Country Report

10th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy, Auckland, New Zealand, November 2026

Country name

Finland

This country report has been prepared for discussion and information purposes in connection with the 10th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy. It draws on an online questionnaire on the Symposium themes, which national teams were invited to complete in advance.

ICCDPP: Navigating new horizons - Country perspectives survey

Introduction

Q1. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

Yes

Q2. I confirm that I am providing a response on behalf of my country.

Yes

Q3. I confirm that I am happy for the responses to this survey to be shared publicly.

Yes

Q4. Is your country going to participate in the 2026 ICCDPP symposium in New Zealand?

Don't know yet

Q5. Who have you consulted with before completing this survey?

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
Ministery of Education and culture
Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI/OPH)
Finnish Institute for Educational Research

About you

Q6. What is your name?

Jaana Kettunen

Q7. What organisation do you work for?

Finnish Institute for Educational Research

Q8. What is your job title?

Professor

Q9. What is your email address?

jaana.h.kettunen@jyu.fi

Q10. Are you happy for your contact details to be published on the ICCDPP website/ relevant documents as part of the publication of this data?

Yes

About your country

Q11. What is the name of your country?

Finland

Q12. Which groups can access career development services in your country?

	Accessible and free to everyone	Accessible and free to some groups	Accessible to those who can pay	Not accessible
Indigenous people	X			
Young people in schools	X			
Young people in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)	X			
Young people in university or higher education	X			
Young people not in education or work (e.g. NEETs)	X			
Adults in education	X			
Adults in work	X			
Adults not in education or work (e.g. unemployed workers and the economic inactive)	X			
Migrants	X			
People in the criminal justice system		X		
Employers/businesses	X			

Q13. Are there any other groups in your country, not listed in Question 12 above, that can access career development services?

No Response

About your country

Q14. How far do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The career development policies, programmes and services in my		X			

Q14. How far do you agree with the following statements?

country are meeting the career needs of the population.		
School leavers in my country are well prepared for successful transitions to work or further learning.	X	
There is a strong evidence base to support the provision of career development services in my country.	X	
AI is having a major impact on the education system in my country.	X	
AI is having a major impact on labour market in my country.	X	
AI is having a major impact on the provision of career development services in my country.		X

Q15. Are indigenous groups involved in the design of career development services in your country?

Yes, to some extent

About your country

Q16. Please provide a short summary of your country's career development system. [Up to 300 words]

Finland has a lifelong guidance system embedded in education, employment, youth, integration, rehabilitation and continuous learning services. In basic and upper secondary education, guidance is part of the curriculum and is delivered by qualified guidance counsellors and teachers. Guidance practitioners are required to hold formal qualifications, typically a master's-level degree including counselling studies. General upper secondary guidance supports study planning, transitions, higher education choices, working-life awareness and entrepreneurship. In VET, every student is entitled to guidance and counselling, and a personal competence development plan is drawn up with the student to support individual pathways, recognition of prior learning, transitions to work and further study.

Adults access guidance through education providers, higher education institutions, municipal employment services, integration services, rehabilitation services, digital services and workplace learning. Young people under 30 can use Ohjaamo One-Stop Guidance Centres for low-threshold support with education, employment and everyday life. Finland's strengths are qualified professionals, curriculum-based guidance, "no dead ends" in the education system, strong public digital infrastructure and skills anticipation.

Finland's career development system is publicly funded, free for the user, and organised as a cross-sectoral whole spanning the education, employment and youth sectors. It is developed in line with EU lifelong guidance policy — the 2008 Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies, the 2015 ELGPN guidelines and toolskits, and the 2026 EU Reference Framework for Lifelong Guidance (Cedefop). National coordination rests with the Lifelong Guidance Forum (ELO-foorumi), co-chaired by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. The national Strategy for Lifelong Guidance, published in 2020 and updated by the Forum in December 2023, sets out six strategic priorities and 19 sub-objectives; the 2023 update strengthened the emphasis on regions' and organisations' responsibility to identify and serve their client groups, and on ethics. A Lifelong Guidance Handbook was completed in 2024.

There has been a slight decrease in the provision of career guidance within employment services, as responsibility for organising employment services was transposed from state to municipalities (in force from January 2025). With that change, the amount of vocational (occupational) psychologist has decreased and they have to some extent been replaced by guidance professional with other, varied educational background. The TE-aspa guidance center (within the state PES, which provided educational advice and career guidance by phone, e-mail and online) was abolished in 2024, that was serving in great

Q16. Please provide a short summary of your country's career development system. [Up to 300 words]

extent employed persons free of charge. There is a provision of private guidance and counselling services.

Q17. Please provide links to any key reports, articles or websites that provide insights into your country's career development policies and systems. [Up to 300 words]

• Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (2024). Handbook on lifelong guidance for those working with education and career guidance (Elinikäisen ohjauksen käsikirja): https://tem.fi/en/-/handbook-on-lifelong-guidance-for-those-working-with-education-and-career-guidance
• Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI/OPH) — Lifelong guidance in Finland: https://www.oph.fi/en/education-system/lifelong-guidance-finland
• Cedefop CareersNet country record — Finland: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-finland-2
• Toni, A., & Vuorinen, R. (2020). Lifelong guidance in Finland. In E. Hagaseth Haug et al. (Eds.), Career and career guidance in the Nordic countries. Brill | Sense.https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004428096_009
• Kettunen, J. (202). Finnish Lower Secondary Career Education Through a Systems Lens. https://doi.org/10.16993/njtcg.85

Q18. Do you have any other comments that you would like to make about the way in which your country organises its career development services? [Up to 300 words]

No Response

Productivity and the inclusive economy

Q19. To what extent do policies for education, training, and employment in your country reflect the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Career development services contribute to economic growth.		X			
Career development services contribute to workforce productivity.		X			
Career development services deliver a positive return on investment on public spending.		X			
Career development services support entrepreneurialism.		X			
Career development services help to address employers' skills and labour needs.		X			
Career development services can be accessed by small and medium sized businesses (SMEs).		X			
Career development services improve levels of job satisfaction.			X		
Career development services contribute to decent work (jobs with access to training, a living wage and other		X			

Q19. To what extent do policies for education, training, and employment in your country reflect the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Career development services contribute to economic growth.		X			
benefits).					
Career development services support equality of access to learning and work opportunities.	X				
Career development services contribute to the green transition.		X			

Productivity and the inclusive economy

Q20. Provide further information about the way in which policies and practices for career development services in your country support productivity. [Up to 300 words]

Career development services contribute to productivity in Finland through three main mechanisms. First, by supporting effective matching between people and jobs: the public employment service, now organised through municipal employment areas, provides labour market guidance, occupational information and active labour market measures. Job Market Finland (Työmarkkinatori) functions as the national digital labour market platform, and the Competency Path (Osaamispolku) tool helps people identify and develop transferable skills. Digital career services contribute to advancement of Career Management Skills, for which a national framework has been set up. The Service Centre for Continuous Learning and Employment (SECLE/Jotpa) funds upskilling and reskilling for working-age adults, especially in shortage occupations and in the green and digital transitions. There is also labour market training for the unemployed, and higher education is offering increasingly modular learning, e.g. Microcredentials.

Second, by reducing drop-out and shortening transitions. The extension of compulsory education to age 18 (2021), guidance entitlements in upper secondary and VET (including the personal study plan, HOKS), and the strengthening of student counselling have aimed to reduce time spent NEET. The 2026 VET funding reform shifts a larger share of provider funding to completion and to transitions to employment or further education, creating financial incentives for guidance-supported progression.

Third, by anticipating future skills needs. The National Forum for Skills Anticipation (Osaamisen ennakointifoorumi) provides medium- and long-term forecasts that inform both VET supply and career information. Regional Development Centres (Elinvoimakeskukset) and PES coordination agency KEHA-centre (KEHA-keskus) provide short-term skills anticipation. However, return-on-investment evidence specific to Finnish guidance services is limited, and is identified as a development priority.

Career guidance / support at the workplaces, especially for ageing workers has been highlighted in recent years. SECLE and Finnish Institute of Occupational Health conducted a pilot project to offer career support at the workplaces.

Q21. Provide further information about the way in which policies and practices for career development services in your country support an inclusive economy. [Up to 300 words]

Finland’s guidance system supports inclusion through universal education-based guidance, free public education pathways, municipal employment services, Ohjaamo centres for young people, integration services for migrants, support for learners with special needs and rehabilitation/employment services for people with partial work ability. The extension of compulsory education to age 18 strengthened transition support and aimed to ensure that all young people gain an upper secondary qualification. The integration reform that entered into force in 2025 gives municipalities a stronger role and includes low-threshold guidance, counselling and basic information for immigrants. Ohjaamo centres offer young people under 30 low-threshold support with work, education and everyday life. Low-threshold multidisciplinary guidance for migrants and persons with foreign background has increased in recent years, e. g. International House –

Q21. Provide further information about the way in which policies and practices for career development services in your country support an inclusive economy. [Up to 300 words]

concept.

Q22. Please provide links to any key reports, articles or websites that provide further insights into the relationship in your country between policies for career development, and policies for productivity and the inclusive economy. [Up to 300 words]

• Education and Training Monitor 2025 — Finland: https://op.europa.eu/webpub/eac/education-and-training-monitor/en/country-reports/finland.html
• A new National Working Life Development Strategy was published in June 2026, which highlights learning and competences at the workplace. National Working Life Development Strategy to 2035 : Finland’s growth by 2035 will be driven by people’s ideas, the courage to reinvent, and collaboration

Enhancing skills and developing technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

Q23. To what extent do policies for education, training, and employment in your country reflect the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Career development services support people to develop skills		X			
Career development services support people to access training	X				
Career development services support the uptake of TVET pathways		X			
Career development services support lifelong learning		X			

Q24. What are the biggest challenges for participation in the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system in your country? [Please tick all that apply.]

The influence of gender stereotyping on TVET choices

Enhancing skills and developing technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

Q25. At what age do young people generally move onto a TVET pathway if that is the path they take?

Young people generally choose between general upper secondary and vocational education after basic education, usually at age 15–16. Compulsory education now continues until age 18 or completion of an upper secondary qualification.

Q26. Does the age of pathway selection cause challenges for your TVET system?

No

Q27. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the age of pathway selection? [Up to 300 words]

Although the formal point of pathway selection in Finland is age 16, the choice between general and vocational upper secondary is made in practice during the preceding year of basic education, supported by the statutory career education curriculum and by a minimum of two periods of work experience (TET) in grades 7–9.

Q28. Provide further information on the ways in which policies for career development services in your country enhance policies for skills development, TVET, and lifelong learning. [Up to 300 words]

Career guidance is positioned in Finnish policy as a core component of the skills and learning system rather than as a separate service. In basic and upper secondary education, the National Core Curriculum makes career management skills a curricular requirement, delivered by qualified counsellors and supported by work experience (TET). In VET, the personal study plan (HOKS) creates an individualised guidance and learning agreement updated throughout the qualification. In higher education, guidance accompanies students through study planning, work placements and graduation.

For adults, The Digital Services Package for Continuous Learning integrates Studyinfo, Job Market Finland and the Competency Path so that adults can identify their existing competence, see what is missing, and find provision to develop it. The public employment service, now run by municipal employment areas, provides guidance for jobseekers including referrals to training. Vocational rehabilitation services and integration services for immigrants offer specialist guidance tied to learning pathways. The Service Centre for Continuous Learning and Employment (SECLE/Jotpa) funds learning provision and guidance pathways.

Three policy decisions in recent years have strengthened the link between guidance and skills. The continuous learning reform (since 2021) put guidance at the centre of adult learning policy. The extension of compulsory education to age 18 (2021) created longer guidance entitlements across upper secondary. The 2026 VET funding reform incentivises providers to support completion and transition, which depends on effective guidance. Together these mean that, in Finland, career development services and skills development policies are designed and reformed jointly rather than separately.

Q29. Please provide links to any key reports, articles or websites that provide further insights about how career development services can enhance skills and support TVET. [Up to 300 words]

• Finnish National Agency for Education — Vocational education and training: https://www.oph.fi/en/education-system/vocational-education-and-training
• Ministry of Education and Culture — Reform of VET: https://minedu.fi/en/reform-of-vocational-upper-secondary-education
• Job Market Finland: https://tyomarkkinatori.fi/en

Ensuring disadvantaged and vulnerable groups can thrive

Q30. To what extent do policies for education, training, and employment in your country reflect the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Career development services help vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to thrive.		X			
Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups can access career development services.		X			

Q30. To what extent do policies for education, training, and employment in your country reflect the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Career development services help vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to thrive.		X			
Career development services support vulnerable groups to access decent work.		X			
Career development services support vulnerable groups to access the education and training system.	X				
There is adequate funding for career development services targeting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.			X		
Policies for social inclusion intersect with policies for education, training, and employment.		X			

Q31. Which disadvantaged and vulnerable groups does your government have policies to support and which are provided with bespoke or targeted career development services. [Tick all that apply]

	Government has policies to support	Provided with bespoke or targeted career development services
Indigenous people	X	X
Women and girls	X	X
Men and boys	X	X
Ethnic minorities	X	X
Religious minorities	X	
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people	X	
People from low-socio-economic backgrounds	X	X
People with low skill levels	X	X
Migrants	X	X
People with disabilities	X	X
People with health and mental health challenges	X	X
Younger people	X	X
Older people	X	X
Other	X	X

Ensuring disadvantaged and vulnerable groups can thrive

Q32. Can you provide any further information about the way in which policies for career development in your country support vulnerable and disadvantaged people? [Up to 300 words]

Finland's approach combines universal entitlements with targeted services. Universal entitlements include free statutory guidance in education, the public employment service, and integration services for immigrants. Targeted elements include Ohjaamo One Stop Centers for young people under 30, integration services for migrants, rehabilitation and employment services for people with disabilities or partial work ability, and support linked to compulsory education and transition phases. The 2025 Integration Act reform strengthens municipal responsibility for migrant integration and aims to improve access for people outside the labour force. Disability policy is based on equality, rights and services for persons with disabilities.

Q33. Please provide links to any key reports, articles or websites that provide further insights into the way that your country's career development system supports vulnerable and disadvantaged people. [Up to 300 words]

• The Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration / Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (kotoutuminen.fi) https://kotoutuminen.fi/en/frontpage
• The Ohjaamo One-Stop guidance center https://kotoutuminen.fi/en/frontpage


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