

POLICY POINTS

The Newsletter of the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This issue features

- the themes and process of the International Symposium on Connecting Career Development and Workforce Development
- recently published policy related studies
- relevant research groups and sites
- books

Career Development and Workforce Development Shaping the Future

International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, APRIL 2006

The themes on this Symposium

- Human capital
- Labour supply
- Employability skills
- International diversity
- Career development services for workforce development
- Older workers
- The information base for public policy making

Workforce development focuses the minds of governments, employers and worker representative organisations in a context of an increasingly global economic environment. Countries are experiencing skills short-

ages, ageing workforces, and education and training systems that do not respond quickly enough to market place and technological changes. Citizens are living longer and pension funds are straining. Citizens are scared by the lack of certainty of their workforce future and of their prospects of non-continuity. Jobs are moving from high cost to low cost economies. Enterprises have to be leaner, more cost-efficient and productive. How can career development services assist governments, enterprises, education and training systems to enable citizens to manage their learning and work , to be active contributors to economic and social development? What are they currently doing and what should they be doing? What are the expectations of govern-

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Connecting Career
Development with
Public Policy



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FOR THIS ISSUE

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ments and employers? How well is the contribution of career development services reflected in national policies and strategies? These are key questions for the International Symposium hosted by Australia in Sydney on April 21-24, funded by the Department for Education, Science and Technology.

Why an International Symposium?

The questions raised above are a concern for every country and economy. The Symposium provides a public platform at international level to examine such issues and to plan international collaborative action. As a result of previous international symposia (Ottawa 1999, Vancouver 2001), inter-governmental and international institutional cooperation has emerged such as the OECD policy review (2001-03) for career guidance which was built upon by the European Commission and the World Bank, and the establishment of the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy. One effect of such collaboration has been the emergence of national platforms in several European countries where career development and public policy issues are being addressed by relevant stakeholders.

Who will attend this International Symposium Linking Career Development and Workforce Development?

Government representatives and officials, employer and worker interests, career development service providers, researchers, project and programme managers, international institutional representatives.

How do International Symposia Connecting Career Development and Public Policy Work?

Countries are invited to participate in the Symposium by planning a paper on the themes of the Symposium with the participation of relevant stakeholders at national level. The persons involved in the prepara-

tion of the paper usually form the country team which will attend the Symposium and contribute to its deliberations. At the end of the Symposium countries make plans for further national and international actions to progress the recommendations of the Symposium.

What is Expected of the Country Paper?

Each participating country is expected to:

- Choose to focus on a **minimum of two and a maximum of three themes**
- Write a response of **500 - 1000 words for each of the two or three themes**
- Discuss **major obstacles or difficulties** the country has faced or is facing in dealing with that particular theme OR
- Describe **strategies or good-practice examples** adopted in the country to address the issues associated with that particular theme OR
- A **combination** of these ideas.

Where possible, the papers should consider career development in relation to the existing workforce and also the workforce of the future.

Which Countries, International Institutions and Organisations will Attend the International Symposium in Sydney?

To date, the following countries and organisations have registered their interest in attending the Symposium: USA, UK, Austria, Finland, Canada, Korea, Latvia, Bhutan, Botswana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Oman, Portugal, Norway, Turkey, Luxemburg, Denmark, South Africa, New Zealand, Hong Kong, CEDEFOP, ETF, FEDORA, IAIEVG, ILO, OECD, African Association for Guidance and Counselling.

For further information on the Symposium please visit <http://careers.qut.edu.au/is2006/>

Interested in International Research Collaboration on Career Development and Public Policy Issues:

Are you/your organisation/institution interested in undertaking international collaborative research on a public policy issue? If so please contact us. Where possible, ICCDPP will provide a match-making service, linking you to persons/institutions with a similar research interest. Write to research@iccdpp.org

Policy Related Studies

EUROPE

CAREER GUIDANCE IN THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (PES)

The Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission has just published this review undertaken by Dr Ronald Sultana and Prof Tony Watts. It covers 25 Member States of the European Union and in addition Switzerland, Norway and Iceland. The study identifies three categories of PES guidance activities: (i) embedded in core services for all unemployed, (ii) a specialised service for some unemployed, and (iii) providing labour market and careers information to other groups such as pupils and students. Among the trends noted were: (a) a shift towards self-help services, (b) the provision of services at three levels: self-service, group, and intensive case management, (c) decentralisation, and (d) outsourcing. Issues raised by the report include quality and impact measurement, role tensions, maintenance of career service identity within overall provision for the unemployed, and the contribution of the PES to national lifelong learning policies and strategies. Copies of the report may be obtained from: corinne.couez@cec.eu.int

LE FONCTIONNEMENT DES SERVICES D'INFORMATION ET D'ORIENTATION

The French Ministry for Education, Higher Education and Research, has recently published a study of the guidance services it administers serving secondary school pupils, school leavers and the general public. Undertaken by the inspectors of both professional and administrative branches, the research had three focuses: the steering instruments for such a service, their implementation, and the work and roles of the guidance practitioners (counsellor psychologists) and their organisations. The views of other stakeholders (parents, pupils) were also sought. The findings show that despite some good examples of practice, management of the service is extremely weak at all levels (national, regional and local), in part due to poor or outdated steering instruments, in part due to lack of monitoring. As a result guidance provision is idiosyncratic, based mainly on the role, interpretation of and the circumstances of the individual practitioner. The report makes many recommendations to redress this situation including: better regional and local management, changing the content of training (less psychology, more economics, sociology, and knowledge of the world of work), the status of the practitioners and their managers, the involvement of users, working in partnerships and networks, using non-traditional contact points and opening hours. The report can be accessed at: ftp://trf.education.gouv.fr/pub/edutel/syst/igaen/rapports/sio_2005.pdf

CANADA

PRACTITIONER AND MANAGER VIEWS OF EVALUATION OF CAREER GUIDANCE SERVICES

Recent research from Canada indicates that front line workers and agency managers believe that it is important to evaluate career guidance services. However, when asked how often they evaluate their work with clients, the majority reported that they seldom do it. The majority of respondents reported that they thought the programs and services they offered were beneficial and the interventions they used were effective. However, they had difficulty producing evidence that would provide a convincing link between the interventions used and the outcomes achieved.

In the Canadian research, respondents expressed frustration that client contextual factors and societal impacts typically were not seen as relevant for evaluation. They also identified many outcomes that they thought were important, but which they did not (or were not allowed to) measure or report. These included client intrapersonal factors such as: Belief that change is possible, internal locus of control, self-confidence, motivation, self-esteem, client self-reliance and initiative, and opportunity awareness. Practitioners also lamented that there was no way for them to report factors such as: Client goal attainment, client skill acquisition, independent client use of resources provided in career services centres, and client acquisition of non-job-related skills (job search, literacy, etc.). Thus, many areas of client change were not being reported, and practitioners expressed a desire to report many important variables that currently were seen as not important by their managers.

The research was conducted by members of the Canadian Research Working Group for Evidence-Based Practice in Career Development (CRWG), using a combination of surveys, focus groups, and telephone interviews. Responses were obtained from more than 370 people, representing practitioners, employers, agency managers, and policy makers. The resulting picture is paradoxical. People at all levels in the career industry agree that it is important to measure the outcomes of services, but very little evaluation is taking place. There is little agreement on what constitutes acceptable evidence of success. When evaluation is done, it often is restricted to variables that are easy to measure, but only scratch the surface. Thus many important indicators of client change, and other factors affecting client outcome, are not assessed.

The research also revealed that:

- Practitioners did not evaluate their work with clients because managers did not encourage them to do it
- Agency managers did not promote evaluation because they were being funded to provide services to clients, not to do evaluation
- Funders lamented that they did not have evidence of the client outcomes that resulted from the programs they funded.

The lack of evaluation was seen as someone else's fault.

A copy of the final report on the survey and current updates on the evaluation framework that is being developed by the CRWG, are available from the Canadian Career Development Foundation <http://ccdf.ca/>

Key Levers of Workforce Development: View of European Social Partners

IN 2002 THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS, that is the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE and UEAPME), and the European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and Enterprises of General Economic Interest (CEEP), agreed on a "framework of actions for the lifelong development of competences and qualifications". The framework underlines competence development and acquisition of qualifications for all groups as the major challenge for lifelong learning and its contribution to an inclusive society. The framework defines four priorities considered essential for the lifelong development of competences:

- identification and anticipation of competence and qualification needs,
- the recognition and validation of competences and qualifications,
- information, support and guidance,
- resources.

The member organisations of those groups undertook to promote this framework at national level within the European Union and to draw up annual reports of national actions identified under each priority. A report on progress to date will be submitted in March by the partners to the European political leaders summit meeting.

EVIDENCE BASED POLICY MAKING

RESEARCH GROUPS AND SITES

Canadian Research Working Group for Evidence Based Practice in Career Development

In the fall of 2004, a preliminary study to learn more about how Canadian providers of career services evaluate the impact of their services was launched by the newly formed Canadian Research Working Group for Evidence-Based Practice in Career Development (CRWG). It was funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

CRWG was created in Ottawa in March, 2004, at a forum convened to discuss the creation of a comprehensive framework for the effective evaluation of career development services. The framework would serve as a guide for career development service providers, practitioners and policy developers in Canada. Researchers from across Canada shared their perspectives on the state of career efficacy research, and discussed what steps to take to provide evidence for the "what, how, why and for whom" of career development services in Canada.

The main goal of the CRWG research project is to explore the current state of practice in Canada, creating shared understandings of evaluation procedures and the desired outcomes for career development practices. Specifically, the study set out to learn about:

- the service outcomes actually gathered and reported by front-line career practitioners;
- the service outcomes gathered and reported at the office, agency or school board levels;
- the service outcomes which are being achieved by front-line and office, agency, and/or school board levels, but which are not reported;

- how policy makers (who fund services) evaluate services, what they want back from services, and the kinds of evaluation information and data they prefer to have about services; and
- how employers evaluate career development services in the workplace, what outcomes they want from these services, whether the evaluation information is useful to them, and the kinds of evaluation information they would prefer to receive.

Working Group researchers are from the Universities of Lethbridge, Calgary, Laval, Moncton, British Columbia, Sherbrooke, HRSDC and CCDF.

United Kingdom: National Guidance Research Forum (NGRF)

This is a tri-partite initiative involving the Warwick Institute for Employment Studies, the Centre of Guidance Studies, University of Derby, and the Department for Education and Skills (which has funded the first phase of the project). The Research Forum web site:

www.guidance-research.org provides three main resource sections:

- Making guidance more effective (equal opportunities, impact analysis, using research in practice, improving practice, lifelong learning, international perspectives)
- Labour market information future trends (UK information by sector)
- National library resource for guidance.

This valuable initiative facilitates the collection of research data to support policy development in

one national focal point for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and enables international readers to view such evidence and to examine methodologies used. ICCDPP intends to involve the NGRF in the development of a global learning network (GLEN) prototype.

Finland: University of Jyväskylä

Jyväskylä University has established a cross-sectoral research centre for lifelong guidance policy & practice. For this first phase it has a 5-year mandate as a cross-disciplinary research unit until the end of 2011. The centre is an innovative network which is comprised of university faculties and centres and regional institutes and its steering group has representatives from national policy makers and social partners. The idea is to create a research & training unit that focuses specifically on career guidance issues in order to strengthen the evidence base required to inform national policy development. The centre focuses on the challenges identified in the Resolution on Lifelong Guidance adopted by the EU ministers of education in 2004 and also national educational and labour market policies. The centre activities and priorities are structured according to the chapters of the OECD and European Commission jointly published Career Guidance Handbook for Policy Makers (OECD 2004). The goal is to act as the national focal point for ICCDPP. When acting as a national clearing house for guidance expertise and research the Internet-pages of the site will be structured according to the main outline of the policy handbook chapters. The Internet-pages are scheduled to be open by the summer 2006.

Books • ILO Publication on Career Guidance to Be Released

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is addressing the issue of career guidance at a time of resounding influences on world labour markets and social structures. Recent passage of a new ILO Recommendation, Human Resources Development: Education, Training and Lifelong Learning (No. 195), 2004 provides added stimulus for attention to career guidance. In addition, constituents in many countries are asking the ILO to assist them to promote youth employment. These factors have contributed to the decision to explore this issue, with an emphasis on the situation in low- and middle-income countries. As a result the ILO is publishing "Career Guidance: A Resource Handbook for Low- and Middle-Income Countries".

The dual purpose of this Handbook is: 1) to focus the attention of policy-makers and programme administrators in low- and middle-income countries upon the core issues in the reform of career guidance services in those countries; and 2) to provide programme planners and practitioners at the national and local levels with a wide variety of country examples and practical career guidance tools to use as models for possible adaptation and use.

The Handbook can be requested from the ILO by contacting DEMPDOC@ilo.org

HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

Let us know of:

- research of public policy interest on the effectiveness of career guidance interventions and services
- tools for the collection of data on usage of services, customer satisfaction, and measurement of outcomes
- marketing strategies
- tools for reviewing the provision of services
- national/regional policy developments
- national/regional policy co-ordination mechanisms

Please send a one-paragraph description in English including how to access the full text to news@icdpp.org. The description, duly acknowledged, will be edited for insertion in the ICCDPP Newsletter and also for GLEN.

If you are aware of studies and publications on guidance policy issues in your country, could you please send a brief description in English as above plus details of how it can be accessed: publications@icdpp.org