FOURTH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY

THEME SYNTHESES

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Introduction

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The country papers (including the papers produced by international organisations) have been synthesised in order to bring them into the symposium in a manageable form. It is hoped that all participants will at least have read all of the syntheses in advance of the event, so that the discussions can build upon the work that has already been done.

The syntheses are not however intended to discourage participants from reading the country papers themselves. The frequent references to particular countries and organisations are designed in part to encourage readers to go back to the original papers (listed below) in relation to statements and issues which particularly interest them. In this sense, the syntheses can be viewed as a kind of index to their sources.

At the end of each synthesis is a list of questions which, in the light of our reading of the papers, seem to be likely to produce a discussion that will meet the needs of participants. They are designed as a stimulant, not as a straitjacket.

1. Blending Economic and Social Goals	**2. Strategic Leadership**	**3. Harnessing Diversity**	**4. Impact Evidence**	**5. Role of the Citizen**
Australia	ACP	ACP	Botswana	Austria
Austria	Australia	Australia	Canada	Denmark
Bhutan	Austria	Botswana	Denmark	England
Canada	Bhutan	Denmark	Finland	Israel
Egypt	Botswana	England	Hungary	Jordan
England	Canada	IAEVG	IAEVG	Scotland
Finland	Finland	India	Ireland	USA
India	Hungary	Israel	Maldives	Wales
Ireland	IAEVG	Netherlands	Norway	(8)
Israel	India	NZ	Thailand	
Jordan	Ireland	Northern Ireland	Wales	
Maldives	Jordan	Thailand	(11)	
Mexico	Maldives	USA		
Netherlands	Malta	(13)		
NZ	Netherlands			
Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland			
Norway	Norway			
Scotland	Scotland			
Thailand	USA			
(19)	(19)			

Theme 1:
Blending Economic and Social Goals

Synthesis Report by Peter Plant

The reports
This synthesis report is based on the 19 country reports which covered Theme 1. The reports were asked to address five sets of questions as outlined below. Most reports addressed at least some of these questions; few addressed all.

Question 1: Economic and social policy goals
In most countries, the emphasis is on skills development and economic growth. This is seen, for example, in the report on Northern Ireland: 'The Government's aim is to enable people to progress up a skills ladder, in order to raise the skills level of the whole workforce; to help deliver higher productivity and increased competitiveness; and to secure Northern Ireland's future in a global marketplace.' The adult guidance services, in particular, as seen as part of such policy aims. Scotland, too, with its all-age approach to career guidance sees career guidance is an enabler, building skills to help people make choices and helping people to play a full role in the labour market throughout their lives. Scotland is establishing a new approach to the curriculum focusing on the learner, increasing entrepreneurship and confidence in young people, tackling the problems faced by vulnerable young people who are not in education, employment or training and building local partnerships to help adults into work. In all of these, career guidance is seen as having a particular role to play. Scotland recognises that career guidance is an essential bridge between economic and social development.

Thus, the social inclusion agenda creeps up from time to time, but it seems in many cases to be seen as an almost separate policy agenda, i.e. a compensating policy area which sits beside the main economic growth and competitiveness agenda. In some countries (e.g. England and Norway) this has had consequences for the structures in guidance provision: England has to some extent separated Connexions from the mainstream skills agenda, and Norway has divided its school-based guidance services into careers and social/personal issues.

Question 2: Blend or balance?
Most countries maintain the view that well-organised career services have a significant contribution to make to the effective operation of education systems, to the operation of the labour market and to the effective use of the nation's talents and skills. For example, the Australian agenda 'will enable more Australians to realise their potential, and that of the nation. It will have a major impact on the living standards of Australians, and generate significant dividends for the Australian economy. It is an agenda that is both good for people and good for the economy'. The Australian report uses the term 'human capital' to place citizens as an economic resource and points to the need to balance the economic agenda with the social agenda and ensure that the work, learning and welfare needs and conditions of citizens are not eroded. A side-comment on the human capital aspect comes from the Indian report which bluntly states that: 'India is rich in human capital but poor in human development.'

In the Irish context, the notion is that economic development and social inclusion are interlinked, not blended: 'Access to lifelong learning is identified as part of a multi-faceted approach to the development of a knowledge-based, innovative economy and an inclusive society… through the provision of second chance

education and training for those with low skills and addressing access barriers through strengthening supports, guidance, counselling, and childcare services, with increased flexibility of provision'

Most countries find that the two policy areas (economic and social) do not blend easily or even balance, although guidance is often seen as a key catalyst for supporting lifelong learning agendas, contributing to workforce development through workforce preparation, adaptability and reintegration programmes, outreach guidance services and educational drop-out programmes. In these terms, the policies aim to balance the two roles of guidance: i.e. that of (1) enhancing economic growth, global labour market competitiveness and flexibility, and on the other hand (2) the social inclusion agenda, where guidance has a societal compensation role to play, even to the degree as serving as the Trojan Horse within the very systems that produce educational drop-out and labour market failures.

Question 3: Examples of policies

Cultural traits come to the forefront when economic and social policy goals are expressed. Thus Bhutan has introduced the concept of the Gross National Happiness (GNH), which builds on four pillars of development: (1) sustainable and equitable socio-economic development, (2) conservation of the environment, (3) preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and (4) good governance. 'Gross National Happiness embodies all aspects of human development of which career development has been accorded high priority in recent years. In Bhutan, the economic growth and human development are mutually reinforcing and positively interlinked'.

Along similar lines, the concept of 'Sufficient Economy' is pivotal to understanding economic and social policy goals in Thailand. The Sufficient Economy focuses on the middle-path approach as a mode of conduct to achieve moderation in life. To achieve sufficiency, one would live more sustainable, minimise greed, and apply moderation reason... The main point is to live together in peace and harmony with nature and the environment 'Yuyen Bhensuk' (i.e. Happy and Healthy Living) is the policy driver here. This has huge implications for career guidance policies which in this light will not seek, for example, to advance economic growth at the expense of sustainability. Recently, this has been reinforced by the International Labour Organisation in its paper on *Green Jobs: Facing up to an Inconvenient Truth* (ILO, 2007).

By contrast, most Western countries and a few others have generated policies which point to the importance of economic growth and labour market efficiency. Thus, Egypt's report states that in 2006, 'economy continued to grow robustly with real GDP increasing by more than 6%. Prospects for sustaining this growth rate remains a challenge for policy-makers and the need for a number of structural reforms, including career guidance'. In England, 'Human capital theory emphasises the importance of increasing individuals' knowledge, creativity and innovative flair as a critical means of gaining competitive economic advantage. Current policies focus both upon developing human capital and upon promoting innovation and entrepreneurship. In addition, a policy of social inclusion is dominant through a process of welfare to work'.

Likewise, the Finnish report points to current labour force shortage as a main challenge for guidance services: 'Repeated and continuous participation in training has become part of the individual's career development, and this is also required for labour and industrial political reasons, as all labour resources must be used. The educational standard of the unemployed, which is lower than the standards of the rest of the population, must be improved. Young people without vocational competence must be guided to educate themselves and to improve their vocational capacities before moving on to the actual working life. The growing share of the immigrant population and cultural diversity are increasing challenges.

Here the Finns express a number of policy concerns that are shared across Europe and elsewhere. The ensuing answers in terms of guidance policies and activities include outreach services, drop-out prevention schemes, targeted guidance provision for migrant workers and older workers, proactive career guidance services within tertiary education (see e.g. New Zealand), easy access to guidance services, including guidance in the actual workplace (see e.g. www.workplaceguidance.eu), and the intensified use of ICT, including telephone helplines such as the UK-based Learndirect (see www.learndirect.co.uk).

Israel, with its multifaceted cultures, faces a complex set of problems: expanding the participation of under-represented groups in the work force; diminishing academic achievement gaps among the country's different populations; and integrating immigrant populations from developed and undeveloped countries in social, economic and educational spheres. Participation in Israel's workforce is some 10% lower than in developed countries. Various programmes to encourage employment, especially among ultra-Orthodox men and Arab women, have been installed.

In most of these activities, individualistic and economic growth oriented goals are reflected in the actual policy and guidance measures: there is no or little emphasis on sustainability, on Sufficient Economy or on GNH (Gross National Happiness), but rather on GNP (Gross National Product). Mexico, for example, maintains a holistic mental health oriented approach to career development, although guidance provision seems to be patchy in practice: the concept of Integral Educational Orientationas is seen as a transdisciplinary activity that strives to contribute to the development of the people in terms of both health and education .

Question 4: How is career development contributing to the achievement of these goals?
Many countries have guidance schemes and activities in place with the aim to re-integrate and include people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Some countries have a stronger tradition of involving the social partners in career guidance. Thus the Nordic countries have formed career development partnerships with local stakeholders, including trade unions and industrial organisations. The partners in the Netherlands have written up a formal agreement on such matters to promote investment in human capital. And some countries (Denmark and Ireland, for example) have some form of National Guidance Forum to co-ordinate guidance efforts across sectors. All these examples strive to contribute to economic and social goals, but the outcomes of these measures are unclear. Some countries focus on particular target groups to achieve economic and social goals. Thus New Zealand aims to improve labour market integration and settlement outcomes for migrants and refugees, so aiming at both economic and social goals. As part of this cross-government initiative, tailored career planning assistance is provided to migrants and refugees to help lift participation rates and reduce issues of under-employment. Assisting migrants and refugees to find sustainable employment in line with their career aspirations has social as well as economic benefits.

Question 5: How could this contribution be enhanced?
Structural linkages across guidance sectors are weak in most countries and need to be reinforced to create transparency and progression in guidance. Outcomes of guidance interventions are rarely measured. In most of above-mentioned activities and policies, individualistic and economic growth oriented goals are reflected in the actual policy and guidance measures: there is no or little emphasis on sustainability, on Sufficient Economy or on GNH (Gross National Happiness), but rather on GNP (Gross National Product). Ireland, however, does mention the issue of environmental sustainability alongside its economic goals in its National Development Plan 2007-2013, which sets out 'the economic and social investment priorities needed to realise the vision of a better quality of life for all. This better quality of life will be achieved by supporting the continued development of a dynamic and internationalised economy and society with a high commitment to international competitiveness, social justice and environmental sustainability'. Linking and balancing the three latter policy areas would enhance the contribution of guidance.

Conclusion
There is consensus that guidance has a pivotal role to play in sustaining economic development, labour force and skills development, mobility, and lifelong learning. Most of such policy goals are concerned with economic growth. This approach is close to being a paradigm. The social inclusion side of guidance is represented in a number of social compensation-oriented guidance goals and activities in terms of drop-out prevention schemes, integration of migrant workers and ethnic minorities, outreach services, easing access to guidance, workplace guidance etc. How progression and continuity is to be maintained (and measured) across these policy and activity areas is unclear in most cases: few national or regional bodies seem to have addressed how both economic growth *and* social equity goals can be obtained through guidance. However,

aside from the overall consensus, there are other voices: the concepts of Sufficient Economy, Gross National Happiness and Green Guidance represent other approaches. Moreover, a picture emerges of two sometimes contradictory policy aims in which guidance is expected to play a double role: sustaining economic development as it unfolds in a highly competitive global economy on the one hand, and, on the other hand, fostering social inclusion and cohesion. While many countries are seeking to balance and blend these aims, there is some evidence of tensions between them.

Questions

1. How are economic and social policy goals reflected in guidance activities and structures, and what impact do they have on these activities and structures?
2. Can economic development and social inclusion goals blend, or is it a matter of the balance between them?
3. Should guidance aim to sustain concepts such as Gross National Happiness (GNH) and Sufficient Economy? If so, what are the implications for its provision?

Theme 2:
Strategic Leadership

Synthesis Report by Lynne Bezanson

The reports
This synthesis report is based largely on the 19 country reports which covered Theme 2. The reports were asked to address five questions as outlined below (Questions 4 & 5 are combined). Most reports addressed some of these questions; 4 countries addressed them all.

Question 1: Describe the strategic leadership for career development in your country.
At the policy level, two mechanisms are predominant: government bodies which link career development to broader social and economic policy agendas; and national strategies which focus on specific aspects of the career development delivery system and which usually are initiated and/or supported at the policy level but enacted through national forum structures.

The Australian paper credits committees established by MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs) with 'much of the momentum for national career development activities'. Finland has had joint ministerial thematic working groups in guidance policy development since the 1980s. The Hungarian National Development Plan (2007-13) includes an overall survey on the national guidance system. The Canada paper reports a new representative provincial/territorial working group in career development (under the Forum of Labour Market Ministers) as 'a very significant step forward for the future of career development in Canada'. Austria has a National Guidance Strategy. Ireland has had a National Guidance Forum since 2004 which has developed a framework for service delivery, quality assurance and practitioners' competencies. Several European countries cited participation in the EU Forums on Lifelong Guidance as contributing to leadership in their own countries. A Scottish Guidance Network has been established to bring coherence to the delivery system.

Stakeholder participation in these bodies varies. Some are dominantly or exclusively government. Finland's national forum on youth in transition includes representatives of youth and the career profession as well as governments; Malta's National Guidance Forum includes government as well as training institutions, and employer and practitioner representatives. Australia cites CICA, a coalition of 12 state professional associations, as 'providing a voice for the industry and a focal point for government', and credits this partnership with substantial quality improvements in career development services. Its paper suggests a new paradigm shift in policy development based on partnerships and shared intelligence, and quotes a senior government official who stated: 'it's vital in looking at policy development to take account of the experience of the people who are actually delivering the programme'.

Three themes were regularly described as priorities in National Forums: service standards; services to adults; and skills enhancement. Ireland has established a Forum for Workplaces of the Future in which career planning and developing personal learning plans for employees are key components. Since 2001, guidance programming in the school system has been inspected along with other academic subject areas. The Irish Institute of Guidance Counsellors provides annual professional supervision to practising counsellors. Finland has developed a National Plan for Adult Guidance (2007-13) which includes guidance in workplaces as well as prior learning assessment; it has a research focus on evaluating the effectiveness of different delivery modes and is developing a national feedback mechanism. England has completed a national skills review which has recommended a universal careers service for adults by 2010. Canada cites the need for more federal funding to the provinces to strengthen universal access, and has set building the evidence base and establishing service delivery standards as priorities.

Countries which reported inadequate mechanisms for strategic leadership recognised the need for or were in the process of building towards establishing national mechanisms, forums or representative bodies which would provide such leadership. Botswana, Hungary, India, Jordan, the Netherlands and Norway are examples.

Few country papers elaborated on strategic leadership within the career development profession although several cited professional partnerships as important (see Question 2 below). Australia reported professional leadership as a strength, as did Ireland. England pointed to the need to strengthen links between professional associations and employer groups. Canada cited the absence of a pan-Canadian organisation, forum or action group for career development practitioners as a challenge.

Papers from the IAEVG and the Association for Career Professionals International (ACP International) focused on professional leadership. IAEVG particularly noted the importance of the guidance sector having an interface with international bodies affiliated with the United Nations, and cited several examples of them playing this proactive role. It also launched in 2007, an international credential in Educational and Vocational Guidance Practice (EVGP) for individuals and training programmes. A joint task force has been formed between IAEVG, ACP International and the Institute of Career Certification International to explore a means for reciprocal recognition of their qualification processes.

Question 2: What are the strengths and weaknesses of any mechanisms or structures?
Australia cited CICA as a mechanism which has established 'sustained and respectful co-operation with government and other stakeholders'. CICA leadership resides with career professional volunteers and there is a limit to their capacity to provide time and expertise to contribute to the all-government approach which is seen as needed. Additionally, career development competes with a crowded policy agenda at very infrequent meetings of the senior policy group (MCEETYA). Similarly, Ireland reported the quality of partnerships between government agencies and professional associations as a strength. Among other advances, it has led to the gathering of data on guidance provision which enables policy to be increasingly evidence-based. Data gathered includes how guidance hours are actually being used in schools, the nature of programmes, and the perceptions of administrators, parents and other stakeholders, as well as the experience of past and present students. The lack of a tracking system to ensure seamless services across the learning system is cited as a weakness of current provision. Malta's National Guidance Forum established a 10-point work-plan based on identified weaknesses and is systematically tacking each. An example is a previous lack of input by social partners, which has been addressed by each sector appointed an active representative.

Both Malta and Norway are dividing guidance in the schools into two distinct areas of personal counselling and career development, and cite this as a strength. While Jordan acknowledges a low understanding of career development services at the policy level, it is systematically putting in place several building blocks to make progress, including a three-year action plan which asks policy-makers to take leadership as a Steering Committee. The Netherlands acknowledges that social goals are not sufficiently connected to career development at policy levels, but points out that the high level of deregulation of career services provides significant scope for innovation: some joint projects are emerging which show promise.

Both Bhutan and India cite the importance of expanding provision through third parties who could receive short training programmes to operate within a limited scope of practice but to reach many. Bhutan is making parents a target audience.

Increased rigour with respect to service accountability is noted as a weakness by several countries. Australia, Canada, Malta, Scotland and USA are examples. At the same time, service accountability is cited as moving higher on policy and professional agendas, which is a strength. The same applies to implementing professional standards for practitioners.

Increased involvement of employers is cited in several papers as a weakness.

Question 3: What steps might be taken to improve strategic leadership?
Australia advocates an Institute of Career Development with dedicated resources to develop a national coherent system and a whole-government approach rather than the current concentration in one department. A unique suggestion is to allow career counselling and other career services as a tax deduction (private provision supported by government is strong in Australia).

Several countries focus on the need to strengthen evaluation. Norway calls for national quality indicators; the USA advocates incorporating career development standards and annual performance plans for educators.

Finland advocates steps to merge the existing cross-sectoral working groups into a sustainable national expert forum on lifelong guidance. Canada suggests creating opportunities to connect regional, provincial and national consultations to build stronger professional networks.

India advocates a model of career development which is based on research and is culturally specific and appropriate for the Indian population. It further wants to involve industry in building school curriculum to begin to bridge learning and work.

Questions 4 & 5: How well-known and valued is career development among the general public in your country and how can this be improved?
Very few countries addressed these questions explicitly.

Ireland reported a very high level of public awareness. It cites a study on 'The Perceptions of the Public on Guidance and Guidance Services' in which the majority of respondents were positive about the benefits of guidance in helping them access lifelong learning. There was widespread agreement that adult guidance needed to include the employed, those with and without financial difficulties and the retired. Ireland notes that while many people still do not know how to access services, 'more people acknowledge the fact that career development is an integral part of one's working life in Ireland'.

Australia reports that awareness of career development is strong in the school system as well as where programmes are specifically targeted, athletes being one example. There is still limited awareness among the general public, but this is growing. There is some evidence of increased awareness among employers. Australia's first National Career Development Week (2007) reached over 3 million people and included 332 events. It recommends reducing the range of acronyms, programme names and rules of access to simplify and give clearer profile to services. It also strongly endorses finding mechanisms to strengthen informal career structures (parents, peers, workmates).

Both Bhutan and India report low levels of awareness and the concept of career development being still in its infancy.

Conclusion
Three themes emerged consistently from the country papers which chose the theme of strategic leadership. These are:

1. *Leadership infrastructure*. Countries are consistent that leadership which is 'housed' is producing results. Career development services are seen as a public good and a government responsibility. The most common infrastructure is joint ministerial leadership spanning education and labour, and increasingly industry too. These create and provide support to a range of national forums which focus specifically on career development issues. There appears to be increasingly a partnership structure to these forums which include representatives of service user groups as well as professional practitioners.
2. *Professional leadership.* At the professional association level, international initiatives from IAEVG and ACP International are providing vehicles for establishing international standards within the

profession and for positioning career development as a contributor to international agendas. The Australian CICA model as well as the Irish Institute of Guidance Counsellors represent partnerships with governments which are productive for all stakeholders. There are a very large number of professional bodies of practitioners. Bringing cohesion and coherence to professional leadership initiatives within and across countries, reducing fragmentation and building influence appear to be emerging issues in leadership.

3. *Priorities.* Across most papers, three themes appeared consistently:
   - Service quality and accountability.
   - Services to adults.
   - Evidence and evaluation.

   The lack of culturally relevant models of career development services was raised by some countries, is foundational, and deserves attention.

Questions

1. What are the hallmarks of strong leadership in career guidance at the national level (political, policy and professional) which enhance and do not limit state, provincial, regional or local delivery?
2. In countries where career development has a strong public profile and public support, what supporting conditions exist and/or what specific initiatives have contributed to this?
3. What countries have managed to make progress in employer involvement? What mechanisms were used and what strategic lessons can be learned? What else might be tried?

Theme 3:
Harnessing Diversity

Synthesis Report by Sheila Semple

The reports
This synthesis report is based on the 13 country reports which covered Theme 3. The reports were asked to address three sets of questions as outlined below. Most reports addressed some of these questions; some addressed all.

Question 1: Key challenges in managing cultural and other societal differences
A common theme was the increasingly diverse nature of societies. In the United States, for example, 'the number of Americans who belong to ethnic and racial minority groups in the US has grown tremendously during the last decade, and these individuals currently account for 31% of the United States' population', with minority groups expected to make up nearly half of the population by 2050. Another example was the 'mosaic of cultures' which had been present since the inception of Israel, with inward immigration from the ex-Soviet Union countries and Ethiopia being a particular recent feature.

There were several challenges in delivering career development services to diverse groups. Firstly, there was a need to provide access to different types and levels of support in a way that would be responsive to cultural and social differences. And secondly, it was important that career development practitioners were trained appropriately in diversity and social justice issues to ensure increased awareness of different cultural and social perspectives and to provide them with flexible strategies and approaches relevant for different groups. Both the Association of Career Professionals (ACP) and the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) noted the importance of having standards for professional competencies that encompassed an understanding of cultural diversity.

Rural isolation was highlighted as a challenge by a number of countries, with issues of transport and poor technology connections arising. Actually getting services to clients in remote areas was a difficulty (particularly where career development services were relatively under-developed or resourced in a country), while a sparsely distributed population could lead to huge differences between remote and major rural and urban areas. In India, for example, 'while in remote areas access to information is the issue, an overload of information almost overcomes the young person in a city'. There were also concerns about the needs of urban clients of low socio-economic status. Migrants within countries were a challenge for career development provision, but so too were cross-national migrants moving across different education and training systems and labour markets, some highly skilled, others perhaps without the language skills required or refugees/asylum seekers.

A number of challenges related to problems experienced in the operation of the labour market. Several countries noted the difficulties encountered by older workers and disabled clients due to discrimination. In Botswana, the HIV/AIDS pandemic had impacted on economically active groups, meaning that pre-existing skills shortages were exacerbated. And in England, amongst others, differential levels of educational attainment linked to gender and ethnicity had led to occupational segregation.

At the other end of the age scale, diversity in young people's needs was apparent in most countries. These ranged from problems with early drop-out from education in, for example, Denmark and the Netherlands,

through to the needs of those who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), young parents and those with a disability.

In addition to those already noted, a number of other excluded groups presented challenges for career development policy and services. These included: ex-offenders; low academic attainers; those with literacy issues; and those who were demotivated or with low status in their society.

Question 2: Career development issues for particular cultural and societal groups
Particular groups brought different career development issues. Indigenous students in Australia needed intervention strategies to support their academic self-concept and motivation, as well as career advice; cynicism, fatalism and negative career beliefs were noted amongst socially backward groups in India; the needs of young people with disabilities were addressed in a number of countries, for example in Northern Ireland where specialist career practitioners had been appointed; and language issues and a lack of understanding of education systems were required to be addressed in dealing with non-Danish clients in Denmark.

Such concepts as 'career', 'motivation for work' and 'career planning' could be understood very differently in diverse cultural contexts, with tensions being noted when, as in the United States of America, there were conflicts between the values of immigrants' culture of origin and the dominant US culture. Particular issues in career development in Israel were experienced in providing services to Ultra-Orthodox men (where rabbinic study is valued over affluence or earning a living) and Arab women in traditionally gender-defined roles. New Zealand career development services have developed a 'Cultural Detective' tool to help practitioner and client become more aware of their respective culturally-defined viewpoints and biases, and services to Maori clients have been designed to take account of different values and perspectives. Two aspects of Te Ao Maori (the Maori world) that are noted as being particularly important are:

- 'acknowledging that career planning and decision-making processes focus around "whanau" (the extended, intergenerational family), "hapu" and "iwi" (sub-tribes and tribes) and so is likely to be couched in "we" not "me";
- 'recognising that for Maori, career planning occurs in the context of the 'health of the whole person' - in the four cornerstones of mind, spirit, physical and family health'.

In many contexts, the capacity of the individual to make independent career decisions or access career development services was seen to be culturally defined: for example, for Arab young people where the father's preference may have a strong influence, and where extended families need to be considered as collective decision-makers; or where career activities will need to be authorised and approved by heads of the respective communities (e.g. in Israel and Thailand). More generally, changing and more diverse family structures in other societies were seen as impacting on the perspectives through which information and advice was understood.

The importance of customising aspects of career development services was recognised as an issue. As noted above, access to culturally sensitive high-quality services and resources was recommended, but methods also needed to be fine-tuned to the specific requirements of different socio-economic groups. Appropriate high-quality labour market information also needed to be produced in a format that would encourage economic participation amongst disengaged/disadvantaged groups such as asylum-seekers, migrants and offenders.

The direct involvement of communities and local organisations in the design and delivery of career development services was seen to be valued as both culturally and socially sensitive in recognising the importance of local solutions and also in empowering excluded and disadvantaged groups. Built into this should be sustained funding of local services, plus systematic research into the relationship between career development and social/cultural diversity.

Question 3: Career development and social integration policies
Career development is seen as both a contributor to social integration policies and a key vehicle to deliver social integration.

In the USA, the career development of a diverse workforce is viewed as a critical component of social progress, since 'all US government agencies are required to develop a diversity plan that also directly addresses career development'. In Israel, ensuring the quality of jobs for disadvantaged or excluded groups is seen as contributing to the enhancement of social mobility.

With respect to career development as a delivery vehicle for social integration, some clear statements come from the Australian perspective: 'Through work preparation activities, career development services can act as a cultural interpreter, assisting understanding on issues such as educational opportunities, accessing work and workplaces and other services'….'career development contributes to social justice, equity and strengthening of social capital' and is 'a catalyst for social integration to realise goals of diversity'. In Thailand, too, career development is seen as able to contribute to creating 'a learning culture and labour database for local communities'. And in India 'promoting full employment has been a basic priority of economic and social policies and considered an effective method of eliminating poverty and promoting social integration'.

Most countries link career development services with education, and some have particular links with programmes to improve literacy. Policies on transition, the labour market, entrepreneurship, skill development and anti-poverty action also integrate with career development policy in many countries. While career development services in most countries have targeted services on particular groups, a case could be made for broadening the focus on diversity and the needs of specifically identified groups to that of social justice for all.

Conclusion
Overall, there were common concerns about the need for diversity training for practitioners and for flexibility of services in the face of diversity: as the New Zealand paper put it, 'acknowledging the cultural and social context… as an explicit part of the career planning process, rather than using a one size fits all model'. Career development could be seen as a key part of a government's strategy to promoting social integration and social justice.

Questions

1. How might the initial training and continuous professional development of career development practitioners be changed to take more account of cultural and social diversity?
2. How can career development resources be made more equally and fairly available?
3. What policy changes would help career development organisations to be more effective in contributing to social integration?
4. How can the effectiveness of career development services in working with diverse groups and supporting social integration be measured?

Theme 4:
Impact Evidence

Synthesis Report by John McCarthy

The reports
Ten countries and one international association chose to comment on Theme 4. Fourteen countries provided brief self-evaluative comments.

Question 1: What expectations of career development services does your country have?
Expectations of career development services are established by countries in a number of ways:

- through legislation;
- through national programmes for education and training;
- in national strategies such as national development plans (NDP);
- as policy objectives for education, training, employment and social inclusion;
- in national social partnership agreements involving governments, employers, trade unions, and civil society;
- in opinions expressed by the general public and by users of such services;
- as position papers on labour market skills shortages both current and future;
- in policy guidelines for the delivery of career development services;
- in statements of delivery agencies;
- in statements of guidance practitioner associations both national and international.

In some countries such as Denmark, the expectations appear to be mainly expressed by the education sector. In other countries such as Ireland and Finland, the importance of career guidance services appears equally recognised by both education and employment sectors. Indeed in Ireland the value of career guidance services appears to have penetrated the collective psyche of government, employers, trade unions and the general public. It figures not only in national social partnership agreements but is well represented in plans to up-skill the existing workforce and in preparing the future workforce for 2020. In Canada, with its strong provincial government structure, there is nonetheless a common pan-Canadian expectation that career guidance will contribute to increasing participation in post-secondary education, especially from societal groups who have traditionally been under-represented.

The expectations themselves are couched in different terms in the education and employment sectors. In the education sector, policy-makers are concerned with improving participation, completion and attainment levels in education and training for young people and adults, and with increasing the effectiveness of education (e.g. Hungary). Career guidance is increasingly seen as a support to adult learning and retraining, in particular to improve adult employability (e.g. Finland). In the employment sector, career guidance services are expected to develop human resources, to support employment and employability (e.g. Quebec), to assist low-skilled and disadvantaged individuals to improve their employability through participation in education and training, and also to aid the social and workforce integration of migrant workers and older workers.

Question 2: What evidence exists to show that career development services are making an impact on individuals, different societal groups, on the economy, and on the wider society?
Interpretation of the words ‘evidence’ and ‘impact’ led to differences in response to this question. Several countries made use of ‘proxy’ or indirect measures of impact:

- increase in percentage of males and females undertaking non-traditional careers (Botswana);
- women’s participation and level of activity in business and politics (Botswana);

- the number of community networks established for diversity and security development (Thailand).

Most of the evidence reported was of an indirect nature: the provision and existence of career development services attests to their value, indicates that there is a need for such services, and demonstrates that they do useful work. It is an argument based on blind faith without any perceived need for supporting evidence.

Other indirect evidence included:

- the political importance attached to guidance, reflected for example in the establishment of national co-ordination or consultative mechanisms for guidance involving education and labour ministries and other stakeholders (Denmark, Finland, Ireland);
- the placing of guidance in national development programmes (Botswana, Hungary);
- the locally generated range and level of career development service activities in different provinces (Canada).

Occasional evaluation studies of career guidance issues also provide indirect evidence of impact. The Ireland report gives five interesting examples:

- Public Perceptions of Guidance Services (2005-6).
- Careers and Labour Market Information in Ireland (2004).
- Attitudes of Students and Graduates to Career Services in Higher Education (2005).
- The Review of Guidance in Post-Primary Schools (2003-7).
- The Composite Report of School Guidance Inspectors (2007).

The evidence gathered in such occasional studies is invaluable as feedback to improve the quality and focus of the existing services, but of itself is not a direct measurement of impact (change in citizen competence, behaviour and situation). Some of the conclusions though are encouraging: ‘guidance provision was held in high regard by many people; people are clear about its benefits and in particular how it assists them to access lifelong learning’ (but also ‘people need guidance to find the guidance services appropriate to them’!).

One conclusion of an evaluation (2007) of the guidance reforms in Denmark, especially the practice of guidance in Youth Centres and Regional Guidance Centres, applies to most countries: ‘there is a lack of evidence (research) of the effects of guidance’.

Question 3: How are impact and effectiveness defined?

The most comprehensive definitions are provided by researchers in Canada:

- Changes in client competence.
- Changes in personal attributes.
- Changes in client situation.
- Broader changes for the client and the community.

In the model they are currently testing, the researchers define impact outcomes as hoped-for end-results of a guidance intervention such as:

- employment status;
- placement rates;
- participation in training;
- engagement in job search;
- client ability to fit in the workplace and over time;
- societal impact (less crime, less substance abuse);
- impact on interpersonal relationships (better relationships with co-workers and family);
- economic impact.

By contrast, the policy-makers’ responses had more limited requirements: participation, retention, and progression in education and employment (Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Maldives, Thailand). In the case of Denmark, the expected long-term effects are very clearly defined:

- The percentage of young people moving to further education and employment after finishing Youth Education.
- Graduation and drop-out rates, and the percentage changing courses 1, 2 and 3 years after finishing Youth Education.
- Percentage of young people continuing in the education system after completing compulsory education: 3, 15 and 27 months later.

Such transition statistics occurring after the implementation of the new guidance reform will be compared with baseline data obtained in 2000, 2001 and 2002. Successful transitions are viewed as an indicator of the effect of guidance interventions in both Denmark and Wales – though, as the Denmark report observed, guidance services are one of several influential factors that contribute to young people's pathways.

Basic statistics (input, process, output) as referred to in the Denmark and Finland reports are the foundation of any data-collection system for guidance. Whichever way one looks at definitions of impact and effectiveness (from the viewpoint of researchers, of policy-makers, or of practitioners), the conclusion of the Ireland report is pertinent: 'indicators that enable services to improve practice and to inform public policy and investment are vital'.

Question 4: What significant gaps are there in evidence and what steps are being taken to address them?

In most countries there is no national monitoring and measurement of impact. As the Ireland report states, there is a lack of a prescribed tracking mechanism between and across different levels of education and training, and there is a need for more direct measures and for outcome data. Or, as put succinctly by Botswana, there is ineffective data capturing, monitoring and evaluation. Where transition data are being collected, as in Denmark, there is a concern that other measures are needed for outcomes of different guidance learning activities.

Two countries, Canada and Finland, report efforts to address the gaps. In Canada, in addition to the testing of the outcome framework model mentioned under Question 3 above, several projects are under way to measure the impact over time of guidance interventions, using experimental and control groups, and to embed the framework model in employment counsellor training. In Finland, work has commenced on developing a sustainable evidence base for guidance services for adults in both the education and employment sectors that will draw on EU and other international experience and expertise. The focus will be on the development of both a qualitative and a quantitative approach to measuring the cost-effectiveness of guidance interventions.

Question 5: How do policy-makers use impact evidence?

Given the generally underdeveloped state of impact measurement worldwide, this question generated few responses. In Denmark, impact evidence is used to observe progress in the attainment of public policy goals and targets. In Finland, the data currently collected are used to assure the quality of services in the public employment service and in schools, but do not have higher-order uses. In Wales, such information is also used for quality-assurance purposes but in addition it informs relevant Welsh Assembly (parliament) policies. In Ireland, statistics gathered quarterly for the Adult Education Guidance Initiative are used by the stakeholder management group to review and evaluate the changing nature of adult target-groups and the support they require.

Self-evaluation comments (14 countries) on impact evidence

Countries assigned different meanings to the scale of 0 to 10, so it is difficult to draw conclusions based on the figures alone. However, the comments provided with the ratings are instructive. Australia is trying to find ways to include measures of effectiveness of career development services in transition programmes and as performance indicators for National Reform Agenda priorities. Norway also sees the need to address this theme through existing and future structures for guidance co-ordination and delivery. England, despite collecting a wealth of information on existing service delivery, has little information relating the costs of

delivery to outcomes, and intends to address this. But without strategic leadership for guidance, the issue of impact evidence is a non-issue, as the Netherlands report comments.

Conclusions

Policy-makers in most countries expect that career development services contribute to the achievement of public-policy goals and targets in the education, employment and social inclusion sectors. These expectations are expressed as anticipated macro-level indicators such as retention, progression, up-skilling, and successful transition rates. These indicators are what interests policy-makers. But there is some recognition that such rates are not, on their own, the exclusive outcome of guidance interventions. Despite these expectations, little attempt has been made by policy-makers to date (with the exception of Denmark) to find evidence to support such links. Serious attempts are being made by some researchers to engage with policy-makers on meaningful outcome data, but we are only at the beginning of addressing this issue.

On the positive side, increasing attempts are being made to gather other forms of data, particularly users' views of their experiences of career development services. Such data, while useful in themselves, are not a substitute for outcome data.

Questions

1. What kinds of impact indicators of the effects of career guidance do policy-makers really want? How realistic are their expectations? For which purposes would they use them?
2. Of the outcomes of career guidance that interest policy-makers (e.g. retention, progression, participation in education, training and employment), how feasible is it to measure what proportion of these are attributable to career guidance interventions/activities? What basic data need to be collected in the education and employment sectors so that such analyses can be undertaken?
3. Given the dearth/lack of evidence on impact and outcomes of career guidance interventions, what role should policy-makers play in order for such evidence to emerge?
4. How can consensus be achieved at national and international levels on definitions of impact and effectiveness that provides meaningful data for policy-makers?

Theme 5:
Role of the Citizen

Synthesis Report by Spencer Niles

The reports
This synthesis report is based on the 8 country reports addressing Theme 5. The country teams were asked to address four questions:

1. How can different societal groups of users and potential users be involved in the design of career development policies and services?
2. Is this considered important in your country as a way to improve the customer experience or to engage with 'hard to reach' groups?
3. What works?
4. How is action taken on relevant findings?

Each report addressed some of these questions; none addressed all.

The responses
In general, country team responses emphasise the need for including citizens in the design, delivery, and evaluation of career services. All country teams agree that citizen involvement in career services is important for improving the quality of service delivery to all groups, including 'hard to reach' groups. Most country teams report mixed results, however, regarding the extent to which success has been achieved relative to engaging citizens in the design of career development policies and services. The reports are also fairly silent on the matter of how action is taken regarding user involvement in the design and development of career development policies and services. The numerical ratings of all countries related to Theme 5 were relatively low.

Strategies for involving citizens
There is consensus that soliciting feedback from users is critical. Strengthening the quality of career services depends upon learning what users find helpful in fostering positive career development. Acquiring user feedback is the most common way in which citizens become involved in the design of career development policies and services.

For example, in Austria, feedback from career services recipients is routinely solicited. Austrian guidance and counselling providers seek to systematically enhance the role of the citizen by including them in the service evaluation process. At the school level, students and parents/guardians complete questionnaires and, in some cases, structured interviews regarding the usefulness of, and satisfaction with, career services received. In tertiary education, data are collected identifying the frequency with which students change their major field of study and student success in navigating the university-to-employment transition are also assessed. Similar data (e.g. transition to employment, user satisfaction) are collected from adults receiving career services in adult education programmes and public employment services.

In Denmark, there are similar efforts under way regarding the inclusion of user feedback in evaluating career services. In addition to assessing user satisfaction with career services, however, the services are assessed by identifying what kind of services are provided and by assessing the direct (i.e. impact on the individual) and indirect (i.e. impact on society) effects of career services delivery. Moreover, citizens are viewed as being central not only in evaluating services but also in designing and delivering career services (Austria is also moving toward this approach). Thus, the Danes extend the range of service delivery models from something

the career practitioner does to clients (the modal approach internationally), or something the career practitioner does with clients (the collaborative approach advocated in many post-modern career intervention models), to something clients do for themselves (a true empowerment model). In this regard, a taxonomy of participation has been developed, identifying three levels of citizen involvement in career services. At the individual level, citizens can be involved in shaping their own user experiences. At the service level, service users can participate in designing services, setting priorities for services, and addressing service gaps. At a wider level, citizens can be involved in influencing public policies related to career development as well as service design and review.

In England, there is also the realisation of the need for moving beyond simply soliciting career services user feedback (which is done routinely) to engaging adults in policy and strategy development. Recently, adolescents have been included in the design and delivery of career services. But real involvement of adults in these processes has yet to occur.

Israel is experiencing a substantial emergence of citizen-based initiatives that address social welfare and poverty issues, including job search assistance for adults (including adults over the age of 45). A challenge facing the service providers in citizen-based agencies and NGOs relates to accountability. Specifically, there is often pressure to reinforce the funding source's political and social agenda (which could, at times, be at variance with the best interest of the individual).

In some nations (e.g. Jordan), a collectivistic orientation to career decision-making represents the dominant approach to career choice. Parents and families in countries such as Jordan play a critical role in orienting young people toward occupational options. Sometimes this influence severely restricts the options young people feel able to consider. The familial influence in career decision-making is so important that efforts are under way to educate parents about career development. School-based forums and activities are examples of strategies for providing important career development information to parents. A parent resource tool-kit is also being developed to engage parents in the career development process in ways that meet the developmental needs of their children.

In Scotland, there is the clear recognition of the need for greater citizen involvement in the design and delivery of career services. There is also the clear understanding that putting citizens at the heart of all aspects of career services requires policy-makers and service providers to truly 'listen' to the perspectives of citizens and to be open to integrating the views of citizens in service design and delivery.

Although numerous models for career services in primary, secondary, and tertiary education exist within the United States, these services often ignore the needs of those who are not successful academically – ironically, the citizen group that likely has the greatest need for career assistance. Several states (e.g. Maine, Pennsylvania) do require all secondary school students to be exposed to career planning classes; however, there are few instances in which students participate in the systematic evaluation of these courses. Most methods of involving citizens in the design of career development policies and services in the USA involve user satisfaction surveys. Beyond this, a substantial number of evaluation and treatment outcome studies are conducted in higher education settings. Some efforts of national associations (e.g. the National Career Development Association) have sought to extend quality services to a wider range of citizen groups (e.g. through the development of the Career Development Facilitator curriculum).

Careers Wales provides an excellent example of integrating citizens in the design of on-line career services. Careers Wales Online (CSO) involves citizens in focus groups, user surveys, discussion forums, and advisory and management roles to acquire important input into the ongoing refinement of this Welsh website. On-line services also have the advantage of offering career assistance to hard-to-reach groups (e.g. jo-seekers in rural areas and students receiving home-based schooling). Given the preponderance of data indicating that on-line services are most effective when used in conjunction with a career practitioner, however, it seems important that an over-reliance on technology for the delivery of careers services be

avoided. It is not clear whether the level of engagement citizens enjoy in the design of CWO also occurs in settings where career services are provided in a more face-to-face format.

Conclusion

There is consensus that the role of the citizen is crucial in strengthening career development policies and services. With regard to career services, this most often translates into soliciting user feedback regarding satisfaction with services received (i.e. opinion data). There is little information in the country reports regarding how this sort of user feedback becomes integrated into the service improvement process. Sharing information and examples, specifying how this occurs, is needed. There is also the sense that there is minimal systematic collection of opinion data (e.g. by using similar data-collection questionnaires across similar settings). Clearly, some between-setting variability is needed, as it allows for more situation-specific user feedback. Creating some uniform procedures in data collection, however, provides opportunities for comparisons across settings. Moreover, there appears to be relatively little incorporation of outcome data in the service enhancement process. Although opinion data are useful, the opinions of the same person can fluctuate over time and be heavily influenced by factors such as the likeability of a particular service provider. Involving the users of career services in field-based treatment outcome studies is essential for more rigorous evaluations of career services. Obviously, there are often structural limitations to such efforts in practice settings, but there are numerous examples in the literature as to how practitioners successfully cope with such limitations to engage in more systematic evaluations of career services.

With some notable exceptions, there seems to be some reluctance to engage citizens in the design and delivery of career services. There is, however, agreement upon the need to make career development services more consumer-centric. There are instances in which this is occurring with regard to the design of web-based career services. Understandably, moving in this direction can be unsettling for many career practitioners. There can in particular be very legitimate concern regarding the ethics of having citizens provide services for which they are not trained. On the other hand, we know from research in the field of social psychology that providing and receiving support from others experiencing similar challenges is the most powerful sort of social support that can be provided. Thus, there is a tension that exists regarding the degree to which citizens engage in the delivery of career services. It can be argued that this tension is very useful in helping practitioners to be sensitive to the advantages and the limits of involving citizens in career services. More examples as to how practitioners manage such tensions effectively will provide important information for others attempting to achieve similar goals.

Shifting to the issue of involving citizens in strengthening career development policies raises many of the same questions noted above. Because policy development involves conducting needs assessments, addressing gaps in services, communicating funding needs, and engaging in additional strategies for effective advocacy of career services, citizens have a crucial role to play in strengthening career development policies. Additionally, the ethical issues that can arise when involving citizens in the delivery of career services are not as inherent in the process of involving citizens in the design of services or in strengthening policies. Thus, it becomes a bit perplexing that more examples for involving citizens in such processes were not identified in the country papers. Certainly, citizens have critically important roles to play as members of advisory boards and as advocates to stakeholders such as lawmakers and funding agencies (to mention just two examples). Sharing examples of effective strategies being used for involving citizens in strengthening career development policies can be useful in motivating others to increase their efforts in this arena.

In summary, while it seems that consensus exists in favour of greater citizen involvement in the design of career development policies and services, examples of this occurring seem less evident in the country reports. There are also few success stories related to involving citizens who are members of 'hard to reach' groups. Perhaps this reflects where the field is in the evolution of involving citizens in enhancing policies and practices. If awareness of the need for greater citizen involvement is the first step, then there is the hope and expectation that specific examples of how this is occurring will soon follow.

Questions

1. What are the benefits and the costs of greater citizen involvement in the design of career development policies and services?
2. What are the barriers to greater citizen involvement in the design of career development policies and services, and how can they be overcome?
3. What is the potential of citizen involvement in the design, and perhaps the delivery, of career development services, and what should be the limits?
4. What are the specific challenges related to involving ‘hard to reach’ groups in the design of career development policies and services?