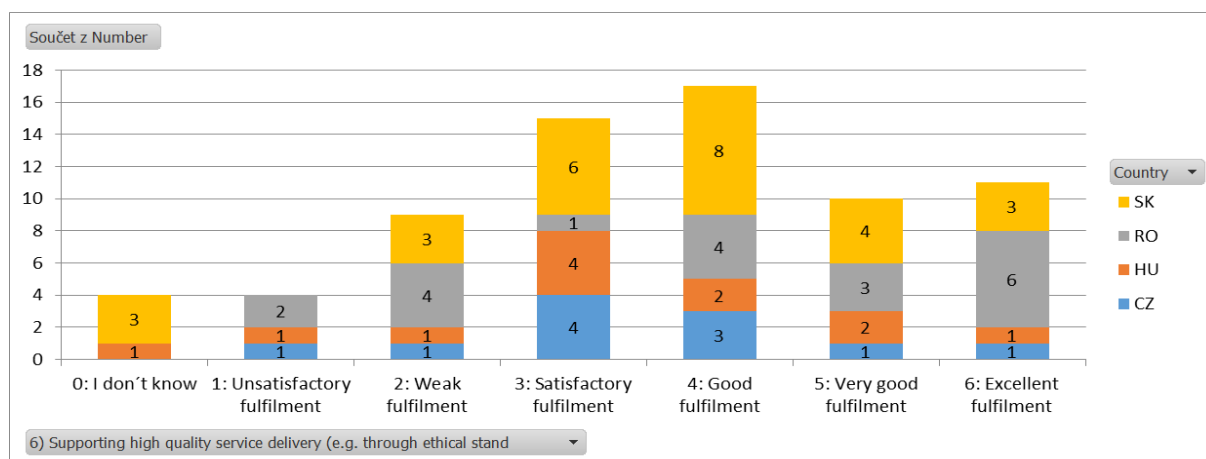
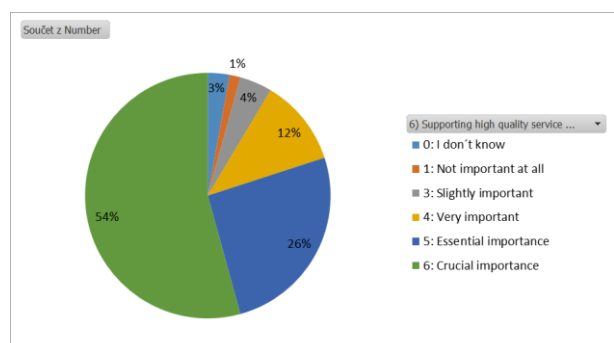


Chart No 13: Importance of supporting high quality service delivery ...)



54% of respondents consider importance of supporting high quality service delivery (e.g. through ethical standards, professional guidelines ...) (chart 13) as crucial, 26% as essential, and 12% as very important. The rest makes 8% of respondents, of whom 4% said the activity is slightly important, 1% not important at all, and 3% did not answer.

2.4.7 Participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...)

On average, fulfilment of participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...) (chart 14) consider respondents between good and very good (4,24 points). The highest fulfilment ratings were received from Slovak respondents (4,68 points), then Czech (4,55 points), Romanian (3,9 points) and Hungarian (3,82 points).

Chart No 14: Fulfilment of participating in research and development projects

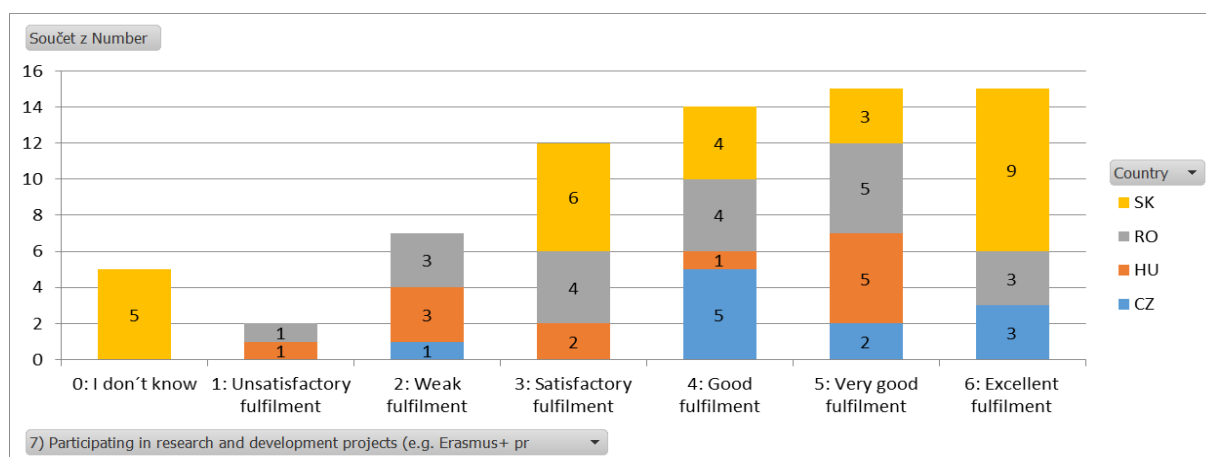
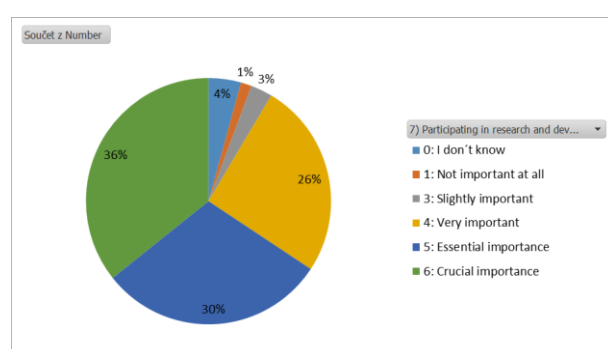


Chart No 15: Importance of participating in research and development projects



Importance rating of participating in research and development projects (e.g. Erasmus+ projects, nationally funded projects ...) (chart 15) is divided almost equally between crucial (36%), essential (30%), and very important (26%). 4% of respondents answered that they had no opinion, 1% that the activity was not important and 3% slightly important.

2.4.8 Promoting career guidance and career guidance providers

Fulfilment of promoting career guidance and career guidance providers (chart 16) is rated on average as good (3,88 points). Its implementation is rated best by Hungarian respondents (4,33 points), followed by Romanian (4,16 points), Slovak (3,85 points) and Czech (3,18 points).

Chart No 16: Fulfilment of promoting career guidance and career guidance providers

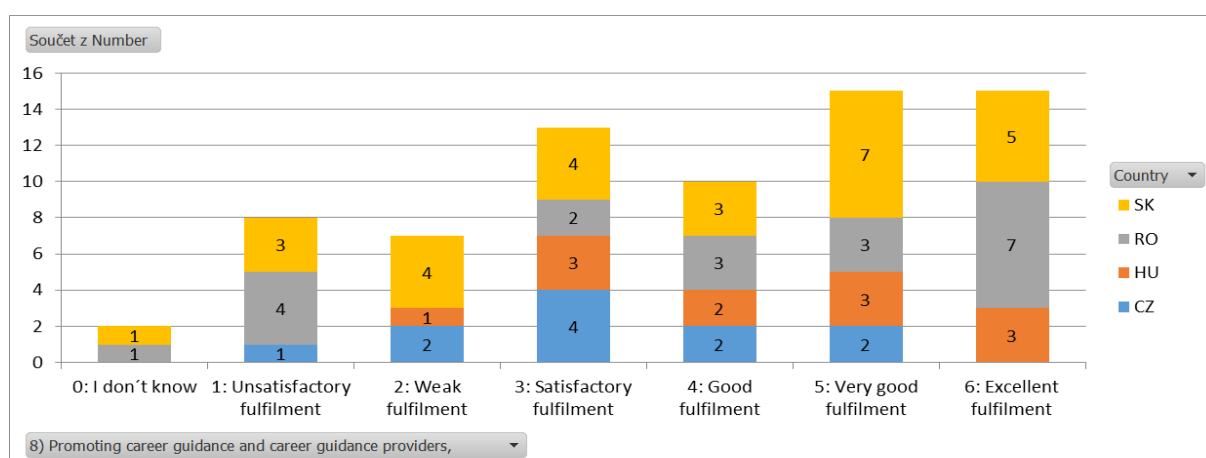
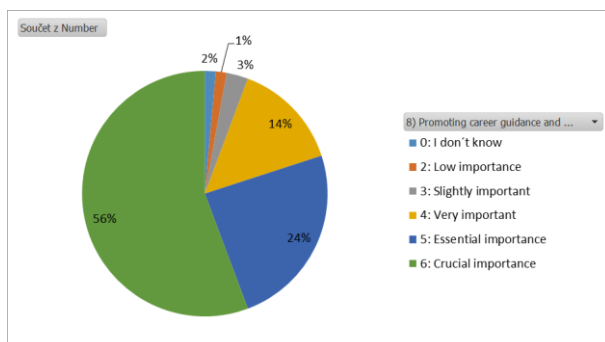


Chart No 17: Importance of promoting career guidance and career guidance providers



Importance of promoting career guidance and career guidance providers (chart 17) is rated as crucial by 56% of respondents regardless of country of origin, 24% as essential and 14% as very important. Of the remaining 6% of respondents, 3% rate this activity as slightly important, 1% as low importance and 2% have no opinion.

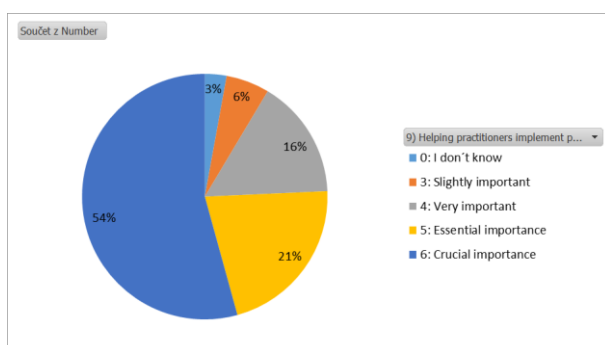
2.4.9 Helping practitioners implement policies into practice (information/training about new legislation, norms ...)

On average, fulfilment of helping practitioners implement policies into practice (by information / training about new legislation, norms ...) (chart 18) was best rated by Romanian respondents between good and very good fulfilment (4,37 points), a little less Hungarians (4,33 points), Slovaks (3,54 points), and Czechs the least (3 points – satisfactory fulfilment).

Chart No 18: Fulfilment of helping practitioners implement policies into practice



Chart No 19: Importance of helping practitioners implement policies into practice



Importance of helping practitioners implement policies into practice (information / training about new legislation, norms ...)(chart 19) is considered by respondents as crucial (54%), essential (21%), very important (16%). Only a very small part of respondents consider it as slightly important (6%) and 3% do not answered.

2.4.10 Shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...)

Fulfilment of shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...) (chart 20) was rated best by Romanian respondents on average between good

and very good fulfilment (4,11 points), then by Slovaks (3,65 points), Hungarians (3,50 points), and Czechs the least (2 points – unsatisfactory fulfilment).

Chart No 20: Fulfilment of shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...)

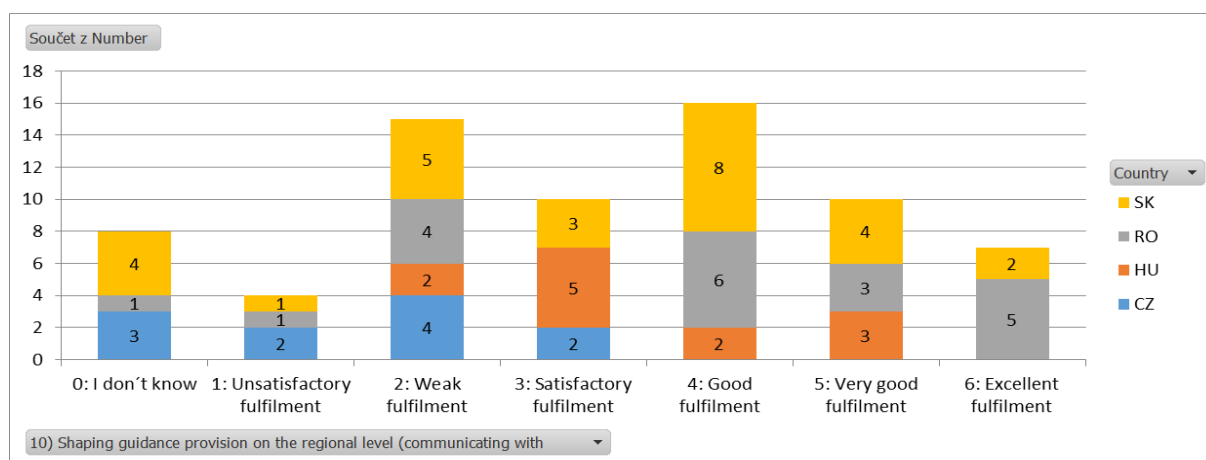
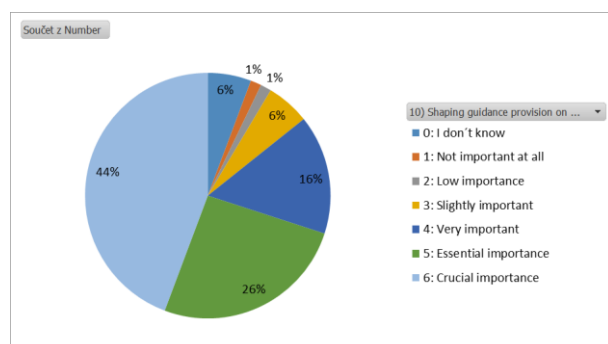


Chart No 21: Importance of shaping guidance provision on the regional level (communicating with regional authorities ...)



Respondents rated importance of shaping guidance provision on the regional level positively, mainly as crucial (40%), than essential (26%), very important (16%). Only 14% or respondents rated it not very positively, of which slightly important 6%, low importance 1%, not important at all 1%, and 6% did not know how to answer.

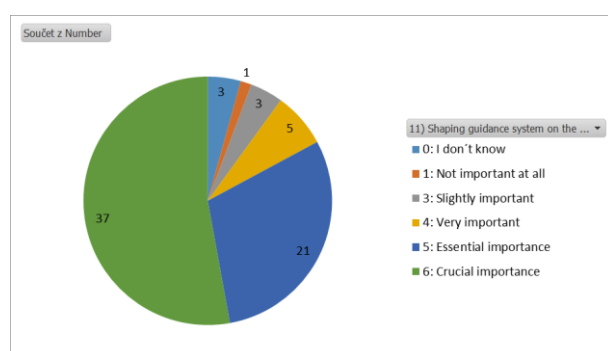
2.4.11 Shaping guidance system on the national level (advocacy, participating in legislative process, communicating with ministries ...)

On average, fulfilment of shaping guidance system on the national level (advocacy, participating in legislative process, communicating with ministries ...) is rated as good by respondents from Romania (4,16 points) and Slovakia (4 points). Hungarian respondents awarded fulfilment of this activity by 3,64 points (i.e. between evaluation point excellent and very good), Romanians 4,3 points, Slovaks 4,2 (both between satisfactory and good), and the Czechs 2,89 points (a bit less than satisfactory).

Chart No 22: Fulfilment of shaping guidance system on the national level (advocacy, participating in legislative process, communicating with ministries ...)



Chart No 23: Importance of shaping guidance system on the national level (advocacy, participating in legislative process, communicating with ministries ...)



Importance of this activity is rated as crucial (37%), essential (21%) and very important (5%). The rest make up only 6%, of which 3% are slightly important, 1% not important at all and 3% did not answer or could not answer.

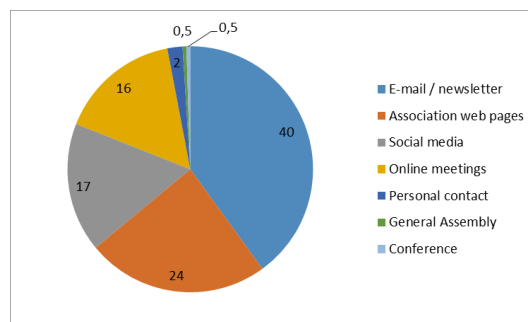
3 Associations' Board activities

Finally, respondents were asked for their opinions regarding the communication between the Board and members, and the topics they find lacking in the association's activities. They were also asked about their views on what they see as the benefits of their membership in the association and what would contribute to their greater involvement in association life.

3.1 Channels of Association's Board communication

Chart No 24: Channels of Board communication

Question on Board's communication channel were answered by all respondents. Since Boards usually communicate through multiple channels, respondents had the opportunity to select multiple options. Among the most common means of communication from the Board were identified by respondents e-mails (40%), association websites (24%), social media (17%) and online meetings (16%). Several respondents mentioned personal contact (2%) and 1% combined General Assembly and conference.



3.2 Provision of information by the Association's Board

Chart No 25: Provision of information by the Association's Board (%)

The provision of information from the association's management to members is generally rated as good by respondents, i.e. 30% rating it as excellent, 21% as very good and 29% as good. A fifth of respondents are somewhat critical, with 10% rating the provision of information from the Board as weak, 7% as unsatisfactory and 3% unable or unwilling to answer.

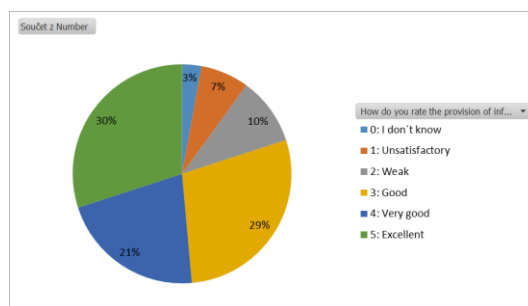
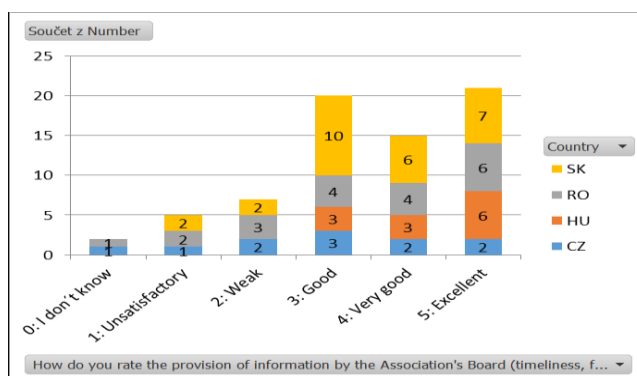


Chart No 26: Provision of information by the Association's Board (by country)

On average, the Hungarian respondents rate communication from Board to members very positively (4.25 points, i.e. between very good and excellent), Slovak and Romanian respondents rate it between good and very good (3.65 and 3.47). The most critical are Czech respondents, who rate communication lower than good (2.91 points).



3.3 Recommendation to Association Board on its communication with members

This and following subchapters (3.3 – 3.7) contain answers to open questions. The responses were anonymized and for the same reason we present them in summary form regardless of the language in which they were written.

We were interested in what respondents would recommend to the Board regarding communication and 40 from 70 respondents (57%) wrote some comments or recommendations. Respondents raised 49 different topics, while some respondents' comments covered more than one topic. The topics can be divided into the following three groups:

- 1) Communication with members (21 comments)
- 2) Events for association members (16 comments)
- 3) Board activities (12 comments)

3.3.1 Communication with members

Members lack information about the activities and decisions of the association board. There's a strong call for regular, structured updates (e.g., monthly or quarterly newsletters). Communication should be clear, timely, and multi-channel (emails, social media, website). Members want to know who is on the board, what they're working on, and how members can get involved. Improve the quality and format of digital communications (e.g., grammar, mobile-friendliness, BCC practices).

There are two topics in this group of respondent responses. First is the information provided by Board to their members, and second communication channels used.

a) INFORMATION

In comments related to improving communication with members, the most frequent recommendation is to increase the frequency, quality, transparency and timeliness of sending information (17x).

Sample of comments:

Communicate more regularly and openly, things happen in the background, but we don't know about it until we meet somewhere and share information with each other...

Clarify what and how you want to communicate.

You send invitations to join, but always very generally, it would be nice to clarify what you need.

The offer of interesting activities comes "at the last minute", often just a few days before the event and I won't arrange a time for participation.

First of all, start communicating with us, not just once a year at the conference

I think the most important thing is more transparent communication.

We don't know the association's projects, even if they may exist - we learn about what was happening at the time of the balance sheet.

We pay an annual fee, the purpose of which I don't necessarily understand - it was never explained to me what happens with the money.

I would like my association to be the voice of the counsellors and not just an NGO with "consultancy" in its name.

Communicate more actively towards members of the association and externally, present career guidance topics in the media.

More frequent, more active periodic communication with specific information related to events, news, best practices, etc.

Regular, monthly or quarterly communication.

One comment to Board activities was quite positive:

You do it great, it is a real help to us advisors and other professions envy us such an association.

b) COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The mentioned communication channels include emails (4x), websites (3x), newsletters (2x) and social networks (2x). Respondents suggest to use mainly e-mail, because information often does not reach members through websites and social networks. One comment concerns also quality of sent information (grammar). Association should modernize and clarify how its digital platforms support communication and participation. One respondent point out that the members' area on the website is considered unclear or dysfunctional.

Sample of comments:

Send comprehensive information, everything is not all together anywhere, you have to compile information from the website and Facebook.

It would be nice to add more on social networks, certainly also LinkedIn, also on the promo career as such, or some targeted campaigns...

E-mail, Facebook algorithms do not help to maintain contact.

Edit the emails you send, they have terrible grammar and can't be read on a mobile phone, only on a large monitor.

You send e-mails to everyone through a copy, while they belong to the hidden copy!

I'm happy to receive email notifications about interesting events, just a little more in advance, please.

There is a member's area on the website that doesn't work properly and I don't understand the point of it.

Sample of one positive comment:

I appreciate the regular newsletter and occasional emails with a current topic the most.

3.3.2 Events for members

Almost all comments regarding events for members recommend to do more. Members highly value events, seminars, workshops, and trainings—both online and in-person. There is a demand for more frequent and regionally distributed opportunities to meet and learn. Meetings are recommended for general semi-formal discussions, as well as educational and awareness-raising events, which could include a space for sharing news, trends, experiences and tools applicable in career guidance. Suggested additions: thematic discussions, accredited lectures, and tool-sharing sessions. Members want more opportunities to contribute, such as through questionnaires, focus groups, or collaborative projects. There's a desire for project involvement, local-level engagement, and networking platforms.

Sample of comments:

The online version is very good and effective, but it would be important for colleagues to meet in person at national conferences and trainings. Thanks to this, we could build our relationship and information system.

Several workshops and discussions with professional colleagues working in the field of career selection.

As part of personal meetings, training and accredited lectures.

Share effective tools in career guidance with counsellors and members

Should it be possible to share news and trends in career guidance more?

I miss educational activities for members in particular.

Share effective tools in career guidance with advisors and members.

3.3.3 Associations' Board activities

Respondents recommend the Board to regularly inform members about their activities so that members can potentially participate in them, e.g. in the preparation and implementation of events, projects, etc. Members desire clear strategic planning and movement toward professionalization of the association. The association is expected to act as a voice for career counsellors and influence policy and legislation. Members want to see greater visibility of the association in public and media discourse.

One respondent mentions that the Board should promote the interests of its members to be active, establish itself as a partner in legislative changes affecting career guidance, involve the membership base in negotiations at the local level, identify the needs and requirements of members and plan activities. Another respondent states the need to support the professionalization of the career guidance profession. There is also a note here that the respondent does not actually know who is on the Board of the association and what the function of the Board is.

Sample of comments:

Communicate more about the internal activities of the Board - what I work on, how often I meet, what is the result, what needs to be helped

Promote the interests of the Association, raise awareness of career guidance and establish itself as a partner in legislative changes affecting career guidance.

Involve the broad membership of the Association in negotiations at the local level, unify (including through questionnaires) needs and requirements, divide the steps into specific tasks.

Communicate more actively towards members of the association and externally, present career counselling topics in the media

I don't even know who is currently on the Board and it is not clear to me what the role of the Board is in the Association.

3.4 Currently underrepresented topics in the association's activities

We asked respondents a question that is important for the Board when considering the future direction of the association, and it concerns underrepresented topics. This question was answered by 39 respondents (54,9%), whose answers can be categorized into the following topics key areas of member interest and underrepresented topics.

a) More events and meetings

- Strong demand for more frequent events beyond the annual conference.

- Interest in regional workshops and national-level gatherings (both online and in-person).
- Requests for revival of previously successful formats like:
 - Winter and summer schools
 - Career clubs
 - "Coffee with career guidance counsellor" informal meetups

Sample of comments:

Any meetings, conferences (more than one formal per year), exchange of best practices, examples from professional activities, problems encountered, projects, approaches, future directions, etc., represent the first step to success.

Summer and winter school, you did clubs, now things revolve only around green consulting and nothing else is happening.

Even greater promotion of career consulting for the public, adults. Tech jobs are changing very quickly and today even people who would not have thought of it a few years ago need a career. It would be nice to make the most of it, catch the wave of changes (enabled by AI, green deal, etc.) and bring career closer to people. More events like "coffee with KP," or support an online version of such an event.

b) Practical and peer learning opportunities

- Sharing good practices and tools among peers.
- Requests for:
 - Expert webinars
 - Online workshops on skill clusters
 - Storytelling events about successful career paths.
 - "Behind-the-scenes" insights (e.g., podcasts, articles).
 - Know-how for newcomers and tips from experienced advisors.
 - Supervision and peer exchange.

Sample of comments:

Storytelling event: The path to success - Inspiring stories of people who have gone through an interesting career path, with the possibility of Q&A.

At the same time, I would like to revive the series "examples of good practice" and take a look into the kitchen of other colleagues. Maybe through a podcast? Or a series of attractive articles? Thank you very much!"

In my opinion, the information on legislative changes is well captured, I would prefer, for example, a section within the conference for sharing know-how, best practice, something more practical for newcomers (career counsellors) but also for those with experience. Possibly workshops (tips/recommendations/advice/how to get started, etc.)

Events enabling sharing of experiences, supervision.

c) Thematic focus and professional development

- Desire for thematically focused events such as:
 - Current trends in career counselling
 - The role of AI in guidance and education
 - Green counselling
 - Life design and life path topics

Sample of comments:

Current trends in career guidance

Julie Samuel's concept of change

The role of artificial intelligence and its ethical approach in education and the workplace.

How to increase the self-confidence of young job seekers, how to help them effectively present themselves

What do we do with out-of-school youth who leave school? I think that more emphasis should be placed on career guidance in schools.

I think that today the choice of a profession and career is more relevant than ever. Accordingly, it may be necessary to represent the department and its important and public interest work at almost every educational forum.

Current employment - employability of young people with health problems (medical certificates or without certificates and who do not face a work program, cannot be employed), youth work, summer jobs.

Single-parent career guidance.

Support for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, e.g. adults 50+, how to help them enter the labour market.

Life path - the trajectory of life and its rhythms and phases, what it requires (A. Palán)

Even greater promotion of career advice for the public, adults. Tech jobs are changing very quickly and today even people who wouldn't have thought of it a few years ago need a career. It would be nice to take advantage of this, catch the wave of changes (enabled by AI, green deal, etc.) and bring career advice closer to people. More events like "coffee with KP," or support an online version of such an event

d) Accreditation, ethics & quality standards

- Several respondents called for:
 - Accreditation of consultants and services
 - Focus on ethics and quality assurance
 - Professional advocacy and better representation at national level

Sample of comments:

Accreditation of consulting services

Improving quality and ethical standards of the profession

Professional advocacy

e) Support for specific target groups

- Need for focused activities and content for:
 - School-based career counsellors
 - Young people with disabilities or outside the school system
 - Adults 50+
 - Single parents
 - Rural youth and jobseekers

Sample of comments:

Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, e.g. adults 50+, how to help them enter the job market.

How to increase the self-confidence of young job seekers, how to help them present themselves effectively.

Choosing a career in the countryside

f) Increased policy and advocacy involvement

- Members want:
 - Stronger involvement of the association in national legislation and policy debates
 - Representation of career counsellors at ministries
 - Participation in educational and employment forums
 - Campaigns, media presence, and online promotion
 - Awareness of career services for adults and schools

Sample of comments:

Professional advocacy.

Promotion of consulting services

Representation of consultants in relation to ministries.

Participation in negotiations with representatives of the business environment

3.5 Main benefit of being an association member

We were interested in what respondents see as the main benefit of their membership in the association. This question was answered by 45 respondents (63,4%). The most valued benefits include professional growth, networking, access to relevant information, and a sense of community. However, there's also a clear call for more consistent communication, recognition of contributions, and enhanced visibility of the association's impact—both for members and the broader professional field.

Respondents' comments can be divided into the following key issues.

a) Professional development & learning opportunities

- Training and workshops (including online and offline formats)
- Participation in conferences, webinars, and educational events
- Access to innovative tools and latest trends in career guidance
- Accreditation certificates or recognition for development hours (though inconsistently delivered)

Sample of comments:

Networking, opportunities for mutual inspiration, learning, support, gaining and sharing information, developing your own and the KP community

They connect people in KP, offer them space for development and networking

Access to the latest trends and innovations in career counselling.

Possibility of participating in trainings, workshops and conferences.

Building professional contacts with counsellors.

Wow, this is really the most active and profitable association I know. From educational opportunities, through support for activities, education, sharing news for members, etc. Also significant financial support...

Information in the field, participation in conferences, workshops in the field, exchange of professional experience.

Strengthening professionalism, professional knowledge, international outlook.

b) Networking & community

- Opportunities for networking and collaboration with peers
- Feeling of not being alone in the profession
- Inspiration and support from a passionate community of like-minded professionals
- Access to international insights through events and communication with global experts

Sample of comments:

Cohesion with a community that has a similar passion and love for career counselling as I do

Networking, opportunities for mutual inspiration, learning, support, gaining and sharing information, developing your own and the community of career counsellors.

They connect people in KP, offer them space for development and networking.

I am very motivated and charged by the fact that so many fantastic people are doing this, full of ideas, looking for how it can be done and not how it can't be done. And that I can join at any time and not get a negative rating. I like events like "On coffee", in smaller towns it is more difficult, and maybe how school fairs are held, so regularly treat e.g. mothers at home (and fathers!) to such career and talent markets, because how millennials come to that is that they haven't had a career in school yet

Building professional contacts with advisors.

Fresh information, possibility of cooperation, connection with other practices in the field

Networking, communication with colleagues from the given country and involvement in the world of consulting from all over the world (very nice communication sessions with international motivational speakers)

c) Access to information

- Regular updates on news, legislation, and activities in the field
- Insight into educational and labour market trends
- Newsletters and informational emails (although quality and frequency vary)
- Staying informed about current projects and innovations

Sample of comments:

Access to the latest trends and innovations in career guidance.

The possibility of attending a conference and receiving a newsletter, which is quite limited, may not be all the possibilities that we as members can participate in.

Current information, innovative development of competencies, networking opportunities.

I welcome the timeliness of information and its availability from your side and I am willing to participate in the activities, because I see great opportunities for advancement in KP. My own and the Association's

Being up to date with news, having my own professional community in which I feel good, a source of professional support

Newsletters, where I can find out what the Association is planning, when the summer school, conference, or current information from legislation is taking place

d) Involvement & contribution

- Ability to actively participate in shaping the association's work
- Opportunities to initiate or join projects
- Possibility of making a meaningful contribution to the professional community

Sample of comments:

Possibility to participate in trainings, workshops and conferences.

Possibility to participate in events organized or promoted by the Association, to be informed about news, to have my own professional community in which I feel good, a source of professional support

I had the opportunity to participate and initiate projects.

e) Recognition & visibility

- Membership can be listed on a CV
- Seen as a marker of professionalism and commitment
- Helps raise visibility within the field (though not all felt it was widely recognized)

Sample of comments:

I can present myself with my membership.

That I can write it on my CV.

Visibility.

f) Critical notes

4 respondents were critical of the benefits of membership in the association, i.e. 8,9% of those who answered this question.

Sample of comments:

Currently none

I don't see any benefit for me.

The only benefit is currently the diploma that I didn't receive. If we were more fairly represented, I would consider the contribution paid annually to the association as well-deserved.

Unfortunately, being a member of the association does not bring me any benefit, nor recognition from those who see it in my CV, because there are too few people who know about the association. One of the benefits may be attending the annual conference and getting X hours of development - but we didn't always get that diploma.

3.6 Possibilities for improving association life for more active member involvement

To improve the future functioning of associations, we asked respondents what could be improved to make them more actively involved in the life of the association. 38 respondents answered (53,8%) and their answers show that respondents would like clearer communication about how they can get involved, they call for more interactive events (both online and in-person), and a stronger sense of community. They also suggest offering financial recognition, more regional and thematic activities, and greater visibility of the association and career guidance in general. Flexibility and accessible formats are key due to limited time availability.

Respondents' comments can be divided into the following key issues.

a) Communication & clear invitations

- Members want direct, clear invitations to participate in specific tasks or projects.
- They emphasized the need for transparent, consistent communication about what's happening and how to join in.

Sample of comments:

Maybe if you addressed us members directly, when there is a possibility to get involved. For example, what you need to help with, where is the space, etc. I liked how you addressed us with the ALMA MATER event :)

Greater openness of the association management to member involvement. Initiating events that are interesting for all members.

If I am offered a task, I will try to participate.

Get it going and provide clear, understandable ways to get involved... Do activities sustainably.

Get the association going a little bit, we would also like to get involved...

Be more present on social media but also do 2 face/online zooms

Specific challenges that would need to be done.

b) Meaningful and accessible activities

- More thematic workshops, discussion forums, online webinars, and informal meetings.
- Hybrid formats (online + in-person) to support regional members or those with limited time.
- Events should promote knowledge sharing, best practice exchange, and mutual support.

Sample of comments:

Common discussion circles, with experienced career advisors, sharing good practice.

Activation of members - incentives, interesting topics e.g. Through webinars, online workshops.

Online discussion forums - space for quick exchange of information and tips.

More online/offline events.

Once a month/two months online meeting - topics would be agreed in advance based on voting from the offer

More informal opportunities to meet

c) Mission & inclusive culture & community feeling

- Members want to feel like they belong to a community, not just a list of email addresses.
- There's a call for more social life in the association – informal, friendly spaces to connect and build trust.
- Opportunities for peer learning, mentoring, and supervision are seen as beneficial and motivating.

Sample of comments:

I believe that pedagogy is a field that creates communities, is present in communities and is able to transmit knowledge. Therefore, experiencing social life, personal contact, conversation and developing friendships do not necessarily have to be limited to the online space. I think that everything I mentioned can bring more activity in the future.

Seeing that there are various activities, feeling represented, feeling that we are a community, communicating with us.

Clear presentation of the vision and opportunities for involvement.

The association also hardly raises awareness of career guidance externally, i.e. a few advisors know about it, but the public and politicians do not understand the importance and significance of career guidance and have no idea that an association exists.

d) Recognition & motivation & reward

- Some members feel their professional expertise is undervalued.
- There's a need for financial recognition for contributed time and knowledge.
- Others expressed feeling more involved when they see the impact of their work or feel represented by the association.

Sample of comments:

The association should not automatically expect advisors to offer their time and experience to others for free. If we are to make a living as professionals from consulting, we need to be rewarded financially for our work.

e) Further professional growth

- Desire of further professional training courses, webinars, workshops including supervision and accredited courses
- There's interest in international mobility and visibility opportunities, especially among more active members.

Sample of comments:

Ability to provide supervision to members.

Give us more online training.

The Day for career guidance is great, but 1 day per year is a bit too little.

Accredited continuing education.

Accredited training, conferences. Higher education options, courses (short, mini courses, new majors, courses).

I also miss international mobility opportunities and greater support for sharing between advisors.

f) Time and accessibility

- Some respondents simply struggle with time and capacity, highlighting the need for flexible involvement options.
- Suggestions included short online meetups, mini-courses, and more regional accessibility.

Sample of comments:

Unfortunately, work, Monday to Friday, and even at home, is getting busier and busier and I feel that there is so little time that I would not be able to participate in person.

It certainly does not matter to the association. I lack time and capacity.

3.7 Final members' comments to Board

Final message to the Board was written by 20 respondents (28.2%). Most of them (45%) expressed appreciation for the association's existence, activities, this survey, and efforts—especially recognizing the often voluntary nature of the work. Some of them conveyed thanks and encouragement, wishing continued success and hoping for greater involvement and expanded activities in the future.

Sample of comments:

Thank you very much for your work. It is often voluntary work, so please do not take my comments critically, rather than suggestions/needs that I perceive. Thank you also for organizing the conference, it was my first personal experience :-).

I thank the association that it exists and I have my fingers crossed that the activities for members will also be expanded.

Thank you for asking

Thank you that the Association exists and I am happy about it, I keep my fingers crossed for everything you do.

Thank you for your efforts and work, it makes a lot of sense and you do it really well. Thank you!

Thank you for your interest in our opinion! We wish you more conscientious and efficient work!

At the Conference, I had the opportunity to see more inside the Association. Thank you for that and I'm glad your enthusiasm. I believe that I will be able to establish myself responsibly among you. Cookery

Some respondents (35%) highlighted the importance of representation in political and professional spaces, paid roles for leadership, and collaboration with other associations. A few noted personal reflections, including a desire to become more active and the value of networking and professional development through the association.

Sample of comments:

Constant involvement in these activities can also lead to the development of our professional skills and networking with other members of the association can open up new career opportunities.

I hope that this effort of yours to get feedback - which I tried to offer in order to make my point as clear as possible - will be a good sign for the consulting community in Romania and that things in the association will make sense for us as well.

I recommend the Council of the Association to organize a meeting with other associations whose members act as career counsellors and agree on one big joint event on the topic of career counselling for all members.

I think that the board of the association should have their activities paid individually, so that they do not do it at the expense of their free time.

It would be good if there was closer cooperation, professional discussions and representation in the political environment with regional career advisors.

It's time to get involved, otherwise I don't see why you'd stay.

Nice questionnaire, I would be interested in the results. I guess you will post them.

The rest of respondents (20%) wrote they have no message to their Board.

4 Conclusion

The survey conducted among members of career guidance associations provided a valuable, analytical, and detailed insight into their operations, strengths, weaknesses, and potential directions for future development. The study covered associations operating in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania. Although the number of respondents was not large, the collected data are sufficient for in-depth analysis and strategic planning. Participants' opinions about their own associations varied widely, ranging from highly positive to critical assessments.

4.1 Strengths

Many members highly value their associations, particularly for the support they provide in professional development through training sessions, conferences, and webinars. Associations also offer valuable opportunities for networking with other career counsellors and other field experts. Additionally, associations serve as essential sources of relevant and up-to-date information on trends, methodologies, and principles of career guidance. Another important aspect is the sense of belonging to a community of career counsellors and the shared values that membership fosters. These factors underscore the crucial role of associations as platforms for building professional communities, exchanging best practices, sharing information, and representing members' interests externally. However, the successful operation of associations depends on the active involvement of both their leadership and members.

4.2 Weaknesses

In addition to positive feedback, it is essential to acknowledge the critical observations that can serve as a foundation for the Board's decision-making regarding the future direction of the associations. Despite broad recognition of their value, significant discrepancies have emerged between what members consider essential and what they perceive as currently being fulfilled. Among the most insufficiently addressed areas are key activities that support professionalization and the development of career counsellors' expertise, such as supervision, mentoring, peer support, and further training through accredited courses. Another crucial but only partially realized initiative is advocacy at the national and regional levels. This gap between members' expectations and the current scope of activities (as revealed by the discrepancy scores) necessitates a strategic review and realignment of the associations' efforts to better meet the needs of their members.

4.3 Communication

Improving communication can not only build trust but also enhance engagement and strengthen members' sense of belonging. One of the most frequently mentioned concerns is the need for clearer, more regular, and more transparent communication. Many members feel insufficiently involved in decision-making processes, lack information about the Board's

activities, and are unsure how to contribute or participate in association initiatives. Specific recommendations from respondents include the regular dissemination of newsletters—either monthly or quarterly—containing details about ongoing and upcoming activities, insights into the Board’s agenda and strategic goals, and direct invitations for active participation (e.g., “We need help with…”).

4.4 Events and Activities

Respondents frequently recommended organizing professional events more frequently, making them accessible not only at the national level but also within individual regions, beyond the scope of traditional annual conferences. They emphasized the need to create opportunities for peer-to-peer exchanges and the sharing of best practices, such as through workshops, thematic discussions, and storytelling from practical experiences. Additionally, respondents suggested reviving successful event formats, such as summer and winter schools, as well as informal gatherings like “Coffee with a career counsellor,” which encourage more relaxed and open discussions.

These recommendations clearly indicate the necessity of creating a well-balanced and diverse event calendar that includes both online and offline meetings. A key aspect is the combination of structured training programs that support professional growth and skill development with informal platforms that foster networking, professional community-building, and inspiration sharing. Establishing such a dynamic system could enhance member engagement and strengthen connections across the association.

Although there is interest among members in actively participating in the association’s activities, many face several key obstacles that prevent regular involvement. One of the most common barriers is a lack of time and capacity. Another factor is the unclear or entirely absent invitations to engage in association initiatives. The third major obstacle is the absence of financial recognition for contributions to the association’s work. Members invest their time, energy, and expertise in association activities, yet their efforts are not always adequately acknowledged.

To effectively address these challenges, it is advisable to introduce flexible and hybrid participation formats that allow members to engage in association activities without requiring physical presence. Online meetings, asynchronous collaboration, or short interactive gatherings can enhance accessibility and make participation easier for a broader group of members. Furthermore, it is crucial to actively communicate specific calls to action and inform members about the ways they can contribute to the association’s life.

4.5 Strategic planning

Respondents suggest that, in the coming years, Boards should focus on several key thematic areas that address both social needs and emerging developments in career guidance. One

priority should be guidance for vulnerable groups, including young people outside the formal education system, individuals over 50 seeking new career opportunities, and rural residents who may have limited access to quality career guidance services. The goal should be to strengthen support for these groups through targeted programs, educational initiatives, and tailored methodologies.

In addition, it is essential to track modern trends increasingly shaping career guidance. These include the integration of artificial intelligence in guidance, the growth of "green careers" in the context of sustainability and environmental protection, and the concept of life design, which promotes long-term career and personal adaptability. These areas could be addressed through professional training, research, and methodological recommendations for career counsellors.

Other crucial topics include the accreditation of career counsellors, the establishment of clear ethical standards for the profession, and the strengthening of political and advocacy efforts at both national and regional levels. Ensuring quality regulation, recognition of the profession, and its influence on education and employment policy development are vital for the sustainable operation of career guidance.

To remain relevant and future-oriented, associations should strategically map membership and social needs, keep up with new social and technological trends and incorporate them into their operational plans and strategies, and ensure their effective implementation. This includes systematic engagement with their members and career guidance experts, organization of thematic conferences and workshops, development of specialized materials, and active collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organizations.

4.6 Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the current state of four career guidance associations several key areas have been identified that require strategic attention and development. Associations play a crucial role not only in providing professional support for their members but also in building a professional community, establishing quality standards for services, and representing the interests of career counsellors at both national and international levels. To ensure their activities remain effective and contribute to long-term sustainable growth, it is necessary to focus on several priority areas.

One of the main recommendations is to enhance transparency and consistency in communication. Clear and open communication strengthens trust between members and the association's leadership, increases engagement, and facilitates the active involvement of members in associational initiatives. This can be supported by publishing summaries of Board meetings, utilizing diverse communication channels preferred by members—such as email newsletters, website updates, and social media. Ensuring a regular and accessible flow of information is key to fostering a sense of belonging and effective collaboration.

Another recommendation relates to diversifying and regionalizing events. Members have varying needs, and the geographical accessibility of events and activities plays a significant role in their ability to participate. Therefore, it is essential to offer a combination of regional in-person meetings and online formats that will make educational and networking opportunities available to a broader group of members. Developing an annual event calendar that reflects members' needs can help improve organization and participation.

Equally important is the professionalization of structures and services. Implementing or strengthening systems for accreditation, mentoring, and supervision will help ensure the quality of guidance services and allow counsellors to further develop their professional competencies.

Clear and accessible calls to get involved contribute to the active engagement of members. Members should have opportunities to participate in specific association activities through the delegation of tasks that require volunteer contributions. A participatory approach, such as using member surveys to select discussion topics, can strengthen the sense of belonging and encourage members to engage actively.

Career guidance should also be externally promoted through increased visibility in media, educational platforms, job fairs, and labour forums. Associations can play a vital role in representing counsellors' interests and advocating for their recognition in political dialogues, which contributes to the long-term stability and professionalization of the field.

Collaboration with other stakeholders is essential for effective knowledge sharing, the development of new projects, and the advocacy of shared interests. Establishing coalitions with NGOs and professional networks provides opportunities for project collaboration and strengthens the influence of associations in employment policy, education, and social integration.

Another crucial aspect is the recognition of members' contributions and the fostering of a sense of community. Associations should actively celebrate their members' achievements, support peer mentoring, and create spaces for experience sharing, such as storytelling from professional practice. This approach reinforces the sense of belonging and encourages collaboration among members.

In conclusion, it is important to highlight that members have not only provided critical feedback but also expressed hope and motivation to participate in the growth of their associations. Many recognize the value of associations, appreciate their efforts, and want to actively contribute to their development. Constructive criticism is a sign of trust in the organization, and it provides associations with the opportunity to progress.

The next steps involve transforming this valuable feedback into concrete actions. Associations now have a unique opportunity to strengthen their role, enhance their influence, and deepen member engagement—not only at the national level but also within the broader context of Central and Eastern Europe. A proactive approach to implementing these recommendations will ensure that associations continue to fulfil their vital mission in the field of career guidance.

Survey of perceptions of activities and benefits of membership among members of four career guidance associations

Project	CEEGAF – Central and Eastern European Guidance Associations’ Forums, No 2024-1-SK01-KA210-VET-000249838
Program	ERASMUS+ program, 2022-2027
Partners	Združenie pre kariérové poradenstvo a rozvoj kariéry, Slovakia Sdružení pro kariérové poradenství a kariérový rozvoj, Czech Republic Magyar Pedagógiai Társaság, Hungary Asociația Consilierilor Romani, Romania
Autors	Zuzana Freibergová, Lenka Hloušková
Date	March 2025

Citation record FREIBERGOVÁ, Z., HLOUŠKOVÁ. L. (2025) *Survey of perceptions of activities and benefits of membership among members of four career guidance associations*. Project ERASMUS+ “Central and Eastern European Guidance Association Forum” (CEEGAF). SKPKR. Prague.

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.