

Country paper – Republic of Croatia

Section 1	Republic of Croatia
Geography Croatia is situated in Central and South-eastern Europe (between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Hungary and Serbia). It has 56,594 km ² (21,851 sq mi) and total land borders of 2,374.9 km.	
Demography Croatia has a population of 4,290,612 inhabitants (preliminary census in 2011). It has a negative natural population growth rate since 1991 (-2,0) and a total fertility rate is 1,43 (2010 est.). Life expectancy is 75.58 years. Literacy - 98.5% of total population above 15 can read and write.	
Labour Market The main stakeholder in the field of LLCG is Public Employment Service (PES). It provides services to unemployed, employed people who want to change their career, employers, pupils and students. Together with schools, Employment Service works with children deciding upon secondary school choice or changing education program. Different methods and instruments are used – individual and group counselling, informing, etc. including workshops for arising career management skills. Preparation for employment includes career guidance, learning methods and techniques of active job seeking, training for employment and professional rehabilitation, especially for vulnerable groups. Civil and private sector in LLCG takes more important role lately.	
Education In pre-school, primary and secondary the issues concerning lifelong career guidance are included in different subjects (according to National Curriculum Framework) as one of the activities of the school counsellors. Mainly through informing about education/employment opportunities. Recently, LLCG centres have been set up in 4 Universities.	
Main national career guidance services Main national career guidance services are provided by the PES. The importance of civil and private sectors is growing, independently and in collaboration with public sectors, schools and four LLCG centres in the Universities.	

Section 2	Taking each of the four general symposium themes (see below), describe the two greatest strengths and two greatest weaknesses relating to each theme in your country (maximum 100 words for each strength and weakness)	
<i>Theme 1: Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies</i>		
Strength 1	Weakness 1	
Croatia is a candidate country and transitional country. All national strategies and programmes are based upon EU programmes and strategies in the field of employment, education, social inclusion and other. It makes it easier to implement measures, make evaluation, monitoring, etc. Besides, Croatia is a member of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network since January 2011. and is participating in two working groups – Career management skills (WP1) and Co-operation and Co-ordination Mechanisms (WP2).	There are many economical problems (slow progress made on privatisation, high level of state aid in the economy, etc.) all resulting in the lack of resources (financing and staff) which is impediment to investing more funds in fields such as education, employment and career guidance, research and technology.	
Strength 2	Weakness 2	
The awareness of partnership based models of cooperation in LLCG starts to take place on national, regional and local levels. The awareness of inter-institutional cooperation is arising, including need to define the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders on national, regional and local levels. National forum of LLCG is to be established in 2012, including legislation on career guidance. Local partnerships on LLCG on local levels are going to be set up in seven regions.	The implications of demographic change have a pervasive influence on both the labour market and the sphere of social protection. Together with the mismatch of skills supply and demand this has created more vulnerable groups with high unemployment rates (women, older workers, young people, etc.). This has implications on creating tailor made services.	

<i>Theme 2: Lifelong guidance policy as a part of integrated human resource development policies – challenges and opportunities</i>		
Strength 1	Weakness 1	
Operational Programme of Human Resources Development, Joint Memorandum on Employment Policy Priorities of the Croatia (JAP) and Joint Inclusion Memorandum of Croatia (JIM), Economic Recovery Programme of the Republic of	Monitoring, evaluation and personnel training of LLCG services specially in education is not organized in systematic way.	

<p>Croatia and National Employment Incentive Plan 2011-2012 are key strategic documents that define key measures and activities that are related to LLCG in the field of education, employment and social inclusion.</p> <p>Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning (2010–2014) is key document in creating an integral system for entrepreneurship education as a concept of lifelong learning. One of its goals is improving the human resources potential in the companies.</p>	
<p>Strength 2</p>	<p>Weakness 2</p>
<p>Government has adopted a Strategic Framework for 2006 - 2013 (SOR) as a document which sets out national development goals. Its objectives related to HRD are to strengthen the active role of labour market institutions in aligning supply and demand for labour, as well as to reduce long-term unemployment and promote lifelong learning. Further development of vocational education in line with economic needs and increased share of higher education in the total population are its objectives as well.</p> <p>Private sector is encouraged to participate in financing of regular education and in-service training.</p>	<p>Provision of LLCG services in employment, education and social protection is insufficient. Until now there is no national roof organization responsible for LLCG in different fields.</p>

<p><i>Theme 3: The changing world and the changing role of career guidance – skills and competencies for lifelong guidance practitioners</i></p>	
<p>Strength 1</p>	<p>Weakness 1</p>
<p>LLCG counsellors in employment gained their competences through “on the job training” and mentorships. The training programme grants them a professional licence in LLCG. All counsellors have MA in humanity and social sciences, and are obligated to continuous professional development (in order to obtain their professional licence).</p> <p>Croatian Employment Service Labour Market Training Centre Project aims to support the</p>	<p>There is no formal education (undergraduate or postgraduate) or training programme in career guidance, nor an educational institution in the field of LLCG.</p>

establishment of staff training based upon TNA.	
Strength 2	Weakness 2
Quality Standards for the Vocational Guidance and Selection at CES secure services quality standardization and more visible and transparent CG activities to the users and public. The Quality Standards define CG processes, activities, flow of activities, methodology, target groups, outputs, etc.	There is no systematic approach and unified training needs analysis to develop the professional competencies of guidance practitioners in all sectors. Such provision would contribute significantly to the development of professionalism and professional standards for guidance provision across sectors.

Theme 4: Evidence-based practice; evidence-based policies

Strength 1	Weakness 1
In 2010 Croatian Government adopted the Regulation on the monitoring, analysis and forecasting of labour market needs for occupations and competences needed for planning and delivering LLCG services. The recommendations are referred to the educational institutions, local and regional stakeholders, sector councils and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. According to the Ministry of Education Act defining criteria for selection of candidates for secondary school entry, students with developmental difficulties are entitled to a direct admission to secondary school upon the written recommendation the professional career guidance expert team from PES.	There is not enough networking between data bases on different educational levels and labour market information exchange (registration of overall information, guidance and counselling services).
Strength 2	Weakness 2
Croatian Employment Service has developed IT data base of CG services, according to the type of services, type of clients, agenda, education and other. Annual goals for different services are being set up. CG IT evidence allows monitoring on achieving the goals according to providers (regional offices), counsellors and plans. Survey on pupils intentions (primary and secondary schools) is done on annually basis including population of 50-60 thousand pupils. Survey	There is a mismatch in skills demand and supply. What is missing is competence based instruments for the assessment of supply and demand (the same principle in identifying and matching competences on both sides).

on employers needs is done annually on sample of 12-15 thousands S/M companies, getting evidence on employers needs for competences.					
<i>Section 3</i>	<i>Looking at the themes, prioritise them according to the most important ones for your country team to explore further and learn about at the symposium (1 = most important – 4 = least important)</i>				
Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies		<i>Priority</i>			
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Lifelong guidance policy as a part of integrated human resource development policies – challenges and opportunities		<i>Priority</i>			
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
The changing world and the changing role of career guidance – skills and competencies for lifelong guidance practitioners		<i>Priority</i>			
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Evidence-based practice; evidence-based policies		<i>Priority</i>			
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>

<i>Section 4</i>	<i>Thinking about these themes, describe up to three high-level key public policy and/or practice initiative currently being advanced or considered in your country (no more than 100 words on each). If it is possible, please say to which of the themes each initiative is most closely linked.</i>
High-level key public policy/practice initiative 1	
<i>The Croatian Qualification Framework (CROQF) is an instrument aimed at improvement of the employability and personal development of individuals, thus strengthening social cohesion. One of the main objectives is the development of a system for validation and recognition of competencies acquired within non-formal and informal learning. The significance of the CROQF is also reflected in improved connectedness between labour market demand and implementation of school programmes and evaluation of all learning outcomes. Currently the Act on CROQF is being drafted.</i>	
Linked most closely to theme 1 and 2	
High-level key public policy/practice initiative 2	
<i>The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for pre-school education and general education</i>	

is compulsory in primary and secondary schools. It includes career management skills which are encouraged through the development of vocational guidance services through operational programmes of the class education and within the contents of additional and supplementary courses and extra-curricular activities. Currently, the implementation of NCF in educational system (schools) is being made.

Linked most closely to theme 3

High-level key public policy/practice initiative 3

EU funded project that has just started would contribute to the high level public policy and practice. The expected outputs are: establishing CG national forum, draft legislation on LLCG provision in both sectors, setting up CG centres and local partnerships on LLCG, further development of IT supported LLCG services, personnel training for LLCG counsellors.

Linked most closely to theme 2, 3 and 4

Section 5

Future focus – what are the key elements of your team’s overall vision for career policy, practice and research in your country? (write no more than 30 words)

- *Strategy on the LLCG*
- *quality assurance system*
- *TNA, personnel training*
- *LLCG National Forum*
- *legislation framework for LLCG provision*
- *self-help methods*
- *LMI exchange system*