

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

Country paper: Ireland

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.

Ms Jennifer McKenzie, Director, National Centre for Guidance In Education (NCGE), Ireland Lead Member

Mr Paul King, Chair, National Centre for Guidance in Education, (NCGE) Ireland Team Member

Ms Beatrice Dooley, President, Institute of Guidance Counsellors, (IGC) Ireland Team Member

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

The NCGE is the agency of the Irish Department of Education and Skills {DES} with responsibility to inform the policy of the Department and support the development of quality guidance practice in the education and training sector. The aim of the Ireland country team is to remain concurrent with International policy and good practice in the areas of access, integration and innovation in career development services.

The Ireland team aims to share policy and practice experience from Ireland and to learn from our international colleagues.

The objective will be to provide an informed report to the Department of Education and Skills on the outcomes of the Symposium 2019.



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

Following the DES funded Review of Careers Information and Tools in 2018, there is an increased interest nationally in career development tools among, for example, Business & Employer groups, and the Further and Higher Education sectors, now expressing interest in the supporting of guidance delivery to their respective cohorts. The Review report is due to be published in Spring 2019. However, a number of submissions identified the narrow focus of the Review on Careers Information and Tools stating this dimension to be only one of a number of key elements essential to the provision of a quality career development services.

Please note: in Ireland, "Guidance Services" within the education and training sector encompass career, vocational, educational, social/ personal guidance counselling services and supports.

Within the Labour Market sector, the Dept of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DSPA) via their INTREO offices provide supports for job seekers.

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.

There are several governmental strategies that have a direct influence on peoples lives in Ireland at this time. These are listed below. However, in addition, the potential implications of the UK exit from the EU will have direct impact on the economy of Ireland , will affect students attending courses in UK , the tourism industry in Ireland and the potential for a direct impact on the political stability and peace process for the island of Ireland.

Furthermore, recent government policies have supported a focus on climate change, which is increasing the number of "green economy" career prospects.

1	• National Skills Strategy and Expert Group of Future Skills Needs Reports
2	Dept of Education and Skills (DES) Action Plan for Education 2016-2019
3	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Strategy Statement 2019-2021
4	Action plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeships 2016-2020
5	Legal Regulation of Health and Social Care professionals

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

Guidance provision is generally visible in the secondary, further and Higher Education sectors to various degrees according to the support provided by management. Provision is generally provided either individually or in a group context. Individuals are not always aware of the wider national strategies or challenges/opportunities on a national scale, tending to be more conscious of their own individual situation. For example, two significant factors currently are the shortage of high skilled workers arising from the apprenticeship pathway and the continued over emphasis on HE as the dominant route to educational and career progression. The National Skills Strategy and Expert Group of Future Skills Needs Reports and the Action plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeships 2016-2020 seek to address these challenges. The Irish National Guidance Forum report (2007) outlines that the role of Guidance Services across all sectors includes responsibility to advocate on behalf of clients and to "innovate systems change" by remaining Impartial, and providing equality of opportunity guidance services to ensure the needs of the individual are met, while remaining aware of national strategies and processes. See:
https://www.ncge.ie/sites/default/files/nationalguidance/documents/NGF_Guidance_for_Life%20final.pdf



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 the education and training sector it is expected that the Review report , due in Spring 2019 will inform policy and planning from 2019.

In the meantime, however, the DES is currently supporting the promotion of a " Whole School Guidance " model, which refers to the role of all school staff in the provision of guidance services, with the qualified Guidance Counsellor at the core of the school support and provision.

The DES Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2014-2019 outlines the key elements required for the development of the FET Integrated Guidance Strategy. The aim here is to ensure access to impartial education and training information and delivery of quality guidance provision across the entire FET sector, including Apprenticeships

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

In education and training sector:

School guidance (including provision in Further Education Colleges) is funded by the DES, with a qualified guidance counsellor additionally allocated by the DES relevant to school size but reduced from a previous ratio which existed in 2012.

Adult learners and those returning to education are entitled to access the Adult Educational Guidance Services (AEGS) based nationally within the Education and Training Boards (ETBs). AEGS targets disadvantaged groups through outreach services locally and regionally.

Currently, those in low paid employment and with low skills are eligible to access AEGS in line with the EU Upskilling agenda

Students attending Higher Education Institutes and Universities have access to the Careers Advisory Service.

Unemployed adults access the career support services of the Dept of Employment Affairs and Social Protection - INTREO office and /or local Jobs Clubs, Local Employment Services, Regional Partnership groups

Adults in employment (ie those not in low paid, low skilled employment) are not entitled to access State funded guidance services. However, if they wish to access Further or Higher Education or Apprenticeships, they can access the AEGS for information .

Currently there is no provision of career development programmes in primary schools

Schools which cater specifically for children with disabilities and special needs do not currently have a Departmental allocation for guidance

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

In the context of the education and training sector:

AEGS services provide opportunities for clients / learners to provide feedback on their engagement with the services and outcomes of the guidance process. National reporting system for AEGS services require that the Services report on the actions they have taken based on feedback from and client evaluations

Higher Education Services provide opportunities for students to evaluate the services (PAUL???)

in Schools, the Whole School Guidance Framework , provides opportunities for students and parents to provide feedback and comments on the guidance services.

However, there is no unified, singular coherent system in place at national level to incorporate and collate this data across all sectors.

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?

In the context of the education and training sector, at national level , the DES recognises the model of guidance counselling in Ireland as representing an holistic approach , with the need for ethical practice encouraged. The provision of guidance services in the education & training sector are developed to meet the needs of the individual, while remaining aware of labour market conditions.

The National Guidance Forum Report (2007) has informed the development of guidance services and guidelines, including reference to Code of Principals , quality provision, etc.

DES provides funding for the co-ordination and/or provision of Guidance Counselling Supervision in schools and AEGS sectors

The Programme Recognition Framework outlines the competencies required of guidance counsellors including the competence for "Providing individual and group counselling to facilitate personal and social, educational and career development and at moments of personal crisis"

The DES supported NCGE Whole School Guidance Framework advocates for the provision of guidance in a continuum of support model, providing Guidance for All (all students), Guidance for Some (small group work), Guidance for a Few (i.e. 1-1) . This model allows for the provision of career guidance and labour market information in groups and the provision of 1-1 to ensure the guidance needs of the individual are met.

DES Operational Guidelines were issued for the development and provision of Guidance services in the Adult Educational Guidance Services. These guidelines require the provision of personal, educational and vocational guidance in 1-1 and group work in line with the Code of Principles as outlined in the National Guidance Forum Lifelong Guidance Framework Quality Guidelines (2007).

The professional bodies representing guidance counsellors and practitioners in the education and training sectors are all committed to the continuing professional development and the promotion of good practice across the guidance profession.

Guidance practitioners who are members of representative organisations such as the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC), the Association of Higher Education Careers Services (AHECS) and the Adult Educational Guidance Association operate within the boundaries of their respective Code of Practice or Code of Ethics or competences documents as appropriate

DES recognises membership of a professional body in support of ethical practice.



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.

Department of Education and Skills (DES) hold responsibility for Guidance provision in:

Post primary schools / Further Education Colleges / Adult Educational Guidance Services / FET sector / Higher Education careers services (through the student support funding)

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) : guidance supports in the INTREO offices / funding for Local Employment Services, Job path programmes / Disability employment supports

Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA): provide frontline guidance services through the Youth Information Centres

Dept of Justice and Equality : guidance supports through the Prison / Probation services of " Linkage" and "Gate" services.

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?

Currently there is no formal process in place nationally for the co-ordination and collaboration of existing career development systems.

NCGE , as the agency of the DES, is tasked with the role to engage with all relevant stakeholders within Education as appropriate on the support and development of guidance services but the agency has no remit beyond the education sector.

The National Forum on Guidance , hosted by NCGE twice per year, on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills, provides an opportunity for communication, co-operation and collaboration with representatives and stakeholders across guidance sectors attending each meeting. Business representative groups are invited to attend.

NCGE reports on the outcome of the Forum discussions to the DES. The Forum recommended that Guidance representation be invited at the 9 Regional Skills Fora nationally, however there has been no agreement on which Guidance representative group was appropriate .

The Adult Educational Guidance Services (AEGS) , based within the Education and Training Boards, provide links to employers, health and youth services at local and regional level and where appropriate local referral systems have been established .

Guidance Representative organisations have established links with national / regional / local business representative groups.

Where work experience is provided as a core element of education and training programmes, the guidance counsellor and / or other teaching staff are involved in connecting with local businesses etc to support the establishment of work experiences.

With the current developments and planning of Apprenticeships, communication at various levels has resulted in the discussions of supporting the inclusion of guidance and career management skills within programmes and the provision of appropriate information on Apprenticeships and Traineeships.

The Department of Education and Skills Review of Careers Information and Tools, due for publication in Spring 2019, is expected to provide recommendations for the development of formal links with business employers etc.

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

The lack of national co-ordination and a national strategy unifying all relevant government departments and accordingly different understandings of the role of career development and guidance impacts on the possibilities for appropriate and effective collaboration.

The disparate nature of the funding for guidance services results in confusion and duplication of roles and target groups .

Within government departments (Ministries) there can be several sections with responsibility for policy and funding for guidance related services leading to confusion and lack of cohesion.

A main challenge lies with the clarification of the agreed role of guidance, which includes the core elements of development of career management skills, information provision, career development, planning and guidance counselling across the lifespan of the individual.

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?

As noted above, the National Forum on Guidance provides an opportunity for communication, collaboration and co-operation.

Guidance representative groups engage with employers, trade unions, media etc based in line with their own membership and target group of clients.

As examples: the Association of Higher Education Careers Services established employer partnerships and produce relevant publications

The Institute of Guidance Counsellors (professional body of guidance counsellors) has established links with labour market and national organisations to promote Apprenticeships etc

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

Professional bodies support their members through Continuing Professional Development and peer support programmes

The DES published the Programme Recognition Framework in 2016, detailing the competences required of guidance counsellors who wish to work in the schools and FET sector for future. Universities who wish for their graduates to be eligible to work in the education and training sector will be required to adhere to these guidelines from 2019.

DES provides supports for CPD and resources for guidance counselling through funding to NCGE and IGC.

DES funds the provision of guidance counselling supervision for guidance counsellors working in schools and through funding for Adult guidance counsellors

AHECS provides continuing professional development programmes for its members

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

The DES supported NCGE Whole School Guidance Framework outlines how school staff are and can be involved in the delivery of career guidance in schools, while recognising the role of the guidance counsellor as the leader in shaping this provision .

In adult education and FET, it is recognised that tutors provide frontline guidance to learners. NCGE supports the AEGS services to provide training to tutors on frontline guidance and referral processes to the AEGS

Within the Vocational Training Centres of the Education and Training Boards, the centre managers, course tutors are directly involved in work experience, employability skills and vocational guidance supports . Advocates within the Youthreach and Community Training Centres also provide guidance supports to the young people attending the programmes.

It is expected that the planned FET Integrated Guidance Strategy will address the issue of provision of guidance by non - guidance qualified staff. This is expected to include reference to the different levels of guidance practice across the FET sector. In line with the Whole School approach which recognises the valuable role of all staff involved and ensuring the core role of the guidance professional, it is expected that levels of training and qualifications required will be identified to ensure continued professional service. The DES Programme Recognition Framework includes provision to recognise guidance qualifications to work the FET sector also.



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 post primary schools the allocation of guidance hours was changed by government in 2012. Allocation of hours to guidance in schools was previously determined in addition to general school staff allocation. This policy was reversed in 2012 but is now being gradually restored but not to the 2012 levels as yet.

In FET: the establishment of the Education Training Boards and SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority, has resulted in changes to governance, management, staffing and provision of programmes. The FET Strategy 2014-2019 has resulted in huge changes across the sector. The FET Integrated Guidance strategy will be developed based on all of these changes and the requirements of guidance provision in the FET sector in the future.

GDPR legislation has resulted in the confirmation of the requirements for national ICT based guidance data gathering across ETB based guidance services. Current ICT based Adult Guidance Management System is being developed to allow for data gathering across ALL FET based guidance services and not just AEGS.

In 2017-2018, following discussions at national level, DES required schools to complete a Compliance return on the use of the guidance allocation and the provision of guidance in schools. It is the expectation that information from this return will provide evidence to inform school guidance planning.

The publication and distribution nationally of the DES supported NCGE Whole School Guidance Framework, was the culmination of 4 years work in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. This introduces the Continuum of Support Model for guidance in schools and outlines the Guidance Learning outcomes (based on CMS) - developing myself, developing my learning, developing my career path.

See: <https://www.ncge.ie/school-guidance-handbook/ncge-whole-school-guidance-framework>

The development of online tools and resources for both public and guidance use, funded by the DES in last 10 years includes Qualifax.ie and Careersportal.ie and Fetchcourses.ie

Resources for guidance counsellors are provided on line by NCGE through the School and FET Guidance Handbooks - see links below:

<https://www.ncge.ie/school-guidance-handbook/home>

<https://www.ncge.ie/FET-guidance-handbook>

A key issue in 2019 will be the publication of the DES Review of Careers Information and Tools report which will provide information and recommendations for future developments in guidance services

Since the 2012 changes to guidance allocations, the various professional bodies representing guidance professionals gather data and evidence from their membership to support their reports to government departments / ministries.

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

Currently in Ireland there are several national strategies which require involvement of and input from guidance services. There is a wider recognition across the education and training sector for the need for further development of quality guidance provision across the sector.

National consultations and reviews refer to the requirement for improved career guidance services across the sector

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?

It is expected that the publication of the DES review of careers information and tools will provide recommendations for a more strategic approach.

NCGE is currently working with a representative group on the revision and redevelopment of the ICT based data gathering system for guidance in FET.

DES is supporting the roll out of the Whole School Guidance framework nationally

DES review of careers information and tools will inform the development of online guidance tools and services

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?

DES Programme recognition Framework details the 8 key competences required of guidance professionals working in the education and training sector for the future to include:

- Guidance theory and professional practice
- Counselling skills in a guidance context
- Labour market, learning and career-related information
- Teaching and learning: design, delivery and evaluation of programmes/learning experiences –
- Psychometric testing: graduates should be eligible to join the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) register for guidance counsellors
- Communicating, collaborating and networking
- Research and evidence-informed practice
- Leading and managing the guidance service

See: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Programme-Recognition-Framework-Guidance-Counselling.pdf>

CPD provided by NCGE , funded by the DES, is based on national guidance policy and practice priorities and is developed based on training needs analysis

Guidance professional organisations, develop their own CPD programmes based on the needs of their membership and their specific working environments

Final reflections

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

Participation in the Symposium allows for consideration of international ideas on good practice in career development and guidance provision.

It would be helpful to have a discussion on the use of the term " Career Development" as the overall term for career guidance, as this would clarify that "guidance" is the service that delivers career development programmes and supports.

The Communique from previous ICCDPP Symposia have informed national discussion and planning for guidance in education and training sector.

Discussion on what participants believe will be the contributors to the “uncertain future” and the impact of increased global inequalities, globalisation and the urgency to create a more sustainable environment for the survival of the planet