

## Appendix 1

### Country Name: IRELAND

#### Country team:

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<b>Section 1</b>	<b>A brief outline of your country – demographics, population and career service provision – target groups and providers (maximum 300 words)</b>
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**GEOGRAPHY** Ireland is an island off the west of Europe, nearest neighbor, UK. Comprises 26 counties in 4 provinces. Mountainous regions, flat midland regions and surrounding coastlines describe the island. Climate is described as temperate, generally not too hot or cold!

**DEMOGRAPHY** ([www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)) Population of Ireland: 4.58 million (approx 62% of population live in Urban areas. East Coast most densely populated area. 2006 Census statistics : - Religion: 87% Roman Catholic ; Population / age ranges 15-24, 14.9% ; 25-44, 31.7% ; 45 – 64, 21.9% ; 65+, 11%

**LABOUR MARKET** Unemployment is currently 14.4 %. Employment market includes base for many multinational global companies (Google, DELL, Pfizer) Focus on knowledge-based economy with funding for scientific R&D

**EDUCATION;** Compulsory education up to 16 years. State funded school system for primary and post primary. Some private funded schools at both levels.

**Pre-School:** mixture of private, state funded and voluntary services.

**Primary:** 4/5yrs – 12 yrs. **Post Primary:** 12 yrs- 18yrs. State Examinations: Junior Cert. at 15 yrs (currently under review<sup>1</sup>) and Leaving Cert 3 Programmes, Leaving Cert Applied, Leaving Cert Vocational Programme and Leaving Cert. at 18yrs. Optional Transition Year programme between junior and senior cycles..School completion /retention rates currently at 87.7%<sup>2</sup>

**Further Education/Adult Education:** State funded post leaving certificate education provides vocational education and training, and literacy and basic education programmes for adults.

**Higher Education:** State funded education includes 7 Universities and 13 Institutes of Technology nationally providing range of qualifications from National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) Level 6 to 10. Some private higher education colleges across country. Central application process for application to higher education.<sup>3</sup>

**MAIN NATIONAL CAREER GUIDANCE SERVICES** Post primary: Ex-quota allocation of guidance hours and employment of guidance in schools and further education colleges; AEGI – adult guidance service based in adult education; Careers Services in Higher Education; FÁS guidance service being merged with Department of Social Protection (DSP) to provide NEES<sup>4</sup>; Local employment services nationally; National Centre for Guidance in Education<sup>5</sup> –DES support agency for guidance in education. IGC, GCI and AEGAI<sup>6</sup>, the various professional organisations supporting guidance practitioners.

<sup>1</sup> [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie) National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/stat\\_retention\\_rates\\_second\\_level\\_1991\\_2004.pdf](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/stat_retention_rates_second_level_1991_2004.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie) Central Applications Office

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.welfare.ie/EN/AboutUs/Pages/NEES.aspx> National Employment and Entitlements Services

<sup>5</sup> [www.ncge.ie](http://www.ncge.ie) National Centre for Guidance in Education

<sup>6</sup> [www.igc.ie](http://www.igc.ie) ; [www.graduatecareersireland.com](http://www.graduatecareersireland.com) ; [www.aegai.ie](http://www.aegai.ie)

<p><b>Section 2</b></p>	<p><b>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).</b></p>	
<p><b>Theme 1: Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies</b></p>		
<p><b>Strength 1</b></p>	<p><b>Weakness 1</b></p>	
<p>Guidance is strongly embedded within the education sector on a statutory basis: Education Act 1998<sup>7</sup>, DES Circulars<sup>8</sup>.</p> <p>NCGE, an agency of the DES, with remit to develop and support policy and practice in guidance in education. NCGE maintains EU &amp; international focus on guidance. NCGE will co-ordinate proposed National Forum on Guidance to share good guidance practice.</p>	<p>The effects of rapid change lead to shift of responsibilities and lack of clarification. Change of government has resulted in changes of roles &amp; responsibilities within Departments and across departments.(Example change from Dept of Education &amp; Science to Dept of Education &amp; Skills; FÁS has been split between Dept. of Education &amp; Skills and Dept of Social Protection)</p>	
<p><b>Strength 2</b></p>	<p><b>Weakness 2</b></p>	
<p>The holistic view of guidance is integrated within post primary, adult education and higher education.</p>	<p>Proposed NEES will provide an information, placement and payments approach rather than a guidance approach. The proposal does not seem to have “guidance” at the core of the policy.</p>	

**Additional Note:** Ireland is currently experiencing rapid and serious economic and social changes with a resulting urgency to deal with these changes. Guidance policy should be embedded into these changes and guidance supports should be integrated as part of the policies informing these developments

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/pp\\_guidelines\\_second\\_level\\_schools\\_9c.pdf?language=EN](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/pp_guidelines_second_level_schools_9c.pdf?language=EN) Inspectorate. (2005). *Guidelines for Second-Level Schools on the Implications of Section 9(c) of the Education Act 1998, Relating to Students' Access to Appropriate Guidance*. Dublin: Department of Education and Science.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/ppt12\\_05.doc](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/ppt12_05.doc) DES Circular PPT12/05 *Guidance Provision In Second Level School*  
[http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/fe70\\_04.doc](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/fe70_04.doc) DES Circular 70/04 *Pay and Conditions for Adult Education Guidance Counsellors and Adult Guidance Coordinators*

<b>Theme 2: Lifelong guidance policy as a part of integrated human resource development policies – challenges and opportunities</b>	
<b>Strength 1</b>	<b>Weakness 1</b>
White Paper 2000 <sup>9</sup> provided the policy behind the development of the Adult Educational Guidance Service (AEGI). AEGI is integrated into adult education, operated through the VEC sector, which has remit for lifelong learning provision, some primary but post primary and Further Education and adult education.	Lack of resources available within education sector to provide further guidance.  Currently there is no national framework for recognition of prior learning (RPL). The process exists separately within different sectors.
<b>Strength 2</b>	<b>Weakness 2</b>
Educational sector- based lifelong guidance policy provides an holistic and integrated approach leading to development of “human resource development” or “ career management skills”	The focus on provision of information and job/training placement within labour market sector neglects human resources development or career management skills.  Need for the integration of the development of these skills more within the labour market sector, ( e.g. into working age and third age) and not just specific skills development for specific jobs

**Additional Note:** clear policies do exist in compulsory education at post primary level. Development of career management skills is linked to development of human resources skills. Formal RPL process would recognise the development of these skills

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/fe\\_adulted\\_wp.pdf?language=EN](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/fe_adulted_wp.pdf?language=EN) DES White Paper on Adult Education *Learning for life*

<b>Theme 3: The changing world and the changing role of career guidance – skills and competencies for lifelong guidance practitioners</b>	
<b>Strength 1</b>	<b>Weakness 1</b>
<p>National Guidance Forum (NGF) <i>Competency Framework</i> (2007)<sup>10</sup> outlining competencies for practitioners at various levels.</p> <p>DES Circulars outline minimum standard of qualification required in guidance to work in post primary &amp; adult education system.</p>	<p>Currently there is a lack of consistent definition of the competencies for working at different levels of guidance. In education sector – there are clear definitions of competences and qualifications needed. Currently there is no clear definition of competencies and qualification levels needed for working in at different levels of guidance within the labour market sector.</p>
<b>Strength 2</b>	<b>Weakness 2</b>
<p>Professional bodies of guidance practitioners exist in different systems, ensuring ethical and professional practice and relevant qualifications.</p> <p>Requirement for continuing professional development (CPD) &amp; attendance at guidance counselling supervision as a guidance practitioner in education system</p>	<p>Application of the NGF framework does not currently exist to provide a national approach across sectors. Current qualifications are not mapped against the NFQ<sup>11</sup> so as to allow progression and development of skills at the various levels on a modular basis</p> <p>Need to develop pathways (e.g. modular based qualifications) to allow for movement across sectors for guidance practitioners at all levels.</p>

**ADDITIONAL NOTE:** The changing role of career guidance is also developing from the change in the EU policy view of guidance as an integrated part of lifelong learning, developing Career Management skills etc, rather than that of a work/training placement service i.e. going from *career guidance* to *guidance*.

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.nationalguidanceforum.ie/documents/NGF\\_Competency\\_Report%20Final.pdf](http://www.nationalguidanceforum.ie/documents/NGF_Competency_Report%20Final.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [www.nfq.ie](http://www.nfq.ie)

<b>Theme 4: Evidence-based practice; evidence-based policies</b>	
<b>Strength 1</b>	<b>Weakness 1</b>
<p>NCGE – once there has been an identified need to develop policy and practice in a guidance area, – research is funded by DES through NCGE to identify and develop such practice, (see examples list below*)</p>	<p>Current Evidence is seen as education based good guidance practice but not seen as a Guidance good practice – across the sectors.</p> <p>Lack of guidance seen within “joined up thinking”</p>
<b>Strength 2</b>	<b>Weakness 2</b>
<p>National based organisations complete research which provides data to inform guidance practice, example ESRI and FORFÁS<sup>12</sup></p>	<p>Lack of designated funding for Guidance research across sectors and a lack of guidance-qualified researchers to engage in research specific to guidance.</p>

**Examples of Research Completed**

- *Review of Guidance in Second-level Schools*  
[http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/review\\_guidance\\_second\\_level\\_schools.doc?language=EN](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/review_guidance_second_level_schools.doc?language=EN)
- *Overarching Research on the AEGI 2000 – 2006*  
[http://www.ncge.ie/AEGILaunch/ncge\\_overarching\\_report.pdf](http://www.ncge.ie/AEGILaunch/ncge_overarching_report.pdf)
- *Looking at Guidance*  
[http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/insp\\_looking\\_at\\_guidance.pdf?language=EN](http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/insp_looking_at_guidance.pdf?language=EN)
- *Research on the Practice of Counselling by Guidance Counsellors in post primary schools.*  
 Final Draft Report submitted to NCGE and DES, April 2011.

<sup>12</sup> [www.esri.ie](http://www.esri.ie) Economic and Social Research Institute

[www.forfas.ie](http://www.forfas.ie) FORFÁS is Ireland’s policy advisory board for enterprise, trade, science, technology and innovation

<b>Section 3</b>	<b>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)</b>
Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies	<p style="text-align: center;">Priority</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>1</u>   2   3   4</p>
Lifelong guidance policy as a part of integrated human resource development policies – challenges and opportunities	<p style="text-align: center;">Priority</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1   <u>2</u>   3   4</p>
The changing world and the changing role of career guidance – skills and competencies for lifelong guidance practitioners	<p style="text-align: center;">Priority</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1   2   <u>3</u>   4</p>
Evidence-based practice; evidence-based policies	<p style="text-align: center;">Priority</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1   2   3   <u>4</u></p>

<p><b>Section 4</b></p>	<p><b>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.</b></p>
<p>High-level key public policy/<u><i>practice initiative 1</i></u></p> <p>Establishment of National Forum for Guidance from October 2011, co-ordinated by NCGE, with DES support, to reflect current scarce resources and importance of sharing good practice across lifelong guidance.</p>	
<p>Linked most closely to Theme                  Theme <b>1</b> - Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies</p>	
<p>High-level key <u><i>public policy/practice initiative 2</i></u></p> <p>Recent development to split the FÁS organization between 2 government departments – Dept of Education and Skills (DES) and Dept of Social Protection (DSP)</p>	

<p>Linked most closely to Theme</p> <p>Theme <b>1</b> - Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies</p>
<p>High-level key <b><i>public policy/practice initiative 3</i></b></p> <p>Set of government funded initiatives to support the unemployed to get back in to education and work (example <a href="http://www.springboard.ie">www.springboard.ie</a>, <a href="http://www.jobbridge.ie">www.jobbridge.ie</a>, Labour Market Activation funded programmes, various work placement and internship programmes )</p>
<p>Linked most closely to Theme</p> <p>Theme <b>1</b> - Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies</p>



<p><b>Section 5</b></p>	<p><b>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)</b></p> <p><i>Future Focus:</i></p> <p>A public policy on lifelong guidance which ensures the seamless integration of lifelong guidance across all sectors, delivered by suitably qualified personnel, supported and informed by research based evidence.</p>