International Handbook of Career Guidance
To international collaboration and cooperation in career guidance. Without this collaboration and willingness to listen and support each other, this handbook could never have been realised.

To our wives, Angelena and Josée, who supported us in this project and who were always available to encourage us regardless of the fact that they had to miss us so many hours while we were working on the handbook.
The *International Handbook of Career Guidance* represents a project of international professional cooperation. It is intended as a catalyst for reform and was designed to support the development of career guidance in the years to come. Working for over four years from Belgium and Australia we had the privilege to collaborate with over 50 colleagues throughout the world to produce this Handbook. In every instance we selected key researchers who have an established reputation in the field of career development. They agreed to be involved and we are grateful for their support in this major effort.

In this handbook we have tried to bring together a collection that summarises the diverse aspects of career guidance. It is a synthesis of the domain of career and vocational guidance firstly for an international readership and secondly it is designed to act as a reference for academics, researchers and professionals in the expanding field of career development. For this reason the Handbook includes coverage of the background and history of guidance right through to poignant issues relating to careers in the modern world of work. Policy issues relating to the provision of careers services as well as professional issues relating to career education, career counselling, career assessment, program evaluation and research methodologies are covered.

The reader will find that many different viewpoints are represented. This is deliberate. The Handbook intends to present to readers some of the career guidance “homes”, as it was called by Savickas and Baker in their chapter on “The history of vocational psychology” in the 2005 3rd edition of the Walsh and Savickas *Handbook of Vocational Psychology*. No attempt has been made to impose a uniform viewpoint, or a particular ideology or theoretical perspective on the reader. Rather, we have preferred the option of allowing each author to speak with their own voice and from their own experience. Accordingly the various chapters complement each other. They provide a holistic view of career guidance as a discipline that is worthy of research and as a field that has both practical and theoretical applications. It is up to the reader to critique and evaluate each contribution on its own merits and then to consider its relevance for their particular situation or context.

The original idea to create an International Handbook originated at the 2001 International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) in Vancouver, Canada, at the moment of the presentation of the first issue of the *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*. Several
international colleagues agreed on the need at that moment, but no action was taken. Unfortunately it took several years before the real work began. Concrete action to realise this handbook started in mid-2003 and progressed still further following a meeting of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance in New Zealand. Agreement was reached in 2004 and the first contributors were contacted in the second half of the year. Three years, some 1,000 pages and 1,300 e-mails later, the Handbook has emerged.

Our underlying aim was to provide a reference that reflected international work in guidance. This edition represents a small step and from the outset it was our stated hope that it would be updated at regular intervals. We are conscious that educational and vocational guidance in all the continents has not been adequately represented and we look forward to the day when there will be a wider international representation of cultural views, so that career guidance is not seen as a purely Western phenomenon.

One by-product of the Handbook has been to reinforce the view that career guidance is certainly a coherent and structured professional field. There is a body of knowledge and expertise that pertains to educational and vocational guidance. It is vast and wide-ranging.

Another by-product for the editors has been an acquaintance with some fine colleagues. Whatever may be said about this field, one thing is true; and that is the fact that people who work and research in this field are by-and-large exceptional individuals. They sacrifice their time and effort to advance knowledge for the benefit of society (and of course their own careers). They blend intellectual curiosity with some altruistic quality. We may not agree on theoretical issues but we certainly agree that we like each other as individuals. This is not a bad starting point for a world that is riddled with wars, oppression and tensions. The field of guidance is international and we thought it deserved an international handbook.

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A key question is “why an international handbook”? Indeed there are a large number of handbooks on career guidance available all over the world. They exist in different languages and are updated regularly. In general, however, most of these handbooks are strongly related to one country or to one cultural or linguistic region (e.g., Brown, 2003; Herr, Cramer, & Niles, 2004). Accordingly they are written from a specific point of view and based upon academic developments, guidance practice and societal situations specific to the readers they target. Beyond any doubt, it is an obvious and appropriate choice but it has one disadvantage. The readership will not be confronted with what is going on in the rest of the world and the global diversity in the field of guidance. Accordingly it is a disadvantage in view of an increasing globalisation and the newly required competencies for professionals. Knowing more about the world-wide diversity will help to uncover better practice examples that may be of use for some specific clients or yield new ideas to adapt existing approaches. It also can help to grasp the new developments in the required competencies for career guidance professionals or to acquire a better understanding of them.

Some of these well known handbooks (e.g., Guichard & Huteau, 2006) respond to this disadvantage and include references to research results, theory development and practice in other countries, mainly the USA. This is certainly an improvement from a global point of view but does it solve the shortcoming? This may solve it to the extent that the handbook reflects on the differences between the situation of the area where the handbook originates and the situation from which the other theories or examples were taken and the impact on the applicability of these foreign models.

The major issue in this perspective is the transferability of theories, research results, measurement instruments and guidance practice from one region to another. For several years a major debate has been opened on the cross-cultural applicability of theories (see, e.g., Leong, 1995). The same is true for instrument development that was, for example extensively debated at the International Association for
Educational and Vocational Guidance and National Career Development Association (IAEVG-NCDA) 2004 International Symposium in San Francisco (Watson, Duarte, & Glavin, 2005). But the topic of the use of career techniques and interventions also received ample attention at this symposium (Feller, Russell, & Wichard, 2005). It can be concluded that sometimes a transfer is possible but that the contextual factors should be taken into account and that in some cases the expected results are not reached. Watson and colleagues (2005) stated that “career counselors and researchers needed to step out of their own reality to consider the reality of clients from other cultural groups” (p. 32).

The number of publications on diversity and cross-cultural issues is increasing rapidly following the influence of these discussions. But in addition, the importance is reflected in more and more journal publications and books that do not have diversity as the main topic of their work. A growing sensitivity to the issue that research findings cannot always be generalised and there is recognition of limitations in applicability of the results is appearing in these publications. Even more it is also generally reflected in the population used for research projects. At the moment it is no longer accepted that theories and methods are developed exclusively on basis of data coming from psychology and counselling students, a research sample that mainly represents the middle-class group of our society. The idea that these results can be applied to the population in general at a national or world-wide level is under pressure.

In vocational psychology and career guidance it is strongly recognised that more attention should go to other social groups (Blustein, 2001; Fouad, 2001). Blustein (2006) considered this issue as key theme and he highlighted the role of social barriers, among which “classism” is central, as creating “inequitable conditions for many people and easy access to wealth and power for some” (p. 194). This author even went beyond the recognition of the need to advance knowledge about the barriers for social groups but stressed how this knowledge can be used to empower these groups and change inequitable systems.

The editors of this international handbook tried to take into account these issues by putting them at the centre of their attention while developing the handbook. In this perspective the decision was made to include a wide range of authors coming from all over the world and not belonging to one linguistic group. These authors, though all well acquainted with international developments in the field of career guidance, will approach their topic based upon ideas and concepts, which are influenced by their national, social or ethnic culture. The influence of the environment(s) on how a situation is interpreted is beyond any discussion. Opting for such a diverse group is a guarantee for a larger diversity in the contributions. This strive for diversity was enhanced because the authors were requested to start with those aspects in their topic they knew best. Implying that they could draw upon their experience and knowledge embedded in their own – national or local – environment. But they also were urged to use results, examples or models coming from other counties and certainly to reflect on the differences. There may be some difference in the amount of this type of reflections in the contributions but this is mainly related to the topic. Some topics offer more possibilities to make this kind of reflection than others.
The fact that diversity may be reached is positive but at the same time it provides a difficulty for the readers. Though all authors contributed in English and therefore use an internationally accepted and recognised standard terminology, a first cause of difficulty may be some subtle differences in what these terms mean to the authors. This is related to how their ideas and concepts are embedded in and influenced by different national, social or ethnic cultures. These differences may not always be apparent at the time of first reading. To discover and recognise these differences may take extra time and may cause some temporary misunderstanding before the issue is cleared. Some extra effort to discover these differences and to overcome them may be needed while reading the handbook. A second cause is related to the native language of the author. Those who are non-native English speakers will translate the terminology from their own mother tongue into English. Though the authors may, in that case, apparently be using the same terminology, they may not necessarily cover the same content, even when they use what appears to be a correct translation.

These differences in interpretation of concepts and terminology – related to cultural and linguistic differences – is not just for some specific terms that were developed in a well defined linguistic or geographical region. It even affects very basic terms such as guidance and counselling (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998). The term guidance is generally translated in French as orientation and in German as Beratung. But Beratung, as used in Germany, does not cover the same tasks and activities as what is understood to constitute guidance in Anglo-Saxon countries (Rott, 2002; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998). In the French Community of Belgium the word orientation is sometimes replaced by guidance. This term is even used as a regular French term. It does, however, not correspond to what the term means in the USA or UK. The same is true for the term counselling. Jean Paul Broonen from the Université de Liège (Belgium) pointed out in his translator’s note (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1999, p. 6) that “the term counselling is exemplary in this respect. There exist no single appropriate short term in the French language, except for a longer paraphrasing, that can describe exactly the type of practice …”. In France, several terms and descriptions are used to cover partial aspects of counselling. The term aide (help) is used and frequently combined with the word psychologique (psychological). While others (Blanchard, 1996), used the term conseil (advice) also in combination with the term psychologique or other terms such as educational. But this is not so universal in the French speaking world. Indeed, in the French speaking community of Belgium the term “counselling” is used by career practitioners as a standard French word, though it covers a very different content compared to what is understood in the US tradition. The same is true in Quebec (Canada), where they use the term frequently in leading publications, however, this time in line with the US tradition (Bujold & Gingras, 2000).

It can be concluded that the decision to include a large range of authors with a very different background has the advantage of presenting work that brings views from all over the world. The benefit of such a result for an international readership is the possibility to discover those world-wide differences in one handbook. It also has the advantage that many of these differences will be highlighted and framed in
a broader reflective perspective. But it requires at the same time some extra work and attention from the readers.

The diversity within the global career guidance community is not only related to cultural and linguistic differences but is also related to the many schisms and splits in the field of vocational psychology and guidance. One of the first splits had started already in the 1930s with “the beginnings of the drift apart by vocational psychologists interested in individual and those interested in industries” (Savickas & Baker, 2005, p. 39). But others followed as for example the split between career guidance practitioners and academic researchers (Herr, 1996). But also among the career theorists different paths were followed each of them related to specific paradigms. This led to what Savickas and Lent (1994) called “a plethora of theories, philosophical positions, and research camps” (p. 1). Though Savickas and Lent recognised the benefits of divergence, they also recognise that the ultimate result of too large divergence can be chaos. The “convergence project” (Savickas & Lent, 1994) represented a major effort to define the theoretical splits and how some of them may be resolved. There were other efforts to overcome these schisms. The constructivist Systems Theory Framework (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006), a meta-theory integrating the different approaches and views, should be mentioned in this context. This framework can well serve as a basis for reflections on how to develop and build a guidance practice opening up some new avenues to deal with some of the splits.

But also splits occurred at a more methodological level. The importance of quantitative methods for research in vocational psychology is generally recognised and accepted. This is, however, not always the case in relation to qualitative methods. McMahon and Patton (2002) stated that “most literature concerning career assessment is devoted to quantitative assessments, … little attention has been given to qualitative assessment” (pp. 52–53). This debate of quantitative vs. qualitative methods is sometimes a debate of one method being superior over the other and only one method, the quantitative, being considered as a scientific method. Is this really the case? Could it not be that each method, if applied with rigor, can lead to a valuable contribution depending on the research goals? The SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis for vocational psychology that was realised at the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the *Journal of Vocational Behavior* (Savickas, 2001) came to this last conclusion. Savickas (2001) formulated, on basis of the results of the analysis by his colleagues, a recommendation that there should be

...greater use of qualitative inquiry attuned to context and complexity while emphasizing the need to balance quantitative and qualitative methods, exploratory and confirmatory research, and positivist and constructivist epistemology. Balance might be best accomplished in programmatic research that uses, in turn, both methodologies ...” (p. 287)

Regardless all the efforts to overcome the splits and schism, the situation did not really improve and led to a situation of even larger divergence. Originally vocational psychology had as its purview all aspects of work and education as a lifelong developmental process. This common purview was divided in many fields of specialisation which tended not to know each other anymore. The process was so
strong that he discipline has “dampened” and that “vocational psychology now lacks a disciplinary home” (Savickas & Baker, 2005, p. 44). The reinvigoration of the field has been forwarded as a real need. Some think that “vocational psychology needs a second ‘big bang’ ” (Savickas & Baker, 2005, p. 46), while others look for new inputs from other scientific disciplines (Collin, 2007) or plead for new paradigms (Palladino Schultheiss, 2007).

Another initiative that could be mentioned that may contribute to reinvigorating the field is the founding of the International Life-design (ILD) group in 2006 in Brussels. This is an international group of career counselling researchers, who are also strongly involved in guidance practice, that work on the idea of new paradigms and how to implement them in practice. This group is, inspired by Mark Savickas’ views on “constructivism”. They chose to include the phrase “life-design” in the name of the group to indicate that learner support, personal guidance and counselling, and vocational or career guidance and counselling should be grouped together. The three areas of guidance and counselling should be considered as parts of one large development project of the individual’s “life” in a broader social and environmental setting. This “life” process includes educational, learning and work aspects but also broader aspects of social and personal development are part of it. The individuals construct their own life in all its aspects and do so in an environment to whose construction they also contributed. Indeed, in line with the ideas of Krumboltz (1979) all individual behaviour becomes part of the environment. From a contextual view (Young, Valach, & Collin, 2002) these actions will play a role at a later point in the construction of the connections among actions and the internal construction of the environment. This is exactly what “designers” are doing. Designers are working with their “client” (the person) to develop an environment or part of it in a process of interplay between both of them and this in an environment that is under change and constant interpretation and re-interpretation.

By stressing a holistic model of the individual and how the different components are interwoven, a platform will be created where all those who are engaged in the broad field of educational, vocational and career guidance, counselling and development could meet on an equal footing with their colleagues from other counselling and guidance areas. This could be an option for practitioners as well as for researchers. Indeed, the life-design group opted to translate models and theories into practical guidance and counselling materials.

But at the same time, the schism between the counselling and the industrial/organisational psychology wing is also a focus of attention for this ILD-group. For this reason the “coaching” concept – a topic that is very high on the priority list of organisational psychology – has been chosen by the ILD-group as a project for applying the “construction” idea. There is a question, however: Is coaching so different from counselling? Or is coaching a matter of applying counselling methods? An international survey and some research projects may bring some answers.

Also in the broader career guidance community efforts have been made to assess the splits and the see how to overcome them. This is reflected in the themes of national and international professional meetings. An example of this type is effort of this type was joint International Symposium in San Francisco in 2004 organised
by International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) and the USA based National Career Development Association (NCDA). It was a meeting where researchers and practitioners from all over the world discussed over two days the topic of how international collaboration could help to overcome some of the existing splits. This was followed by the 7th Biennial Conference in 2005 of The Society for Vocational Psychology, which was organised by Richard Young in Vancouver. In this meeting – though strongly oriented towards career psychology research – attention was given to the issue of the need for researchers and practitioners to cooperate on new developments in the field of vocational psychology and its related practice.

Already there have been quite some efforts to reinvigorate the field and the impact of all these initiatives is real and beyond any doubt. It would, however, be beneficial if all these initiatives and all those involved could meet and confront their findings and ideas. This would be even more important if it could be done within a group where practitioners as well as researchers could cooperate. This is exactly one of the goals of this handbook. The authors were chosen in such way that they represent the different “homes”, as this was called by Savickas and Baker (2005). The goal is that by putting all the different point of views together in one publication, to transcend the so-called borders and that the different homes become different rooms with many doors leading to each other in one large “house”. The house, which will be the home to vocational psychology and career guidance and counselling.

The handbook has six parts and 35 chapters. Parts I, III and IV can be considered more as reflections and information on the career guidance practice, while Parts II, V and VI are more theoretical and research oriented though the relation to guidance practice remains evident. A brief overview of the content may help to highlight to which extent the goals of building the house of vocational psychology and career guidance has been realised.

Part I of the Handbook consists of three chapters that give a taste of how career guidance worldwide is influenced by societal changes. In particular technological changes and globalisation are pointed out as the most influential changes. There are large differences in societal development between countries or regions. The issue of inequality – in particular if it is related to economic power – plays an important role because of the globalisation. These differences can lead to some unexpected and undesired effects on the individual’s career development. The social context in the different countries and continents define the importance and organisation of career guidance but it also affects the methods and goals. The question is if this should lead to indigenous forms of guidance and to which extent these indigenous forms still have communalities? The three chapters approach the issue of worldwide societal changes and its effect on career guidance somewhat differently but have quite some common grounds.

The chapter on Career Guidance in a Global World by Raoul Van Esbroeck describes how the present situation of globalisation is the result of a long process of changes in society and the world of business. Globalisation is perceived as having far-reaching consequences for society as a whole. There are benefits but there are also a number of unexpected consequences. Some of these consequences are
related to the clash of cultures and are indicated as having major impact on individ-
uals and their careers. The need for career guidance and new approaches in guid-
ance are given special attention. A holistic person-centred guidance model and a
one-stop-shop model are presented as a heuristic framework for designing new
paths to career guidance in a globalised world.

The chapter on the Social Context for Career Guidance Throughout the World
by Ed Herr discusses the powerful effects of the social context on individual career
development and on the provision of career guidance. These processes are interac-
tive and the content of each is undergoing rapid and wide-spread change. The social
contexts of nations around the world are being affected by many forces, including
the intensity of international economic competition, the pervasiveness of advanced
technology in the implementation of work processes, the transfer of jobs and work
tasks across political boundaries, and the globalisation and integration of manufac-
turing, creativity, science, technology, and management. Such contextual factors
have made career paths and individual career development more complex and more
fragmented, requiring workers to assume more responsibility for keeping their
skills current and serving as their own career manager. As expectations of workers
vary and as the social contexts of nations are recreated by transformative forces –
economic, political, organisational – career guidance has become a world-wide
socio-political instrument to meet national goals and to assist individuals to address
their specific career concerns.

The third chapter, written by Kerr Inkson and Graham Elkin on The Context of
Careers in Developed Nations, explores the issue of career contexts by using the
metaphor of the (career) traveller travelling through a complex and changing land-
scape. Individual agency in careers is contrasted with contextual structure and the
influence of structure is emphasised. Among the contextual variables considered
are constraints imposed by social class, ethnicity and gender: economic develop-
ment; globalisation; political policies; industry and occupation structures; the
knowledge economy and educational provision; organisational restructuring and
control of careers; forms of employment such as contracting and temporary work;
changing labour force characteristics including ageing, feminisation, turnover, and
migration; national and local cultures and values; family life; and future scenarios
for increased casualisation of the workforce and mass unemployment.

Part II of the Handbook contains seven chapters. This part is the classical part,
as it can be found in any handbook. It contains the history of career guidance
(Helping People Choose Jobs: A History of the Guidance Profession), the career
theories in general (The Big Five Career Theories and Recent Developments in
Career Theories: The Influences of Constructivism and Convergence), more spe-
cific theories (A History of the Guidance Profession, Decision-Making Models and
Career Guidance, A Constructivist Approach to Ethically Grounded Vocational
Development Interventions for Young People, Developmental-Contextual
Perspectives on Career across the Lifespan) and some reflections on the applicabil-
ity of theories in a global world (Theories in Cross-Cultural Contexts). There are,
however, some specific aspects which are interwoven through all chapters. The
authors of these chapters take into account the importance of social contexts and
the role of international societal differences and changes. It makes this part of the Handbook, though classical at first sight, an innovative section that may bring some surprises to readers.

The chapter written by Mark Savickas on the history of the guidance profession approaches the history from a broad international perspective. With the rapid social changes brought by information technology and the globalisation of the economy, the profession of vocational guidance must reconsider the current relevance of its models, methods, and materials. The profession has successfully reinvented itself before in devising youth mentoring for agricultural communities, vocational guidance for industrial cities, and career counselling for corporate societies. To remain relevant and useful in the 21st century, the profession is again reinventing its theories and techniques, this time to concentrate on self-construction within an information society. The chapter contributes to the guidance profession’s self-reflection and encourages its reinvention by considering the history of vocational guidance, especially its origins and the development of its four main methods for helping people make educational and occupational choices.

Alvin Leung wrote the chapter on what is considered at the moment as the traditional “big five” theories. He reviews five career development theories that were developed in the United States (USA) but have made an important contribution to career guidance and counselling internationally. These five theories are the Minnesota Theory of Work-Adjustment, Holland’s Theory of Vocational Personalities and Work Environment, Self-concept Theory of Career Development formulated by Super and more recently by Savickas, Gottfredson’s Theory of Circumscription and Compromise and the Social Cognitive Career Theory. In addition to summarising core concepts and propositions of the five theories, this chapter also examines their cross-cultural validity through reviewing key findings from recent empirical studies conducted outside of the USA. Possible directions to advance and “indigenous” the five career development theories in diverse cultural regions are also discussed.

Some recent developments on career theory influenced by constructivism and convergence are described in the chapter written by Wendy Patton. This chapter briefly overviews the history of career theories, and within the context of the need for a shift in philosophical underpinnings of career theory, describes the core principles of constructivism and its role in the focus on convergence in career theory. Second, it explores two recent theoretical contributions, the Systems Theory Framework and the Career Construction Theory, which reflect developments in both integration and in the influence of constructivism in career theory. For the purpose of comprehensiveness, the influence of constructivism the role of these influences in a number of emerging theoretical discussions is also reviewed.

The chapter by Itamar Gati and Shiri Tal concentrates more on the role of decision-making models in career guidance. This chapter discusses the ways in which a decision-theory perspective can potentially enhance our understanding and facilitation of the career-decision-making process. The chapter explores how by adopting and adapting decision theory to the unique features of career decisions, theoretical knowledge can be transformed into practical interventions, providing career counsellors with tools to assist deliberating individuals. The authors suggest
that one of the reasons decision theory has not yet been embraced as a leading framework for career guidance is that normative decision-making models, which were dominant for many decades, are overly rational and too abstract to be applicable. It is therefore suggested to adopt prescriptive decision-making models, which outline a systematic framework for making decisions, while acknowledging human limitations and intuitive decision-making styles. The usefulness of prescriptive models for facilitating career decision-making is demonstrated by a short review of the PIC model (Pre-screening, In-depth exploration, Choice).

The chapter written by Jean Guichard and Bernadette Dumora brings in the ethical component as it can be applied in constructivist approaches. They start with reflections on the societal context of “high modernity” (Giddens) and how this implies that vocational issues are much broader than that of occupational choice (Parsons) or of career development (Super): Reflexively organised life-planning becomes a major endeavour for individuals. Vocational interventions (education or counselling) aim to help them in this life designing process that – for most individuals – encompasses the issues of work and employment. To do it rigorously, such interventions need to fulfil two conditions: (a) to be grounded on knowledge about the self-construction processes and factors and (b) to make their societal and ethical ends explicit. Adolescence and emerging adulthood appear to be critical ages in this self-construction. Different European researchers have approached the processes in young people of the constitution of the intentions for their own future. Four approaches are presented: the representative matching of self and occupations (Huteau), the development of career decision making cognitive abilities (Dumora), the recurrent and diverse mini-cycles of career development activities (Van Esbroeck et al.) and the construction of a dynamic system of subjective identity forms (Guichard). Relying on these observations, vocational interventions (career education or counselling sessions) have been designed (and some of them assessed) to prepare youngsters to take their decision as regards their school and (future) occupational careers. In our current global context, it seems nevertheless that vocational interventions should aim at more ambitious ends: those of helping young people think about their own contribution to the development of a world where people “live well, with and for others in fair institutions” (Ricoeur).

The chapter written by Fred Vondracek and Erik Porfeli highlights the role that developmental-contextual perspectives can have on career development across the lifespan. These authors start from the idea that the developmental contextual perspective has proved to be a useful means of comprehending how careers are the product of the person-in-context because it represented a meaningful extension of segmental theories that served as the foundation of vocational psychology. Developmental Systems Theory and one of its progeny, Motivational Systems Theory, employ developmental contextualism and living systems theory to yield a comprehensive theory of human functioning. Such advances hold great promise because they merge the biological, psychological, and action aspects of the person to yield a bio-psycho-social perspective of career development.

In their chapter Fred Leong and Arpana Gupta examine the strengths and weaknesses of Western based models for use in a global/international setting. They use