

New Skills for New Futures Higher Education Guidance and Counselling Services in Germany

Gerhart Rott

Bergische Universität-Gesamthochschule Wuppertal



FEDORA Project

New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education in the European Union

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in
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A country report of a study on
“New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education”
carried out under the auspices of FEDORA,
with the support of the Commission of the European Communities
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FOREWORD

This country report is part of larger study on “New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education”. The study has been carried out under the auspices of the European Forum for Student Guidance - Forum Européen de l’Orientation Académique (FEDORA). It has been funded by the European Commission as part of its LEONARDO DA VINCI programme.

FEDORA provides a platform for counsellors and advisers in higher education to meet and exchange their experiences. Its activities have enabled practitioners to gain insight into the wide range of guidance methods and activities in Europe, and to benefit from the richness of this diversity.

In particular, the FEDORA Summer Schools have provided opportunities for practitioners to learn from each other’s experience, and to relate this experience to recent theoretical developments. The Summer Schools revealed the strong demand for more systematic training in this field, and the potential benefits of responding to this demand at a European rather than purely national level. It was felt, however, that before planning any initiatives of this kind, a clearer map was needed of guidance and counselling services in higher education in Europe, and of current training provision for practitioners. A proposal for the study was presented to the European Commission, and the Commission agreed to fund it under its LEONARDO programme.

The study is of wide significance. For the first time, a comprehensive analysis is available of higher education guidance and counselling services across the whole of the European Union. In several cases, the study has provided the first such analysis even at national level. Because it is based on a common structure and methodology, the study also enables practices in each country to be contrasted with the others.

This report, together with the 15 other national reports on all Member States of the European Union and the synthesis report written by A.G. Watts and R. Van Esbroeck, is an important one both for FEDORA and for guidance and counselling in higher education in Europe.

This resource will be invaluable for international and national policy-makers, for higher education managers, and for guidance and counselling practitioners, as well as for employers in planning their higher education recruitment links. In particular, it enables the strengths and weaknesses of the different national systems to be identified, and is a powerful source of ideas on how the services in each country might be improved. It will also give clearer direction to the work of the European Commission, FEDORA and other European bodies in supporting such development.

Joachim Klaus
President, FEDORA

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Preface

Various inquiries and handbooks, initiated and financially supported by the European Commission, have in recent years laid the foundations for a cross-European understanding of the counselling services at work in the various educational systems of the Union (Watts, 1992, 1994). These publications were concerned with all age-groups and with the entire range of educational institutions; their emphasis was nevertheless on the area of educational and vocational guidance; student counselling was accorded relatively little space in their pages. Two publications to date have been devoted centrally to counselling at the university level, but then only to certain specialised areas of counselling: the social counselling services (Schäferbarthold, 1992), and psychological and psychotherapeutic counselling (Bell, McDevitt, Rott & Valerio, 1994).

The survey offered here is of the entire range of counselling services in the German higher education sector; it is a constituent element of a Leonardo project supported by the European Commission which aims to provide a complete picture of counselling services in tertiary education within the various countries of the union. The survey method is one of comparative presentation and analysis based on work by the two leaders of the project: the study by Prof. Tony Watts (1992, 1994) mentioned above, and the functional model for university counselling proposed by Prof. Raoul Van Esbroeck (1997) of the Vrije Universiteit Brussels. The survey seeks to establish the comparability of its findings by presenting them in tables based on uniform categories, and it strives for a high degree of differentiation by using qualitative criteria and expert judgements in the assessment of its findings.

The data on which the German report is based come on the one hand from an empirical study on psychological counselling whose remit covered the entire range of student counselling in Germany (Figge, Kaiphas, Knigge-Illner & Rott, 1995); on the other hand they are drawn from a variety of studies and empirical inquiries as well as the statistical material, annual reports and activity reports of the individual counselling services. To bring this material up to date, a special questionnaire was prepared and sent out to every Central Student Counselling and Advisory Service (ZSB - *Zentrale Studienberatungsstelle*) and to the counselling services of the Student Affairs Organisations.

The preparation of the present report has had the active and critical support of Karin Gavin-Kramer and Dr. Helga Knigge-Illner of the Central Student Counselling and Psychological

Counselling Service in Berlin, who formed, together with myself, the operational team of the project. Their work has exemplified the critical dialogue whose method informs the entire European project. Eighteen other practitioners, managers and policy-makers have not only annotated and expanded the survey tables from their various points of view, but have also provided frequent detailed comments which have enhanced the presentation and interpretation of the data in all their complexity. I should like to express my thanks to all concerned - and to Joseph Swann for his help in preparing the final text - for their invaluable work.

The national reports had to be completed within a far shorter space of time (April to September 1997) than is normally available for comparable inquiries. This has caused considerable problems for so complex an entity as the German educational system, with its federal structure and diverse counselling services. On the other hand the pressure generated by lack of time has cut discussion short and accelerated judgement and action.

This has made itself felt especially with reference to the methodological framework and the categories with which we have had to work. Discussions with colleagues both in Germany and on the wider European front have revealed doubts about certain categories and procedural steps; attention has been drawn, for instance, to the inadequate presentation of psychological counselling and psychotherapy. The project deadlines, however, ruled out any new formulation - in the course of compiling the national reports - either of the categories or of the tables concerned. Both at the national and at the European level I could have wished for more time and scope for discussion.

Nevertheless the clear pragmatic limits have sharpened the sense of this being a European statement, and they have emphasised the element of ongoing discussion in the procedure. European reports of this sort, in our present stage of development, provide the knowledge we need for reflection and considered judgement - judgement, however, which can be no more than provisional. The present report on the situation in Germany is to be understood as a first step in a European dialogue. Other steps must follow.

Gerhart Rott

Wuppertal, September 1997

1. Summary

This report represents the German contribution to a cross-European project initiated by the 'Forum Européen de l'Orientation Académique' (FEDORA). The project, entitled 'New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education' has been conducted within the framework of the LEONARDO programme of the European Commission. Its aims are as follows (Butcher, Van Esbroeck & Watts, 1997):

1. To provide an up-to-date overview of the current structure of guidance and counselling services within higher education, the roles of those who work in the services and the training for such roles.
2. To identify the extent to which training provision exists within the European Union to equip those in guidance and counselling roles in higher education with the new skills they require to meet the changing needs of an increasingly diverse student body within a European labour market.
3. To provide a basepoint for exploring the extent to which postgraduate and post-experience training modules might be made available across Europe, possibly leading to a European masters degree in guidance and counselling in higher education.

With these aims in view, the report first presents an analysis of the various counselling services relevant to the higher education (HE) sector, setting this out according to the method and structure agreed beforehand between the various national groups within the EU: a procedure which facilitates comparison and will ease the composition of the final synthesis report on the structure of guidance in European HE as a whole.

It is the declared aim of FEDORA that this report, as well as arousing broader public interest, should awaken the universities to the importance of the counselling services working in their midst and their relevance to contemporary developments in HE. In particular, the report will underline the responsibility of the universities for the standards of their own counselling services and for the provision of ongoing training in this field. FEDORA's desire for a European masters degree in guidance and counselling is a key element for the future.

The report therefore highlights the counselling services operating in the tertiary sector, specifically the Central Student Counselling and Advisory Services (ZSBs) with their twin fields of activity in informative (orientational) and psychological counselling. In their historical development (*Kultusministerkonferenz* (KMK), 1973) as in their contemporary

relevance they (along with faculty-based course counselling) form the core professional counselling input in higher education.

The report aims, however, at a comprehensive description of the main counselling services, understanding this concept generously in order to differentiate the various facets and goals of their provision. Chapter 2 begins with a general survey, subjects the various services in turn to a more detailed scrutiny, and finally summarises their provision under a number of analytic headings. The services internal to the university or college are taken first, then those provided by institutions closely connected with the HE institution (Student Affairs Organisations) and finally those external to the HE sector (the Federal Department of Employment).

Chapter 3 presents an overview of the principal counselling roles within these services and goes on to analyse their activities according to various relevant criteria. Three role-profiles are then examined in greater detail: those of the ZSB student counsellor, the psychological counsellor or psychotherapist and the vocational advisor.

Chapter 4 deals with the training and qualification for these roles, including the ongoing training provision, whose meagre presence on the European scene is indicated and discussed.

A concluding summary makes clear the existence in Germany of a structured and qualified counselling service, whose continued qualitative expansion and strengthening, however, is of great importance to dynamic developments in the HE sector. This is particularly true of vocational guidance provision for both students and graduates. A European masters degree course in guidance and counselling that was able to crystallize current methodical reflection and address the complex training demands and expectations of the service would contribute substantially to the development of student counselling for the 21st century.

2. The structure of guidance in higher education

Introduction: higher education in Germany

Education in Germany is divided into a primary sector that is largely uniform across the country, a secondary sector that is further subdivided and differs from state to state, a well-established two-tier system of vocational education and training and a widely differentiated higher education system.

There are 90 universities, 83 of them in the public sector (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Technologie, 1997, 1996), including the comprehensive universities (*Universität-Gesamthochschulen*), medical colleges and other specialised institutions such as the Sports University in Cologne and the Distance Learning University (*Fernuniversität*) in Hagen. Teacher training is now largely integrated into the university structure, but 6 teacher training colleges still exist (mostly in Baden-Württemberg) - statistically these are counted as universities. Music and art are taught in a specialised way in 46 HE institutions. Theology is taught in many universities but also in HE institutions belonging to the various denominations (11 Roman Catholic, 4 Protestant, 1 Jewish).

The second major HE institution is the *Fachhochschule*, an advanced technical college or professional school, specialising sometimes in a single field, of which there are 176 in Germany. Their curriculum is essentially practical and vocational, preparing for those professions which demand 'the application of rigorous knowledge and scientific method or artistic ability' (Fachhochschulgesetz NRW, 1988, p.98). Among these institutions are 30 colleges of administration training civil service officers.

Distribution of students among the various HE institution types.

Year	Students				
	Total		at		
			Universities and Colleges of Fine Art and Music	Fachhochschulen	
	Thousand	Percentage	Thousand	Total	At Fachhochschule for administration
				Thousand	Thousand
1996	1838.5	28.3	1396.4	397.5	44.5

(bmb+f, ed. *Studierende an Hochschulen 1975 bis 1996*, 12 - 14)

The growth in demand for education can be seen in the following figures:

Expansion of student numbers.

Percentage of students in the age-range 19-26:

	1960	1970	1980	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Former West Germany	4.3 %	9.5 %	15.9%	22 %	-	25.2 %	27.2 %	28.4 %	30.2 %
Former East Germany	-	-	-	8.5 %	-	10.4 %	12.5%	14.3 %	16 %
Germany as a whole	-	-	-	19.6 %	21.2 %	22.7 %	24.6 %	25.9 %	27.7 %

(bmb+f, ed. *Grund- und Strukturdaten 1996/97*, 147)

Important reforms to the HE system were introduced in the late 60s and 70s, widening the curriculum and bringing democracy into HE politics. More recently further reforms to the HE system have been mooted. The key concepts in the contemporary debate are economy (global budgeting to increase the financial autonomy of the individual institutions, controlling, goal-oriented direction, cost reduction), shortening of study time, quality of training and enhancement of career prospects for graduates. In general, institutions are increasingly concerned with their image and with cooperation and contacts with industry.

To gain a place at an institution of HE a student must have university entrance qualifications: generally - though not exclusively - in the form of the *Abitur* (equivalent to British A-levels or Higher School Leaving Certificate) gained after 13 years at grammar school (*Gymnasium*) or (less commonly in Germany) at comprehensive school (*Gesamtschule*). The qualification for entering a *Fachhochschule* can be gained at a vocationally oriented specialist secondary school (*Fachoberschule* - like the old technical colleges in the UK) and at some other institutions. It qualifies only for courses at *Fachhochschulen* and for the integrated courses of the comprehensive universities (*Gesamthochschulen*), though it is possible in various ways to transfer from these to full university courses.

An important factor for understanding the structural development of HE in Germany is the cultural sovereignty of the 16 federal states, guaranteed by the constitution. Restrictions to state autonomy in law making and in executive political competence exist only in the areas of vocational training, in the federal framework of laws governing the universities, in the establishment of universities and in the provision of student grants. Even in these areas, however, close cooperation with the individual states is the rule. The educational policies of the states vary considerably, but the standing committee of education ministers

(*Kultusministerkonferenz*) strives for unity in the HE sector. The five eastern states which joined the federation in 1990 took over for the most part the existing system of the western states. They retained a few characteristics of their own, such as (in some cases) the award of the *Abitur* after only 12 years' schooling.

Any person holding university entrance qualifications is entitled to a place at the university of his or her choice. However, some courses (most commonly music, art and design, and in some cases architecture, journalism, sports) demand a special entrance examination held by the university or other HE institution to determine adequate basic knowledge and aptitude. Free choice of profession or vocation, and thus free choice of the relevant course of training, is a basic constitutional right in Germany. Only when (according to strict criteria) there are not enough places available, do the courts accept a limitation on entry numbers (*numerus clausus*), either on a local basis for the individual state or across the whole Federal Republic, in which case it is administered by the central admission service (ZVS - *Zentrale Vergabestelle für Studienplätze*). In either case places are then awarded on the basis of grades attained in the *Abitur* or other university entrance examination and on the time a candidate has been waiting for his or her place.

2a. Main guidance and counselling services and systems: overview

2a.1 Background: service providers

A counselling service will to a considerable extent be influenced by the type of HE institution in which it is integrated or whose students form its clientele. From the sheer number of its students a university will make different demands from those of e.g a small art college or music academy, where close personal contact between teacher and student is still possible. Moreover, the status of a university as a place of research as well as teaching suggests a more distant relation towards the student as an individual person. The university tradition tends to be one in which 'professors emphasize their research and teaching obligations and resist against any other responsibility' (Martin, 1996, p.80). This tendency, according to Martin, is reinforced both by the overcrowding that is a feature of contemporary university life - 'in most departments there are many more students than faculty feel they can handle' (*ibid.*) - and by the traditional attitude of universities that 'they do not have to compete for students' (*ibid.*).

The *Fachhochschulen* have as a rule far fewer students than the universities, and have forms of teaching that generate closer contact than is the case at universities. This may account for the relative infrequency of counselling services in these institutions: approximately 40% of *Fachhochschulen* have a ZSB.

The relative size of the university counselling services explains the greater complexity and variety of their counselling and guidance activities. Basic structures, however, are remarkably similar for all institutional types. The tables presented here do not, therefore - apart from the column 'capacity' or 'extent' - distinguish between these various HE institutional types. An explanation of the different modalities available is given in the commentary.

The institutional context and organisational framework of the various counselling services, in particular their funding and administrative control, plays an important role in their activities. Professional qualifications and standards, day to day cooperation as well as the concrete needs of the students mean that the counselling services share many common features. Nevertheless the specific objectives and culture of their host institutions crucially determine the nature of their work.

Apart from the relatively rare services provided by the churches and student communities or by special associations, there are three main types of institution involved in student counselling: higher education institutions, student affairs organisations, and the employment offices.

2a.1.1 Higher education institutions

The present report focuses mainly on counselling in HE, which covers the universities (including the comprehensive universities), academies of music and art, teacher training colleges and *Fachhochschulen*.

HE objectives are outlined in the HE laws of the individual states, which makes for some differences in detail; but the overriding structures of research, teaching and learning form a common core. The particular task of the ZSB is to take account of the student in the totality of his or her personal context (Nestmann, 1997, pp.18ff), but this will always be, in some way or other, influenced by the nature of the institution and its particular goals.

The internal structure of the university or other institution further differentiates the counselling service provided. Internal administration is based on the faculties. Academic groupings (professors, other teaching staff, non-teaching staff, students) elect a central body (e.g. the 'convention' or *Konvent*) to rule on fundamental matters of principle and supervise

elections (e.g. of the *Rektor* or president - in UK terms, vice-chancellor); they also elect the senate whose concern is the day to day running of the university. The elected head of the HE institution is the *Rektor* or president, who is assisted by a professional head of administration or *Kanzler*, a post which is differently regulated in the various states of the federation.

The ZSB may be either a central facility within the university, in which case the senate will frequently nominate a commission or advisory board to liaise and cooperate with it, or it may be immediately subject to the *Rektor* or president, or even form part of the administration in the strict sense, in which case it will constitute an administrative department (*Dezernat*) or be part of one. In a few cases a central psychological counselling service may be integrated into an institute of psychology or a university hospital. Where a ZSB serves several HE institutions it is usually integrated into a university, the other institutions being represented on a joint supervisory commission. Counselling activities closely connected with the teaching programme (e.g. course counselling) are normally provided by the departments or faculties concerned.

2a.1.2 The student affairs organisations (*Studentenwerke / Hochschulsozialwerke*)

The provision of a social infrastructure for students is not, in Germany, the immediate task of the university or other HE institution but of local, legally autonomous, Student Affairs Organisations (*Studentenwerke*) - on whose supervisory boards, however, the university will be represented. There are in any case many points of contact in their fundamental concerns, as well as in their institutional structures and physical location, between these organisations and the institutions which host them. One characteristic is that the Student Affairs Organisations are organised on a municipal or regional basis, which may, in country areas, mean that the institutions they serve are geographically quite distant from each other (100 km or more). In such cases counselling services must either be centralised or rely on a branch structure.

The objective of the Student Affairs Organisations is to support the economic, social, physical and mental well-being of the student body. They run catering facilities (*Mensas* or dining rooms and cafeterias) and halls of residence, distribute state grants and loans (BAföG) and also in many cases run counselling services (psychological and social counselling and counselling for disabled students), though these may be restricted in scope.

2a.1.3 Employment offices

The local employment offices (UK 'jobcentres') are subsidiaries of the federal Department of Employment (*Bundesanstalt für Arbeit*) situated in Nuremberg. This is centrally concerned with the unemployment insurance scheme which all employees in Germany are obliged to join. Contributions to this scheme are on a fifty-fifty basis shared between employee and employer, and the scheme is administered jointly by the state and by the employers' and employees' representatives. In addition to providing unemployment benefit, the employment centres act as employment agencies; they organise work projects for the unemployed and retraining schemes. Career or vocational counselling, which begins in the upper school, is a further element in their remit.

2a.2 Notes on table layout

The professional counselling of adolescents and young adults within the educational system falls for the most part under one of the three headings just given. This is why they are presented in Table 1 under the title 'funding / administrative control'. As well as the terms 'location' and 'extent' which refer to where the service is situated and to its distribution across the HE sector, the table also has the heading 'level'. This calls for a brief explanation. It uses van Esbroeck's model (Van Esbroeck, 1997; Van Esbroeck & Watts, 1997) of the functional distance between the counsellor and the academic teaching structure, in which three levels are distinguished:

- first in line (1): part of the formal teaching function
- second in line (2): linked to the formal teaching function, but with some degree of specialisation
- third in line (3): separated from the formal teaching function and offered by a specialist.

The heading 'target group' refers only to the main service recipient group; there may be others. Parents, for example, may turn to the ZSB or sit in on its sessions. And the groups summarised here may comprise a wide variety of help-seekers. Thus the term 'potential students' covers school students, school-leavers, national servicemen, people doing alternative service and those in employment. Nor are the groupings named in the table to be thought of as mutually exclusive: thus the ZSB will also advise disabled students.

2a.3 Translation and terminology

The translation of the term '*Beratung*' (cognate with the verb '*raten*', to think something out, and with the noun '*Rat*', practical advice or counsel) is problematic. It is used in German in all counselling contexts, being qualified where necessary by an adjective which then gives it a more specific meaning, as in '*psychologische Beratung*' or '*Studienberatung*'. The word '*Beratung*' in itself refers to a communicative activity of everyday life, not necessarily to a professional activity. In recent years it has become a commonplace of the world of work, from the 'all-round *Beratung*' (meaning advice and information) offered to the passenger buying a railway ticket, to the *Beratung* by one's personal bank adviser on loans and investments, and the *Mieterberatung* provided for tenants in rented property (the same sort of service that is provided by the Citizens' Advice Bureaux in Britain). Increasingly, however, the German term is being used in a more specialised context where it parallels the English word 'counselling' and refers to a psychotherapeutic activity (in the broad sense) centred on a person's perceptions, experiences and behavioural patterns and on their evaluation of situations. In all such activities the relation between 'counsellor' (*Berater*) and client is of paramount importance. Between these two poles lie many other shades of meaning which can be understood only by looking at the way the underlying concept is determined by the particular situation.

The distinction between 'counselling' and 'guidance' as those terms are used in the UK gives rise to a further translation problem. In the first draft of the survey table we used the terms 'guidance workers' and 'advisors' to differentiate between the various roles and functions in the counselling centre. But this led to considerable protest from staff who insisted that their task was counselling and that they should be called counsellors. This seemed better to reflect the image the service in Germany has of its approach as being personalised and non-directive (Klaus, 1991; Rott, 1993; Rott & Wickel, 1996), despite the fact that many German 'counsellors' do not primarily see their work in the psychotherapeutic terms that are central to the British idea of counselling (Martin, 1996). Nor would many of them want to subscribe to the stipulation of the British Association for Counselling's 'Code of Ethics and Practice for Counsellors' that 'Counsellors do not normally give advice' (Bell, Henry, Heyno & McDevitt, 1994, p.140). In view of this we decided in favour of the terms 'counselling' and 'counsellor', using the alternatives 'advisor', 'advisory service' and 'guidance' to indicate where necessary the ambivalence of the basic concepts. We have translated '*Berufsberatung*' as 'vocational

guidance', the term that is commonly used in Europe to cover the many different activities involved; on the other hand, following Watts (1992), we have translated the term '*Berufsberater*' as 'vocational counsellor'.

The inherent difficulty of translating one set of institutionalised terms into another has been pointed out with some force in the Vocational Training Glossary of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). The comment is made there that 'superficial harmonisation of terminology without proper clarification [...] only simulates unity and is counter-productive to real cooperation' (CEDEFOP, 1996, p.3). We should like, therefore, to draw the reader's attention to the explication of concepts given in the commentaries, and to the underlying problem of translating between two different linguistic worlds.

Table 1 : Main guidance and counselling services and systems - structure and content

Service / system	Funding / administrative control	Location	Extent	Level (mainly)	Target-group (mainly)
Central Student Counselling & Advisory Services (ZSB - Zentrale Studienberatung/ Zentrale Einrichtungen: Studienberatung und Psychologische Beratung)	funded / controlled by HE institution	inside	almost all universities and some other HE institutions	3	potential students, students
Faculty-Based Course Counselling (Fachstudien- / Studienfachberatung)	funded / controlled by HE institution	inside	all HE institutions	2	course students
Distance Learning Centres (Fernstudien- / Studienzentren)	funded / controlled by HE institution	inside	few HE institutions	2 and 3	potential students, students
Careers Guidance & Vocational Qualification Projects (Berufs- und Arbeitsmarktorientierungsprojekte)	funded / controlled by HE institution, sometimes mixed funding with local Employment Office (Arbeitsamt) and/or employers	inside	few HE institutions	3	advanced students, especially of the humanities and social sciences
Counselling & Advisory Services for Students with Disabilities or Chronic Illness (Beratungsstellen für Studierende mit Behinderungen)	funded / controlled by HE institution or by Student Affairs Organisations (Studentenwerk) or by Employment Office (Arbeitsamt)	inside or attached to campus or outside	most HE institutions	2, 3	students with disabilities and chronic illnesses
Psychological & Psychotherapeutic Counselling Services (PBS - Psychologische und Psychotherapeutische Beratungsstellen)	funded / controlled by Student Affairs Organisations (Studentenwerk)	attached to campus or outside	some HE institutions	3	students
Social Advisory Services (Sozialberatung)	funded / controlled by Student Affairs Organisations (Studentenwerk)	attached to campus	some HE institutions	3	students
Vocational Guidance for Secondary School Graduates and Students / Higher Education Team (Berufsberatung für Abiturienten und Hochschüler / Hochschulleam)	funded / controlled by Federal Department of Employment (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit)	attached to campus and/or outside	most HE institutions	3	secondary school graduates, students

2b. Commentary

Introduction: development of the counselling services

The ZSB, vocational and course counselling services of the various HE institutions offer a wide range of professional counselling for school students, others interested in the possibility of studying, as well as matriculated students before, during and after their tertiary education. The ZSB in Germany, however, varies considerably in size, and in the scope and quality of the service provided, from one institution to another.

Historically the counselling services had their roots in the widespread discontent in the 60s with the state of university education and with the ensuing drive to reform the HE system. Student counselling was seen as a way of counteracting some of the frustration and loss-inducing friction inherent in the system (Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK), 1973). The expectations put as a result of this on the counselling services were to some extent unrealistic and unfulfillable, but they did set the sights of the service on modernisation and gave considerable impetus to that dynamic. This was true of the counselling services already in existence at the time - e.g. vocational guidance; most services, however, were established in the course of this reform movement of the 1970s (Figge *et al.*, 1995).

The 80s were a period of professional consolidation, with attention being paid especially to questions of method, to the expansion of the counselling programme and to cooperation between the services and centres. It was the time when counselling established itself successfully as an integral element of the HE sector. In the late 80s circumstances changed for the worse, but the difficulties were now different from those of the early years: financial cut-backs and the overloading of the university system led to some serious reductions in the service and to the cancelling of innovatory projects. Despite the positive utterances of highly placed administrators and politicians, it was in practice frequently difficult to obtain financing for the service, none at all being available at the federal level.

With the unification of the two German states in 1990 the question of establishing counselling services in the eastern states took priority. Structures were simply taken over on the western model.

In the context of scarcer resources and the reforms consequently needed across the entire HE sector, current discussion focuses on increasing the efficiency of the counselling services and thus consolidating their claim to adequate funding.

2b.1 The Central Student Counselling and Advisory Service (ZSB)

The ZSB forms the core of the professional counselling system in the HE sector in Germany. There are about 190 ZSBs in Germany¹. With a single exception, all universities in the public sector have a ZSB; only one third, however, of other HE institutions do so, some of these being served by the local university.

The ZSB provides the general counselling that is distinguished in state HE legislation from the course counselling within the faculties and departments. The rapid expansion and complexity of the HE sector demanded a professional counselling input beyond the facilities of the various faculties and departments. Some state legislatures have explicitly catered for psychological counselling as a ZSB task. In certain other states the universities themselves have made this part of the ZSB remit. In 1992 40% of ZSB units provided psychological counselling (*ibid.*, p.37); these are the so-called integrated ZSBs (*ibid.*). At the Free University Berlin and at the University of Hamburg this integrated structure is expressed in the double name 'Central (or Centre for) Student Counselling and Psychological Counselling'. At the University of Hanover the two areas are served by separate units, and in a few universities psychological counselling is undertaken by the Institute of Psychology or the Faculty of Medicine.

2b.1.1 Phases of Student Counselling

HE counselling can be divided sequentially into four phases:

- preparatory counselling
 - 'fresher' counselling
 - mainstream student counselling
 - college leaver counselling
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- **Preparatory counselling** - ZSB activity reports indicate that 50-60% of their clientele are potential students: school students, national servicemen and people doing alternative service, apprentices who have the *Abitur* but are learning a craft or trade before studying, people in

¹ Calculating the precise number of ZSBs is not simple. In smaller HE institutions the tasks and functions of the student admission office and of the counselling service are often not clearly distinguished, and it may be a matter of chance whether they are listed as a ZSB or not. Figge's detailed survey of HE institutions listed 189 ZSBs. The Standing Committee of *Rektors* (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz - HRK) (1996) provides similar figures.

work who want to take a HE qualification, in particular women who have brought up families and want to take up or re-enter HE. Clients may, if they want, bring their parents along to counselling sessions. For all of these groups telephone and written information and/or counselling is of particular importance. Information given in counselling sessions is principally concerned with choice of course and course entry conditions but also with vocational prospects. Many ZSB units cooperate with the vocational guidance services (e.g. of the Department of Employment) as well as with schools and with the university faculties to offer special student information days during the course of the academic year.

- **'Fresher' counselling** - In their first weeks at university students need information and guidance to enable them to settle into their courses, make contacts and adjust to their new life. The ZSB frequently provides brochures and organises introductory sessions held by the teaching staff, or at some universities trains student tutors who offer supervisions in small groups for first semester students.
- **Mainstream student counselling** - The ZSB is available for students who need more information than they receive in their faculty or department, or who need orientation and help in the wider perspective of their studies. The aim of the ZSB is to pave the way for reasoned decision-making in an active personal context. Information and guidance that looks beyond the individual departmental subject is of particular importance, especially when a student wants to change course or university. It is also the task of the ZSB to counsel students who doubt the wisdom of their choice of subject or their suitability for HE, as well as those who suffer disturbances of various kinds during the course of their studies, e.g. examination anxiety, problems in making contact or in their relationships, problems of self-esteem etc. Training groups may be offered on themes such as efficient learning and working or coping with stress.
- **College leavers counselling** - In Germany choice of vocation and career is of particular importance towards the end of a student's time in HE or in postgraduate studies. The ZSB frequently offers special training groups in this field.

Most ZSB units have set up information stands (*Infotheken*) with brochures and leaflets on their own institution as well as other local, regional, European and international information

useful to students in HE, not only in relation to their studies but also to careers and the career market.

2b.1.2 Internal structure of the ZSB

The German HE system demands a high degree of independence and maturity from its students. It is not easy to organise one's course of studies into a meaningful and motivating whole. University students have privileged opportunities, but they are also subject to considerable stress. They have to master the crises of young adulthood constructively in an environment that is by no means always supportive (Krüger, 1982, 1986; Lindig, 1990; Rott, 1990; Martin, 1996).

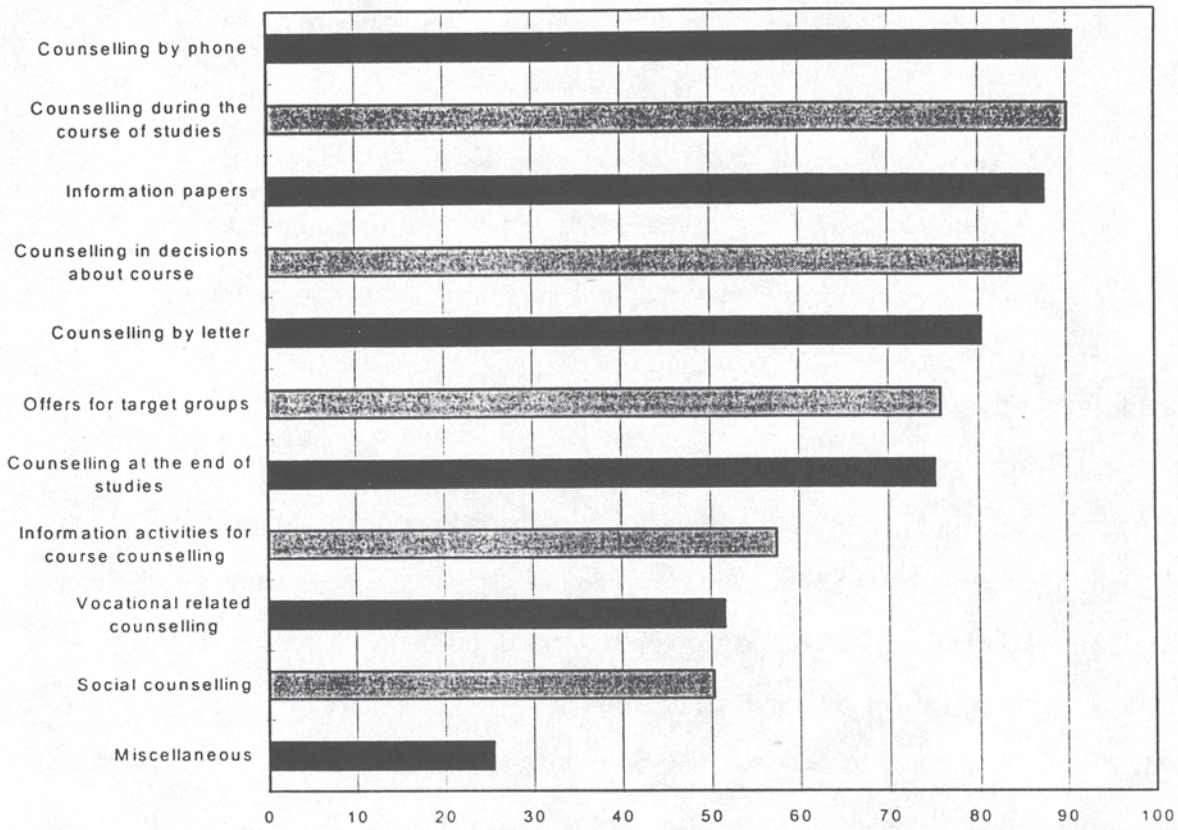
The decisions a student has to make, whether they are concerned with a course of study or with personal and critical situations, are not merely a matter of adequate and correct information, but of person-centred support in the process of clarification that leads up to those decisions. Counselling, then, is both thematic and goal-and-person-oriented (Rott & Leonhardt, 1997). The degree to which a ZSB is able to respond to the complex demands of its clients and to support their decision-making process depends both on the guiding concept of the service and on its ability to translate this into practice. The personal background of the individual counsellors as well as their flexibility and competence is clearly central. Organisational modalities, especially the relation of the ZSB to its host institution, play a role here, but one should not overestimate this aspect.

The heterogeneity of counselling concepts and procedures in German HE has been emphasised by Deppe (1996, p.5). However valid such differentiation may be, one should nevertheless not overlook the core characteristics of the ZSB and the broad band of similarities in structure and provision which they reveal. In their empirical study of counselling Figge *et al.* (1995) distinguished four areas in which such structures were evident:

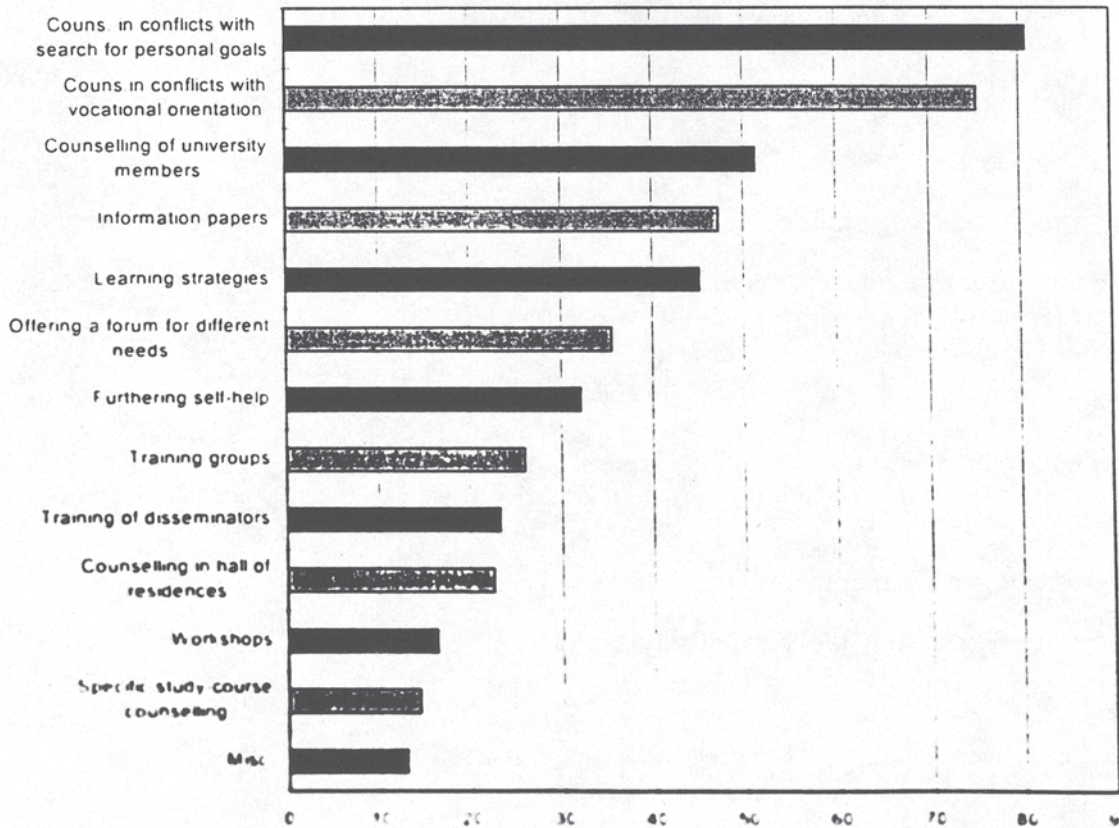
- informative counselling
- person-centred counselling
- psychological counselling and psychotherapy
- psychiatric and psychotherapeutic treatment

Of these the first three are particularly characteristic of ZSBs. Their activities can be illustrated graphically as follows:

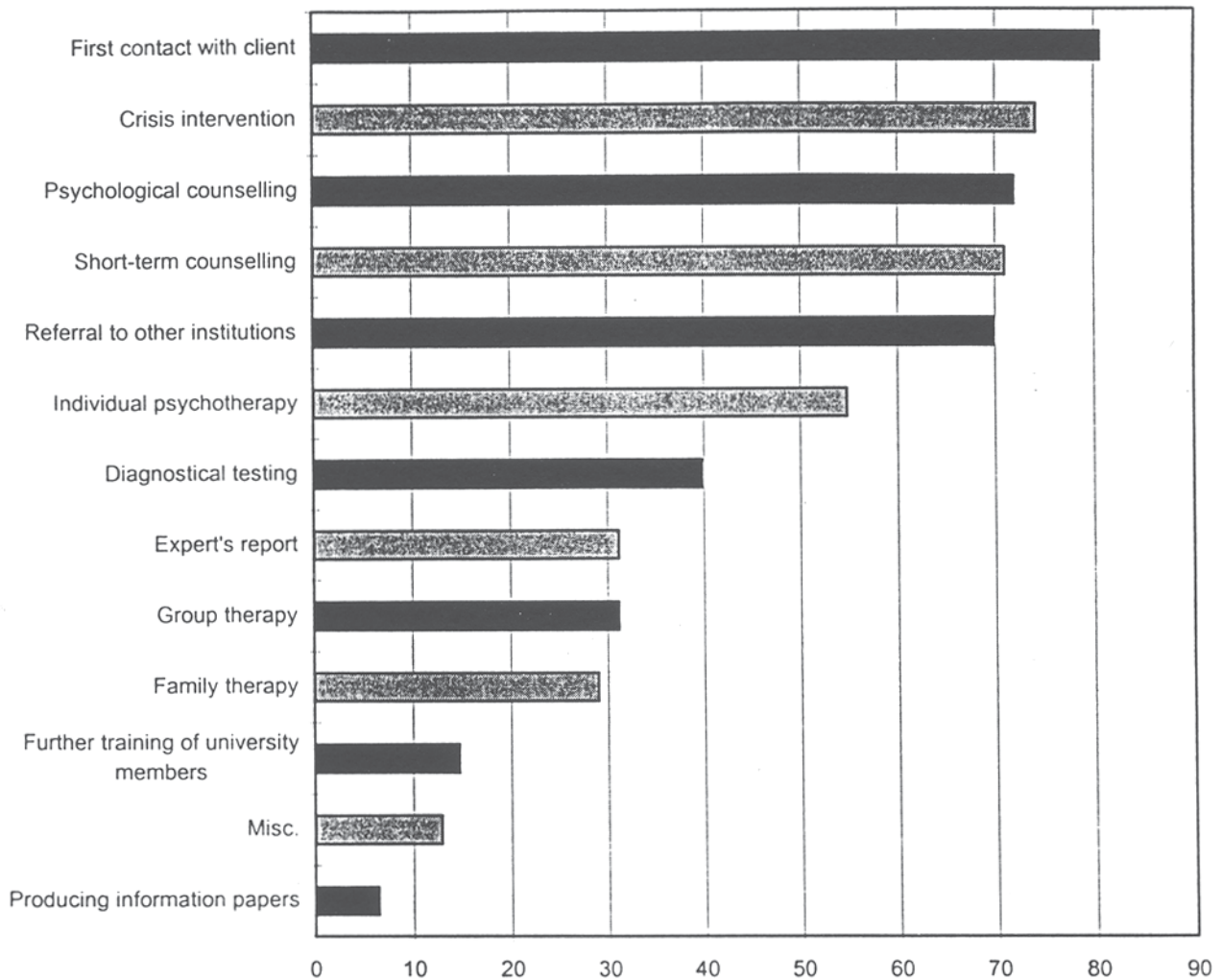
• Informative counselling in the ZSB: activity profile



• Person-centred counselling in the ZSB: activity profile



• Psychological counselling and psychotherapy in the ZSB: activity profile



The study from which these data are taken allows the reader to 'see mutual interaction between the areas under investigation both in content and form' (Figge *et al.*, 1995, p.80), and Rott and Wickel (1996) bring out the positive dynamics of the integrated ZSB as a particular 'feature of the German counselling system'. Figge (1997) again pleads for these three classes of activity, along with psychotherapeutic treatment, to be viewed as an integral whole. The importance of this can be seen, for instance, in the development of procedures for working groups (Knigge-Ilner & Kruse, 1994) which invoke a complex of psychological and psychotherapeutic as well as didactic and informative counselling functions.

The complex insight into student development fostered by the diverse activities of the counsellor frequently also has a positive effect on the function of the ZSB within the HE system, enabling it to operate as a focus for counselling and guidance across the entire host institution and thus to bring clarity and practical coordination to a mass of detail (cf the section on cooperation)

Finally the current interest in providing counselling for the transition from HE to employment (Augenstein, 1996) and in the development of new composite forms (cf. the section on trends) should lead to new and effective counselling structures.

2b.2 Faculty-based course counselling

The HE legislation of the individual German states consistently views course counselling as an internal support structure important for the efficient functioning of the institutions concerned. There is great variation, however, in the time university teachers are available to students during their open office hours, and this time is generally taken up by students who are currently in a course taught by the particular staff member or have chosen them as their examiner. Course counselling properly speaking, however, should aim not only at these students but in particular at beginners, and should in principle be available to anyone who wants help in structuring their studies meaningfully. Moreover, the specialisation of faculty members, useful as it is for students in their own department, sets limits which can already be seen in the question of course combinations - limits which highlight the necessity of the ZSB as an overarching institution within the university or college.

The task of course counselling, however, is practised in a very fragmentary manner across the HE sector. Teachers and students alike conceive of it frequently as a matter simply of expounding the formalities of the course regulations (*Studienordnung*), and even here the departmentally appointed counsellors in some cases know little about those formalities. One reason for this unsatisfactory state of affairs is undoubtedly the lack of clarity in the definition of the task itself. Many professors within a department or faculty can take over the counselling function without any of them feeling responsible for the overall perspective of the department; or the task may simply be delegated as a chore to a staff member with relatively little experience - as a rule, course counselling brings with it no reduction in other tasks. It must be said, however, that there are also very positive examples of efficient and committed course counselling, whether at the individual level or in the attitudes of departments and faculties.

Faculty-based course counselling may in general be characterised as possessing a high level of academic professionalism but a fairly low professional profile in terms of counselling competence. Methodical discussion, 'round tables', 'discussion circles' etc. are more usually initiated by the ZSB. There is a notable dearth of publications, too, from faculty members on

the subject of theoretical models for course counselling; when these have come it is also as a rule from the ZSB (Rott, 1991; Chur, 1996).

A possible reason for this situation may be seen in a remark by Bargel that a lack of guidance and counselling is the most striking deficiency of the west German HE system. His empirical inquiry into the situation of students in the winter semester of 1992/93 showed that at that time only 25% of students in the west German states considered it possible to consult their teachers for advice and guidance when they felt they needed it (Bargel, 1993a, p. 25). A later survey showed, however, that 46% of students took advantage of faculty counselling (Bargel, Ramm & Schreyer, 1996, p.3165).

New measures, though, can give course counselling a different quality, as can be seen in the example of Berlin, where obligatory examination counselling has led at the very least to increased personal contact between student and teacher. Several universities have delegated a specific 'faculty representative for course teaching', who may well bring new impulses to course counselling, and the draft HE legislation in several states emphasises similar functions: e.g. the current draft of the Bavarian HE law recommends the introduction of a dean of studies. More generally the current pressure on faculties and departments to function efficiently in terms of student performance may bring in some necessary changes.

2b.3 Distance learning

There are distance learning programmes and institutions in Germany both at the university and at the *Fachhochschule* level. While entry at the *Fachhochschule* level is markedly open, the university programmes have the same entry requirements as conventional universities. Most distance learning students study at home and have correspondingly little contact with others in their field. Their course material is generally of a very high standard in terms of scholarship and didactic presentation; nevertheless 'distance learning demands of its students intense self-discipline and organisational ability' (Schuemer, 1992, p.2).

Distance learning students form a very heterogeneous group with equally varying motives (*ibid.*). Counselling, therefore, in this context has an importance and a quality of its own. Alongside the counselling provided by the ZSB units of the various HE institutions, especially those which themselves offer distance learning courses (e.g. the Technical University of Dresden), there are 56 distance learning centres throughout the country which also provide a counselling facility (Rektor/Kanzler - Dezernat 2 - Studentische und akademische Angelegenheiten/ Zentrale Studienberatung, 1997). These are either organisationally

incorporated into the Distance Learning University (*Fernuniversität-Gesamthochschule*) Hagen or are autonomous units, often within a university or *Fachhochschule*. Counselling is then either organised centrally through the ZSB of the Distance Learning University, in which case telephone counselling is in the foreground, or it takes place in the study centres (*ibid.*).

2b.4 Careers guidance and vocational qualification projects

In comparison with British universities, German HE institutions feel little responsibility for placing their graduates in employment when they leave university. Traditionally professors in the faculties of engineering and in the natural sciences have made an effort, through personal contacts, to find jobs for the graduates whom they have got to know in their courses. As the universities have expanded, however, this network has necessarily thinned out and the careers problem has become more acute.

Against this background HE staff in a number of institutions - sometimes in cooperation with the Employment Office - have initiated structures and projects to provide additional qualifications or practical experience, in particular for graduates in the social sciences and humanities. In this context course counselling as well as career counselling has taken on a new intensity in order to enable students to bring their qualifications to bear in a fruitful way in the employment market. In the present depressed market, which puts additional stress on students and graduates, such projects open new perspectives for career counselling as a close collaborative enterprise both between the ZSB and academic staff (Augenstein, 1996) and between the university, industry and commerce.

2b.5 Counselling and advisory services for students with disabilities or chronic illness

The duty of the HE institutions to cater for the special needs of students with disabilities is clearly established in the political and legislative framework of German HE. In addition, special recommendations of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education (KMK, 1982) and of the Conference of *Rektors* in HE (then Conference of West German *Rektors* - Westdeutsche Rektorenkonferenz (WRK) - 1986) make explicit the intention to fulfil these requirements.

Although recent years have seen a number of improvements in facilities to integrate students with disabilities, much remains to be done both at the technical level of adapting buildings and at the level of support and counselling provision. Almost all HE institutions have a representative specially designated (usually by the senate) to coordinate facilities in this

respect, the main task being to create a university or college that is open to all. The degree of individual counselling in this function varies from one institution to the next and depends largely on the presence within the institution of special counselling provision for this student group. Such counselling services will cover finance, mobility and accommodation as well as any specific personal or technical needs the disabled student might have (Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW), 1996b).

Counselling of the disabled will be especially concerned with self-help and 'peer counselling'; it may be offered by an independent body under the aegis of the local Student Affairs Organisations, or it may be part of the social counselling task of a full-time staff member of that organisation. In 1995 28 of the 65 local Student Affairs Organisations provided such counselling in one form or another (Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW), 1996a), generally as part of their social counselling programme. One can work on the assumption that about the same number of ZSBs will have a staff-member with the special task of counselling disabled students (R. Langweg-Berhörster, personal communication July 1997). Special mention must be made of the small number of specialist units with intense specialised provision for the disabled, e.g. the 'Study Centre for the Visually Disabled' at the University of Karlsruhe.

The 'Counselling Centre for Disabled Students' of the German Student Affairs Organisations supports local counselling centres with information material, contacts, conferences etc. for disabled and chronically ill students. At certain employment offices the Department of Employment provides special vocational counsellors for disabled school-leavers and students; a specific area of their competence is work rehabilitation and funding.

2b.6 Psychological and psychotherapeutic counselling services within the local Student Affairs Organisations (PBS)

Alongside the psychological and psychotherapeutic counselling integrated in many HE institutions into the activities of the ZSBs (Figge *et al.*, 1995; Figge, 1997), many Student Affairs Organisations provide similar services which are, however, organised on a municipal or regional basis rather than as an element within the individual university or college. A 1992 survey of all services which provide psychological counselling quoted the following figures: 58% ZSBs, 30% Student Affairs Organisations, 12% others (Figge *et al.*, 1997, p.37). The DSW's own figures (1996) show that 35 of the 65 organisations have a psychological counselling centre under one of various headings: 'psycho-social counselling centre' (Jena).

'psychological counselling centre' (Halle), 'psychological and psychotherapeutic counselling centre' (Berlin), or 'psychotherapeutic counselling centre' (Heidelberg). At times these headings would seem to cover an extended concept of social counselling. The name under which the centre operates is of less importance, however, than the scope of the provision offered. This may vary from e.g. a 3-hour weekly slot offered on an hourly-paid basis (Chemnitz-Zwickau), or a contract with a personnel counselling and training company (Leipzig), to the permanent employment of a considerable number of psychotherapists (Berlin: 5 full-time, 12 part-time). The Student Affairs Organisations in Munich, Braunschweig, Heidelberg and Bremen all offer extensive provision; many other institutions have one or two psychologists or psychotherapists on their staff - Figge reckoned on average 2.2 per unit (Figge *et al.*, 1995, p.26). These centres view their work as 'preventive and supportive of development' (Studentenwerk Berlin, 1997, p.60) and emphasise the flexibility of their approach. The larger centres, especially those under medical control (e.g. Heidelberg), cater for psychiatric as well as psychotherapeutic counselling (Figge, 1997, pp.40ff) and lay special emphasis on interventions in cases of serious personal crisis.

As in the ZSBs, the interventions and therapy offered by the Student Affairs Organisations are for the most part relatively short: up to 10 hours (Studentenwerk Berlin, 1997, p.29f), for example, or on average 9 sessions in Heidelberg (Holm-Hadulla & Soeder, 1997, p.424); longer therapeutic interventions are, however, more frequent than in the ZSBs (Figge, 1997, pp.38f, p.108). Some psychological counselling services within the HE institutions have fixed contracts with the Student Affairs Organisations which stipulate that these take over all mid- and long-term therapy. The overall field of activity of the psychological counselling offered by the Student Affairs Organisations is also similar to that offered by the ZSBs, although more emphasis is laid on individual and group psychotherapy. Counsellors are faced with similar problem areas and sources: learning and study, parents, contact and relationships including those with sexual partners, depression and self-esteem deficiency (Zentraleinrichtung Studienberatung und Psychologische Beratung, 1995; FU Studienbüro der Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Allgemeine und psychologische Beratungsstelle – Zentrale Studienberatung, 1995; Zentrale Studienberatungsstelle Bergische Universität-Gesamthochschule Wuppertal, 1996; Studentenwerk Berlin, 1997; Holm-Hadulla & Soeder, 1997).

Despite these similarities, the psychological and therapeutic counselling of the ZSBs appears to specialise more intensely in study-related problems. The integrated nature of the

ZSB within the university or college seems to promote a more sharply focused awareness and closer cooperation across the counselling spectrum (Figge *et al.*, 1995; Rott & Wickel, 1996; Figge, 1997).

2b.7 Social advisory services

The Student Affairs Organisations are also charged with the distribution of state financial support (BAföG), which depends among other things on parental income. In recent years state economies have reduced the number of students who receive this support from 63% in West Germany in 1971 to 18.1% in the western German states and 37.7% in the eastern states in 1995 (Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW), 1996a, p.23; Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Technologie, 1995, p.246). As a result many students have difficulties in financing their studies and the need for financial advice is correspondingly high. Many Student Affairs Organisations interpret their social function in a broad enough sense to establish special advisory services for student finance, social (UK= 'national') insurance, accommodation, legal problems of foreign students and the special needs of students with children. The DSW (1996a) report of 1995 cites 40 general social counselling services, to which the University of Leipzig was added in 1996, but this figure may include psycho-social counselling not immediately concerned with social problems of the sorts named. Some of these centres have two staff members; more common however is one, and sometimes only one part-time position. Counselling is conducted either on an individual or group basis; cases of conflict - in particular between students and parents - are dealt with by arbitration. All counselling is voluntary (Deutsches Studentenwerk, 1993b).

2b.8 Vocational guidance for secondary school-leavers and students (HE team)

The counselling services mentioned so far are all organised in relation either to an individual university or to a university town or region: they are essentially local. The Career Advisory Service for Higher School-leavers and Students (BB-A/H - *Berufsberatung für Abiturienten und Hochschüler*) is a service of the Federal Department of Employment, and as such is represented in every Employment Office across the country. Its task is defined as being 'to enable those seeking advice to make an informed career choice for themselves' (Deichsel, 1992, p.61); its activities 'comprise

- development of criteria for informed personal decision
- pinpointing of options and strategies for effective action

- combatting misinformation about specific career prospects and risks' (*ibid.*, p.63).

All sixth forms are visited at least once by vocational counsellors who answer the questions of the group and provide information about the services of the local Employment Office and Career Information Centre. Individual sessions lasting up to an hour may then follow after personal contact with the Employment Office. Every school-leaver receives a free copy of the booklet 'University and Career: Your Choice' issued jointly by the Department of Employment and the government and federal states commission on educational planning and research development (BLK).

In towns with HE institutions the Department of Employment career advisory service for students is conducted in a particularly intensive way. Here a HE coordinator in the Employment Office has the task (without legal powers) of maintaining contact with the university and/or colleges concerned.

Until 1995 the Department of Employment maintained in 42 offices a service aimed specifically at qualified specialists and managerial staff. When this was closed down some offices established their own HE teams, consisting of professional career advisors, academic advisors and market specialists; their brief extended from career advice to school-leavers and students (BB-A/H) to job placement (Schober, 1997), with special emphasis on the entire spectrum of graduate employment information. Currently this concept is established only in some 40 of the larger universities (20,000 students upwards). In such a situation the role of the HE coordinator is crucial, as maximum cooperation is called for from all parties concerned.

Apart from the booklet mentioned above and information brochures on specific graduate training and employment prospects, the Department of Employment issues two special journals, 'abi' and 'UNI', distributed free of charge to higher school-leavers and students currently in HE respectively. The Department of Employment's Central Office for Job-Placements (ZAV) in Frankfurt issues regular market analyses, both on a general and on a profession-specific basis, and acts as a centre for upper school and student jobs and work experience abroad.

2b.9 Student-run counselling services

The present Europe-wide survey is concerned only with professional counselling services, but the significant role of non-professional services within the HE sector should not be overlooked. Course counselling in particular is offered at student-student level in the faculty and department based student groupings (*Fachschaften*). Student tutors also play a special

role in this area, and in some HE institutions the ZSB trains and supervises these tutors (Gavin-Kramer, 1991). Social and legal counselling is often available from the Student Union (AStA - *Allgemeiner Studentenausschuß*), sometimes on a professional basis. Student societies, both federal like the AIESEC or IAESTE (associations for economics and engineering students respectively) and local, have in recent years contributed substantially to career awareness and direction through student fairs and job-markets.

2b.10 General considerations

- **Funding**

Virtually all the counselling services listed here are financed by their respective institutions and offered free of charge to the client. Each institution expects its counselling services to show loyalty towards its aims and objectives.

All the service providers enumerated above under 2a.1 are engaged in discussion of tasks and costs. In the past the universities rarely formulated any express aims, but such discussions are now part of everyday life in the HE sector. Counselling services are increasingly called upon to justify their relevance and efficiency. It is increasingly common in some institutions that counselling services are required more or less explicitly to assist in the selection of potentially good students (and conversely in the rejection of those deemed 'incapable of studying'). The conflict between such a function and the principles of person-centred guidance generally accepted and practised by the German student counselling services may lead to crises of loyalty.

Diminishing financial resources coupled with rising demands on the education sector in general have initiated intensive discussion and trial of possible economy measures and new models for financing HE (Hochschul-Informationssystem GmbH - HIS - Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung - CHE, 1997). The experience of other European countries has been followed closely. Specific measures include 'global budgeting', increased user sharing of the costs of certain university counselling and training programmes, the introduction of student fees, attracting social sponsors etc. On the basis of a successful trial-run at the universities of Bochum and Wuppertal, 'global budgeting' has recently been extended to all the HE institutions of the state of North Rhine Westphalia, in some instances with funds being allotted according to specific indicating factors, e.g. graduate numbers (Hödl, 1997).

The extent to which this type of flexible accounting and budget distribution will affect the counselling services is not yet clear. At issue is the recognition of their importance for the goals of the organisation, and the readiness of HE management to foster quality in counselling provision. Put the other way round, what is at issue is whether the pecking order at the funding table will inevitably lead to cuts in counselling or whether public expectation of certain minimal standards being maintained will have a concrete effect on the distribution of finance. Another aspect of the current discussion is whether, in view of currently unfulfilled needs, fees should be charged for certain counselling activities. Piecemeal measures of this sort seem at present to be impracticable to any relevant extent²; on the other hand it would be thinkable to finance counselling through the levy of an overall student fee, although there is much controversy about such fees at the moment.

- **Counsellor-student ratios**

The question about the numerical ratio of counsellors to students presupposes a close local and institutional relation between the two groups, seeing counsellors as concerned exclusively with the students of their own university or college. This presupposition does not hold for Germany, where ZSBs are concerned not only with their own students but to a very significant degree, for example, with the quantitatively scarcely definable body of school-leavers and would-be students. Nor are social counselling and the special counselling services for disabled and chronically ill students represented at every HE institution. Finally the careers advisory service for school-leavers and students and the HE teams of the Federal Department of Employment are not linked to any particular HE institution and their remit is not restricted to students or graduates. The student-counsellor quotient is therefore an inadequate parameter for calculating the actual ratio between providers and users of the service; at the very least the upper-school numbers in the catchment area of the HE institution in question must be taken into account if any realistic picture is to be gained. Nevertheless, so far as the ZSBs are concerned, the relation between tenured counselling posts and student numbers in a particular institution can serve as a broad indicator of the provider-user ratio.

In the key decision of 1973 that led to the establishment of ZSBs, it was calculated that after an initial two-year period a counsellor-student ratio of 1:3,000 would be reached (KMK) and

² Some counselling services are already trying to make economies, e.g. by sending out information only when a service is provided, or making a charge for information, or printing it in booklets offered for sale. Other services, for instance, ask for a small voluntary contribution to the costs of psychological counselling

that this would level out to a fixed ratio of 1:1,000. Other planning drafts reckoned a minimum of 4 counsellors per university or college, and that this would be raised proportionately in the larger universities. None of these plans has been realised in the past twenty years. The actual ratio at present is in the order of 1:4,000³.

- **Cooperation, links and referral practices**

The three counselling services which together cover the spectrum of tertiary education from school to first professional appointment maintain close links with each other both in the content of their work and in their referral practice. Given the different tasks they perform, the general student counselling service cooperates for the most part on an informal basis with the course counselling of the individual faculties and departments. The normal path for prospective and new students leads from general counselling, which will deal with questions of application, registration and course combinations, to course counselling, which will deal with the specific modalities of a department's course structure. It is relatively uncommon for students to go direct to departmental or faculty course counselling; when this happens, it is as a rule because the person concerned is not informed about the various counselling structures within the university or college and thinks the course counsellors can answer all their questions, whether course focused or otherwise. The frequency of referral of students from departmental counsellors to the ZSB depends on how well known the ZSB services are throughout the institution (cf. the section on 'image'). Course counsellors may also themselves refer to the ZSB for information without sending on the student in question. Cooperation between ZSB and course counsellors may be on a 'jour fixe' basis of regular meetings; it may include joint development of brochures etc. on specific courses and the joint organisation of course introduction sessions. Both the quality and the extent of cooperation between these two services varies from one university to another.

In institutions where psychological counselling is not integrated into the ZSB, cooperation between this latter and the psychological counselling of the Student Affairs Organisations is of particular importance (Figge *et al.*, 1995). Cooperative relations may also exist between the

³ Working on the basis of 470 tenured counselling posts across the country, the current student population of 1.84 million would provide this ratio of 1:4,000. Individual services however report ratios of 1:6,000 or even 1:10,000.

ZSB, for example, and other local psychological counselling services, as well as with local psychotherapists and doctors.

Relations between the HE institutions and the career advisory services of the Federal Department of Employment are regulated contractually through the offices of the Standing Committee of *Rektors* (HRK) - e.g. for the exchange of information brochures etc. - and on a local basis, e.g. for the use by the Employment Office of counselling rooms and facilities in the university or college.

In recent years the universities themselves have been more active in providing career information and further training qualifications as well as work experience placements in order to ease the transition for their graduates from the HE institution to professional life. One such model is the experimental Careers Service of the University of Münster (Bock & Köster, 1996) which combines input from the ZSB, the technology transfer unit, the Foreign Students' Office and career counselling. Available resources are often insufficient for the widespread development of such structures, however, and close cooperation with the Federal Employment Offices is as a rule the only substitute.

The actual functioning of cooperation between these various services to achieve good counselling results depends on the ability of the people concerned to 'work together effectively' (Deppe, 1996, p.13) in the realisation of joint projects.

- **Stages in the student career for which support is available**

In general it may be said that the counselling services in Germany are best equipped for the phase preparatory to university entry and for students beginning their courses.

The preparatory phase actively involves career counselling and the ZSB; the 'fresher' phase actively involves the ZSB and the course counselling services of the faculties and departments. Despite these services, significant information gaps still occur in the initial HE phase (Lewin, Heublein, Schreiber & Sommer, 1997, p.38; Gemeinsame Kommission für die Studienreform im Land Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1996). Surveys have shown the importance of these counselling and advisory services in providing orientation for prospective students and for those in their early semesters, but that the effectiveness of their work depends crucially on the cooperation of upper school and faculty staff (Gemeinsame Kommission für die Studienreform im Land Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1996).

Counselling is available for all students at any time during their courses when critical situations arise either in their studies or in their social and personal lives, but experience

shows that the services concerned may fall short of the ideal in their variety and extent. A tutorial system is not part of the normal HE scene in Germany.

This is the source of some of the difficulties facing graduates in the transition from university to professional life. During their time at university students are given too little help actively clarifying their goals, including their career objectives (Augenstein, 1996). The career services and job-market projects of the universities and colleges, for the most part in cooperation with the HE teams of the Federal Employment Offices, are, however, attempting to fill this gap in counselling provision. Model projects such as the 'Careers Service' mentioned above in the section on cooperation can open up new perspectives in this field for the ZSBs too.

- **Acceptance and image**

General statements about the degree of acceptance, effectiveness and usefulness of HE counselling services are uncommon, as the many factors involved create methodological difficulties. For various reasons evaluations scarcely occur at all. Only in the areas of ZSB counselling, careers advice and course counselling are there any data that would facilitate such judgements. So far as the effectiveness of counselling is concerned, surveys on the improvement and optimisation of study attitudes must be distinguished from those aimed at the subjective evaluation of counselling. Specific cost-use evaluative analyses of ZSBs such as that conducted in the Saarland in 1979 were methodologically problematic and were not continued.

For the most part analyses confine themselves to client-based evaluation. Early studies of this type (Bertram, 1979; Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1982) came to very positive conclusions with respect to the ZSBs. More recent surveys which include evaluation of counselling provision in wider questionnaires on student attitudes and behaviour reveal on the other hand a somewhat ambivalent picture (Bargel, 1993a; Lewin *et al.*, 1997). What is noticeable on the whole is that counselling by the faculty and departmental student associations (*Fachschaften*) is evaluated very highly. Counselling by faculty members is also viewed positively on the proviso that staff be available to students, which however is seen as problematic (Bargel, 1993a, p.8; Lewin *et al.*, 1997, p.15). The professional counselling of the ZSB and career advisory services is at the same time judged insufficient by about one third of the student body (Bargel, 1996, p.3166), although the ZSB services are rated more highly than those of the Employment Offices (Lewin *et al.*, 1997, p.15). Both

services achieve higher ratings from their users than they do from non-users (Bargel, 1993a; Bargel *et al.*, 1996), which suggests that negative evaluations are connected with an image problem (Bargel, 1993b).

The services of the ZSBs are clearly used more in institutions where they are present in a more developed form: thus university services, which are almost always better staffed and equipped, have more clients than do those of the *Fachhochschulen* (Bargel *et al.*, 1996). A further point is that the intensive use of the central counselling services by school students, school-leavers and other would-be students of all ages is often not recognised by the management of HE institutions as a significant factor either in the task-description or in the workload of the ZSB; again and again the attempt is made to define the activities of the ZSBs, and above all to trim staff ratios, in relation only to the number of matriculated students in the institution. Survey results show the need for more exact analysis if the relation between provision and need in the counselling services is to be defined more clearly (Figge, 1991) and service provision improved.

- **New technologies**

New technologies were introduced to the counselling services in the first instance by the Federal Department of Employment, which developed a computer database on training courses, 'Kurs direkt', which is available in many Employment Offices across the country. Office procedures such as letter writing and the sending of information brochures etc. were computerised at an early stage. Further important steps were the development of software for computer-assisted decision making on the part of the client. To date these programs are confined to the support and clarification of the client's own career and training interests. Widely used testing or career guidance programs do not exist in Germany, nor are there any current plans to introduce them. This is also true of the counselling services in the HE sector.

The University of Münster ZSB created the database 'AKZ' which lists all the postgraduate study opportunities in Germany according to location, target group and content. The database was made available to all interested counselling services, where it could be installed without difficulty and run on a PC. The Standing Committee of *Rektors* (HRK) took up the results of this initiative and, in cooperation with a publishing company, issued them on CD-ROM.

For the HE counselling services, use of computers for office work such as answering letters and preparing and sending out information is nowadays a matter of course. More recently the internet has started to become a useful tool of the ZSB and is increasingly used to facilitate

the flow of information. In many services e-mail is becoming as normal a feature of the office as letter-post and telephone. Most German HE institutions now have their own web site which also lists the service information and e-mail address of their ZSB, and a number of ZSBs have developed comprehensive internet-based descriptions of the courses and counselling provision of their university or college - information which they can constantly update.

On the basis of their experience with the database 'AKZ', the University of Münster ZSB has developed a protoversion of an Internet Study and Course Guide which lists not only postgraduate courses and opportunities but the whole range of undergraduate courses available in the country too. This internet guide lists the course programme of each university or college according to a uniform scheme which enables the user to download information on any course and compare them in detail, e.g. what courses in microsystems technology exist across the country and what they look like. All ZSBs are encouraged to join the database and integrate it into their own web sites. By agreement with the University of Münster the various ZSBs can decentralise and update the internet guide, if necessary with the assistance of the database originators in Münster, e.g. in technical matters. The decentralised database will then list the entire course and study programme of the German HE system without the heavy costs of a centralised database. Moreover, in contrast to most classic databases, it is available worldwide over the internet free of charge. Developments in this area are rapid.

A different dimension of media- and computer-based teaching has been introduced by the distance learning universities, which have also seen the advent of counselling by video-conference and e-mail. The Distance Learning University at Hagen has set up economics courses so far in Hagen, Hamburg, Munich and Berlin, where teaching and examining are conducted interactively - among other methods, by multipoint video-conferencing. As distance learning programmes become more widespread and begin to use the internet - cf. the University of Dresden's distance learning project and the internet-based European Virtual University now in the process of establishment at the Universities of Essen, Lyons II and Perugia - new counselling tasks and procedures may well be called for.

Current experience shows the usefulness of these new media and technologies not only in the area of information management in the office but also in the far greater individualisation they allow of information as it is gained and stored. This does have some effect on personal counselling, but the face to face dialogue of counsellor and client remain the core element of the counselling process.

- **International students**

The supervision and welfare of foreign students in Germany, like the arrangements for German students to study abroad, falls in the first instance under the remit of the Foreign Students' Office. At many universities and colleges this task is conceived as primarily administrative, covering e.g. registration, application for grants and financial resources management as well as the distribution of information on these subjects. Some HE institutions, however, provide more intensive personal supervision and counselling for both student groups. ZSBs, like the other offices named, are expected in general to provide a competent service for foreign students. Given the wide differences in legal status (residence conditions, right to study etc.) between one national group and another, this can in many cases only be achieved in close cooperation with the Foreign Students' Office.

- **The European dimension**

In recent years ZSB counselling has been increasingly involved with the foreign students who come to Germany under the aegis of the various European mobility programmes. These students, whose residence rights and matriculation conditions are similar to those of German students, fall within the scope not simply of the Foreign Students' Office but can call on the same HE counselling and welfare provision as German students. In addition, study abroad has become so integral a part of many students' plans and expectations that the ZSBs have to deal with enquiries from students in their early semesters as frequently as they do with questions about careers. This demands knowledge of the other European educational systems: in itself a considerable stretching of normal counselling competence. The information shelves (*Infothek*) of the ZSB may be a convenient way of meeting this need, and some ZSBs (e.g. Wuppertal) have produced booklets on studying abroad with particular emphasis on 'Studying in Europe', as well as 'Welcome Guides' for students from the EU. On an individual level, international contacts (e.g. through FEDORA) can ease the information problem and help with placements and exchanges; this does not seem, however, in itself to be able to meet the growing demand. The sheer volume of information in this sector needs management that exists neither centrally nor - apart from a few beginnings - in a decentralised form. A number of Student Affairs Organisations have developed special service packages for foreign and/or European students, and these may include a counselling element. The Employment Offices have concentrated their resources in this field, setting up special 'European Career Advice Centres' (EBZ) - 14 of

them by the end of 1996 - each providing intensive information, advice and contacts with respect to one or two European countries.

All these activities, quite apart from the counselling itself, demand not only considerable linguistic competence and intercultural experience but also a rethinking of counselling methods. This too, like the development of appropriate counselling for ethnic minorities in Germany, will be a task for the years ahead. Discussion in these areas is only just beginning.

• Trends

In the course of the last twenty-five years the ZSBs have established themselves as professional services offering a high standard of provision for students, prospective students and graduates. Their staffing and equipment, however, has lagged a good deal behind what was originally expected; some informed opinions consider them 'for the most part poorly equipped' (Augenstein, 1996, p.3204). On the other hand they, like the institutions of which they are a part, have to face new circumstances and demands: shortfalls in financing, pressures on costs (Hochschul-Informationssystem GmbH - HIS, Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung - CHE, 1997), questions of HE development and quality (Bargel, 1993a, 1993b, 1997), problems of student aims and the job market and their European dimension (HRK, 1997; Teichler, 1996) all raise the question of the limits within which a counselling service *can* provide and develop an effective product.

The North Rhine Westphalian Commission for Reform in Higher Education (Gemeinsame Kommission für die Studienreform im Land Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1996) set the following aims: responsibility of the individual for (especially tertiary) education profile, course link-ups for better educational and career prospects, active learning as a basic didactic principle, examination as an integral part of the learning process, clarity and flexibility in course planning, experience-related training and qualification, realistic time scale for courses and qualifications and finally a new concept of personal communication and responsibility. This sets new aims for the HE sector, emphasising qualities of independence, self-confidence and imaginative originality, but also of cooperative group work in the learning process as in career decisions.

The counselling services, with their personal and contextually defined methods and their manifold and varied competence, can make an essential contribution to the realisation of these aims. It is however an open question to what extent they are, despite financial restrictions in Germany as in almost all other countries, and despite an ageing staff, in a position to effect

'fundamental innovations' (Augenstein, 1996, p.3204) and through a union of course and career-directed counselling to contribute to the genesis of a new HE culture.

There is a danger that increasing competition between the universities will be expressed in direct pressure on the ZSBs, which could endanger the integrity of their personal counselling work. Cost-effectiveness drives could lead to activities directed only to spectacular results, if this is seen as a way of ensuring the survival of the parent institution: counselling services could be used by the universities to weed out unsuitable candidates or to attract students by direct advertising. The most important conditions for counselling quality, namely the trust of the client in the counsellor and the commitment of the counsellor to individual and personal support, would then have been jeopardised. Both universities and their counselling services will in future need mutually agreed and defined standards of quality that allow their clients sufficient room to take personal decisions on the basis of their own abilities and interests, expressly informed by 'knowledge and experience' (Lewin, Heublein, Schreiber & Sommer, 1997, p.39).

3 *Task analysis*

3a **Overview**

Introduction

Section 2 presented the German HE counselling services and their functions. The present section is concerned with the various professional roles within these services. Tables 2 and 3 provide a schematic overview whose agreed ground-plan, however, when applied to German realities, gave rise to some problems of nomenclature and arrangement. The tables are thus followed by a commentary (3b) intended, among other things, to prevent overhasty conclusions from being drawn.

The entries in these tables, like those in tables 1 and 4, derive from a draft developed by the operational team responsible for this survey, in collaboration with a small number of additional experts. The draft was submitted for critical evaluation to 18 further experts from various areas of the HE sector, including practising counsellors but also members of the Standing Committee of *Rektors* (HRK), the Association of Student Affairs Organisations (DSW) and the Federal Department of Employment. The data finally entered in the tables by the operational team took account of the feedback from these experts.

Apart from some divergent opinion on the evaluation of certain individual data, and a few disagreements of a more basic kind, there was a high degree of unanimity among all concerned with the survey tables. These present patterns and emphases in counselling provision and must be interpreted accordingly. To treat individual entries out of context could mislead the reader into a sense of exactitude not justified by the procedural methods of the survey.

Table 2 gives an overview of the professional roles found in the various services; this is restricted to counsellors or advisors with the relevant university, clinical etc. training. Other staff members are mentioned in the commentaries. Numbers and tasks of counsellors given in the table follow this pattern. Apart from the statistics provided by the Federal Department of Employment and the distance learning centres, which keep exact records, all figures are estimates. Counselling positions can be more reliably calculated, on the basis of empirical indices, than the actual number of counsellors employed in these positions either on a full-

time or a part-time or an hourly basis. For this reason, in some cases two numbers are given: the first number is that of positions, the second that of staff in these positions. When no exact numbers were available, figures are set in round brackets to make clear their approximate nature.

The counselling focus categories derive from a model developed by Van Esbroeck (1997) which distinguishes between the following counselling areas:

- educational (*E*): guidance on choices of educational options, and learner support
- vocational (*V*): guidance on choices of, and placement into, occupations and work-roles
- personal (*P*): guidance and counselling on personal and social issues.

The relevance of area to role is estimated on a 7-point scale, whereby 0 denotes no relevance and 7 exclusive relevance of the area given. For each professional role the total number of area points is thus always 7. The estimation was made on the basis of several variables: 'time spent, and how the focus is perceived by the counsellor, by the client and by the institution (cf. Van Esbroeck, 1995; Van Esbroeck & Watts, 1997).

Table 3 describes the usual tasks and functions of the various professional roles. Especially here individual instances may diverge considerably from the norms described; what the table depicts is not an empirical mean but a typification of job-tasks. The relation of task to job is categorised in five degrees of involvement: 4 major involvement, 3 considerable involvement, 2 some involvement, 1 minor involvement, 0 no involvement.

The tasks described had been categorised and the categories agreed in advance (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1997). It was again problematical, however, that these categories did not meet the realities of particular national situations. So far as Germany is concerned, the main objection, apart from some additions and alterations in the field of career advice, was the absence of psychotherapy from the category list. This was felt all the more strongly as the definition of 'counselling' was regarded as insufficient to cover the field of psychological counselling as practised in Germany.

Task classification

- 1. General management:** general administrative management, including service/programme planning and evaluation. Includes managing guidance activities within the institutional setting, and general liaison with external bodies (e.g. education institutions, guidance agencies, social services, official bodies, and employers). (A)

2. **Information management:** the collection, production and display of information in relation to education and training opportunities, and/or careers, occupations and the labour market. (B)
3. **Information-giving:** providing relevant information to individuals or groups in relation to education and training opportunities, and/or careers, occupations and the labour market. (C)
4. **Counselling:** helping clients to explore their own thoughts and feelings about their present situation, about the options open to them, and about the consequences of each option.
5. **Short-term individual counselling:** helping clients on a one-to-one basis in a single or limited number of sessions.(D)
6. **Long-term individual counselling:** as 5 but representing a planned programme over a longer period and more sessions. (E)
7. **Short-term group counselling:** as 5 but on a group basis. Tends to be in smaller groups than teaching, to be composed of individuals who share some common characteristics, to focus on their expressed needs rather than on predetermined learning aims, and to be organised to encourage active participation by all the individuals involved.(F)
8. **Long-term group counselling:** as 7 but representing a planned programme over a longer period and more sessions.(G)
9. **Facilitating self-help groups:** encouraging individuals to form themselves into ongoing groups to share experiences and to support each other.(H)
10. **Advice:** making suggestions based on the helper's own knowledge and experience and on assessment results. (I)
11. **Assessment:** making judgements about individuals' suitability for certain options, based on inventories, tests, observations, interviews, etc.
12. **Facilitating self-assessment:** supporting individuals in choosing their own assessment devices and drawing conclusions from them.(J)
13. **Diagnostic assessment:** selecting assessment devices, interpreting the results and making appropriate recommendations.(K)
14. **Referral:** referring individuals to service better equipped to deal with their problem.(L)
15. **Teaching:** programmes of planned experiences, designed to develop the skills, concepts and knowledge that will help individuals to manage their educational, vocational and personal development. (M)
16. **Placement:** into education or training programmes, and/or into employment.

17. **Liaison with providers:** liaison with employers and with education and training providers to obtain information on the opportunities they offer.(N)
18. **Coaching:** helping individuals to present themselves effectively (on application forms and in interviews etc).(O)
19. **Vacancy information:** providing individuals with information on particular vacancies in education, training or employment.(P)
20. **Preselection:** preselecting individuals for particular vacancies in education, training or employment. (Q)
21. **Advocacy:** negotiating directly with institutions or agencies, within and/or outside own institution, on behalf of individuals, especially those for whom there may be particular barriers to access. (R)
22. **Supporting other guidance sources:** providing training sessions and disseminating information materials to teaching staff and other guidance providers.(S)
23. **Feedback to providers:** collecting information on the unmet needs of particular groups, and encouraging providers of opportunities to respond by adapting and extending their provision.(T)
24. **Follow-up:** contacting former clients to see what has happened to them. Its purposes may include data for use with subsequent clients, evaluating the effectiveness of the guidance given, and offering further support needed.(U)

Table 2 : Main occupational roles and focus

Service/system	Occupational roles	Number	Focus		
			E	V	P
Central Student Counselling & Advisory Services (ZSB - Zentrale Studienberatung/Zentrale Einrichtungen: Studienberatung und Psychologische Beratung)	Head of Central Student C & A Service (<i>Leiter</i>)	(95/95)	3	2	2
	Student Counsellor (<i>Studienberater</i>)	(260/340)	3	2	2
	Student & Psychological Counsellor /Psychotherapist (<i>Studienberater und Psychologischer Berater/Psychotherapeut</i>)	(100/135)	3	1	3
	Psychological Counsellor/Psychotherapist (<i>Psychologischer Berater/Psychotherapeut</i>)	(15/20)	1	1	5
	Course Counsellor (<i>Studiengfachberater</i>); usually Academic Teaching Staff	(10 000)	4	1	2
	Head of Distance Learning Centre (<i>Leiter</i>)	60	4	1	2
Distance Learning Centres (<i>Fernstudien- / Studienzentren</i>)	Advisory & Counselling Staff (<i>Studienberater/Mentor</i>)	(180)	4	1	2
	Head of the Vocational Guidance Project (<i>Leiter</i>)	(30)	2	4	1
Careers (Guidance & Vocational Qualification Projects (<i>Berufs- und Arbeitsmarktorientierungsprojekte</i>))	Advisory & Counselling Staff (<i>Berater</i>)	(40)	2	4	1
	Counselling & Advisory Services for Students with Disabilities or Chronic Illness:				
Services of the HE Institutions and of Student Affairs (Organisations (<i>Beratungsstellen für Studierende mit Behinderungen</i>))	Advisory & Counselling Staff for Students with Disabilities: inside HE (<i>Berater</i>)	(40/55)	1	2	4
	Advisory & Counselling Staff for Students with Disabilities: Employment Office (<i>Berufsberater</i>)	86	1	4	2
Services of Employment Office (<i>Berufsberatung für Abiturienten und Hochschulreife/Reha I/II</i>)					
Psychological & Psychotherapeutic Counselling Services (PBS - <i>Psychologische und Psychotherapeutische Beratungsstellen</i>)	Psychological Counsellor/Psychotherapist (<i>Psychologischer Berater/Psychotherapeut</i>)	(70/110)	0	1	6
Social Advisory Services (<i>Sozialberatung</i>)	Social Worker (<i>Sozialberater</i>)	(45)	0	1	6

(table 2 continued)

Vocational Guidance for Secondary School Graduates and Students/ Higher Education Team (<i>Berufsberatung für Abiturienten und Hochschuliler/Hochschulteam</i>)	Head of Vocational Guidance (<i>Abschnittsleiter</i>)	137	1	6	0
	Careers Advisor/Vocational Counsellor (<i>Berufsberater</i>)	837	1	4	2
	Placement Officer (<i>Akademischer Arbeitsberater, only within a Higher Education team</i>)	63	0	6	1

Table 3 : Tasks performed in the main occupational roles

Occupational roles	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Head of Central Student C & A Service (ZSB)	4	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	0	1	4	3	1
Student Counsellor (ZSB)	1	3	3	4	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	3	1	0	1	2	1
Student & Psychological Counsellor/Psychotherapist (ZSB)	1	2	3	4	3	3	3	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	0	1	2	2	2
Psychological Counsellor/Psychotherapist (ZSB) ¹	1	1	1	4	4	4	3	2	1	3	2	3	2	1	3	0	0	1	1	1	2
Counsellor	1	2	4	4	0	1	0	1	4	1	0	3	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Head of Distance Learning Centre	4	3	3	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	0	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	2	1	1
Advisory & Counselling Staff	1	2	4	4	2	2	1	1	3	2	0	2	1	2	2	1	0	1	1	1	1
Head of the Vocational Guidance Project	4	4	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	4	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
Advisory & Counselling Staff	1	2	4	3	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	2	3	2	4	4	3	2	2	2	2
Advisory & Counselling Staff for Students with Disabilities: Inside HE	3	4	4	4	3	1	1	4	3	3	1	3	2	3	4	3	0	4	1	3	2
Advisory & Counselling Staff for Students with Disabilities: Employment Office	3	4	4	4	1	0	0	1	4	2	1	3	0	3	2	4	1	2	1	1	1
Psychological Counsellor/Psychotherapist (PBS) ¹	1	1	2	4	4	3	4	3	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	2
Social Worker: Social Advisory Service	3	3	4	2	1	1	1	2	4	1	0	4	0	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Head of Vocational Guidance	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	1	2	3	0
Careers Advisor/Vocational Counsellor	1	2	4	4	2	1	0	0	4	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	1	2	2	2	1
Placement Officer	2	3	4	2	1	2	0	1	4	1	1	2	1	3	3	4	3	3	1	2	1

Notes

1 Since more specific categories were not provided for the research classification, one has to be aware that the term 'counselling' subsumes quite distinct kinds of activities. To clarify to some extent the differences one should add the task psychotherapy (individual) and psychotherapy (group). The involvement in the case of these categories would be 1/1 for the student & psychological counsellor / psychotherapist and 4/4 for the psychological counsellor / psychotherapist respectively.

3b Task analysis: commentary

A distinctive feature of the German counselling services is their intense awareness of the person as an individual. This has to do with the wide range - and repercussions - of choice not only in courses but in the individual structure and planning of study programmes too. Successful study and successful choice of career can only be based on decisions rooted in the circumstances and conditions of an individual biography. Thus German counsellors tend to see their task in terms of achieving the clarity of mind necessary for such decisions.

Figge *et al.* ascribe to 'person-centred counselling' a medial role in the complex network of forms and structures that characterises student counselling (Figge *et al.*, 1995, pp.33ff): it is an approach that 'seeks to access the personal meaning of information and places the client as person at the centre of its concerns, taking special account of her or his psychological situation' (*ibid.*, pp.78f). This explains why psychological counselling in Germany is so embedded in general student counselling; indeed from this derive the methodological premises which to a great extent guide the student counsellor's work. Likewise the Career Advisors' Association sees the 'establishment of a broad range of variants for personal decision', along with a 'wide variety of methods' applied 'with close reference to the person and their situation', as key features of professional counselling (Deutscher Verband für Berufsberatung e.V., 1994, p.6). Significantly, many of the experts consulted in connection with these tables wanted the *P* values raised. The operational group decided finally against this, as the relative weighting is clearer if the *P* values are restricted; but one should work on the principle that the areas of guidance are closely intermeshed.

Interconnection of this sort occurs not only within professional roles but also directly in individual counselling sessions. In the varied counselling types provided by the ZSB one or the other form of guidance may dominate, and in any one individual session all three elements may be present: *E*, for instance, in information on available courses, *V* in discussion of the vocational relevance of a decision, and *P* in reflections on the personal situation, needs and abilities of the client. This is as true for prospective students as it is for all phases of a student's university career up to and including graduation. Conversely, even when the focus is clearly on *P*, as in psychological and social counselling, there is nearly always some connection with *E* and *V* as well. The interplay of cognition, emotion and attitude in the everyday life of a student - and this applies also to career plans - calls for a holistic type of

counselling, albeit one in which counsellors have different roles related to the various aspects of this whole.

3b.1 Central student counselling and advisory services (ZSB)

Differentiation between the various counselling roles and tasks will depend on the size of the ZSB unit. In small *Fachhochschulen*, for example, the ZSB might be staffed with less than one full-time member; universities, on the other hand, generally have three or more full-time counselling staff, and the larger universities can have up to nine (Figge *et al.*, 1995). In principle counselling staff may be either full-time or part-time, and in the latter case their number will be raised proportionally. Most counsellors have at least a half-time job; hourly paid positions are rare.

The counsellor will have between one and three assistants for information-gathering and the preparation of materials, document-management, replying to letters and telephone enquiries and secretarial work. All of this increasingly involves electronic data processing. Assistants and part-time student assistants are also involved in 'clearing': answering simple enquiries or passing the client on to the qualified source.

Important for any analysis of counselling tasks within any ZSB is the question of whether it is an 'integrated' ZSB unit, i.e. with provision for psychological counselling. Two organisational models may in that case occur, according to whether the role of psychological counsellor / psychotherapist is distinct from that of student counsellor or the two are united in the same person. In the latter case, the weighting of tasks relative to the two roles may vary.

The student counsellor has a clear relation to the university context, to educational decisions and problems concerned with the activity of studying (*E*). But she or he also takes vocational questions into account (*V*), and the methods applied will always be person- and client-oriented (*P*). Counsellors are frequently engaged in information-gathering and the production of brochures etc. especially with respect to courses at their own university or college (*B*). Information-giving (*C*) is likewise important in any individual counselling connected with university courses or the job-market (*D*). Counselling sessions last on average 30-45 minutes, and follow-up sessions are not infrequent (*ibid.*). Sessions of more than an hour's length and serial sessions (*E*) are not as a rule deemed helpful in the student counselling context; problems that need this sort of extended counselling are generally better served by psychological counselling or faculty-based course counselling (*L*). Group sessions (*F*) can be held on specific topics advertised in advance, or they can address the needs of clients as these

arise; they can be organised *ad hoc*, for example to cope with increased demand in a certain area.

When the student counsellor sets out to give advice (I) or to facilitate self-assessment (J), this will take the form not simply of affirmative support but also of suggestions which the client can take up and examine in the interplay of a counselling dialogue: a client's reaction to suggestions can play an important role in this process. Diagnostic tests etc. are not part of normal student counselling procedures (K). As well as individual counselling, special training groups (M) are sometimes organised to help students develop strategies (O) to cope with study-based (or examination-based) crises. Furthermore close contact has to be maintained with other members of the university or college staff if the flow of information is to function, and the counsellor will be concerned that these contacts operate interactively (S, T).

Some ZSB units have staff members who work exclusively as psychological counsellors or psychotherapists (Fields D, E, F and G). The methods used in student counselling are those of client-centred and behavioural therapy as well as psychoanalytic and other psychotherapeutic procedures such as gestalt therapy (*ibid.*, p.39). These are considered optimal approaches to the many psychic conflicts that young people undergo in the study situation - conflicts which demand intensive engagement with the cognitions, emotions and behaviour that condition the individual, if an appropriate solution is to be found (Rott, 1996).

Individual sessions in this counselling area usually last from 45 minutes to an hour. Series of 1-6 sessions are very common and 7-10 sessions common; in some ZSBs series of more than 10 sessions can also be very common. In all of these, whether long or short, it is not so much a matter of a planned programme (cf. the definition given above of long-term individual counselling) as of the clarification of a psychic conflict that calls for harmony to be found or re-established between inner experience and the factual framework of outer life. Both in its course and in its conclusion the counselling must be seen as an open process. In this context the time limits imposed on a psychological counsellor / psychotherapist can become part of his or her method, although the counselling itself is largely determined by the particular problems, the personal development and the aims of the client.

ZSB staff members working in this field regarded the definitions and categories of the 'task classification' given above as an inadequate description of their activities. Figge *et al* distinguish more precisely between 'brief counselling', 'psychological counselling' and 'individual psychotherapy' (*ibid.*, p.37). Likewise in some ZSBs the psychological counsellor / psychotherapist may not only hold relatively long series of group sessions (G) e.g. on learning

and working, but also be involved in teaching (M) - e.g. relaxation training - and in leading group psychotherapy sessions.

Diagnostic assessment (K) is for the most part only made in connection with the counselling and psychotherapy itself, and is discussed with the client. Its purpose is then to reinforce the effectiveness of the counselling and facilitate self-assessment (J). The focus may also be the attainment of specific goals or the acquisition of certain skills (O), in which case the counselling may move readily from one form to another.

The counsellor who is active in both fields (psychological counselling / psychotherapy and general student counselling) will split her or his involvement according to the time available and to the conditions and approach of the individual working environment. What is clear is that the input in the areas of orientation and information (B and C) will be greater than they would be for the purely psychological counsellor.

The same holds for the head of service of the ZSB. Their activity is for the most part mixed, and the size of the unit will dictate the degree to which they personally can act as counsellors. Their counselling roles will be determined by their qualifications (e.g. as a psychologist), but they will always have to concern themselves closely with management (A) as well as institutional contacts (S, T).

All counsellors refer clients to other sources (L); psychological counsellors will work particularly closely with medical practices such as local psychotherapists or specialist clinical units.

3b.2 Faculty-based course counselling

Course counsellors are for the most part professors or other faculty members concerned with the academic teaching programme (M). On the basis of their specialist knowledge they inform students about courses (C) and recommend ways of planning and structuring a course of study in their department (I). Advice and counselling of this sort (D,I) is based on content rather than method.

3b.3 Distance learning centres

Counsellors in these centres have similar tasks to those in a ZSB. The provision of information (C) and associated advice and counselling (D,I) is often only possible by telephone. A counsellor's work consists largely in the giving of recommendations for better use of distance learning materials and structures.

3b.4 Careers guidance and vocational qualification projects within the university

Information about and contact to organisations providing vocational qualifications beyond the scope of the HE institution itself falls almost everywhere within the remit of the ZSB, whose work has a clear focus in this area (C, D) and may extend to recommendations (I). Heads of service are active especially in the areas of general management (A), information management (B) and the nurturing of contacts both within and outside the university to sources concerned with vocational training and career opportunities (N,R,S,T). Advisory and counselling staff provide information, for example, about work-experience openings (P) and make certain prior choices (Q). Both in the provision of information and in individual counselling, their concern is to heighten the ability of their clients to act positively and effectively (O).

3b.5 Counselling and advisory services for students with disabilities and chronic illness

Services are provided both by the HE institutions themselves and by the local Student Affairs Organisations. The task of the university Coordinator for Disabled Student Affairs is to represent the interests of disabled and chronically ill students within the university as an institution (R,T). Advisory and counselling staff, on the other hand, are concerned with the individual problems of their clients whom they help with counselling and information (B,C,D,I). They support self-help groups (H) and in individual instances will take up the cause of disabled and chronically ill students vis à vis the various organs of the university system (R). Where necessary, they will be concerned with mediating and fostering strategies to overcome conflict. Advisory and counselling staff in particular cultivate contacts with business (N) in order to facilitate and improve employment opportunities (P).

3b.6 Psychological/psychotherapeutic counselling services in Student Affairs Organisations (PBS)

The tasks and methods of these services are similar to those of ZSB psychological counsellors / psychotherapists in the same field, with a tendency towards longer-term therapy provision (E and G).

3b.7 Social advisory services

The special task of social advisory services is to inform students in detail about financial and accommodation matters etc. and to advise them in questions concerning their social situation

(B,C, I). In cases of acute need, staff will not only give individual counselling (D,I) but also take up their client's cause vis à vis third parties (R) and attempt to resolve conflicts by arbitration. Referral (L) and the support of self-help groups (H) integrates their work in a network of other agencies. In some instances the work of a social advisory centre borders on psychological counselling.

3b.8 Vocational guidance for secondary school-leavers and students (HE team)

Employment office vocational counsellors specialising in provision for university and college students and for school-leavers with university entrance qualifications (*Abitur*) are usually part of a team under a section leader whose main concerns are policy and general management (A). The advisors themselves can rely on a large amount of centrally produced information material and are thus less involved in information-gathering (B) than are their ZSB counterparts (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, 1992). Individual vocational and careers counselling of school graduates, students and prospective students (C,D,I) is, however, an important focus of their work; this will often include referring a student to other sources (e.g. the ZSB) for more immediate information. Group sessions may be held on vocational orientation (E), and these frequently take the form of teaching sessions (M). In addition, careers advisors / vocational counsellors are concerned to provide their clients with relevant presentational skills etc. (O) and, in the context of job and training availability, to maintain contact with employers and other training bodies (N,P,S,T). In this context they also provide a central agency for training and work experience placement (P,Q) for school graduates and for students who have broken off their studies. Special questions of vocational provision for this latter group as well as for university graduates are dealt with by graduate placement officers (*Akademische Arbeitsberater*), whose task is to inform (C), to counsel (D) and to make recommendations (I) on the basis of their specialised knowledge of the careers market (P), selecting (Q) and negotiating (R) between candidates and available jobs. Finally, the Employment Offices have their own psychological service for diagnostic questions (K). The HE coordinator has particular responsibility for liaising with the universities and colleges in the area.

3c Detailed profiles

This section fills in some detail the profiles of three counselling functions: those of the student counsellor, the psychological counsellor or psychotherapist, and the vocational advisor. These central functions might well form the substance of a European masters degree in guidance and

counselling. It is the declared aim of FEDORA that such a degree course should be established, not least in order to underline the responsibility of the universities for the quality of their own counselling provision.

The functions described have been selected according to three criteria: (1) they must be an integral part of - or at least closely related to - a university or college; (2) they must be widely practised; and, (3) they must be highly professionalised. It was important that all three criteria should be fulfilled in some way or other, but they should not be interpreted rigidly. Thus vocational and career guidance is not integrated into the university system, and only in some HE institutions is it even closely connected with that system; on the other hand it is highly professional and very widespread. Account therefore was taken of it in this section. It was decided to include in this category those counsellors concerned with careers guidance and qualification projects who, although they are not so many in number, are (where they do exist) fully integrated into the university system. Faculty course counsellors, on the other hand, are integrated into the university where they teach, and there are many of them; but their lack of professionalism as counsellors excludes them from more detailed treatment.

Taking consideration of these factors, the detailed profiles presented here are of:

- the student counsellor in a ZSB;
- the psychological counsellor or psychotherapist, comprising both those who work in a ZSB and those who work in the Student Affairs Organisations;
- the vocational guidance counsellor, whether in the vocational counselling or graduate placement department of the Employment Office, or as a member of a university careers guidance and vocational qualifications project.

Individual functions have already been described in considerable detail, so the following comments will enlarge only on certain aspects essential for a thorough understanding of the role in question.

3c.1 The student counsellor (ZSB)

For all prospective and actual students the ZSB is the first stop at the university. Here they will find full and accurate information (B, C) on which to base the key decisions of their academic career. Not that the counsellor should or can know everything. Full and accurate means rather that they be aware themselves of the gaps in their information, that they indicate this in a responsible way and show how it might be overcome (Deppe, 1995) - when counsellors cannot themselves answer a question, they know as a rule who can (L).

Most counselling bears at least implicitly on the relation between personal interests and the abilities demanded by a particular course, with the career perspective as a third relevant factor. Student counselling is not concerned solely with choices available at a particular institution but also with alternatives: with degree courses elsewhere, for example, or with vocational training options outside the university altogether. Counsellors can grasp quickly what their clients really want and need, and steer the conversation to focus on these matters. It is often a question of using one's imagination and the width of one's background knowledge to find alternatives and solutions that might help the client, and to discuss the consequences of deciding this way or that (D, linked with I and J). The aim is always to help clients, individually or in groups, in the light of such discussion to decide for themselves.

Student counselling is concerned not simply with information, therefore, but with the clarification of personal goals and conditions and the ability to use information in a fruitful and effective way. Counsellors do not solve their clients' problems but encourage and support them to trust in their own problem-solving abilities. In this context the non-verbal element in the counselling dialogue is important for detecting and using any gaps and blind spots there may be in the communicative process.

The student counsellor must have a thorough knowledge of what courses are available and of their background conditions, especially in their own institution (B). Some ZSBs have counsellors specialising in a particular faculty; more commonly, however, this is not the case, though contact to the faculties (N) may frequently be shared among the staff on an individual basis. The knowledge required is not just of the formal rules and conditions of the various faculty courses; the counsellor must be able to tell the client with some personal conviction what the courses are about, what their point is. They cannot of course know in detail the content of every course: that is the function of the course counsellors within the faculty. But the student counsellor has the advantage of a wider standpoint than the individual faculty, and this interdisciplinary competence enables them to assist students at a professional level in the key decision-making processes of their university careers, just as their training and experience as pedagogues provides them with the basis on which they can help students work, learn and prepare effectively for examinations. This twofold basis in information-directed and person-directed skills is complemented by knowledge of the world of careers and work, and this puts the counsellor in a position to help students see the vocational relevance of their course decisions and effectively realise them (O).

The counsellor, and in particular the ZSB head of service, will, over and above this, be concerned to create a well-functioning balance of work, with its demands and stresses, within the team. Finally, all the activities of the ZSB will feed back into the various decision-making organs of the HE institution where ongoing problems of the university are discussed.

3c.2 The psychological counsellor or psychotherapist (ZSB and PBS)

A detailed profile of this counselling role is given here not only because of the number of its practitioners in Germany but also because of the enormous influence they have had on concepts of counselling in German universities. Many fundamental aspects of counselling method are derived from psychological and psychotherapeutic theory and practice. In the past twenty years all the counselling organs named in this report have without exception sought dialogue with psychological counselling. The reason is clear: they wanted to integrate into their own discipline what psychology had to teach them about processes and models of personality development, their possibilities and limitations (Nestmann, 1997); and they wanted to apply psychological counselling methods in their own field.

Developing the analysis given in 3.2 above, one could say that psychological counselling addresses the problems of the client against the background of their own personal development. The need for counselling arises from the achievement demands and goals imposed on a student, from conflict in relations with parents, fellow students or emotional partners, or from problems of general orientation or identity. Psychological counselling enables students, through the availability of a therapy-centred relation, to understand and clarify conflicts and impasses and to find new strategies for action that will - or at least may - solve them. It is a highly differentiated, person-centred type of counselling and it enables students to realise and develop their potentialities and interests. The form of psychological counselling is either the individual session or series (shorter or longer) of sessions (D, E), coaching (O), group sessions (F,G) or individual or group psychotherapy. Informative (C) or teaching (M) sessions may accompany these other activities.

With this brief, psychological counselling plays a key role in the cooperation between the various counselling services (L,S), and it provides important feedback (T) to the university or college administration. Its role in this respect is to make people aware of the personal side of the educational process in an age when this tends to be overlooked at the tertiary level in favour of what may be at times a short-sighted emphasis on technical effectiveness. Themes such as 'holistic approaches to learning...', individual enablement and the mobilising of

personal resources..., the importance of personal decision and the heightening of prosocial competence in the study process..., stress-resistance techniques..., general method-training..., the intellectual experience..., emotional development and creativity' (Kruse, 1994, pp.11f) can all be approached effectively through psychological counselling methods.

The bridging function of the psychological counsellor is especially evident in the context of the ZSB, where the range of tasks is very broad: from information sessions, through various forms of individual and group counselling, to psychotherapy proper - again with individuals or groups. The counsellor's work here is geared to critical demands of the student career and will develop appropriate forms (e.g. exam preparation groups) to enable participants to evolve their own problem-solving strategies. As the counsellor in question works in close cooperation with general student counsellors - or may be one herself or himself - sessions which are both informative and person-centred (e.g. on initial orientation or change of course or faculty) may well take place with some frequency.

3c.3 Vocational guidance counsellor

Three interrelated vocational counselling roles are profiled here: the advisory and counselling staff of the university careers guidance and vocational qualification projects, and (within the HE team of the Federal Department of Employment) the vocational counsellor (*Berufsberater*) and graduate placement officer. Student counsellors also cover the job prospects of would-be students but they do not have extensive contact with employers. By contrast, all three groups covered here maintain intensive contact with employers (N,R,T), albeit with different emphases. The vocational counsellor deals largely with training opportunities for school-leavers and those who break off their HE courses, as well as with work-experience places for upper school and HE students (P,Q). Graduate placement officers deal primarily with job placements for graduates (P,Q) and thus maintain contact in particular with appropriate employer groups. The same is true of the university career guidance and vocational qualification projects, although these concentrate on harmonising work-experience placements with course content (P,Q,M). The various emphases are evident in the counselling and information sessions (C,D,I) provided by these different services: vocational counsellors are concerned primarily with the development of a general career perspective at the beginning of the university course, the graduate placement officer with the transition from university to workplace, and the university careers guidance and vocational qualification projects with the

acquisition of professional qualifications at university and competence-transfer between university and the workplace.

4 Training and qualifications

4a Overview

This section is concerned with the training and qualifications of counsellors in the various roles described in section 3 above, including opportunities for keeping up to date and for further training and qualification. A distinction is made between full-time training (FT) and part-time (PT) courses.

German universities provide no basic courses in counselling. At the most, counselling may be included as an element in psychology, education and social science degree courses and in those leading to first-stage teaching qualifications whether at university or at teacher training college. Further qualifications in counselling are available at five teacher training colleges (HRK, 1996), but these are concerned primarily with counselling in schools. In the faculties of psychology and education, students may go on relevant work experience, but this will only provide rudimentary contact with counselling methods. Only in the *Fachhochschule* degree course in social work (*Sozialpädagogik*) is there a practical training phase in the form of an internship before or immediately after graduation. Psychology students on the clinical psychology option have the most thorough basic training in counselling and psychotherapeutic techniques.

Basic practical qualifications over and above the purely academic teaching available in HE institutions have to date been offered only outside the HE sector, e.g. by professional associations of psychotherapists and numerous other institutions concerned with further training. As well as training in psychotherapy, these have offered courses leading to counselling qualifications, which may be taken by counsellors irrespective of the discipline from which they have graduated. Client-centred counselling as promoted by the professional Society for Client-Centred Psychotherapy (*Gesellschaft für wissenschaftliche Gesprächspsychotherapie*) deserves particular mention here. In-service training of this sort, according to current regulations, takes about 300 hours spread over two years.

Psychotherapeutic training on the other hand is open only to doctors and psychologists. Entry for graduates in educational science and social scientists is hedged around with strict conditions. As in-service training it lasts between three and five years (approx. 2,000 hours), and the training has been extended recently to include a one-year internship in a psychiatric

clinic. Conditions and regulations applicable to this training vary considerably and are undergoing rapid change. A law governing psychotherapy has been planned for some time, but political controversy in the whole area of health provision has prevented it from being passed as yet.

Most counsellors have had a university education - though social counsellors in the local Student Affairs Organisations frequently have a *Fachhochschule* diploma. None of the professional roles described in sections 3a and 3b requires any particular training or qualification prior to appointment as a counsellor. As a result of this, qualifications may vary widely between practitioners of the various roles or even within the same role. In practice, qualifications depend more on the ambition and commitment of the individual counsellor and of the unit in which he or she works than on uniformly applicable criteria.

The survey in table 4 is thus to be understood only as a schematic overview. The highlighting with an asterisk of non-obligatory initial training and the frequent use of the term 'patchy' of in-service training reflects this situation. The commentary will make further differentiations between the various professional roles in this respect.

Table 4 : Training and qualifications

Service/system	Occupational roles	Minimum educational qualifications for entry	Initial training in guidance and counselling	In-service training in guidance and counselling
Central Student Counselling & Advisory Services (ZSB - Zentrale Studienberatung/Zentrale Einrichtungen: Studienberatung und Psychologische Beratung)	Head of Central Student C & A Service (Leiter)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	*basic counselling training / psychotherapy (patchy)	patchy
	Student Counsellor (Studienberater)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	* basic counselling training (patchy)	patchy
Faculty-Based Course Counselling (Fachstudien-/Studienfachberatung)	Student & Psychological Counsellor/Psychotherapist (Studienberater und Psychologischer Berater/Psychotherapeut)	4 1/2 yrs psychology degree (FT) ¹	usually psychotherapy	patchy
	Psychological Counsellor/Psychotherapist (Psychologischer Berater/Psychotherapeut)	4 1/2 yrs psychology degree (FT) ¹	usually psychotherapy	patchy
Distance Learning Centres (Fernstudien-/Studienzentren)	Course Counsellor (Studienfachberater); usually Academic Teaching Staff	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	usually none	usually none
	Head of Distance Learning Centre (Leiter)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	* basic counselling training (patchy)	*patchy
Careers Guidance & Vocational Qualification Projects (Berufs- und Arbeitsmarktorientierungsprojekte)	Advisory & Counselling Staff (Studienberater/Mentor)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	* basic counselling training (patchy)	*patchy
	Head of the Vocational Guidance Project (Leiter)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	*patchy	*patchy
Counselling & Advisory Services for Students with Disabilities or Chronic Illness:	Advisory & Counselling Staff (Berater)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	*patchy	*patchy
	Advisory & Counselling Staff for Students with Disabilities: inside HE (Berater)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	*usually none	* patchy
Services of the HE Institutions and of Student Affairs Organisations (Beratungsstellen für Studierende mit Behinderungen)	Advisory & Counselling Staff for Students with Disabilities: Employment Office (Berufsberater)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	*9 months basic training	* 1-wk FT information course every year (average)
	Advisory & Counselling Staff for Students with Disabilities: Employment Office (Berufsberater)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	*9 months basic training	* 1-wk FT information course every year (average)

(table 4 continued)

Psychological & Psychotherapeutic Counselling Services (PBS- <i>Psychologisch und Psychotherapeutische Beratungsstellen</i>)	Psychological Counsellor/Psychotherapist (<i>Psychologischer Berater/Psychotherapeut</i>)	4 1/2 yrs psychology degree (FT) ^{1,2}	usually psychotherapy	patchy
Social Advisory Services (<i>Sozialberatung</i>)	Social Worker (<i>Sozialberater</i>)	4 1/2 yrs psychology degree (FT) ¹	usually none	patchy
Vocational Guidance for Secondary School Graduates and Students / Higher Education Team (<i>Berufsheratung für Abiturienten und Hochschüler/ Hochschulteam</i>)	Head of Vocational Guidance (<i>Abschnittsleiter</i>)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	9 month administrative and guidance training	* 2-wk FT information course every year (average)
	Careers Advisor/Vocational Counsellor (<i>Berufsberater</i>)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	9 months vocational guidance training	* 1-wk FT information course every year (average)
	Placement Officer (<i>Akademischer Arbeitsberater</i> , only within a Higher Education team)	4 1/2 yrs first degree (FT)	9 months vocational guidance training	* 1-wk FT information course every year (average)

Notes

- 1 Sometimes other first degrees are accepted, especially education.
- 2 In a few cases 6 yrs medical training plus 5 yrs specialisation in Psychiatry and Psychotherapy.

4b Training and qualifications: commentary

In the absence of any generally accepted basic qualification for the counselling profession (cf.4a), qualifications and training will be dealt with separately for each counselling role. The three key roles profiled in detail in section 3c will in section 4c be given detailed treatment with respect to their training shortfall and to the wider European context.

4b.1 Central student counselling and advisory services (ZSB)

There is no systematic training for student counsellors. What has been said about the heterogeneity of counselling training and qualification is particularly true of this group. There may well be student counsellors who, after taking a first degree have had only the experience of long years' service as the basis for their work, without any formal training either before taking up their post or later, and without any external supervision. On the other hand there will be colleagues who have a first degree in one or perhaps two combined subjects, a doctorate, experience outside the HE sector and extensive further training in psychotherapy, and the same colleague may have had in-service training in any number of subjects ranging from university and course organisation to vocational guidance and opportunities for studying abroad. Furthermore he or she may also choose to work under the constant personal supervision of their own external psychological advisor. Such supervision is neither formally regulated, however, nor (as a rule) paid for by the institution, but left to the responsibility of the individual. In some ZSBs, team supervisions have occasionally been arranged.

Unpublished data used by Figge *et al.* (1995) as the basis for their report indicate that about a quarter of the total number of counsellors in German HE have a first or further degree in psychology and a further quarter have degrees in subjects associated with the counselling profession (education, social science). About half have graduated in other disciplines. Every fourth or fifth counsellor has at least two degrees (Figge *et al.*, 1995, p.56). Just under half have additional training in at least one counselling and/or psychotherapeutic method (e.g. client-centred counselling) (*ibid.*, p.128).

Counsellors engaged only in information-based counselling will have no further training, but over a third of those who are also concerned with person-centred counselling do have such training; in 'integrated' ZSBs, this figure may well be up to two-thirds. Almost all staff engaged in psychological counselling have had further training in psychotherapy, even though not all will have studied psychology; some may have degrees in education or an allied subject.

The planned law on psychotherapy demands, however, that the qualified psychological psychotherapist should have a first degree in psychology.

A broad group within the counselling profession thus possesses a good general qualification for their work, but training in thematic specialities still remains largely non-existent either at the pre-service or the in-service level. Training of new counsellors is therefore the responsibility of the ZSB unit and its personnel. Except in Lower Saxony, there is no formal training available for the profession. The head of service and her or his colleagues must recognise gaps in competence and find training solutions for them, working on the assumption that contact with high-grade professional competence and know-how will, in the absence of any established state-of-the-art training system, help offset the pitfalls of an essentially autodidactic experience.

At the federal level there has since the 70s been a regularly convened working group on student counselling (ArGe - *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Studien- Studententinnen und Studentenberatung*) which has recently taken on the form of a full association and thus become something like an official professional body. Twice a year, in the semester vacations, it holds a three-day in-service training session with guest lecturers and workshops. Each session has a unifying theme, but the workshop topics are very varied. In the past two decades some pioneering themes have been debated and many workshops of high quality organised. Many of these colloquia have been documented. As they do not have a continuous systematic structure, however, they cannot function as basic training nor can they fill the need for in-service training modules. With their immediate topicality and their wide range of themes the colloquia nevertheless function as a much-needed catalyst in the development of student counselling as a vital and changing discipline.

Regional meetings, generally at the state level, of heads of service or of ZSB staff comprise a further important communication structure within the profession, establishing, for example, working groups in such fields as internet use or the planning of careers fairs. Also at the state level (as currently in North Rhine Westphalia), the German universities from time to time organise in-service training for HE personnel in general, and this may be used as training for student counsellors. The states further organise cost-free in-service training in areas such as electronic data processing, use of the new media or management training for heads of service, but none of this is directed to the specific needs of student counselling. The same is true of the annual week-long sabbaticals (*Bildungsurlaub*) available across the whole spectrum of professional life in German states such as North Rhine Westphalia and generally used by ZSB

staff as in-service training. Sometimes training is offered at an informal level by regional groupings of student counsellors, as in Upper Bavaria, where the local Association of Counsellors runs courses for student, vocational and school counsellors together with social workers, or in Berlin, where psychotherapists in the Student Affairs Organisation offer occasional courses in counselling skills for student counsellors. Individual HE institutions and states also organise ad hoc meetings of an in-service training character devoted to topical developments and needs, but these can run up against financial barriers, as recently happened in Saxony, where a well-subscribed course in client-centred therapy put on by the ministry had to close for lack of funding. Every July the Bavarian counsellors' association runs an annual 2-day training session for colleagues. The ministry of education in Baden-Württemberg traditionally offers annual in-service training for its student counsellors, and the state-run Institute for Education and Teaching provides, at the instigation of the local student counselling association (which also provides some training modules), courses in counselling skills, group organisation and leadership, supervision and other specialist topics.

Cooperation in training also takes place at interstate level. Thus the universities in Hessen, which have, since the early 80s, run an annual training week for student counsellors, now (since 1994) do so in cooperation with their colleagues in Thuringia and Rheinland-Pfalz. The course is directed to the needs of new as well as established members of the profession (Caputa-Wießner, Kohlhaas & Eikenberg, 1996). In similar fashion, student counsellors in Bremen are taking up contact with the training scheme operating in Lower Saxony.

In Lower Saxony the coordinating office for student counselling has established the only longstanding and systematic in-service training for student counsellors in Germany. It comprises a two-year 20-day-a-year course for newly appointed counsellors, divided up into a series of individual training modules, together with a further training session open to all student counsellors. The course does not presume any specific university training or degree. It consists of three main elements (Deppe, 1995): background knowledge, counselling methods and supervision. Among other more university-centred topics, two background modules are devoted to the relevance of the job market to student counselling, an area frequently neglected in in-service training (*ibid.*).

The Standing Committee of *Rektors* (HRK, formerly WRK - *Westdeutsche Rektorenkonferenz*) used to organise from time to time in-service training sessions for student counsellors. These were planned by the president's working group for student counselling. The most recent of these sessions was the fourth European colloquium for student counsellors

in Berlin, held in cooperation with the Berlin universities and FEDORA. Since the restructuring of the HRK this working group has however been dissolved, and the engagement of the HRK in further training has diminished accordingly, confining itself in recent years to discussions about student counselling at the university politics level. Thus in 1996 it organised a discussion on the subject of cooperation (HRK, 1997a). Nevertheless the HRK played a considerable part in the success of the 1996 FEDORA congress in Rostock, which took a major step in the widening of perspectives in careers and vocational counselling (HRK, 1997b).

Psychological training covers many areas of immediate use in student counselling, and the transfer of general principles to this specialist field is thus relatively unproblematic; there is no specific training for psychological counsellors or psychotherapists working with students. Ongoing training is available only through the ArGe working group mentioned above, or through the relevant professional organisations, under whose aegis psychologists and psychotherapists can attend courses and conferences and organise their own personal supervision - albeit at some expense to themselves.

4b.2 Faculty-based course counselling

Professors and faculty members engaged in course counselling have no formal training in counselling techniques unless their academic field happens to include this competence, nor do they feel the need for such training. Their entrustment with the counselling task is generally on the basis of personal qualities and with the underlying support of their colleagues and superiors. Only in a few universities have courses in counselling skills, didactic approaches and student supervision been offered - e.g. by the education institute in Bochum, the ZSB in Wuppertal or the psychological counselling service in Jena (Rott, 1992).

4b.3 Distance learning centres

Further training for counsellors in this context by and large repeats the situation in the ZSBs. In-house training has been able to put into practice some of the elements sketched out by Schuhmann and Augenstein in their paper on 'The Development of a European Ongoing Training Centre at the University of the Saarland' (1994), whose underlying concepts reflect those developed for student counsellors by Deppe (1995). These take account of the particular academic and social situation of distance learners.

4b.4 Careers guidance and vocational qualification projects

Training in this field does not go beyond that available to general student counsellors. Intensive contacts with the world of work provide on-the-job experience, and courses on vocational options offered by external training bodies can extend this competence. In-house training seeks also to broaden the knowledge and experience of counselling staff in this field.

4b.5 Counselling and advisory services for students with disabilities or chronic illness

ZSB or Student Affairs Organisation counsellors for students with disabilities have generally graduated in a relevant discipline (education, social sciences or psychology). There is no special training available, although some in-service training is offered on a regional basis by the Student Affairs Organisations or by other welfare organisations working in the field. The counselling service for disabled students of the Association of Student Affairs Organisations (DSW) holds an annual 2/3-day congress aimed at familiarising counsellors with individual aspects of the field and providing an opportunity for exchange of experience and views. A further 2-day in-service training conference is offered for 'Coordinator for Disabled Student Affairs', but the DSW itself regards a week-long training course for newly appointed coordinator as essential. In general it may be said that, beyond these various initiatives, the matter is left to the responsibility of the individual counsellor. Given the complexity of the field, current initial and in-service training cannot be regarded as adequate, and the DSW has called for improvement in the situation (R. Langweg-Berhörster, personal communication, July 1997).

Employment Office counsellors for disabled school-leavers and students (*Berufsberater Reha II*) do have specialised initial training and this is continued as in-house training after qualification.

4b.6 Psychological/psychotherapeutic counselling services in the Student Affairs Organisations (PBS)

Again the training situation does not differ from that of ZSB counsellors working in this specialty. Most PBS psychologists have had further training in psychotherapy (Figge *et al.*, 1995, pp.129f); this may sometimes have been on the basis of a first degree in another subject than psychology. Larger units may well have medical psychotherapists too.

All of these groups will, like their colleagues in the ZSB, receive the bulk of their training in counselling and in psychotherapy from the professional associations mentioned in 4b.1 above.

and these associations will also provide them with supervision, the brunt of the costs in each case being born by the individual (supervision costs are sometimes borne by the Student Affairs Organisations). External staff trainers are sometimes employed (as in the Student Affairs Organisation, Halle), and team supervisions are more common than in the ZSBs. Other training opportunities are represented by the ArGe association of counsellors (cf. 4b.1) and the annual 2 day congress on psychological counselling and psychotherapy in HE organised by the DSW, which provides many opportunities for colleagues to exchange ideas.

4b.7 Social advisory services

Staff in the social advice centres of the Student Affairs Organisations have either a *Fachhochschule* diploma in social work or a university degree in education. No special training exists in this field either. Some staff will have on their own initiative done further training in client-centred dialogue skills. Local welfare organisations such as the *Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband* organise occasional training programmes, and at the federal level the DSW holds an annual congress for this professional group too.

4b.8 Vocational guidance for secondary school-leavers and students (HE team)

No general initial training is available as part of a degree course. Counsellors must simply have a university degree, and the Department of Employment also regards work experience as a desirable precondition for appointment. Counsellors for students and secondary school-leavers (viz. those with university entrance qualifications in the form of the *Abitur*) are, however, thoroughly prepared for their job over a 9-month (formerly 12-month) period of full-time work under supervision. Emphasis is placed during this training on clarification of the client's needs, on the acquisition of dialogue skills and on the decision-making process (Deppe, 1995, p.8). Important areas covered are general background, law and institutions in the careers field, job-market analysis in its relevance to vocational counselling, cooperation with schools, employers and the HE sector and the organisation of training placements.

In-service training is available either at a local or a state level in annual or biennial training weeks. Occasional information days are also organised for staff. In addition, certain training modules are offered from time to time for all careers guidance staff, e.g dialogue skills or information technology. Depending on the region, counsellors in HE teams have supervisions organised either on a colleague-to-colleague basis or externally. The Department of Employment psychological service will in future be more active in this area.

HE coordinators often have additional training opportunities. Placement officers have to date had a similar 12 month training period with special emphasis in their case on career placement organisation, but this training has currently stopped, as no further placement officers (*Akademische Arbeitsberater*) are being appointed. Structural changes in the HE teams will define the future role of the placement officer as well as the shape of future training. The HE team head will continue to have appropriate training in management and administration.

4c Detailed profiles

In planning a masters degree the three key counselling roles are those of the general, the psychological and the vocational counsellor. These will therefore be treated once more here from the point of view of training deficiencies and of the relevance of a European dimension in future training. The benefits of a European perspective may be seen in the wider frame of reference it would provide for:

- **political issues:** the relation of the university to the workplace - HE and the economic cycle - careers guidance
- **structural issues:** problems and concepts of modernisation - counselling structures and methods - standards and quality control
- **personal development issues:** for instance the tasks of establishing "a new match between the acquisition of knowledge and the development of behavioural patterns" (European Commission, 1997, p. 70) and of coping with "employment market uncertainty more efficiently" (*ibid.*, p. 73)
- **intercultural issues:** the intercultural conditions of counselling - the counselling of exchange students - inter-service cooperation projects

All these issues are central to contemporary HE counselling and could fruitfully be addressed within the pragmatic context of a European-level training programme.

4c.1 Student counsellor in the ZSB

Three points may be made about the training shortfall, whether pre-appointment or in-service:

- There is no coherent training for student counsellors prior to appointment
- In-service training modules conceived explicitly for different aspects of student counselling would be difficult to embed in any existing institutional structures

- Vocational aspects of HE, widely neglected in training, must be rethought.

European contacts in student counselling have already been made in various contexts. Two bilateral German-British conferences have taken place (Saarbrücken 1981 and London 1984) (Augenstein, Beyer, Steptoe & Thorne, 1985) as well as two international conferences (Paris 1979 and London 1983). These, along with the first practical visits supported by the EU under the aegis of the then (1986) West German working group of student counsellors (ArGe - cf. 4b.1), laid the foundation for mutual understanding and respect. The ArGe built on these contacts by inviting a speaker from another European country to each of its subsequent training sessions.

With the founding of FEDORA and the participation by individual German student counsellors in FEDORA summer universities and European conferences, knowledge levels rose and contacts deepened, although this unfortunately still applies to individual counselling services only. The two FEDORA conferences in Germany (Berlin 1991 and Rostock 1996 - both in cooperation with the HRK) broadened the basis, but not yet enough.

4c.2 Psychological counsellor or psychotherapist (ZSB and PBS)

Psychological counsellors have, as we have seen, a broad range of further training opportunities, but the poor financial resources of the service units and consequent high costs to the individual can cause severe problems. Training, both pre-service and in-service, is more immediately concerned with the work-field than is the case in other counselling areas - the psychodynamics of the young adult, or therapeutic treatment of learning blocks, for example, are typical psychology degree course topics. Nevertheless a more intensive exchange of experience and an expansion of training opportunities could be very helpful. Steps could be taken precisely in this field to implement a proper training curriculum for psychological student counselling, either in the direction of a 'general psychotherapy' course (Grawe, Donati & Bernauer, 1994) or of an approach integrating various psychotherapeutic methods (Huber, 1993; Revenstorf, 1992). Questions of quality control could be put more readily in such a context (Grawe & Braun, 1994; Rott, 1997).

Through their professional associations, psychological counsellors and psychotherapists have in recent years had more opportunity to make cross-European contacts, for instance through ArGe (cf 4b.1 above) or through the European Psychological Congress organised by the European Federation of Professional Psychologists' Associations (EFPPA). In Athens (1995) and in Dublin (1997) special symposia on psychological counselling in HE were held

(Kalantzi-Azizi, Rott & Aherne, 1997), but it became evident that relatively few counsellors attend such meetings, and it would for this reason too seem sensible to make the European dimension of HE counselling part of standard in-service training. German student counsellors have been involved in the activities of the FEDORA working group on Psychological Counselling in Higher Education (FEDORA-PSYCHE) (Bell *et al.*, 1994; Rott, 1996, 1997b), and have attended not only the FEDORA congresses in Berlin (1991), Barcelona (1994) (Rott, 1994) and l'Aquila (1997) but also those of national groups like the British Association for Student Counselling (ASC), which in 1996 held a conference on 'Culture and Psyche in Transition: a European Perspective'. All of this has been of considerable benefit at the individual level, but until now the exchange of ideas has been restricted to too few local units.

4c.3 Vocational guidance counsellor

The further training of vocational counsellors and academic placement officers is organised at its various national and local levels by the Federal Department of Employment; in recent years this has also included provision for ongoing supervision. This amounts to a fairly comprehensive training concept and contrasts markedly with the dearth of training opportunities for the members of careers guidance and vocational qualification projects within the HE institutions. On the other hand, these latter have closer contact to the educational and training potential of the university or college where they work, and this itself provides a sort of ongoing training and growth in competence. It remains to be seen whether the interaction between the Employment Office HE teams and the universities will create new forms of training and whether these will extend to the ZSBs, but as yet there is little sign of such a development.

European training initiatives have so far been restricted to the members of the European Vocational Counselling Centres (EBZ), but they are beginning to reach out now to other vocational counsellors and academic placement officers. For counsellors in the HE institutions, the meeting of the FEDORA working group on employment in Rostock (1996) (HRK, 1997c) was an important stepping stone in the discussion of future training structures. For all three professional groups one can, however, say that the European dimension of university training, and especially of the job market-place, has not yet fully been realised.

5 Conclusions

The past 25 years have seen the establishment in almost all universities and in many other HE institutions of a wide range of counselling activities. Within the framework of these institutions, apart from the counselling on course structures and options at the faculty level, the principal provider of counselling is the ZSB, whose twin functions of informative-orientational and psychological-psychotherapeutic counselling address many recurrent student needs. Alongside these services there are in many places those of the local Student Affairs Organisations with their social and health welfare provision, especially in psychological counselling and psychotherapy. A long history of cooperation, based on a number of explicit agreements, exists with the vocational counselling services of the Federal Department of Employment.

Counsellors are for the most part well qualified for their job; in Figge's words: 'overall, student counsellors can be termed a highly qualified group' (Figge *et al.*, 1994, p.54). For all counselling specialities, opportunities for exchange of experience and further training are available at the local, regional and national level.

But there are unsolved problems in the counselling sector too. On the one hand, counselling services suffer from a general structural under-development, and in some institutions this is acute. Similarly, both supply of and attendance at further training courses leave something to be desired. Moreover, university degree courses specifically directed to the HE sector are non-existent and the European dimension of student counselling is only just beginning to feature in training courses. Neither the universities and colleges themselves, nor the HE administration, have as yet fully recognised the counselling of students as an essential complement in the tertiary sector to teaching and research. The very generality of the situation underlines the appropriateness of a European module in the further training programme as a meaningful addition to existing courses.

There are new factors in the equation too. The German universities are currently undergoing a process of very open-ended restructuring. Quantitative expansion in HE has not been accompanied by appropriate qualitative and structural renewal (Bargel, 1997, p.41); but preoccupation with this evident deficit has expressed itself to date mainly in the call for greater effectiveness and the search for new organisational models (CHE & HIS, 1997, Hödl, 1997). On the other hand, students are undergoing an increasing individualisation and diversification of their motives for studying and consequently also of their strategies. As

Bargel says, 'student histories and career choices are no longer linear and unidimensional but are increasingly composed as a collage of many parts' (Bargel, 1997, p.42). This involves multiple conflicts: between single-mindedness and flexibility, between complex qualification patterns and brevity of study, between the ephemeral quality of information and its relevance, and not least between the intrinsic interest of a discipline and the need to consider future career options (*ibid.*, p.43).

It is difficult to place these complex factors in any clear perspective; but student counselling must face the difficulties and seek ways of solving them (Augenstein, 1996; HRK, 1994). Either it 'gains the strengths it needs to develop in this direction ... or it stagnates' (Bargel, 1997, p.46): those are the alternatives. The European masters degree in guidance and counselling could be the sort of impulse student counselling needs, if this degree, engaging with some of the issues outlined above (cf. 4c), were able to present a balanced and flexible combination of modules taking account of the varied professional backgrounds of counselling staff, their different needs and their existing - in some cases very high - qualifications. If counselling concepts could be thus modernised and improved, and the client-directed task-triangle of academic learning, personal development and vocational choice more effectively approached, one might realistically expect a far larger group of counsellors to take advantage of the opportunities such training offered both as a qualification and as a window to permanent and fruitful cooperation. The European dimension would in that way bring with it a more clearly defined as well as more widely enjoyed professional profile.

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Addresses

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Studien-, Studentinnen und Studentenberatung (ArGe)
Universität Giessen
Büro für Studienberatung
Stefan Prange
Ludwigstraße 28 a
35359 Gießen

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Thüringer Studien- und StudentenberaterInnen ARGE Thüringen
(Gesellschaft zur Förderung von Studieninformation, Beratung und Therapie im
Hochschulbereich - GdBR-, Sitz in Weimar)
TU Ilmenau
Zentrale Studien- und Studentenberatung
Dr. Reiner Mund
Max-Planck-Ring 14
98684 Ilmenau

Berufsverband der StudienberaterInnen und Berater in Baden Württemberg
Helmut Salewski
Universitätsstraße 10
78434 Konstanz

Berufsverband Deutscher Psychologinnen und Psychologen e.V. (BDP)¹
Heilsbachstraße 22 – 24
53123 Bonn

Bundesanstalt für Arbeit (BA)
Regensburger Str. 104
90327 Nürnberg

Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW)
Weberstr. 55
53113 Bonn

Gesellschaft für wissenschaftliche Gesprächspsychotherapie (GWG)¹
Postfach 270165
50508 Köln

Hochschulrektoren Konferenz (HRK)
Ahrstraße 39
53175 Bonn

¹ There are numerous professional organisations and institutions for training in counselling and psychotherapy
The two named indicate a starting point for the search of further contacts

Hochschulübergreifende Fortbildung NRW (HüF)
Hochstraße 21
58084 Hagen

Interessengemeinschaft der Studienberater/-innen sächsischer Universitäten und Hochschulen
Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft Mittweida
Herr Saß
Technikumplatz 17
09648 Mittweida

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