

Appendix 1
Country Name: **Norway**

Country team (names, positions, email addresses, telephone numbers):

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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)
<p>Geography Surface area: 385 199 km². Few very large cities, but still some urbanised areas, especially around the capital Oslo. A long coastline with fjords and mountains, thus a lot of fisheries and not very extensive agricultural economy. Extensive reserves of petroleum and gas and on a per-capita basis, it is the world's largest producer of oil and natural gas outside of the Middle East.</p> <p>Demography Norway has about 4.5 million inhabitants. About 600 000 people live in Oslo, the capital of Norway.</p> <p>Labour market Regulated labour market with relatively low unemployment rate, although a relatively high percentage of the population is on some kind of social support. A well developed social service supports people that fall out from the labour market. It may be difficult, for many reasons, to reintegrate these people into active labour force.</p> <p>Education Public education: Compulsory education applies to children from 6 – 16 years of age, at primary and lower secondary school level. Upper secondary school, normally from 16 – 19/20 years of age, is either 3 years (for study paths leading to admission at tertiary level) or 4 years (vocational training).</p> <p>Tertiary vocational training and higher education providers offer further education, up to bachelor, master or PhD degree.</p>	

In Norway all public education is free of charge.

In addition to these public institutions, there are a variety of private institutions, at all levels. Some of them receive subventions from the government.

Main national career guidance services

Career Guidance Partnerships have been established in most of the 19 counties in Norway. The object is to develop cooperation and coordination between the different career guidance services in a lifelong perspective in each county, as well as to enhance the quality of the services. Partnerships are expected to include regional authorities, the educational sector, the work and welfare sector, the social partners and other relevant public and private stakeholders. The Partnerships are also expected to contribute to the establishment of Career Guidance Centres in their county.

The Career Centres' tasks include

- Supporting career guidance in the educational system, both by offering professional support to guidance professionals and by offering additional guidance to pupils and students
- Providing guidance services for all adults, and for youths outside the school system and labour market, in cooperation with services offered by Labour and welfare services (NAV).
- Providing professional support to guidance professionals in local NAV offices.

In the educational sector Career Guidance Services is implemented in all schools, in some of the university colleges and in all universities in Norway. All pupils in Norwegian schools have an individual right to receive the necessary guidance (as stated in the Education Act) either related to social issues or dealing with their education paths and future work expectations.

The work and welfare service, (NAV), has guidance integrated in its strategy for follow-up of users. The user's rights to have his/her needs and work abilities individually assessed, is stated in the Act of Work and Welfare Administration, and has been implemented in NAV since 2010. Users that might need a more comprehensive assistance directed towards the labour market will have rights to extensive employability assessment.

	<p>(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>	
<p>Strength 1</p>	<p>Weakness 1</p>
<p>Career guidance is implemented as one of the measures to reduce the high drop-out rate in secondary education. All pupils are entitled to career guidance in lower and upper secondary school, and this is defined as a collective responsibility of the staff. Over the last few years, systematic competence development for all school counsellors has been provided, and a separate subject discussing possible education choices has been established at lower secondary level. Various themes related to career choices are integrated in this subject and also in other subjects. Since 2010, the transition between lower and upper secondary education has been the focus of a national initiative (NY GIV), as well as follow-up measures aimed at drop-outs from upper secondary school. In this initiative, career guidance is one of several measures; another important measure being improving basic skills.</p>	<p>In Norway there is no career guidance service especially designed for immigrants to help them access education paths and/or the labour market.</p>
<p>Strength 2</p>	<p>Weakness 2</p>
<p>Career Guidance Partnerships have been established in most of the 19 counties in Norway (see above). These partnerships provide a basis for the coordination of career services at national level and will contribute to enhancing the quality of the services.</p>	<p>The Career Guidance Partnerships are not fully developed in all counties, and the Partnerships are facing some challenges concerning cross-sectoral cooperation.</p>

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

Strength 1	Weakness 1
<p>Establishing Career Guidance Centres in all of the 19 counties is an overall national policy. These centres shall provide services for all target groups; pupils and students (indirectly through supporting provision in schools and through other education providers); unemployed adults (in cooperation with PES) as well as employed adults at all ages, and also for special target groups. The centres will also support professional development for practitioners (career counsellors).</p>	<p>Not all counties have established Career Centres. The centres already existing need national support to develop in accordance with quality standards. Overarching quality standards need to be defined at national level.</p>
Strength 2	Weakness 2
<p>Validation of prior learning (VPL) is implemented in the Norwegian education system, for adult students. In upper secondary education their learning will be validated and accredited towards national curricula. In tertiary vocational education and higher education their learning will be validated towards the study programmes in each institution.</p>	<p>Even though legislation and a system for VPL provision are established, quality development is an ongoing challenge. In upper secondary education, access to validation differs between the counties, due to different priorities locally. Also, the content of the actual validation process may vary. In higher education the different institutions are autonomous and consequently develop their own specific routines, which may lack transparency.</p>

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

Strength 1	Weakness 1
<p>Since 2003 several Norwegian University Colleges have established comprehensive education courses of 30 ECT in career counseling. The participants are recruited from the whole field of lifelong guidance, and this education has contributed to professionalization and a broader common understanding of the major issues and challenges counselors deal with on a daily basis.</p>	<p>There are no master programs dedicated to career counseling, and only a few PhD candidates been able to do their research on topics that are of high importance for guidance practitioners.</p>
Strength 2	Weakness 2
<p>The majority of career counselors in Norway work in primary and secondary schools and have formal teachers education. In 2008 the Ministry of Education provided competence requirements that specified the need for comprehensive education in counseling at the minimum of 60 ECT for those working as counselors in schools.</p>	<p>There are no competence requirements for the guidance practitioners working with older students or adults. For that reason we can see a great variety regarding their background, competence and skills.</p>

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

Strength 1

National coordination is now established in the National Unit for Lifelong Guidance. The Unit will be responsible for developing systems and routines for gathering evidence. The emerging body of evidence will support policy development.

Weakness 1

National coordination of career guidance is newly established, as career guidance is a relatively new field in Norway. Thus systematic work to build up an extensive body of evidence is only just beginning. Collecting existing evidence will be one important task.

Strength 2

In Norway, school counselling is well and extensively documented and evaluated. A number of measures within school counselling are based on this body of evidence.

Weakness 2

There is no reliable research into the effects of career guidance in Norway so far. For example, the Career Centres need support to compile statistics and to evaluate their own provision.

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)
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 3 <u>4</u></p>
Evidence-based practice; evidence-based policies	<p style="text-align: center;">Priority</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 2 <u>3</u> 4</p>

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>From January 2011 a <u>National Unit for Lifelong Guidance</u> has been established at Vox, the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning. Vox is an agency directly under the Ministry of Education and Research. The main objective of the Unit is to improve quality and stimulate development of provision and access to career services for young people and adults in different phases of life. The Unit will also work to enhance cooperation and coordination among key actors, and coordinate activities across sectors.</p> <p>The Unit chairs a <u>National Coordination Group</u> at directorate level, which is set up to coordinate policy development and implementation in the different sectors.</p>	

Linked most closely to Theme **1 and 2**

High-level key public policy/practice initiative 2

A National Forum for Lifelong Guidance is established, including all relevant stakeholders. Participation in the National Forum reflects representation in the regional partnerships already established to enhance development of lifelong career guidance in the regions. The National Unit serves as a secretariat for the forum.

Linked most closely to Theme **1 and 2**

High-level key public policy/practice initiative 3

Career Guidance Partnerships are established in most of the 19 counties in Norway. The objective is to develop cooperation and coordination between the different career guidance services in a lifelong perspective in each county, as well as to improve the quality of the services. It is expected that the partnerships include regional authorities, the education sector, the labour and welfare sector, the social partners and other relevant public and private stakeholders.

Linked most closely to Theme **2 and 3**

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).
<p>The aims for the National Unit of Lifelong Guidance expresses the overall vision for the career policy in Norway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Access to career guidance for all- A solid evidence base and quality-assurance system- Professional services with a focus on CMS	