

Breaking Barriers: Connecting European State Schools with University Guidance through IEC Partnerships

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“A large majority (81.5%) of pupils in upper secondary education in the EU were taught in public institutions in 2022. At least two-thirds of pupils in upper secondary education were educated in public institutions in nearly all of the EU countries.”

Source: Eurostat

That means **14.8 million students** in the EU alone.

In addition, there are *1.47 million* upper secondary students in public schools in non-EU countries in Europe (including the UK), plus *6 million* in Türkiye.



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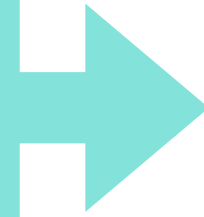
Context - what there is

01	NO (or minimal) COUNSELLING IN STATE SCHOOLS	Focus is on domestic opportunities; there is little to no information on international options; fit is not even discussed
02	TEACHERS ARE BUSY & NOT TRAINED IN COUNSELLING	Students turn to their subject teachers or form tutors with their questions, who have huge workloads, no training in college counselling, and no time for personal attention
03	CHOICES ARE BASED ON INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION	University and course choices are mostly based on what subjects the student is good at or what the “good jobs” are
04	CONFUSION ABOUT ROLES	There is confusion about who can help and how; e.g. what the difference between an IEC and an agent is, resulting in stonewalling and limiting students’ opportunities



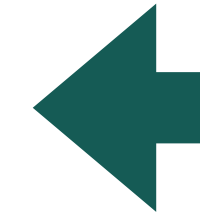
Why does it matter and what should we do about it?

UNIVERSITIES
are missing out on
potential **great-fit**
students, who would
bring **diversity** to
campus



CLOSER COLLABORATION between universities,
schools (and school-based counsellors!), and IECs

- local counsellors understand the culture and the national curriculum; they speak the language, too
- IECs can support schools with post-secondary pathway discussions and planning, relieving the load on teachers
- international schools can open up their university fairs to local state school students



COUNSELLORS
are missing the
opportunity to have a
positive impact on
their wider
environment using
the **resources** they
already have at hand



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What are **we** doing about it?

Two case studies



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Case study 1: counselling curriculum and talent development

THE SCHOOL



Mid-sized, selective secondary school in Budapest

Teaches the national curriculum with a proprietary pedagogical programme

Students aged 12-18 (grades 7 to 12)

Robust support for students who struggle (academically or in executive function), but little assistance for talented ones

THE SITUATION



The student body is changing; there is increasing demand for supporting academically outstanding students and post-secondary pathways. They want to elevate their talent and HE advising programme.



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Case study 1: counselling curriculum and talent development

THE ISSUE



There won't be a classic college counsellor position, even part-time, so what alternatives are there?

THE RESPONSE:

Collaboration with Altiora Learning



1. Discussions with SLT and looking at “what is”
2. Proposal to build a curriculum from grade 9 to 12 involving teachers, embedding it into their pedagogical programme
3. Building trust with teachers, gathering their input
4. Developing talent development and future pathways curriculum to fit school programme
5. Training teachers
6. Supporting implementation



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Case study 2: supporting students who know where they want to go

WHO?

- Predominantly independent / international school students
- Family / friend connections
- Returning home

PROFILE?

- High achievers
- Student-athletes
- Adventurers and explorers

**ACCESS TO
KNOWLEDGE IS THE
PRIMARY FACTOR!**

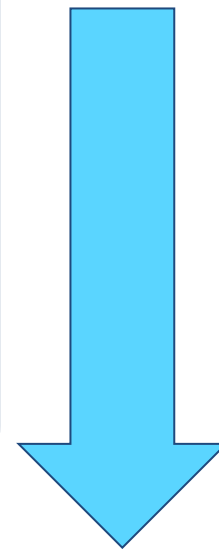


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Case study 2: supporting students who know where they want to go



- Free resources...
- Empower students and families
- Assist counsellors
- Provide opportunities
- Theory vs. Application
- HMC / pro bono



- Promote Study Abroad
- Promote Canada
- Shared resources = widen pool
- Global citizens
- Brightest and the best
- Scholarships / awards



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The university perspective

Recruiting from state schools is not just a diversity strategy—it's a **smart investment in overlooked talent**. But it requires a different mindset and tailored communication.



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Getting in front of State School students

- ☐ Embassies
- ☐ Collaborations with other universities
- ☐ IEC (and school-based counselor) friends

If you have the funding:

- ☐ Tours
- ☐ National Fairs

From there it is time to connect to the schools. Building the relationship takes time, and will not be without hurdles, but is not impossible. Student ambassadors can play a vital role.



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Approach

Brand-selling vs. pathway explaining:
take off your marketing hat and take on a counseling role

Be a sponge:
learn about the students' national context (curriculum, as well as educational landscape overall)
adjust your story to be understandable (=jargon-free), relatable and attainable

Help the school help their students:
update your processes as and when necessary



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Together, we can ensure **every student** has access,
guidance, and a chance to thrive.

Sharing knowledge creates opportunity.



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Q&A



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