

Leading career development services into an uncertain future: Ensuring access, integration and innovation

Country paper: Switzerland [Insert country name]

In advance of the symposium all attending countries are asked to produce a country paper setting out the key issues for their countries in relation to the key themes of the conference.

Please use this template to enter your information. You should aim to be concise. Use bullet points and links rather than providing a lot of local detail. **The paper should be no more than 10 pages in length.**

How to submit:

- Download the Country Paper Template, save this on your computer.
- Prepare the country paper based on consultation within the country team and preferably with relevant national authorities and information sources.
- Submit the Country Paper by sending it to jmc@iccdpp.org (John Mc Carthy, director ICCDPP)
- Deadline: **31st of January**

If you have questions concerning the country paper, please contact John Mc Carthy (jmc@iccdpp.org)

Background information

1. List all of the members of your country team with their organisation.

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2. What are the key aims your country has for participating in this symposium?

Switzerland is a federalist country with 26 cantons. Career guidance is almost entirely the responsibility of the cantons. So far each canton has had its own career guidance strategies. There is only KBSB (Swiss Conference for Career Guidance), which ensures minimal coordination. In recent years, SERI (State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation) has developed a mission statement for VET in Switzerland in 2030. This shows that career guidance is becoming increasingly important for the implementation of this mission statement. It is therefore demanded by KBSB as well as by politicians that career guidance be further developed as uniformly as possible throughout Switzerland. The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK) has therefore commissioned KBSB to develop a national strategy. This will take place by the beginning of July. The aim of participating in the conference is to incorporate findings from other countries in the final phase of this strategy development.



Theme #1 - Context and challenges for career development policy.

In your country...

3. Is the level of policy interest in career development:

- Growing?
- Shrinking?
- Staying about the same?

Comment

In Switzerland, interest in career guidance from all sides (politics, business, education, cantons, federal government) has risen sharply in connection with the VET mission statement 2030 (see question 2). The Swiss education system is characterised by its high permeability, which is to be further strengthened in the coming years. However, this development cannot be implemented without strong career guidance.

4. What are the key political, social, economic and technological issues that are likely to have an impact on people's lives and careers in your country?

Give up to five of the most important issues as you see them.

1	Technological change / digitalisation / changes in the labour market
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2	Migration, integration policy
3	Shortage of skilled workers in certain sectors of the labour market
4	Stereotypical career choice patterns
5	Demographic changes

5. What roles do career development programmes and services play in addressing these political, social, economic and technological challenges?

Due to the expected developments on the labour market and the increasing permeability of the education system, information and counselling on training and further education is becoming increasingly important. Career guidance is also becoming increasingly important when it comes to integrating low-skilled workers into the labour market. At the same time, companies in certain sectors find it difficult to fill vacancies due to a shortage of skilled workers and a decrease of jobs with low skills requirements. .



Theme #2 - Aims for, and access to, career development

In your country...

6. What are the key policy aims for career development programmes and services?

In principle, career guidance should support sustainable integration into the labour market and the maintenance of employability (in the broad sense, i.e. not only employability but also aspects of mental and physical health).

7. What groups of people can access career development programmes and services and what groups are excluded?

In principle, career counselling is open to all population groups. However, the policies in the 26 Swiss cantons vary: in all cantons, career guidance services for young people are free of charge. In recent years, however, many cantons have introduced an obligation to pay for career guidance services for adults. As a rule, however, it is possible to exempt low-skilled persons and persons in precarious

economic circumstances from costs. The question arises as to the extent to which the obligation to pay costs should be regulated throughout Switzerland as part of a national career guidance strategy.

8. How are the opinions of citizens and service users heard and incorporated into policy and practice?

The question cannot be answered for all cantons. In certain cantons, surveys have been carried out on public awareness and concerns for public career guidance. In most cantons, however, only existing clients are surveyed. In the first half of 2019, a representative survey will be conducted throughout Switzerland on the awareness and needs of the population in the field of career guidance.

9. Is there a framework for ethical practice in career development? How does this framework balance the interests of the individual with the demands of policy and signals from the labour market?

Almost 20 years ago, KBSB (Swiss Conference for Vocational Guidance) drew up a charter of ethical principles. This is currently being revised in collaboration with Profunda Suisse (the professional organisation of career guidance counsellors). To date, the Charter has not been coordinated with political decision-makers; this is likely to be the case increasingly in the future.



Theme #3 – Integrating career development into wider society.

In your country...

10. Which ministries or jurisdictions are responsible for career development programmes and services? Clarify what programmes and services each ministry or jurisdiction has responsibility for.

In practically all cantons, career guidance is the responsibility of the ministries of education. Within the ministries of education, career guidance is usually the responsibility of the VET administration offices. At the intercantonal level, KBSB (Swiss Conference for Career Guidance) is a specialist conference of the EDK (Swiss Conference of Ministers of Education). The Confederation is responsible

for the education and training of the counsellors and has an interest in the development of the career guidance as it is responsible for the professional education for which career guidance is an important tributary. That's why certain aspects of the upcoming development works are coordinated with SERI (State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation).

11. What leadership, co-ordination and collaboration approaches exist within the career development system to ensure collaboration across different sectors and different types of clients. For example, how are career development systems within the education system connected to those within employment, health and youth work?

The question cannot be answered in general, as the structures and processes in the various cantons are very different.

12. What are the main challenges to leadership in the field and the main obstacles to effective collaboration?

The situation varies from canton to canton. In principle, career guidance services enjoy sufficient freedom to adapt their services to needs. However, in many cantons various cost-saving measures have been taken, which is why resources are often insufficient to provide services that meet social and economic needs. At the cantonal level, it is also often difficult to adequately communicate career guidance services because of their close integration into the administration. This is also very difficult to achieve at the intercantonal level because there is no common, cross-cantonal label.

13. What kind of cooperation (if any) is there between the career development services and stakeholders like employers, trade unions, the media, NGOs, professional organisations etc?

Here, too, the situation varies from canton to canton. As a rule, it is largely up to the heads of the career guidance services to decide how they organise their regional network. In many cantons, career guidance is involved in official bodies for interinstitutional cooperation. At the national level, the problem is that there is no national organisation responsible for career guidance other than KBSB (Swiss Conference for Vocational Guidance). Accordingly, there are no structures in place to work systematically with the various key stakeholders at the national level. Moreover, it is difficult for nationally organised stakeholders to find the right contact person for national concerns in connection with career guidance.

14. How is the professionalism of career development workers developed and maintained whilst working with other professionals?

In Switzerland, there are clear rules for the qualification of career counsellors: they must have a postgraduate degree in career guidance. The Swiss Service Centre for Vocational Education and Training and Career Guidance provides an annual continuing education programme for career

counsellors. Further training and development measures are the responsibility of the cantons. In principle, an increased supra-cantonal strategic orientation towards the future requirements of career guidance would be desirable.

15. Do other types of professionals (e.g. teachers and social workers) deliver career development? How is a professional service ensured?

The Swiss curricula stipulate that vocational orientation takes place in schools. The teachers are prepared for the subject area within their studies. The public cantonal career guidance services support and advise the teachers with their expertise in the implementation of the study plan in the field of vocational orientation. In various cantons there are framework concepts that precisely define the division of roles. The school management is responsible for the further professional qualification of teachers. Various pedagogical universities offer continuing education programmes in this field.



Theme #4 - Leading innovative change for the future.

In your country...

16. What are the key innovations or ways that career development programmes and services have changed over the last 10 years? This could include changes relating to technology, practice, management and governance and the use of new theories and evidence.

The innovations differ fundamentally from canton to canton. In various cantons, holistic consulting concepts have been developed. As a rule, this involves a stronger focus on career design competencies. A few years ago, an online test platform jointly operated and used by the cantons was put into operation. Other innovations relate to the systematic integration of online information in information and counselling concepts; for example, a QR code on information resources available in the career guidance centres leads directly to the Swiss web portal for vocational counselling (Berufsberatung.ch). Other cantons are in the process of gaining experience in the field of e-guidance (or blended guidance).

17. How do national policies and initiatives, where they exist, ensure and support the development of innovation in career development services provision?

There is currently no national strategy in this respect. However, it has been recognised at political level that the further development and innovation of career guidance requires a national strategy which should also provide the basis for the promotion of innovation. Such a strategy is currently under development (see also question 2).

18. What new, innovative and promising interventions in career development programmes and services is your country planning for the future? How are such innovations making the most of open data initiatives, online technologies, artificial intelligence and other forms of innovation?

A project is currently underway to evaluate a tool for e-guidance that can be used in all cantons. A study was also commissioned from a university to develop scenarios for comprehensive IT-supported information and counselling. The study will also evaluate to what extent approaches from the fields of artificial intelligence and augmented reality could be used. Furthermore, an intercantonal working group will develop approaches that can make career guidance and information centres more attractive. Various cantons have already implemented new approaches (e.g. Career Centre Zurich, Career Guidance Zug) or are developing their own projects for repositioning the information centres; for example, the Canton of Berne is currently developing an innovative approach for linking online and presence information and putting a focus in career management skills, which will be implemented in a first career guidance centre in autumn 2019.

19. How is the training and continuing professional development (CPD) of careers professionals encouraging innovation and taking account of new evidence as well as changes in technology and the labour market?

As mentioned in Question 14, there is a nationally coordinated offer of further training for career counsellors. This takes up findings from science and innovation on a selective basis. In future, it will be a question of increasingly controlling these offers. To this end, an intercantonal committee for education, further training and innovation in career guidance is to be set up in 2019 by KBSB.

Final reflections

20. Is there anything else that you could like to address through participating in this symposium?

Due to the federal structures in Switzerland, it will continue to be a matter of finding a compromise between the cantonal sovereignty in the field of career guidance a national strategy. It would be interesting to be able to benefit in this respect from the experience of other countries.