

Appendix 1
Country Name: Estonia

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| Section 1 | A brief outline of your country – demographics, population and career service provision – target groups and providers (maximum 300 words) |
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| | <p>Geography Area: 45 227 km². Administrative division: 15 counties, 226 administrative units with local governments. Closest neighbours Finland, Latvia and Russia.</p> <p>Demography Population (2011): 1 340 194 (69% Estonians, 26% Russians, 5% others)</p> <p>Labour market In 2010, 687 000 persons aged 15–74 were economically active, of them 571 000 were employed and 116 000 unemployed. The unemployment rate was 16,9%. In 2011, second quarter there were 92 000 unemployed and the rate of the unemployment is 13,3%.</p> <p>Education The levels of education are preschool education, 9-year basic education (which comprises a single structure), secondary education (which is divided into general secondary education and vocational secondary education) and higher education.</p> <p>Main national career guidance services In Estonia career services contain career education, career counselling and career information. Services are provided in schools, universities, colleges, training institutions, public employment services, and companies, in the voluntary/community sector and in the private sector. The services can be provided as face-to-face or distant sessions, on an individual or group basis. The service package may include career information, assessment and self-assessment tools, counselling interviews, career education, work search programmes, and transition services.</p> <p>In 2008, a contractual agreement to develop career services was signed between Ministry of Education and Research in Estonia (MoER) and Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) stating the areas of responsibility in providing high quality career services to the whole population. The agreement is aimed at developing of methodology, training system, service provision, quality and co-operation in the field. Foundation Innove, National Resource Centre for Guidance (NRCG, established in 1998) is the main partner of MoER and MoSA in developing career services in Estonia.</p> |

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| Section 2 | <p>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; therefore maximum 400 words per theme and maximum 1,600 words in this section).</p> | |
| <p>Theme 1: Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies</p> | | |
| Strength 1 | Weakness 1 | |
| <p>A consensus has been reached by a co-operation agreement, signed in 2008, between the two main ministries, who are responsible for developing career services in Estonia (the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Social Affairs). This is the ground for developing systematically and jointly career guidance policies also in a changing economic, political and social situation. An ESF-funded programme was initiated by the agreement, entailing 5 key-areas: methodology, developing and implementing a systematic training scheme, offering career services, quality of career services, cooperation.</p> | <p>Estonia is a small economy, which makes it easily malleable by the changes taking place in larger economies. This also initiates rapid changes in the labour market, which in turn makes it very difficult to form reliable labour market prognosis, that give the ground and content for timely and appropriate career services.</p> | |
| Strength 2 | Weakness 2 | |
| <p>Ability to react quickly to the rapid changes in the labour market. For example: opening career information rooms at every office of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund in order to provide all people with career information services.</p> | <p>General question of sustainability: many successful developments (also the programme, initiated by the co-operation agreement between the two ministries) have been financed by ESF. The current situation of career services policies would not have been achieved by only state funding, which raises the question of general sustainability of the developmental process in case the termination of ESF funding.</p> | |

Theme 2: Lifelong guidance policy as a part of integrated human resource development policies – challenges and opportunities

| Strength 1 | Weakness 1 |
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| <p>Instead of focussing narrowly only on the professional development of one person, the focus has become wider. The concept of lifelong learning in Estonia supports changes that take place during the lifetime. When previously the education system was focussed on formal education, now the approach is broader. In the light of this, career services have received a wider approach. For example, the needs are approached both at general, vocational and higher education.</p> | <p>Currently, grown-ups who are in employment (either in threat of losing one’s job due to health or skills or other related issues, or who want to change their career path) do not have access to <u>state funded career counselling services</u>.</p> |
| Strength 2 | Weakness 2 |
| <p>The importance of human resource development is acknowledged recurrently in various governmental strategies.</p> | <p>Currently, in practice, governmental strategies are linked to concrete educational levels and spheres. The weakness for career services in this respect is an un-systematic approach. The importance of career services and human resource development policies is reflected in <u>various</u> strategies in a scattered way, but not consistently, jointly. This gives an outcome where single services (for example career services) function perfectly on their own, but in reality they are not often interrelated (the question for one person “if you do X, your further possibilities are Y and Z” is not always answered).</p> |

Theme 3: The changing world and the changing role of career guidance – skills and competencies for lifelong guidance practitioners

| Strength 1 | Weakness 1 |
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| <p>The system of regular in-service training courses has been initiated and activated by the ESF programme “Developing the System of Career Services”. The exact content and goal of the training courses can be modified according to the current needs.</p> | <p>There are no regular accredited basic training programmes offered to the career specialists in the public universities. Estonian institutions of higher education provide career counselling education (both at the bachelor's and master's levels) primarily within the field of psychology and business management.</p> |
| Strength 2 | Weakness 2 |
| <p>Even though the general system is quite fragmented in Estonia, the training is organized jointly for the educational system and labour market system career service specialists (in order to create joint knowhow). Example: summer-schools, that have participants from both sectors and which are always linked to special educative elements, that take into account the current needs of the economy/labour market/social system. Very often international knowhow is used in these events.</p> | <p>Current workers are not very well prepared to follow, understand and interpret the ever changing information concerning the economy, the labour market etc. and to “translate” it to their clients. An additional intermediary interpreter is needed at the moment.</p> |

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

| Strength 1 | Weakness 1 |
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| In 2009, a National Forum for Career Services was created. Representatives of ministries, their subordinate units, local government authorities, educational- and research institutions, service providers, entrepreneurs, and target groups belong to this Forum. The Forum has a fixed annual work plan that in 2010 entails working out the principles for quality control. | There exists no systematic quality-assurance across sectors. |
| Strength 2 | Weakness 2 |
| Handbooks for quality assurance have been worked out, that are currently piloted in the youth information and counselling centres. | the evidence collected is splintered between universities, public employment services, schools, information centres etc. |

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| Section 3 | 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) Comment from Estonia: the themes have been listed according to the order of priority i.e. for example, only one theme listed under priority 1 |
| Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies | Priority 1 2 3 4 |
| Lifelong guidance policy as a part of integrated human resource development policies – challenges and opportunities | Priority 1 2 3 4 |
| The changing world and the changing role of career guidance – skills and competencies for lifelong guidance practitioners | Priority 1 2 3 4 |
| Evidence-based practice; evidence-based policies | Priority 1 2 3 4 |

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| Section 4 | Thinking about the themes, describe up to three high-level key public policy and/or practice initiatives currently being advanced or considered in your country (write no more than 100 words on each). If it is possible, please say to which of the themes each initiative is most closely linked. |
| <p>High-level key public policy/practice initiative 1</p> <p>Currently the general system (including all relevant legal acts) of social policy is examined and worked through with the outcome of social code of laws in order to assure actual cooperation and systematic approach (also case management) between different counterparts, to prevent doubling of service providing and also to prevent possible threats of people falling into “benefits-traps” etc. In relation to this large initiative, also issues concerning human resource development and career services are looked through and suggestions for improvement will be made.</p> | |
| <p>Linked most closely to Theme ...</p> <p>Lifelong guidance policy as a part of integrated human resource development policies – challenges and opportunities</p> | |
| <p>High-level key public policy/practice initiative 2</p> <p>In 2006 an initial study for developing career services system was conducted, which gave suggestions for further developing the career services system in Estonia. This study gave the first kick for the cooperation agreement, that was signed by the two ministers who are responsible for developing career services in Estonia (in the education and labour market system respectively) in 2008. The co-operation agreement was followed by an ESF funded programme “Developing the System of Career Services”, that took off in 2009 and which will last until 2013. Both from the current outcomes of the programme and the general political, economic and social progress, a need to formulate a common and systematic conception for the development of career services in Estonia (for the year 2020) has been raised. The formulation of the conception is co-ordinated by the National Resource Centre for Guidance (in minimum cooperation with the counterparts of the National Forum of Career Services) and it will be complemented by an additional study (conducted in 2011) that analysis the career services system development.</p> | |
| <p>Linked most closely to Theme ...</p> <p>Lifelong guidance policy as a part of integrated human resource development policies – challenges and opportunities</p> | |
| <p>High-level key public policy/practice initiative 3</p> | |
| <p>Linked most closely to Theme ...</p> | |

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| 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). |
| Qualitative career services are available for all people. People are aware of career services and use them actively. Efficient formal education and in-service training for career specialists is present. Operative and efficient quality-assurance-system is present. | |