Theme #1
Context and challenges for career development policy

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Context matters

• “…economic and political, socio-cultural and educational factors...have a bearing on how career guidance is conceptualised, and how it is delivered, if at all.”

• “Over the past 15 years, career guidance has featured highly on the policy horizons of several countries across the world. Stimulated in part by a severe economic downturn, and, in response to that, by policy. Career guidance is back in fashion—at least as a policy topic.”

Sultana, 2017, *Career Guidance and Livelihood Planning across the Mediterranean*
The local and global context for career development policy

• Career guidance and development is sometimes characterised as a ‘globally travelling idea’. It exists in some form in most countries around the globe.

• Awareness is needed on the interaction between the ‘globally traveling ideas` of good career development and contextual characteristics

And

• the inter-relatedness between the context and the individual, and how career development is understood and developed into services and programmes.

• However, little attention has been given to how context shapes the concept of career development as it travels across the globe.

(McMahon, Watson, & Patton, 2014; Sultana, 2017)
COUNTRIES WERE ASKED TO CONSIDER...

• Key political, social, economic and technological issues that are likely to have an impact on people’s lives and careers in the countries

• Policy interest in career development

• What role do career development programmes and services play in addressing political, social, economic and technological challenges
Examples of political issues

• Political instability is highlighted as a main contextual issue in some countries (e.g. Republic of Kosovo, Syria).

• In Ghana on the other hand, it is highlighted that a stable political environment, and the peace and security in the country has greatly impacted foreign direct investment and the growth of businesses resulting in the emergence of new jobs and careers.

• In other countries, the political climate has a more direct impact on the provision of career development services. The Netherlands reports that there is growing political awareness, attention, and larger budgets for career development issues.

• Denmark reports that since 2013 there has been a growing political scepticism towards career guidance provision due to lack of evidence and documentation of the effect of guidance and declining recruitment to vocational education.
Examples of social issues

• Some countries (e.g. Chile, Estonia, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, the Netherlands) highlight social inequity and the segregation of structures as a main issue.

• In Hungary, different vulnerable groups (women, low-skilled, youth, etc.) are underrepresented in the education system and in the labour market.

• In Mongolia, migration from rural areas to central regions and cities are an important contextual issue.

• In Norway, Singapore and Slovakia an aging population is highlighted.
Examples of economic issues

• Several countries highlight the importance of a rapidly changing economy to the way in which individuals are able to develop their careers (e.g. Cambodia, Egypt, Ghana, India, Qatar and Singapore).

• In many countries (e.g. Cambodia, Canada, Croatia, France, Japan, Luxembourg, Sri Lanka, Switzerland) there is an increasing consensus that there is a growing gap between the skills that industries and businesses require and what young people in education institutions, whether academic or vocational training, acquire.
Examples of technological issues

• Many of the countries (e.g. Chile, Croatia, Finland, France, Ghana, India, Japan, Republic of Kosovo, Luxenbourg) highlight how technology is changing the labour conditions of workers.

• The increase in automation, robotics, and the increasing use of digital technologies have generated a change in the business models of companies, generating modifications in the competencies demanded by the labour force, and changes in working conditions.
Environmental issues – a new area to consider for career development policy?

• In India, climate change and environmental degradation is seen as one of the key issues impacting on the lives and livelihoods of people, especially those working in the agrarian sector.

• In the United States of America, climate change is creating hardship in every corner of the country including the farming industry in the Mid-West, tourism in the South, and the entire economy of California.

• Career development programmes and services play a minor (if any) role in addressing these issues.
Policy interest in career development among participating countries
Policy interest in career development is growing

• Norway has been working to strengthen access to career services across all sectors. To achieve this Norway is developing a cross-sectoral quality framework which emphasises quality development, governance, ethics, professional competence standards and models for career learning.

• In Egypt there is no overarching policy there are a plethora of initiatives which are delivering career guidance services into high schools, universities and other youth outside schools in training centers. This has been supported by the development of study programs designed to educate career counselors and researchers.

• In Austria there is an increased attention towards factors such as economy, companies, and technology and that new approaches to career development are needed. Also, there is an increased effort to positively shape changes and challenges in various ways, also career development policies.
Policy interest in career development is shrinking

• Denmark has seen a setback in the level of policy interest in career development. Career guidance in schools have been transferred from independent institutions to the municipalities and to a certain extent to primary and secondary schools.

• In Syria there is increased attention on how to fight poverty and enhance peoples career status, career development has slipped down the policy priorities due to more acute needs. The country’s instability and poverty make it difficult to focus on career development when survival is the main priority for most people in Syria.
Policy interest in career development is staying the same

• The USA describes themselves as being in a period of pendulum politics, where the objective is to reverse or eliminate previous policies

• In Serbia a national career guidance and counseling strategy was introduced in 2010. Since then educational laws and reforms have recognised career guidance and standards for career guidance and counseling services have been developed for secondary schools.
Roles in which career development programmes and services play in addressing the contextual issues

• In this final section concerning the countries response to theme one, we address how they report on the roles in which career development programmes and services play in addressing the contextual issues presented in the previous section.
Some examples

• In **Egypt** career development provides support to the national development needs in response to ‘Egypt Vision 2030’ in steering the engagement with new qualifications needed for future jobs.

• **Finland** is also focusing on capacity building among guidance practitioners who deliver these services (e.g. their digital and intercultural competences and ability to utilise labour market intelligence/information efficiently for the benefit of their clientele).

• In **Austria** specific measures exist for older employees, for women and women returning after family phases, for immigrants and refugees and for persons with special physical or mental needs.
Some more examples

• In **France**, services focus to enhance mobility of pupils/students/individuals in France and overseas

• In **South Korea**, the development of career guidance programs for the underprivileged is stimulated, and policy attention is emphasized.

• In **Germany**, orientation programmes at schools are established to raise awareness and inform young people on developments, labour shortages, including modernised online information portals.
Conclusion

• The objective of developing strategic career development policies to ensure accessibility for persons in career transitions was articulated by almost every country paper. However, the complexity of the context where carer development policies are developed in relation to the complexity of challenges for career development policy speaks for a development where one sees that interest level, the context, and the actual career guidance services are interrelated.
THANK YOU!
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Challenges and important issues
• What are the challenges when it comes to communicating the relevance of career development policy?
• What are the arguments for having a career development policy in relation to social, political and economic challenges that countries are facing?

Possible solutions
• How can the level of policy interest be increased?
• What can countries do to improve the relevance of career development policies to wider societal challenges?
• Are there any promising examples of how to promote the relevance of career development services and career development policy?

Priority actions
Based on your discussions on the challenges and possible solutions, please point to one or two priority actions at
• national level, and
• international level
References


