

Synthesis Paper



Theme 2.

**Ensuring that content and delivery
of career development programs
and services are relevant**

Synthesizers:

Spencer G. Niles, The College of William & Mary
Steffen Jensen, SJ Consulting

Ensuring that content and delivery of career development programs and services are relevant especially considering the changing work opportunities especially considering the changing work opportunities, Re theme 1

A synthesis of the perspectives of countries and international organisations attending the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy Symposium 2017

Synthesizers:

1. Spencer G. Niles, the College of William & Mary

2. Steffen Jensen, SJ Consulting (Former head, Danish Ministry of Education)

The theme addresses the following issues:

1. What reforms, if any, have already taken place in the content and delivery of career services in the education and labour market sectors in response to the changes identified in Theme 1?
2. What additional reforms are needed in the content and delivery of career services in the education and labour market (including PES and HR) sectors to respond to those changes?
3. What are the policy levers in place or needed in your country that support necessary reforms (e.g. the provision of experiential careers learning) in the content and delivery of career services in education and labour market sectors?
4. What are the main barriers and/or success factors to implementing such career service reforms i.e. policy, content and kind of services, delivery methods, and openness to change.
- 5.

In light of the rapidly changing labour market is it very important that the content of career development programs takes account of actual and forthcoming work opportunities and also that the programs and services are easily accessible for clients who need career services.

1. What reforms, if any have already taken place in the content and delivery of career services in the education and labour market sectors in response to the changes identified in Theme 1?

Fifteen countries have responded to the changes by introducing guidance interventions in the educational sector, some by specific reforms to the guidance system, most by changes in the content of guidance and some by recommendations for the guidance sector broadly.

Seven countries have changed the content and structure of labour market information and guidance – mostly by specific reforms.

Nine countries have set up overall plans and/or cross-sectoral schemes or strategies, while seven countries have introduced partnerships between the education and industry sectors. Five countries have introduced work experiences in their educational programs.

Other interventions have been reforms of compulsory, upper secondary, vocational and higher education, introduction of enhanced use of ICT in guidance and additional professional training for guidance practitioners.

Nearly all countries have responded to the challenges in some way, and it seems that introduction of stronger labour market information in guidance in the educational system in different ways is a key component of the interventions in many countries.

Nearly half of the countries have included work experiences in education and/or establishing partnerships between industry and education. Philippines, Japan, South Korea and Norway should especially be mentioned.

Table 1

Reforms/interventions already taken place	Countries
Guidance in education	
Recommendations	Japan, Ireland, England
Changes	Sri Lanka, Scotland, South Africa, Cambodia, Japan, Philippines, Finland, Denmark
Reforms	Denmark, Norway, South Korea, Wales
Guidance in labour market	
Changes	Japan, Norway, Sri Lanka
Reforms	South Korea, South Africa, Chile, Finland
Use of ICT in guidance	South Korea, Wales
Compulsory education	Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg, Philippines
Vocational education	Tunesia, Luxembourg, Denmark
Upper secondary education	Denmark, Finland, Philippines
Higher education	Philippines, Chile
Work experiences in educational programs	Scotland, England, South Korea, Japan, Philippines
Partnerships between education and industry	Philippines, Australia, Norway, USA, England, Scotland, Wales
Overall plans and cross-sector schemes	Saudi Arabia, Wales, USA, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, Canada, Tunisia, Luxembourg,
Professional training of guidance practitioners	England, Scotland

2. What additional reforms are needed in the content and delivery of career services in the education and labour market(including PES and HR) sectors to respond to those changes?

There is a wide range of needed reforms/interventions, nearly equally spread over the countries. These include:

- Increased access to career guidance for adults
- Expanding/re-organizing the guidance system
- A clearer role for guidance in relation to education and/or the labor market
- Widened access for a broader public to guidance, e.g. through use of ICT/guidance portals
- Access to relevant and updated labor market supply and demand data within education
- Development of improved curriculum, e.g. introduction of career management skills, clear career pathways for pupils
- Demand for explicit legislation including national or regional strategies
- Stronger links between education and industry including collaboration between stakeholders
- Robust implementation of specific reforms
- Higher standards/qualifications for guidance practitioners

There continues to be a need for more evidence to support career services relative to their impacts on key metrics such as graduation from secondary school, the successful transition from secondary school to employment or post-secondary education, finding meaningful work in adulthood, and more rapid transitions from unemployment to employment. Finally, support for more coherent guidance systems in which there are clear roles for school and career guidance providers are needed.

Table 2

Reforms/interventions needed	Countries
Inncreased career guidance for adults	Denmark, Canada, New Zealand, Scotland, Wales
Expanding/re-organizing guidance systems	Wales, South Korea, Cambodia, Chile, Denmark
Clearer roles for guidance	Denmark, Philippines, South Korea, England, Wales
Explicit legislation / Strict implementation	Norway, Philippines, Finland
Use of ICT / portals	Finland, Philippines, Cambodia
Use of databases (e.g. LMI)	Sri Lanka, Canada, Philippines, Luxembourg, Finland
Higher qualifications for guidance practitioners	Philippines, Japan, Norway, USA, England, Sri Lanka

Reforms/interventions needed	Countries
Establishment of new bodies	Sri Lanka, Tunisia
Widening access to guidance	Tunisia, Norway, Chile, Ireland, South Korea
More labor market relevant education	Tunisia, Denmark
Clear career pathways	Canada, USA, Scotland
Collaboration between stakeholders	South Korea, Chile, Norway, Canada, Luxembourg
Development of national/regional strategies	Canada, Chile, England
Development of specific CMS curriculum	Nigeria, Ireland, Wales, South Africa, New Zealand
Specific links between education and industry	USA, Wales, Sri Lanka

3. What are the policy levers in place or needed in your country that support necessary reforms (e.g. the provision of experiential careers learning) in the content and delivery of career services in education and labour market sectors?

By far, the most mentioned policy lever (fifteen countries) is a top-down approach from legislation, policy strategies, ministries and agencies. Only seven countries mention a bottom-up approach from fora and networks of stakeholders.

The following levers are mentioned by one country each: industry awards, drop-out issues, job-skills mismatch, international experiences through international bodies, and systematic staff development. Greater collaboration among educational, employment, and governmental bodies is also required.

Key strategies for relevant career development program and service delivery to address these levers most often included:

- ICT integration with more current, accurate and relevant employment information
- Increased use of apprenticeships and internships to help young people learn more about themselves and the world-of-work
- Strengthening of educational-governmental-business partnerships
- Expansion of personalized career and life planning portfolio strategies for youth to support middle and high school student engagement in career and educational planning.

Clearly, evidence supporting these interventions relative to their capacity to make a relevant and sustained impact upon important career development outcomes would generate policy levers that could elevate the funding for and delivery of expanded career development programs and services.

Finally, it is rare that lifelong career guidance occurs. Services and programs often commence when the recipients of those services are in secondary school or in the employment sector. Given the growing evidence of the importance of childhood in the career development process, the provision of true lifelong guidance would be a worthy initiative (with relevant research studies) for addressing school dropout rates and improving transitions pertaining to school-to-school, school-to-work, and work-to-work transition.

In their papers, the countries and international organisations reproduced many of the themes identified by the literature in this area. While not all countries discussed all of the themes and trends it was clear that countries felt that they were going through political, economic, social, technological and environmental changes. Some countries have commissioned or identified research on how these issues are manifesting within their country (e.g. Australia). Countries identified the following issues as contributing to the changes in work organisation.

Table 3

Policy levers	Countries
Fora / networks of stakeholders	Austria, Finland, Luxembourg, Japan, Norway, Canada, Cambodia,
Legislation / policy / ministries /agencies	Sri Lanka, Wales, Scotland, England, USA, South Korea, Ireland, South Africa, Chile, Cambodia, Norway, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Finland
Drop-out issue	Denmark
International experiences	Finland
Job-skills mismatch	Philippines
Awards	Japan
Industry Outreach	USA

4. What are main barriers and/or success factors to implementing such career service reforms i.e. policy, content and kind of services, delivery methods, and openness to change

a. Success factors

Only a few success factors are mentioned in the country papers. Some countries mention the importance of legislation, national strategies or frameworks as well as overall strong awareness of the importance of guidance as important success factors.

National or regional bodies or working groups with stakeholders and openness to change are also cited, as are is clear division of tasks, consensus between relevant ministries, one-stop service, ICT in guidance and ongoing professional development programs for guidance

practitioners. The introduction of a new master’s degree level career development specialization for teachers is cited as a very positive innovation.

Table 4

Success factors	Countries
Strategies/ awareness of the importance of guidance	Austria, South Korea, Wales
Clear division of tasks	Finland
Legislation / national strategies / framework	Finland, Canada, Norway, Scotland
National/regional working groups / bodies	Ireland, Finland
Openness to change	Philippines, South Africa,
Consensus between ministries	Tunisia
Professional Development programs for practitioners	Canada
ICT in guidance	Norway
One-stop services	South Korea

b. Barriers

Half of the countries mention conflicting interests between stakeholders and/or opposition from some stakeholders as barriers to change. Barriers include reluctance from schools to allocate time or resources to guidance, unwillingness to focus on non-academic further education etc. and/or a lack of awareness (on the part of schools and students) as to the importance of lifelong career guidance interventions.

7 Seven countries mention lack of finances as a problem. Five countries cite lack of political focus or coherent strategies and five countries cite assessing problems and lack of knowledge about guidance resources, programs and/or curriculum as barriers.

Additional barriers include lack of relevant data, unclear role of guidance, opposition from professional chambers and related bodies, fragmented education to employment systems, changes of political priorities, lack of co-ordination and lack of educated staff.

Table 5

Barriers	Countries
Finances	Austria, Philippines, Canada, South Africa, USA, Scotland, Wales
Conflicting interests / opposition from stakeholders	Wales, Scotland, England, South Korea, Norway, Canada, Japan, Philippines, Luxembourg, Denmark
Lack of evidence / data	Denmark, Chile
Unclear role of guidance	Ireland, Denmark
Accessing issues / knowledge of availability	Canada, Chile, USA, England, Scotland, Saudi Arabia
Policy changes	Norway, New Zealand
Lack of co-ordination	New Zealand, Norway, Cambodia, USA
Lack of political focus / coherent strategies	Wales, England, South Korea, Chile, New Zealand
Lack of educated staff	South Korea

Possible recommendations:

Inclusion of work experiences in education, and bridge building activities from education to work are well known and effective tools in guidance and it seems that these tools are spreading to many countries. All countries should be encouraged to use such resources and tools.

It is important to emphasize the importance of access to relevant and updated labour market data to support an effective guidance service.

Finally, evidence based data on the impact of guidance is needed to convince politicians of the importance of guidance and career development programs.