

The Country Paper should not exceed 25 pages, including the cover page.  
The finalized Country Paper should be submitted via email at [ICCDPP2017@krivnet.re.kr](mailto:ICCDPP2017@krivnet.re.kr) in Word (.doc file).

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# Norway

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## Introduction

We are now at a crucial crossroads where decisions must be made.

The structures of work opportunity are undergoing massive changes in most countries. Information and communications technology have significantly changed how organisations and businesses function. The local and national economies are affected by the global economy in ways that could not have been envisaged 30 years ago. Many people struggle to make a living. Incomes have been stuck for many years while the cost of living is steadily increasing. Wealth and income inequality is growing with wealth increasingly concentrated among a small percentage of the population. Youth unemployment and underemployment rates are universally high. Career pathways are very unclear. There remains a disconnection between education & training and the world of work, and between career development practitioners in all sectors and employers. The era of the 4th Industrial Revolution and Artificial Intelligence (AI) has arrived. Automation is increasingly encroaching and reshaping work in many economic sectors. The future of work is uncertain and unclear.

To deal with these issues above, we need to seek approaches and methods that meet individual career needs and produce measurable results that are practical and socially relevant for individuals and societies.

The career development sector addresses the challenges of bridging the supply and demand sided of the labour market and enhancing the prospects of our economy and society. It equips individuals to make educational, training and work choices that will afford them decent work and future opportunity and helps employers to access qualified and productive workers.

How is the career development sector in your country facing the challenge of being relevant and current in the context of such massive change? How have the personal, social and economic impacts of its programs and services been demonstrated and/or transformed in response to changes in the labour market? What can funders and policy makers realistically expect from programs and services provided within the sector? What can the public and employers realistically expect? What are the implications for policy and practice going forward?

The 2017 Symposium invites countries to examine the crossroads at which the relevance and impact of career development interact with the significant changes occurring in their labour markets and to explore constructive and impactful career development responses. Countries are expected to develop a Country Paper in which the following four themes will be addressed:



**Theme 1**

Understanding how work opportunities are changing



**Theme 2**

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



**Theme 3**

Improving career practitioner training and practice



**Theme 4**

Reforming career services in education and labour to focus on career competencies and successful transitions

In reference to these themes, countries are encouraged to pay specific attention wherever possible to:

- Key elements in your country that are guiding policy development and implementation
- Examples of specific outcomes that are resulting from policy implementation and how these outcomes are measured
- Examples of promising implementation strategies.

## General question

1. Please indicate the theme that you are the most interested in discussing (Please note that country teams will participate in all sub-themes discussions during the symposium.)

- Understanding how work opportunities are changing
- Ensuring that content and delivery of career development programs and services are relevant
- Improving career practitioner training and practice
- Reforming career services in education and labour market sectors to focus on career competencies and successful transitions

2. Please indicate your reasons for participating for this symposium.

- Norway has put skills policy, and more specific, career guidance, higher up on the agenda during the last years. Several initiatives and developments are going on. To participate in this symposium, is an excellent opportunity for the team to meet colleagues from all over the world to learn, exchange and discuss matters concerning this important policy area.

3. To what degree are the established career content, programs and services in your country in meeting the career needs of the population?

3/5

4. On a scale of 1(Lowest) – 5(Highest), how does career development provided in schools, produce ‘career ready school leavers’ in your country?

2/5

5. On a scale of 1(Lowest) – 5(Highest), what is the strength of the public policy evidence base for career development in your country?

2/5

## Thematic questions

Questions to help you to organise your country responses to the four specific themes are outlined below:



### Understanding how work opportunities are changing

6. What are the major changes that are taking place in access to, or maintenance of, or progression in employment and/or livelihood possibilities for youth and adults in your country?

- Norway is a strong economy with, traditionally, a low unemployment rate. However, a relatively high proportion (+/- 20 %) of the workforce is outside the labour market, receiving different benefits. Young adults, especially young men without completed education, are at a higher risk of not getting into the labour market.
- Norway was not so affected by the economic crisis that hit Europe a few years ago. But the Norwegian economy is now facing a major challenge, due to changes in the oil economy. Continuous low oil prices the last few years, has had a deep impact on the industry, with downsizing as one of the consequences. In the long term, the supply of oil is also going to be lower, which indicates the need of a fundamental restructuring of the Norwegian economy as a whole.
- Norway is also facing changes in the labour market due to technological change, demographic change, regional differences, and immigration. These major challenges call for higher priority of competence strategies and provisions, recently stated in national strategies and inter-ministerial cooperation.

7. From your knowledge, what are the major drivers/factors behind these changes? -  
\*examples required

- Changes in the oil economy: lower prices, lower supply – need of a fundamental restructuring of the oil economy, shift to greener economy.
- Technological development/automation. Problem: traditional jobs are disappearing, new jobs occurring, which means a need for new/other skills in the adult workforce, and also need for adjustments in the education sector to make sure young people get relevant education.
- Demographic development: older population. Problem: an expensive welfare state must be financed by a smaller workforce.
- Increased immigration: will help the problem above, but new immigrants are in need of

upskilling before they can be fully integrated in the labour market.

8. How are education, training and employment policies and practices in your country responding, if at all, to these changes?

- A National Skills Policy Strategy has just been signed. It gives the direction for Norway's future skills policy. The strategy points at several measures that will be important to follow up with policy decisions and funding.
- Efforts are done to strengthen inter-ministerial coordination, there are trials being piloted, and efforts done to adjust regulations that are sub-optimal. Many of the proposed measures are stated in a White paper on lifelong learning from 2015-2016. These are aimed at increasing access and reduce obstacles, like the division of rights between youth and adults, which have had an excluding impact when it comes to the access to training, or the limited options of transitions between general education and vocational education and training.
- To prepare for seniors to stay longer in the labour market, they are granted some extra days off after they pass 60 years.
- There is a continuous development of changing the educational programs and curricula according to societal and workforce needs, and also to meet the need for increase in quality and to reduce drop-out rates.

9. What evidence is there, if any, of the impact of these policies and practices on improved access to work opportunities for youth and adults (please refer as appropriate to access issues covering gender, seniors, disabled and other minorities)?

- Efforts and programs that are going to be implemented and piloted, are planned to be evaluated. Thus it is not in due time to report on evidence. However, there is sufficient evidence that wage subsidies may have an increased impact on employability, thus is planned to be provided more frequently.

10. What evidence is there, if any, of the impact of these policies and practices on improved access to appropriate workers by employers?

- Yet to be evaluated, see the above paragraphs.



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

11. 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?

**Education sector + all age "sector":**

- A new compulsory program in career development/career learning is given in secondary school ("Educational choice"). The programme includes elements of career learning/career management skills
- There are career centres in almost every county in Norway, giving adults access to free of charge professional career services.
- The contact between career practitioners and the labour market sectors is strengthened.
- There are established partnerships between central stakeholders in every county to strengthen career guidance services.

**Labour market sector:**

- Extensive widening and enhancing the cross-sectorial co-operation and co-ordination about groups at risk, youth and refugees especially. The strong focus implies co-ordination both on political level, as well as national and local administrative level, which are further materialized into collaboration on piloting projects. The focus also implies a stronger commitment between the Government and the Labour market organizations to co-operate on priority areas.
- One out of several examples is a project where NAV-counselors collaborate with career centers in five communities in piloting career guidance services in the Asylum centers. The career guidance services are part of a full time programme to speed up the integration process into work or complementary education and training after residence permit has been clarified. Collaboration on staff training is part of the national project.

12. 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?

**Education sector:**

- Further strengthen the cooperation between different stakeholders within career guidance services.
- Further need to widen the access to career guidance services, both in schools and higher education.
- More focus on the professionalization of the career guidance practitioners and the teachers involved in the career learning-programmes.

**Labour market sector:**

- There is a need for preparing the implementation of the propositions in the Green Paper delivered by an expert committee in 2016, aiming at developing a comprehensive system of career guidance services accessible to all citizens (PES users incl).
- Strengthening quality of guidance services as well as the competencies of staff, and to further develop ICT-based guidance services are also included in the propositions.
- As part of a needed restructuring of NAV implying stronger local judgement assessments, evidence based improvements are aiming at further individualizing and adapting follow-up methodology and labor market schemes, e.g in the "Place then train" concept. Simplifying the ICT-based guidance tools along with enhancing user's involvement is planned to enable more dynamic guidance, putting the user in the "driver's seat".

**Adults:**

- Further strengthening the access to a variety of guidance services, including web-based information, e-guidance and face-to-face guidance services for all adults.
- These services need to be professional and well-coordinated with other guidance services delivered within the education- and labor market sector.
- Secure access to tailor-made career guidance services for refugees and immigrants.

13. 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?

- The Government (represented with five different ministries) together with the social partners, agreed upon a Skills Policy Strategy for Norway in February 2017. The Skills Policy Strategy sets out the direction for the future skills policy in Norway. Among other issues, the strategy points at the importance of a more comprehensive lifelong guidance system and of better system for gathering and giving labour market information. In 2016 an expert committee advised the Government on how to develop a better system for lifelong guidance (Green Paper). Together, this might serve as policy levers in the field of career guidance.
- The Parliament, having endorsed a White paper in 2016 urging changes needed in the PES administration (NAV), provides the basis for comprehensive improvements of labor market services. Stronger delegated authority and frame of actions to the local PES offices, including refined ICT development, is expected to provide better adapted services and benefits of better inclusion of citizens, refugees, and services to employers. Summed up, the mantras in focus at the PES are on employers, user's experiences and professional competence and units.
- NAV is, in collaboration with the education authorities, involved in following up the White paper on lifelong learning (2016) mentioned above, and the newly endorsed national Skills Policy Strategy. This implies further development and provisions of guidance services and means like training and work practice.

14. 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?



**Barriers:**

- Changes in political priorities in the different sectors impeding the implementation of agreed goals.
- Intersectorial co-ordination between sector based missions, means and regulations may be extremely demanding.
- Discrepancy between expected actions according to agreed goals and necessary funding and capacity.
- Complications of colliding regulations between sectors, complicating the enabling of changes and solutions
- Lack of political engagement and willingness to increase funding of guidance services.

**Success factors:**

- **Policy:** National skills strategies form the basis for regional strategies and implementation of coordinated plans into local practical collaboration of which career services are an integrated part. Resources and funding are realistic.
- **Content and kind of services:** Framework, quality standards as well as standards of staff competencies are nationally and regionally agreed on and followed up in all sectors.
- **Delivery methods:** Citizens may have access to a diversity of career services being unrolled within the frame and missions of the sectors, in that way together covering the OECD definition of career guidance (2004).
- Increased development of ICT-based career services will multiply the access and utilization of career services for the majority of citizens. In the ongoing automating processes project in the NAV, conversion of ICT support and communication channels will simplify the system of following up users, enabling a dynamic guidance with enhanced user's involvement. This already has become a success in the field of parental allowances provisions.



## Improving career practitioner training and practice

15. How do governments/agencies/professional associations in your country ensure that the initial and continuing training of career practitioners in the public and private sectors stay relevant to the context (place, time and needs) of clients' social, economic and work lives?

- In Norway, the higher education sector is quite autonomous and there is no tradition for the government to directly influence the content of the education of career practitioners.
- On the other hand, when establishing the new Masters programme in career guidance, the government granted a targeted funding for the programme, thus indicating the importance of upskilling of career guidance practitioners in Norway. The National Unit for Lifelong Guidance in Skills Norway was also invited to contribute in the initial phases of the development of the Masters programme. There is also a continuous informal dialogue initiated by the Masters programme between the programme and relevant actors/stakeholders, to ensure that the programme is in line with the recent developments both in the field of career guidance and in the society as a whole.
- There is a tradition in Norway that different organizations (PES, school owners, the municipalities, the directorates etc.) commission courses/training programmes/further education in career guidance from universities or the university colleges, and thus have a dialogue with the providers of these programmes when it comes to content
- Some school guidance practitioners have access to special funding from the Directorate of education to participating in further education and training in guidance.
- The new Master programme is also delivering open courses in career guidance, specifically aimed at career practitioners.
- Norway is now developing a new teacher's education at Masters level, career guidance is an optional course in some of the programmes.
- In Norway we have established a National Forum with representatives from all stakeholders. The forum consists of approximately 30 different stakeholders and they meet twice a year. This is a structure that is established to ensure communication between stakeholders when it comes to the recent development in the field of career guidance.
- Recently there has been conducted a major process in Norway concerning the development of the skills policies. How to ensure that the career guidance practitioners have relevant and sufficient skills and competencies, have been in focus throughout the whole process. The social partners have engaged especially in this question.
- In PES (NAV): Strengthening staff competencies in providing work directed guidance to users of the NAV (PES including partnership with municipalities on social services) Tool: A Guidance platform with a variety of thematic modules, developed in the NAV system and additionally courses developed at a University College. Ongoing training courses since 2014.

- In PES (NAV): Further developed guidance methodology by focusing on the relationship and interaction between employers and participants in labor market schemes (“Inclusion competencies”) aiming at making the placement into a sustainable job.

16. What role does/should the business/employer community have in influencing the relevance of practitioner training?

- There is not a strong tradition of including business/employer community in “influencing the relevance of practitioner training” in Norway.
- There is however, long lasting traditions of cooperation between the educational authorities and the organisations of labour market when it comes to content and relevance in vocational education and training.
- In the recent assignment from the Government to the National Unit for Lifelong Guidance to develop a quality framework (see question no. 17), there is a requirement to involve all stakeholders in the discussions about the quality framework.
- In the counties in Norway there is a tradition in cooperation/interactions between business/employer community and career practitioners in schools.
- There is also a growing cooperation/interaction between career centres at universities and the business/employer community.
- The main employer organizations have on different occasions engaged in the question about what kind of competencies a career guidance practitioner need to enable relevant guidance when it comes to future work opportunities. They are especially concerned whether the career guidance practitioners have sufficient knowledge about work opportunities, different industries and lines of work, and the future skills needs.

17. What national/regional mechanisms are in place to ensure that practitioners’ competency frameworks, if such exist, stay relevant?

- A recent report (a green paper) from an expert committee to the Government have suggested that there should be developed a quality framework for lifelong guidance. One of the components of such a framework is suggested to be competence standards for career practitioners. A recent follow up from the Government on the report, is that The National Unit for Lifelong Guidance in Skills Norway has been given the assignment to start developing such a quality framework. This has to be done in close cooperation with other stakeholders. The development of competence standards will be based on a close dialogue between the governmental bodies, the different stakeholders, the employers of career guidance practitioners, the social partners and the providers of education and training in the field of career guidance.
- There has been developed a practitioners’ competency framework in the school sector. It is in the form of recommendations for what competencies the career guidance practitioners in the school sector needs. This framework is not compulsory, but some school owners have made them mandatory.
- The career centres on regional level and career coordinators in counties are regularly supporting practitioners with relevant courses.

- Regional partnerships ensures that practitioners competency frameworks stays relevant according to regional needs.

## 18. What are the main barriers/success factors to effecting reforms in the professional preparation and development of career practitioners?

### Barriers:

- No common agreement or understanding of the requirements to be seen as a professional career guidance practitioner.
- No cross-sectorial quality framework, no competency standards (besides competency recommendations for school counsellors), no common agreement upon learning outcome for career guidance students.
- Not sufficient funding for education and training-programmes (e.g. no bachelor's programmes in career guidance).
- Not enough academic staff at high level to educate and conduct research.
- Not enough awareness by employers or by governmental bodies of the importance of securing that practitioners have professional training.
- No strong professional association to contribute to discuss and set the standards for what is to be called professional career guidance.

### Success factors:

- Committed relationship/cooperation between stakeholders on national, regional and local level
- Continuous development of curricula in the Masters programmes and other formal educational programmes, developed in cooperation with the labour market and societal stakeholders.
- A developed lifelong guidance system
- A broad professional research team
- A culture of targeted training programs



## Reforming career services in education and labour to focus on career competencies and successful transitions

*Transition* is a process of moving within and between education, employment or training situations.

*Career transition* competences refer to the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to make successful transitions.

19. What have the Ministries of Education and Ministries of Employment done individually and collectively in your country to ensure that individuals learn how to make successful transitions to and within an uncertain labour market?

- There has been developed a National Skills Strategy, signed by 5 ministries and 8 of the main social partners focusing, among other themes, on the importance of making well informed educational and work-life choices. The strategy points at the importance of a well developed career guidance system that gives adult access to career guidance.
- A follow up of the strategy is that there is going to be established a National Skills Committee and a Skills Board (English name not yet decided!). They are to work with the system for gathering, analyzing and communicating better labor market information/information about future skills needs. The project will focus on how to ensure that these analyses of future skills needs, are made available for career guidance practitioners and end-users in a way that is understandable and useful to them.
- In secondary school the program "Educational choice" is supposed to give the students career competencies to prepare them for later transitions. Also the career services in both, secondary school, upper secondary school and higher education are aimed at this.
- There has been a stronger focus on integration of immigrants, also including a stronger focus on the importance of giving access to relevant career guidance, both for newly arrived refugees, and also immigrants that are granted asylum. The transition process from being a newly arrived asylum-seeker, to get integrated and learn Norwegian, get relevant education or up-skilling and finding a job in Norway is challenging. We are now looking into how career guidance, and especially career learning, can be better used in the different integration programs. We also work with how to give this group better access to professional career guidance services.
- Skills Norway was recently given an assignment to develop a quality framework, which is planned to include a Career Management Skills-framework.
- In the PES-sector there has been an increased focus on ensuring that unemployed and people outside the labour market due to health problems, are given the opportunity to develop career competencies during the different programmes they attend.


20. How career transition competencies are currently addressed in curricula and in employability frameworks in the education and employment sectors (PES, HR, Employment training etc.) in your country?

- During the last years, there has been a development towards a better understanding of and interest in the importance of career learning and transition skills. This has mainly been a bottom-up process, but with some influence from policy level.
- There has been written some reports and there has been conducted different development processes in different sectors, both with a focus on systems development, service development and the development of practical tools.
- The theme career competencies, including transitions skills, is in different ways included in the training programs for practitioners.
- There is an emerging tendency toward practitioners in different sectors developing practical tools useful in working with the development of career competencies/transition skills.

21. How is the acquisition of these transition competencies assessed?

- There has not been developed any quality assured assessment-tools for transition competencies yet.

22. What research if any is undertaken in your country to identify the evolving career learning\* (KSA) needs of different groups of the population? How are the results of such research acted on/used and by whom, in order to make career learning relevant?

 **Career learning** in this context refers to the knowledge, skills and attitudes that individuals require to enable them to both understand the worlds of work and learning and the relationships between them to enable them to navigate these worlds successfully.

- There has not yet been undertaken research only focusing on the career learning needs of different groups.

23. What needs to be done in your country so that transition, employability and entrepreneurial skills are integral and essential parts of curricula and programmes in education and labour sectors?

**Transitions:**

- There is a need to raise the awareness of the importance of Career Management Skills both at policy level and with the practitioners.
- There is a need to develop a Career Management Skills-framework that can both serve as a policy lever, as well as being a tool to help practitioners work more systematically with career learning.
- Together with such a framework, we need to develop different resources that can support the practitioners when they promote career learning.
- There is a need to develop and deliver targeted training programmes to up-skill career guidance practitioners when it comes to CMS.

**Employability:**

- More career learning can increase the employability of the labour force. It is an embedded element in many labour market schemes and with more focus on close following up both the user and the employer in labour market schemes may enhance the impacts.
- There is a need for better cooperation between the school- and higher education-sector and the labour market, so that students can get more labour market training during their education.

**Entrepreneurial skills:**

- More focus on developing entrepreneurial skills through the whole education system. Even more focus on the “Junior Achievement”-programmes that already are quite well established in Norwegian schools.