

YouMatch Study Tour on Career Guidance

In June the YouMatch network embarked on another virtual study tour. This time, all CoPs were invited to look at the topic of Career Guidance from different angles.

The importance of Career Guidance (CG) has been highlighted by the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. As data from the International Labour Organization (ILO) emphasizes, the most fragile groups, like young people, are the most affected: worldwide 17,4% of 18 to 29 years old stopped working and only 35% of youths are optimistic regarding their future. As a result, effective employment services become even more important.

In June, YouMatch invited its network members on a virtual study tour to discuss the current challenges of CG during different stages of life and regarding different target groups. YouMatch brings together about 100 employment service practitioners from 25 African and MENA countries within five interregional Communities of Practice (CoPs), working on different topics. The topic of CG is connecting all CoPs, therefore the study tour was organized for the whole network to provide different perspectives and examples of effective, innovative and target group-oriented services of CG. International experts and practitioners presented their experiences during five conference days focusing on six topics: CG and Covid-19-pandemic, CG and Digitalization, CG during Education, CG for Job Seekers, CG and Gender and CG and Inclusion. For each topic, three examples were presented. The special needs of vulnerable groups were addressed as a cross-cutting theme throughout the study tour. Thus, the study tour gave participants an insight into practical examples from around the world and enabled a lively exchange on the event platform.

Besides the topics on CG during education and for job seekers, the session on CG and digitalization was of high relevance for the participants. As Clarisse Goffard, consultant on digital services, pointed out: “Digitalization is like a train stopping only shortly at the station – either we get on the train, or the train leaves us behind”. That is why public employment services have the responsibility to not only deliver digital services, but to fight the digital divide and ensure that “everyone gets on the train” through promoting basic digital skills for job seekers.