

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

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## 1. Country Name :

# Republic of Ireland

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## Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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



**Theme 1**

Understanding how work opportunities are changing



**Theme 2**

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



**Theme 3**

Improving career practitioner training and practice



**Theme 4**

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

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

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

## General question

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

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

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

-To discuss with and learn from our international colleagues, and to bring the learning back to our country to inform next stage thinking and planning

NCGE is an agency of the Department of Education and Skills, and as part of our role we inform the Dept on issues relating to guidance policy and practice. While our main focus is guidance in the education sector, we work closely with our colleagues in the employment sector. Attending this symposium would provide us with the opportunity to consider and discuss the wider issues of career guidance , to learn from our international colleagues, and to bring this learning back to Ireland to inform our own thinking , planning and advice for the Dept.

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

( 3 )/5

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

( 2 )/5

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

( 3 )/5

## Thematic questions

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



### Understanding how work opportunities are changing

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

Ireland has recently launched a series of national strategies, which outline a national “Action Plan” for Jobs, Education and the National Skills Strategy. These outline the government’s commitment to employment and education possibilities. They have also engaged private contractors to deliver career guidance and support to long term unemployed under a programme called Job Path. These compliment the Department of Social Protection (DSP) staff and existing contractors of DSP who deliver Local Employment Services and Jobs Clubs in various locations around the country.

<https://www.djei.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Action-Plan-for-Jobs-2017.pdf>

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/Action-Plan-for-Education-2017.pdf>

[https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub\\_national\\_skills\\_strategy\\_2025.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf)

NCGE hosts the National Forum on Guidance twice per year, where issues relating to the changes in the wider economy and education sector can be discussed.

<http://www.ncge.ie/about-us/national-forum-on-guidance-2011-15/>

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

The extreme rate of unemployment that occurred during the downturn and the danger of a drift into long term unemployment, coupled with low levels of education among the young unemployed who came mainly from the construction sector. As a result there has been strategic national Government focus on strategies for recovery from the recent economic recession and strategies to continue to build the economy with education and jobs.

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

-Currently the Dept. of Education and Skills Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2015-2019 outlines the strategic thinking for development of FET Sector

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>

Revised focus on and development of Apprenticeships is key element of FET & HE process

<http://www.apprenticeship.ie/en/SitePages/Home.aspx>

National Skills Strategy outlines the skills development needed nationally and country wide to 2025

Currently there are huge changes in the management and organisation of deliver of FET

Pathways to Work set out a number of strands that it commits to delivering on between 2016 to 2020.

Strand 1: Enhanced engagement with unemployed people of working age

Strand 2: Increase the employment focus of activation programmes and opportunities.

Strand 3: Making work pay – Incentivise the take-up of opportunities.

Strand 4: Incentivising employers to offer jobs and opportunities to unemployed people.

Strand 5: Build organisation capability to deliver enhanced services to people who are unemployed

Strand 6: Building Workforce Skills

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

Currently, an update report is required annually for the Action Plan on Jobs and Action Plan on Education to indicate outcomes achieved. Currently research is being carried out by ESRI to address the provision in the FET sector through Post Leaving Certificate Colleges, where evidence has also been gathered on access to work opportunities from these colleges and courses. This report is due Spring 2017

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

-As changes are ongoing, such evaluations are ongoing, however a renewed focus on achieving targets set at government level requires annual reports published.

Reduction in the numbers of those unemployed would suggest that the policies are having some impact

See below impact report for the Job path service.

<https://www.welfare.ie/en/downloads/JobPath-performance-report-January-2017.pdf>



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

11. What reforms, if any, have already taken place in the content and delivery of career services in the education and labour market sectors in response to the changes identified in Theme 1?

In relation to the education sector, there will be an increase to the allocation of guidance available in schools.

NCGE has worked in collaboration with FET colleagues to propose a draft strategy for Guidance In FET which would encompass relevant changes

In labour market sector there is a large reduction in the live register since 2012 with national figures falling from over 15% to 7.5% in 2016. The long term unemployment rate has also fallen as has the rate of unemployment for the under 25 year olds.

12. What additional reforms are needed in the content and delivery of career services in the education and labour market (including PES and HR) sectors to respond to those changes?

-Further clarification of the Career Management Skills delivered the career services. We could not comment on HR providers

\_ RE: PES –DSP are currently considering the needs of other cohorts including people with disabilities and dependent spouses. New tailored activation programmes will be required for these. Increased engagement patterns with the unemployed have proven to be successful in getting people back into employment. More resources are still needed to continue this momentum.

13. What are the policy levers in place or needed in your country that support necessary reforms (e.g. the provision of experiential careers learning) in the content and delivery of career services in education and labour market sectors?

-We have now reached a stage that career guidance / guidance counselling is recognised for the valuable contribution made to education and employment.

Many colleges and universities are now including a work experience module or internship as part of their course requirements.

The Action Plan for Education for 2017 reflects the development of a Career Learning and Development Framework for Schools, - in final phase of development by NCGE , due for publication in 2017

NCGE monitors the current Adult Education Guidance Services in the FET sector to ensure quality provision.

NCGE meets regularly with the Dept. of education Inspectors of Guidance to discuss requirements in schools.

14. What are the main barriers and/or success factors to implementing such career service reforms i.e. policy, content and kind of services, delivery methods, and openness to change?

There are currently different roles and training requirements in career services across education and labour market. The National Forum on Guidance provides an opportunity for providers across all sectors to meet and discuss issues common to provision of guidance across these sectors and to identify similarities also.



## Improving career practitioner training and practice

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

Dept. of Education and Skills published the Programme Recognition Framework in 2016 outlining the requirements for course providers in delivering recognised qualification I guidance counselling for those working in the education and FET sectors <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Programme-Recognition-Framework-Guidance-Counselling.pdf>

-NCGE worked closely with the Dept. of Education and Skills to develop the Programme Recognition Framework – the guidelines for universities on the training for guidance counselling qualifications  
NCGE provides CPD for guidance counsellors. We carry out Training needs analyses and develop CPD programmes to suit the needs of the guidance counsellors and their clients.

We provide online learning opportunities for guidance counsellors via online modules and professional webinars.

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

Labour market learning and career related training is vital. Business / employer groups could liaise with trainers / professional organisations for training and professional development purposes

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

Dept. of Education and Skills provide continuous professional development for guidance counsellors through the programme of the National Centre for Guidance in Education and through funding for the professional association for guidance counsellors. Supervision for the guidance counselling aspect of the role is funded by Dept. for those in schools and FET based guidance services.

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

Success factors: the DES publication gives clear outline of the qualifications required for guidance professionals in the education and FET sector.

Main barriers include the lack of clarification of the role of guidance practitioners and the need for formal training for those working in the labour market sector.



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

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

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

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

Within Education, guidance is provided to support transitions from primary to post primary and to support education transitions into third level.

In employment the Pathways to Work plan outlines the supports available for unemployed.

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

NCGE is currently developing a Career Learning and Development framework for schools. Guidance-related learning has been incorporated into a major development at school level on Wellbeing.

In Higher Education careers services, some have integrated with those delivering the core curriculum, to include career guidance / career planning modules.

We cannot comment on HR policies

Ireland is focusing on the development of formal RPL processes to support transitions.

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

At this point, there is no such formal assessment

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

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

-Currently in Ireland, the Action Plan for Education 2016-2019 includes an overarching review of career guidance services across the education and FET sectors. This review will begin in Quarter 2 2017

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

NCGE has informed the FET Strategy in the development of Section 10 – Guidance focusing on the development of the FET Guidance services generally -the current FET Strategy includes focus on development of career management skills <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>

Strategic objective 3.3 Provide career management skills to learners on FET courses to manage flexible career pathways, increasing employability thereby empowering learners to manage their skills development and career goals.

At this time the Dept. Career Guidance review of guidance services in the education sector will provide information to inform such planning for the future

NCGE is currently developing a Career Learning and Development Framework as a resource for schools in planning the delivery of their careers education programmes.