RESULTS DISCUSSION WORKSHOP AT

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Types of CGC providers

Name of the CGC Service	„Bildungs- und Berufsberatung Wien & Niederösterreich"	„Berufsinformations -zentrum NÖ"
Network orientation/organisational provision	Provided by network of different of different organisations	Provided by Chamber of Commerce Lower Austria
Focus on guidance paradigm	Narrative	Quantitative-psychometric
Employer orientation	Usually no direct interaction with employers	Employers as client group (guidance on hiring, training needs)
Low threshold/high threshold	Different formats (f2f, email, telephone, online), outreach orientation (e.g. 80 different venues in Lower Austria), mother tongue counseling, free of charge	Two guidance venues in major urban areas in Lower Austria, most offers not free-of-charge

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Target groups with need of support in the area of digital skills

- **Clients 40+ –** in part great uncertainty in the use of digital applications and devices. This is also associated with great uncertainty in the acquisition of digital skills. Important topic: prevention of cybercrime (unsafe links and attachments, subscription traps).

- **Women re-entering the labour market –** have outdated skills when re-entering the labour market due to rapid changes in (digital) skills requirements

- **Job changers who have worked in the previous job for a long time –** Often have selective digital competences in relation to applications and devices that were needed in the previous job.

- **Young people -** do not necessarily have good digital skills because they have grown up with digital technologies.

- **People who need the most support but do not seek counselling or are difficult to reach through formal counselling services.**

Guidance issues

- **Employees/Job Seekers:** In which jobs would I fit in well with my competencies?
  - Challenges: no/low motivation to learn, no current employer available (employees looking for a new job!)

  => It seems rarely or never the case that an employee seeks guidance on how further develop/improve competencies in the existing job.
- **Employers:** What kind of job candidates am I looking for? What training do my employees need?
  - Challenges: No clear understanding of job requirements or lack of job analysis by employers (often SME's with lack of HR-competencies)

Challenges in guidance on digital skills

- **Lack of change competency on side of client's** – referred clients often lack change competency, in some cases existing change competency must be uncovered by biographical analysis
- **Job advertisements contain too high competency requirements** – this is changing lately due to lack of skilled workers on the labour market
- **Technical infrastructure of clients** – Clients don't have PC or WLAN at home is used by 6 persons at the same time, bad internet connection in peripheral regions
- **Low digital competencies as obstacle for use of online formats** (Guidance & Training)
- **Exact assessment of competency requirements of a specific job** is a complex task, specifically challenging for newly created positions
- **Analysis of acquired competencies** – Clients don't want to talk about their former job, but important to transfer acquired competencies to the new job.

Challenges in skills assessment

- **Self-assessment of competences problematic** – is based on knowledge about an application; someone may rate his/her competences very high because they are not aware of the other functions of the application.

- **Overestimation of own digital competences** – especially by male clients

- **Dialogue on competences complex –** The term competency is difficult (especially for clients) and it is difficult for many clients to name existing competences => a lack of digital competences leads to a lack of knowledge about the relevant terms

- **In practice digital skill needs are often very specific**, meaning to be able to perform specific activities with specific applications - Assessment would therefore have to be very detailed and adapted to specific applications.

Challenges in providing suitable training offers

- **Lack of technical infrastructure or digital competencies on client's side** make it hard to make use of online training offers, which could be especially useful in peripheral regions.
- **High threshold entry-level training offers** – e.g. entry-level courses on digital competencies that require online registration.
- **Quality of further training offers for counsellors difficult to assess.**
- **Training offers not very specific or needs-based –** E.g. Excel course - workplace requires very specific Excel skills - courses go far beyond this. Problem: if the competences are not used in practice, they are lost => "waste of life time".
- **Right timing of training** - competencies should be developed when they are needed. Employers are looking for candidates that meet all competency requirements already when hiring.
- **Further education alongside employment is too much** - especially people (in reality often women) with care obligations are overburdened with courses in addition to work (e.g. courses at weekends). In practice hardly manageable for the target group.

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Ideas for innovation & improvement – Guidance & Training

- **Digital assessment tool** - a quick competence self-check according to the motto "less is more" that is optimised for mobile devices.

- **Provision of digital devices** for trainings if clients don't have their own.

- **A single registration platform** for all continuing education providers in the region.

- More **attention to the composition of groups** in continuing education programmes - it is advantageous if participants are at a similar level.

- **E-learning** offers very good opportunities for demand-oriented continuing education programmes structured in small modules but **require basic digital skills** on client's side.

- **Linking guidance and learning provision** - digital skills provision as part of the guidance provision.

- **In-company training - use of buddy systems**, i.e. employees with existing competences pass them on to colleagues.

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Relevance of networks & networking

- **Horizontal** - Provision of guidance services by network of organisations (division of responsibility by geographic area and/or guidance format)
- **Vertical** – With organisations that refer clients (e.g. PES) and organisations clients could be referred to (e.g. provider of entry-level courses in the region) – the term "system counseling" was used here
- **Grown networks** (e.g. training provider networking with companies to analyse their training needs) vs. **planned networks** (e.g. the provision of guidance services in Lower Austria by different organisations)
- **Tasks of networks:**
  - Community of practice (e.g. social workers from different organisations meet regulary for professional exchange)
  - Joint knowledge management
  - Provision of needs based support by referral

Ideas for innovation and improvement - Networks

- Development of a quality concept for networks.

- Inclusion of additional strategic partners, e.g. by establishing an advisory board.

- New knowledge management tools – collaborative tool where everyone can feed in, but systematically, with automatic updating.

- Benefit system for referral of customers of training providers - provider has no suitable course for clients, referral to another course provider, but payment for referral.

- A single registration platform for all continuing education providers in the region.

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Useful aspects for methodology development

- No specific formats that focus exclusively on digital competencies – need to develop a methodology focusing on digital skills that works in holistic guidance processes.

- In many guidance cases there is no current employer available (either job seeker or employee who wants to change job/employer).

- Support in job requirement analysis (e.g. by interview, job shadowing) highly appreciated by employers with lack of HR-competencies (especially SME) – could be a potential benefit for employers to collaborate with CGC.

- CGC could support shift of mindset on employer's side:
  - formulation of realistic job requirements
  - more openness towards training on the job/after hiring.