

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

Country paper: Republic of Kosovo [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.

Radica Berishaj: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST)

Ylber Aliu: Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW)

Burim Mexhuani: Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MCYS)

Daniele Cristian Passalacqua: Luxembourg Development Cooperation Agency

Bekim Kasumi: Smart Bits

Sovran Berisha: Smart Bits

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

To exchange practices and experiences with countries across Europe, so that they can be applied in the context of our country. The same event will also enable our team to gather information and draw comparisons regarding the progress of other countries in tackling policy issues and challenges in developing career programmes and services. The same symposium will help us figure out if we are on the right track in developing policies regarding career guidance.



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

There is a growing trend of policy interest in career development as policy-making has recently started to reflect on the importance of career in the context of lifelong learning and inclusion of social partnerships in the creation and implementation of career guidance policy. In addition, career as a concept is becoming more current in the education, youth and employment policy development. It is also important to mention that there seems to be greater support by donors due to the aforementioned approaches.

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	Political instability
2	High rate of unemployment
3	High index of social discontent and poverty
4	The fact that we are the youngest nation in Europe should be taken advantage in developing the economy based on natural potentials and human capital
5	Wide usage of technology and the interest of young people towards it

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

Career development programmes and services are very valuable in addressing many challenges of the public in our country. Some benefits of such programmes and services are: establishing a better alignment of competences between the labour market and education system; preventing brain drain; better allocation of the education and training programs; smoother transition from the school / university to the labour market; improved image and trust in public institutions; improved social welfare through reduced unemployment and poverty index, etc.



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?

Some of the key policy aims in this regard are: to increase the education budget; implementation of career education in k-12; better curricular alignment between career, entrepreneurship and IT; easier access to information; development of the Career Centre Concept and Work-Based Learning; qualification of career counsellors; establishment of Career Centres in secondary and high schools and in youth centres; development of social partnerships to generate information on labour market trends; creation of the digital platform in the Labour Market Information System (LMIS); digitalization of the career guidance system, Busulla.COM; digitalization of the modules to align the education system with the labour market; and recognition of prior learning.

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

Career development programmes and services are widely available to most groups of people, including: pupils k-12, talented students, unemployed, returnees (people who have lived abroad and return to the country) and persons with special needs. However, at the time we write, employers are not sufficiently involved in drafting and developing such programmes and services. Yet the digitalized career guidance information system and other incentives undertaken are expected to facilitate the cooperation with employers.

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

Workshops and participatory decision-making sessions are organized with social stakeholders, NGO's and education institutions. In addition, with the help of Luxembourg Development Cooperation Agency, the Ministry of Education, has created its digital platform, Busulla.COM to enable an effective communication between policy-makers and citizens / service users. The platform allows school management to cooperate closely with businesses in raising funds, gathering donations, assigning experts to help the school to develop occupational standards, create surveys to conduct a quantitative analysis of the demand for specific profiles / jobs etc. Such a mechanism to exchange information aims to make career orientation programmes as effective as possible.

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?

The framework of ethical practices is part of the modules being elaborated to Level V candidates. The purpose is to help people offering the service to understand that besides the complex labour market trends, people have various needs based on their career development, personality and cultural traits. The aim is to help organize the information about career choice and labour market around the affinities and interests of the individuals taking service.



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.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) is the leading jurisdiction, followed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MCYS). In 2015, MEST has prepared the document on career strategies in the lifelong learning context. As of today, a three-year action plan exists, while the second three-year action plan is being developed. Likewise, career concepts and theories have been developed to be implemented through the Life and Work curricular area from pre-school to grade 12, including both gymnasiums and vocational schools. In addition, the new curriculum requires teachers, regardless of their subjects, to develop IT, entrepreneurship, and career orientation competences. This has been anticipated to be achieved through: project-based learning; Teaching Techniques Clubs; Career Orientation Clubs; Formative Assessment etc. Furthermore, the career guidance information system, Busulla.COM, has been established to support the process of career orientation through career tests, a holistic database of education institutions and occupations specific to the labour market in our country, job and internship vacancies and online advisor. The same platform is connected with the portal of the Public University of Prishtina and LMIS to ensure current information on education and labour market. Moreover, the venture incubator, namely, Venture UP has been established at the University of Prishtina to promote the right skills and entrepreneurship among students and youth.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MCYS) has prepared its Youth Employment Action Plan 2018-2020 which anticipates financial support for projects that aim to prepare young people for the labour market by offering the right knowledge, skills and competences. Through the same action plan, MCYS anticipates to expand its soft skills training among all regions of the country with a special focus on rural areas. The main training themes are: applying for a job, writing a CV, writing a motivation letter, written and verbal communication, critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, emotional intelligence, etc.

Last but not least, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) has been committed to draft the employment and vocational training policies, while the Employment Agency is responsible for active measurement of labour market indicators and trends in the market. MLSW has approved its new model for support of the unemployed, which categorizes jobseekers into two categories. The first includes registered jobseekers who are registered in the online platform to take services offered online. The second category are registered unemployed who are people that work with the Employment Agency to help them identify job vacancies.

With the aim to support people in developing the right skills, MEST, through its CGIS Busulla.COM has developed Basic Check Potential Assessment Self-Test. This is a standardized test developed by

experts of relevant industries to measure the candidates' level of competence for specific jobs. Taking such a test and utilizing it in the process of career guidance and counselling helps candidates to develop the right skills, let alone its usefulness in the recruitment process by employers.

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 new competency-based curriculum has shifted the paradigm of traditional education across the education institutions. Teachers are encouraged and expected to undertake extracurricular activities to develop employment and entrepreneurship skills as well as to create a positive perception of their future. Furthermore, continuous professional development of teachers is encouraged to help them create a culture of lifelong learning both for themselves and their pupils.

Non- and for-profit organizations work together under supervision and coordination of the three ministries to join their activities about career development programmes and services. For example, Busulla.COM is working together with Career Centres, Career Clubs and Opportunity Scouting initiatives across schools to promote career orientation and entrepreneurship concepts. Other projects also work together in developing career orientation activities and drafting occupational standards.

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

Being a relatively new concept in our society, leadership has been facing challenges with regards to career development programmes. To begin with, youth and mid-career people have not been much exposed to practices of career guidance and orientation thus far. Consequently, it is not a common practice among citizens to seek for advice and to turn to career counsellors using its scientific basis.

In addition, a proper communication between the education institutions and employers does not exist. The two need to work more closely together, so that there is an effective alignment between profiles / departments offered as well as the competences gained by pupils and students.

Moreover, leadership has been facing challenges in accessing data that would inform policy-making across all levels. Data about profiles offered across the country, number of business, and expected competences from businesses are lacking and their presence would facilitate and improve the accuracy of the decision-making both at the local and national level.

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?

The cooperation between career development services and relevant stakeholders is constantly improving. This is thanks to the good coordination that MEST and other ministries have been providing between the stakeholders, with special emphasis to the international organizations and donors related to career development models.

Several organizations that work closely with these ministries have developed and are implementing their career orientation models in Kosovo. A good example is the cooperation of donors with MEST in developing and promoting career guidance in Kosovo.

Similarly, there is an incentive for more frequent cooperation with employers and professional organizations. Nevertheless, more needs to be done to involve other relevant parties that could be of benefit for such programs including trade unions, the media, etc.

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

The first generation of career counsellors is being trained in Kosovo as an interdisciplinary approach / curriculum and qualification for career advisers at Level V qualification and professional practice is being conducted in those institutions dealing with career orientation and counselling.

During the first half-year of 2019, 1000 teachers will be trained on different modules of career education and guidance, which translates to approximately 1 teacher per school. In addition, 65 directors of upper secondary schools and all directors of the municipal education directorates will be trained on topics related with the expected outcomes of career guidance and education in schools.

In this way we will ensure that the career guidance education objectives are embedded in the school performance evaluation plans and, as such, all planned career education activities are implemented.

In parallel to the planned trainings in schools, in March 2019 the training of 32 career advisors of Employment Agency will take place about using the virtual platform, Busulla.COM. Starting in June 2019 the advisors of Employment Agency and Regional Employment Offices will start offering the career guidance to job seekers through the modules of virtual platform, Busulla.COM.

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

The curricular area "Life and Work" from the pre-school to the 5th grade is delivered through the subject "Life Skills" with the career concept integrated. From 6th to 12th grade, within the IT subject, the concepts of career and entrepreneurship are being reframed. Since this year, a new curriculum is being implemented, where IT teachers undergo a training on career orientation concepts and the Busulla.COM - Virtual Career Guidance platform. At the same time, the first generation of career counsellors is undergoing training, which will guarantee professional services in relation to career

orientation, counselling at schools and youth centres, at the university and in employment centres. The career counsellors will also be able to work as online advisors because they also have a module on the use of IT and portal for work as well as the national career portal - Busulla.COM.



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.

In the period 2014-2016, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Agency for Vocational Education of Republic of Kosovo have analysed and benchmarked career development programmes, practices and approaches of different countries in Europe and outside. Based on the findings of that process, the decision has been made to establish a national virtual platform for career guidance, called Busulla.COM, which takes a central role in the implementation model of Career Education in Kosovo.

Starting at the lower secondary school, all pupils of Kosovo will get training from their teachers on how to use Busulla.COM. In their eighth grade, they will do the online tests on Interests, Values, Abilities, and Preferences (IVAP) as well as the Basic Check Potential Assessment Self-Test (a occupation neutral test of competences from different fields, such as logical thinking, imagination, languages, math, etc.), which were developed in accordance with the requirements of the labour market. These tests help pupils focus on the most adequate occupations based on their personality traits and learning potential. Detailed information about different occupations are provided through the Occupations Explorer Module of Busulla.COM, which is also interlinked to ESCO and ISCO and aggregates various statistical data (e.g. average salaries, demand, output, etc.) from different sources (such as Ministry of Education Information Systems, Trade Associations, Statistical Agency etc.).

Finally, an overview of all upper secondary schools, colleges and study programmes is provided through SchoolFinder Module of Busulla.COM, which will help students find the study programmes and continue with their studies.

To facilitate the transition from school to work, Busulla.COM has integrated also the JobFinder- and Online Helper Module.

A unique characteristic of the Career Education Implementation Model of Kosovo is its Labour Market alignment. This is achieved through embeddedness of representatives of employers and trade associations in different stages (school-industry liaison, Basic-Check test, occupation explorer, training needs assessment, skills-and knowledge needs analysis, etc.).

The career guidance was included as an optional subject in the lower and higher secondary schools. There were limited modules and teaching and learning materials available. Afterwards, the Public University of Prishtina launched its Career Guidance Office serving its students. A similar office has also been introduced to private colleges. In the higher secondary level, the school based Career Guidance Centres were introduced and later the establishment of the Municipality Career Guidance Centres occurred. As such, Career Guidance became an integral part of Kosovo's Curriculum Framework involving its offer in the curriculum area "Life and Work". Recently, the Career Guidance Information System, Busulla.COM, was introduced as the most advanced and user-friendly tool available to all institutions and categories of people in need in Kosovo.

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

There is clear and supportive legislation and policies available in the country. However, with regards to their implementation, there is very limited governmental budget available. But as mentioned above, there is still high commitment of the donors in this subject and mainly the activities foreseen there are supported financially by them.

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?

In 2020 Busulla.COM will be enhanced with the e-portfolio module, which will enable pupils, students and job-seekers to continuously develop their skills portfolio and achieve career objectives. The Occupation Explorer Module of Busulla.COM will also have a special category for future jobs and skills required by future jobs. The Career Tests will be enhanced with Soft Skills Tests, in accordance with the new modules of Occupations Explorer.

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?

Until now, there has been no continuous development of career professionals. There were ad-hoc trainings for a small number of teachers in schools and for the ones employed as career centre staff. This approach to employment centres in the context of creating integrated counseling and guidance services resulted in the training of career counsellors as job counsellors. A new generation of career advisers who are in the process of education, by modern methods - guarantees success in the application of services, but at the same time it guarantees readiness for continuous professional development (the principles of lifelong learning are included in the education program).

Such training and practices of continuous professional improvement help career development programmes and services. A technological advancement, as highlighted above, is Busulla.COM, which will serve as a tool for the career advisers to deliver their services and to collect new evidence about career guidance and labour market.

Much more advanced continuing professional development opportunities regarding the changes in technology and labour market were offered to the Employment Advisers of MLSW through their compressed training.

Final reflections

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

Involvement of Training Needs Assessment and Skills and Knowledge Needs Analysis features into Busulla.COM platform aims to bridge the gaps/mismatch between vocational education and training offer and labour market requirements.