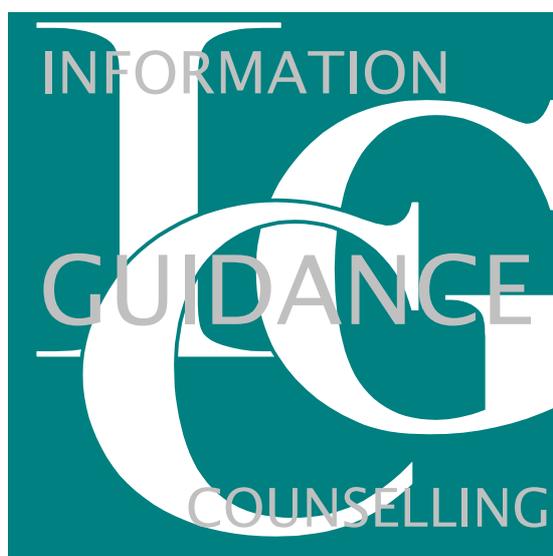


# OECD REVIEW OF CAREER GUIDANCE POLICIES



## CANADA

### COUNTRY NOTE

**Visit:** July 2002

**Revised draft:** September 2002

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1. In the autumn of 2000 the OECD's Education Committee and its Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee endorsed a comparative review of career information, guidance and counselling policies. Participating countries complete a detailed national questionnaire, and after its completion host a short visit by an expert review team. Canada was the ninth country to host such a visit, from 2 to 10 July 2002.<sup>1</sup> The team had meetings with policy-makers and guidance practitioners in three provinces (Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec) and at federal level; it also had meetings with a number of non-governmental national organisations, and visited several employment offices, youth employment centres and voluntary-sector organisations, as well as a university student services department.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the federal questionnaire response, provincial responses were received from British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Saskatchewan.

2. Drawing upon the visit, the draft federal and provincial questionnaire responses and other documentation, this report summarises the impressions of the review team, and its suggestions for ways in which policies for career information, guidance and counselling might be further developed in Canada. After a brief contextual introduction, the report describes the key features of the main parts of the career development<sup>3</sup> system, including some comments on each. It then offers some general comments on five key topics:

- Converting information into action.
- Establishing more coherent and accountable frameworks for career development within the educational system.
- Extending services to employed adults.
- Assuring the quality of service delivery.
- Strengthening strategic leadership.

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1. For members of the review team, see Appendix 1.

2. For the review visit programme, see Appendix 2.

3. In Canada, the term 'guidance' tends to be used only in the school system (except in Quebec, where it is applied more broadly). 'Career development' tends to be the generic term used to describe career information, guidance and counselling services. See federal questionnaire response, sections 2.0.1 and 6.1.

## 2. THE CONTEXT

3. In terms of land area, Canada is the second-largest country in the world. It occupies a territory almost the size of Europe; its French-speaking province (Quebec) is three times the size of France. But because of its severe climate, nearly 90% of the country lacks permanent settlements. Thus in relation to its geographical size, the population of Canada is relatively small (just over 30 million); most people live in large urban areas close to the border with the USA (almost one in four lives in the metropolitan areas of Toronto and Montreal). Since 1997, the Canadian economy has been one of the best performers in the OECD, in contrast with the protracted period of low growth in the early and mid-1990s. Because the overwhelming majority of its exports go to the USA, its economy is strongly influenced by developments south of the border.<sup>4</sup>

4. For historical and demographic reasons, Canada is characterised by a strong sense of regional identity. One in five Canadians has French as their mother tongue: these include 80% of the residents of Quebec, and significant concentrations in Manitoba, New Brunswick and Ontario. Around 5% of the population are of Aboriginal descent, representing a wide variety of indigenous communities. In recent years, the cultural and ethnic diversity of the population has been increased through immigration: the proportion of the population who are foreign-born is 17.4% (as against 5.1% in the European Union, for example).<sup>5</sup> Immigrants currently account for over 70% of the net labour force growth, and it is estimated that by 2011 they will account for all such growth. Targets have been set to reduce the income gap between immigrants and Canadian-born workers<sup>6</sup>: it currently takes 15 years for the former to achieve income and employment levels similar to the latter.<sup>7</sup>

5. Over the past four decades the distribution of employment has undergone a major shift from the resource and manufacturing sectors to the service sector. The proportion of the labour force working in the service sector is now 73.6% (OECD average 65.2%). The labour-force participation rate is relatively high (76.3% v. OECD average of 70.1%), though this masks relatively low rates for young people and older adults, especially when compared with Scandinavian countries.<sup>8</sup> The unemployment rate is close to the OECD average (6.9% v. OECD average of 6.3%), but the proportion of these who are long-term unemployed is relatively low (11.6% v. OECD average of 31.8%).

6. Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP in Canada is 6.2% (OECD average 5.7%). The percentage of the population aged 25-64 with tertiary-level qualifications (39%) is higher than in any other OECD country (OECD average 22%). On the other hand, the proportion participating in continuing education and training is slightly lower than average (30% v. OECD average of 31%), and over two-thirds of Aboriginal people aged 25-34 have not completed high school.<sup>9</sup>

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4. OECD (2001), *OECD Economic Surveys: Canada*. Paris.

5. Except where otherwise stated, these and other statistics in this report are taken from standard OECD and Government of Canada sources.

6. Government of Canada (2002), *Knowledge Matters*, p.8. Ottawa.

7. Federal questionnaire response, section 2.2.8.

8. OECD (2001), *op. cit.*, pp.132-133.

9. Federal questionnaire response, section 2.2.1.

### 3. THE CANADIAN CAREER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

7. The Canadian career development system is multi-faceted and highly decentralised. In policy terms, it reflects the division of responsibilities between federal, provincial/territorial and municipal governments in the areas of education, training and labour market matters. Constitutionally, education comes under the jurisdiction of the ten provinces and three territories.<sup>10</sup> There is no federal ministry of education; provinces work collectively through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), which provides Ministers of Education with a national voice for education in Canada. In practice, many decisions relating to career development services are made at school board or institutional level. The federal government plays a more significant role in labour market matters, but here too there is growing devolution of funding and responsibilities to the provinces through Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs): seven (Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, North West Territories, Nunavut, Quebec and Saskatchewan) have taken on the full delivery of career development and other services (with a few exceptions); a further five (British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Yukon) jointly plan the services with the relevant federal department, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), which delivers the services; only in Ontario are the services still both planned and delivered by HRDC. Federal and provincial co-ordination in relation to labour-market matters is managed through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM).

### 4. THE MAIN SECTORS

#### 4.1 Schools

8. The ages of compulsory schooling vary across Canada, but are generally between the ages of 6/7 and 16. In most provinces, secondary education ends with grade 12 (age 18); in Quebec, it ends with grade 11. Most secondary schools offer a mix of general and vocational courses.

9. Guidance programmes in schools have traditionally been based, as in the USA, on the role of the guidance counsellor. A few provinces have defined minimum counsellor-student ratios – in British Columbia, for example, the K-12 ratio is 1:693.<sup>11</sup> In most cases, however, there is latitude for school boards to determine the resources that will be allocated to such roles, and some services suffered from the cuts in school budgets over recent years: accordingly, in many schools the ratio is no better than 1:1,200.<sup>12</sup> In most provinces, guidance counsellors are licensed teachers who usually<sup>13</sup> also have a graduate

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10. For shorthand purposes, the term ‘provinces’ will henceforth be used in this document to denote ‘provinces and territories’.

11. British Columbia questionnaire response, section 2.4.

12. Federal questionnaire response, section 7.4.

13. Though not invariably, especially in the case of teachers with part-time guidance counsellor roles in smaller schools.

qualification – preferably a master’s degree – in guidance and counselling; this may, however, include little or no specific attention to career development and career counselling, concentrating instead on counselling focused on adjustment, developmental and crisis issues. In Quebec, by contrast, they must have a master’s degree which includes significant attention to career issues but they do not have to have a teaching background.

10. From a career development perspective, there are two long-standing concerns about the role of the guidance counsellors: that they are required to devote an undue amount of time to responding to students’ personal problems, leaving little time to address career issues; and that they devote an undue amount of time to the educational guidance needs of those progressing into post-secondary education.<sup>14</sup> A survey in 1994 found that their top time-consuming tasks were named as personal crisis counselling (61%), career planning (32%) and educational planning (25%).<sup>15</sup>

11. Attention devoted to career education within the school curriculum has been growing but varies considerably across the provinces:

- In some provinces, career education courses are offered at selected grade levels.
- In others, they are offered in timetabled blocks across a number of school years: in Saskatchewan, for example, the middle grades (grades 6-9) are required to deliver 30 hours per year; in British Columbia, it is mandatory to devote 60 hours per year from kindergarten to grade 12 to career and personal planning (up to the end of grade 7 it is called ‘personal planning’; thereafter the emphasis on career planning is more explicit).
- In yet others, career development is infused across the curriculum during certain grades or throughout the period of schooling.

Some provinces adopt a mix of these approaches: thus in New Brunswick each of grades K-12 has a specified series of learning objectives, some of which are to be achieved through a separate curriculum programme (especially in grades 9-10), and some through infusion into other core courses, especially the first language (English or French). In a few provinces successful completion of the career education programme leads to credits which are necessary for graduation: this is the case, for instance, in Ontario, where completion of a half-credit course in career studies in grade 10 is mandatory; in Alberta, where a grade 11 course in career and life management is required; and in British Columbia, where four of the 28 credits necessary for graduation must be in personal and career planning. On the other hand, in Prince Edward Island delivery of career education is confined to the integration of career topics into some programmes/courses.<sup>16</sup> This last, more laissez-faire approach risks career education being viewed as an optional add-on which can readily be set aside to accommodate competing demands for classroom time.

12. Significant curriculum innovation has been introduced by The Real Game series, which is based on extensive use of role-play and active learning. Originating in Newfoundland, its development has been led by the National Life/Work Centre. Versions are now available for all grade levels from grade 3 (including an adult version). Some or all of the series have already been successfully adapted for use in a number of other countries, including Australia and the UK. Dissemination within Canada has been strong in some provinces, but less so in others, partly perhaps because of resistance to anything ‘not invented here’.

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14. See e.g. OECD (1999), *Thematic Review of the Transition from Initial Education to Working Life*. Paris.

15. Federal questionnaire response, section 6.2.

16. Prince Edward Island questionnaire response, section 7.

13. Opportunities for students to experience the world of work vary considerably. Some schools have well-established co-operative education programmes, through which the teaching of particular school subjects (particularly more applied subjects like business, technology and IT) includes significant elements of work experience. In general, however, these are taken only by a minority of students.<sup>17</sup> Other students may have more limited forms of work experience or work shadowing. In British Columbia, students must complete 30 hours' work experience in order to graduate from high school; in addition, around a third of students take an 'enhanced career programme' option which involved 100 or more hours of work experience. In Ontario, 40 hours' participation in community work is mandatory. As part of Canada Career Week, grade 9 parents and other workers all over the country are encouraged to participate in a national shadowing scheme ('Take a Kid to Work Day'). Other common career exploration activities include work visits, mini-enterprises (e.g. Junior Achievement) and career fairs.

14. A growing development in Canadian schools is the introduction of portfolios. These include various methods for recording learning, both in and out of school, and inside and outside the formal curriculum. Often they are linked to attempts to move towards a stronger competency-based approach to the curriculum: the Employability Skills Profile developed by the Conference Board of Canada has been influential in this respect. Sometimes they are linked with processes of personal/education planning. Some provinces (e.g. Manitoba) have encouraged schools to develop their own systems; others have adopted a more standardised approach. In Ontario, for example, the 'Choices into Action' programme requires all students to develop and maintain an academic and career portfolio, and in grades 7-12 also to complete annual education plans; to support this process, schools are mandated, at least in grades 7-11, to assign teachers to act as teacher-advisers, with regularly timetabled group sessions of at least 30 minutes per week with the groups of students (usually numbering between 12 and 20) for whom they are responsible. Brief in-service training programmes have been developed to support such teachers. Without adequate training, such systems can easily degenerate to mere paper systems, and their potential as career development processes lost.

15. Such programmes may indicate significant moves towards the adoption of whole-school strategies in relation to guidance delivery. In Quebec, schools are being encouraged to develop the concept of the 'guidance-oriented school' (*l'école orientante*). This is linked to wider competency-oriented school reforms stemming from an extensive process of community consultation (the Estates General on Education). In the course of this consultation, the limitations of the previous career education provision – based on a programme taught largely by teachers who happened to have space in their timetables – was repeatedly pointed out, particularly by young people themselves. The criticisms were reinforced at the Quebec Youth Summit held in 2000. Accordingly, it was agreed to begin providing support for students' identity development in elementary school and guidance in career planning throughout secondary school; to increase the number of qualified guidance specialists; but also to promote participation by all stakeholders, first by encouraging discussion and collaboration between teachers and guidance professionals, and then by developing true partnerships with parents and the community.<sup>18</sup> Personal and career planning is defined as one of five 'broad areas of learning' throughout schooling. Development of the detailed curriculum framework is still at an early stage (elementary school) and at this stage schools are being permitted considerable flexibility in determining what a 'guidance-oriented school' might mean within the broad parameters provided.

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17. Less than 10%, according to OECD (1999), op. cit. (ref.14), p.9. In Ontario, however, the current review team was told that the figure within the province was as high as 35-40%.

18. Quebec Ministry of Education (2002), *Making Dreams Come True*. Quebec City.

## 4.2 Universities and community colleges

16. After secondary school, students may continue their studies in community colleges and/or universities; in Quebec, students who want to go to university have first to go to *collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel* (CEGEPs) where they follow a two-year pre-university course, alongside other students taking vocational courses. In total, there are about 90 university-level institutions and over 200 community colleges in Canada (the latter go under a variety of names). There is also a range of adult education centres, private training institutions and distance education services.

17. The structure of careers services varies a great deal from institution to institution. In some cases they are part of personal counselling services, in which case their links with the labour market may be weak. At the other extreme they may be located within employment or co-operative education services, in which case their main focus is likely to be on student summer work placements and on on-campus recruiting by employers, with limited attention to the personal process dimensions in career development. In some institutions careers services operate on a stand-alone basis; in others they are integrated into a generic student services structure. In many institutions they have to deal with high caseloads and have accordingly been seeking, alongside their traditional one-to-one work, more economical ways of providing services to their students. These include devoting more attention to self-service information rooms, to the use of peer helpers, to the development of web-based services, and to group guidance sessions – including, in a few cases, career development courses within the curriculum which may be (usually optional) credit-bearing courses or (usually mandatory) non-credit courses. Some also now restrict the number of sessions which students can have for individual counselling in an academic year. On the other hand, some extend their services to incoming students and/or to alumni, though the latter in particular may be on a fee-for-service basis.<sup>19</sup> No systematic data seem to be available on the frequency of these different arrangements, let alone on trends in this respect.

18. Some universities and colleges have co-operative education programmes in particular subject areas (e.g. engineering). The proportion of students participating in such programmes is, however, quite small.<sup>20</sup>

## 4.3 Public employment services

19. Traditionally, the federal government played a significant role in labour market matters, including the provision of employment services. As noted in para.7, this role has now been significantly transferred to the provinces, though to different degrees: substantially in seven, partly in five, and not at all in one (Ontario). Where the full transfer has taken place, HRDC retains responsibility for national labour market information and for certain Treasury-funded programmes (notably for young people, for Aboriginals, and for people with disabilities), as well as for making employment-insurance payments.

20. Public employment services are currently targeted mainly at marginalised groups, seeking to reintegrate them into the labour market as quickly as possible in order to increase the labour force and reduce income-security payments. Where the full transfer of services to the provinces has taken place, this has enabled employment services for individuals with employment-insurance entitlements (for which HRDC remains ultimately responsible) to be reintegrated with services for social-assistance claimants (for

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19. Crozier, S., Dobbs, J., Douglas, K. & Hung, J. (1999). *Career Counselling Position Paper*. Canadian University and College Counselling Association. McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.

20. Even at the University of Victoria, which has a large co-operative education programme, only 30% of students are in the programme (British Columbia questionnaire response, section 2.2).

which the provincial governments have in recent years been responsible). Where partial transfer has occurred, and indeed in Ontario too, the trend is towards co-location of separate services.

21. Services for targeted groups are based on screening interviews designed to determine service needs. These interviews may include counselling elements, but they are largely concerned with assessment and with 'gatekeeping' (estimating the minimum resources required to achieve successful job entry). Where it is perceived necessary, they lead to a case-managed action plan which may include some training assistance, wage-subsidised work experience or help with business start-up; it may also include access to such career development activities as employment counselling and help with job search. Adherence to the action plan may be required in order to maintain eligibility for income support.

22. Some or all of these employment services – including, in some cases, the screening interviews and subsequent case management themselves – may be 'contracted out'<sup>21</sup> to third-party organisations, which may be for-profit or not-for-profit. The latter include public bodies like community colleges but also community-based organisations which specialise in one or more target groups: one of the arguments for contracting out is that these latter are likely to be more attuned than government organisations can be to the distinctive needs of their clients (see Section 4.4), as well as being well connected to local labour market conditions and opportunities. In addition, contracting out can result in lower staff costs (staff tend to be lower paid and to have fewer benefits<sup>22</sup>), is more flexible in responding to changing service demand, and makes it easier to argue for increased resources (governments tend to be more willing to fund programmes than direct staff costs).

23. The extent of contracting-out varies across the provinces: in Ontario (where employment assistance services are still managed entirely by HRDC) almost all services are contracted out; in British Columbia the figure is about 90%<sup>23</sup>; whereas the review team was told that in Manitoba the figure is less than 50%, and in Quebec and the smaller Atlantic provinces even lower. The process of contracting-out raises important issues about maintaining programme standards and equality of programme use among different groups. Where employment assistance services are contracted out direct by HRDC, the contractors are expected to comply with certain performance standards which include staff qualifications and such issues as the accessibility, reliability and responsiveness of services. Where, however, services are devolved to the provinces, such arrangements vary. Increasingly, the trend is towards attempting to monitor contracts on the basis of outcome measures, notably placement into jobs which are held for a minimum period (usually 3 or 6 months). This leads to the risk that agencies may 'cherry-pick' clients who seem likely to achieve these outcomes.

24. As noted in para.19, HRDC has retained responsibility for a number of programmes containing career development elements for young people, for Aboriginals, and for people with disabilities. Many of these, too, are contracted out to community-based organisations. But HRDC maintains direct delivery responsibility for the Youth Employment Strategy, which includes various internship programmes for particular groups of young people (First Nations and Inuit youth, those interested in areas of science and technology with skill shortages, and those interested in international work experience), a student loans programme (supported by on-line information resources designed to help students in establishing their learning goals and planning their finances), and employment services for student summer placements

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21. To avoid the need for formal competitive tendering processes, this often takes the form of 'contribution agreements'.

22. In the case of services contracted out by HRDC, salaries are about 10% less, and employment-related expenses amount to an additional 12% of salary compared to 25% among government employees (federal questionnaire response, section 10.5).

23. British Columbia questionnaire response, section 7.9.

(largely based in employment offices over the summer period and run by students hired for the purpose). An interesting adaptation of this youth employment service is Café Jeunesse in Montreal, which combines it with youth-oriented information services from 13 other federal government departments in a cybercafé-type environment.

25. Some services for these groups are also run by the provinces. Quebec, for instance, has a network of non-profit Carrefours Jeunesse-Emploi (Youth Employment Centres) which offer information and guidance services alongside various workshops and cultural/social/travel projects to young people aged 16-35, through a network of 106 service points. They focus particularly (though not exclusively) on young people at risk, and include outreach services designed to make contact with such young people.

26. There are also special employment services for immigrants, funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and by some of the provinces as part of their settlement and adaptation programmes. These services include employment counselling services, job-search programmes, assistance with recognition of foreign credentials, and prior learning assessment. Again they are usually contracted out to third-party organisations.

27. Alongside all these targeted services, HRDC and its provincial partners are obliged by legislation to provide universal access to labour market information services and labour exchange services. These are delivered largely on a self-service basis. In some provinces, other services may be available on a universal-access basis: in Quebec, for example, a service needs determination interview is available to all; in Manitoba, employment counselling is freely available in principle, though it is not widely publicised for fear that the ensuing demand might exceed supply. There are also commonly some openly-available group sessions.

28. The collection and analysis of labour market information (LMI) represents a major area of activity in the public employment services in Canada, and an area where HRDC has maintained a clear leadership role based upon its legal responsibilities in this respect. This includes responsibility for information on jobs, occupations, career paths and learning opportunities, as well as labour market trends. In addition to using its own internal resources to develop and disseminate this information, HRDC supports a number of partnerships with the provinces to co-ordinate their respective efforts in this area. These include the Canada Career Consortium (CCC), the Canadian Career Information Partnership (CCIP) and Canada WorkInfoNet (CANWIN). These arrangements co-ordinate data-collection systems which are rightly claimed to be among the best in the world.<sup>24</sup> CANWIN is responsible for a national portal designed to connect all citizens to the career information they need; it is based on a lead partner in each province, working within a set of common guidelines<sup>25</sup>, though there is limited cross-pathing between the resources in the different categories (e.g. between learning and work information).

29. One of the key products from HRDC's LMI work is *Job Futures*, which is extensively used by career development practitioners and their clients. It includes supply/demand outlook projections by occupation and by field of study, and is accompanied by a guide to help practitioners in answering common LMI questions asked by clients making use of these materials. Henceforth these products will be available in web-based form only, so easing the task of updating them.<sup>26</sup> Provinces also create their own

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24. Expert Panel on Skills (2000), *Stepping Up: Skills and Opportunities in the Knowledge Economy*, p.41. Ottawa.

25. In these respects it bears some similarities to the ESTIA network in the European Union.

26. This is linked to the federal government's policy of providing its citizens with access to all government services on-line, aiming to make Canada the 'most-connected' country in the world by 2004 (federal questionnaire response, section 2.2.3). For the present, however, there is a risk that premature moves

parallel products. In addition to such formal products, HRDC also supports the publication of *The Edge*, a magazine researched and written by young people which articulates career development issues with a youth voice; it is accompanied by a Calendar for Parents designed to stimulate and inform career-related discussions with parents, and is distributed free of charge to every secondary school in the country as well as to public libraries and youth employment centres.

30. The main labour exchange service, managed by HRDC, is the Job Bank: an electronic job-posting service available free to all Canadian employers and job seekers. Employers are now able to post their vacancies directly rather than via HRDC staff. The review team was told, however, that the Job Bank covers only around one-fifth of the job-vacancy market, mainly at the lower end of the market in skill terms. Apart from this, job-placement services are left to the private sector.

31. A key rationale for HRDC's continued leadership role in relation to LMI (para.28) is the policy support for encouraging labour mobility within the country, so that despite the fact that occupational regulatory bodies are all at provincial level, citizens can access opportunities wherever they may exist across Canada. This is supported by an Agreement on Internal Trade which includes a labour mobility chapter (of the 51 regulated occupations in the country, 42 have substantially met their obligations under this chapter or are well on the way to doing so<sup>27</sup>) and also by a Red Seal Programme under which qualified tradespersons can get an endorsement on their qualification that enables them to practise in any province. It is also supported by a Work Destinations website designed to offer practical help to Canadians who wish to consider relocating to another province.

32. Public employment offices across the country include resource centres containing Job Bank and other resources, including Internet access and paper-based materials. In general, however, they have limited space, and staff support for such resources is usually confined to administrative support (for print-outs, booking machines, etc.) rather than skilled information support. Moreover, the design of the offices visited tended to give prominence to queues for welfare payments, and this seemed likely to deter some potential users like employed people interested in exploring job changes. In addition, the lack of national branding restricts public recognition of such facilities: many people still refer to the offices as 'Manpower', harking back to an earlier title (Manpower and Immigration Canada) before HRDC was created in 1993. Despite all this, staff at one of the centres visited by the review team estimated that around 50-60% of visitors came without being interviewed, to use the resource centre (significantly, no official numbers were maintained in this centre, or at the other centres visited – their performance measures did not cover such users).

33. HRDC has a comprehensive in-house training programme for its employment counselling staff. It comprises a three-module programme which staff can work through at their own pace through a mixture of distance learning and short two-week courses. Some in-house training is now also provided by the provinces. These are not in general available to third-party contractors, though some training provision may be included in contracts as an allowable expense, and new university/college courses are beginning to appear to meet the growing demand from this and other sectors (see also para.36).

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towards exclusive dependence on web-based information will restrict access from regions, including many Northern and remote rural communities, which have limited dial-up internet access.

27. Labour Mobility Coordinating Group (2001), *Report on Implementation of the Labour Market Chapter of the Agreement on Internal Trade*.

#### **4.4 Community-based services**

34. The role of community-based organisations in the career development field has been significantly enhanced by, as outlined in Section 4.3, the contracting-out by federal and provincial employment services of some of their services to targeted groups. Some of the organisations focus on particular Aboriginal communities (either on their reserved lands or at ‘friendship’ or other centres in urban areas); some focus on particular immigrant groups; some on people with particular disabilities; some on other groups like ex-offenders or the homeless. Some may offer access to broader groups of people (e.g. young people) within particular localities. Part of the rationale for such contracting-out is that such organisations are often perceived by members of these groups as being more accessible and more attuned to their needs. Aboriginal people, for example, want to see their culture reflected in the services provided to them.

35. In total, it is estimated that there are probably over 10,000 community-based organisations delivering career development services to different clienteles across Canada.<sup>28</sup> Many are small, with perhaps 5-7 full-time-equivalent staff; though some are much larger, with as many as 100 or 200 employees over a variety of locations. Some focus mainly on career development activities, which may include information services, career/employment counselling and job-search workshops. Many have a wider range of functions, including various forms of education/training and social/community work (some of these, e.g. literacy programmes, may include career development elements): this may enable them to adopt more holistic approaches to the needs of their clients. Often they base their services on a mix of funding from different government sources, at varying jurisdictional levels. In many cases a significant proportion of their funding is project-based, which can mean instability in terms of staff turnover and continued survival. A few offer career development services on a fee-for-service basis to individuals who do not fall within groups covered by their funded programmes.<sup>29</sup>

36. The community-based sector tends to be fragmented, under-resourced and to have limited access to structures and supports; some have career development professionals on their staff but many do not. To address these issues, HRDC has supported a range of networks, mainly at provincial level. A particularly noteworthy national initiative of this kind is Career Circuit, designed to support community-based organisations offering career development services to young people, especially those who have left school. It is based on a partnership creatively forged by HRDC between three non-profit organisations: the Canadian Career Development Foundation, the Canadian Foundation for Economic Education and the Canadian Youth Foundation. It offers on-line networking between over 5,000 such agencies, a searchable database of career resources, and a self-instructional training programme, supported by a network of trainers. A number of Regional Representatives, with a mix of career development and other qualifications plus community development experience, have been employed within the provinces to provide a liaison link and offer direct support to the agencies.

#### **4.5 The private sector**

37. The private sector includes a variety of agencies that provide career development services which in the main are paid for by individuals or their employers. They include a substantial range of outplacement agencies that work with individuals who have or are about to lose their jobs, often through restructuring or downsizing. They also include private practitioners who may specialise in career counselling or may offer it as one of a range of counselling and consultancy services (assessments for

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28. Federal questionnaire response, section 7.9. Elsewhere in the same response (section 4.3), the figure is given as 20,000.

29. An example, visited by the review team, is the Jewish Vocational Services in Toronto, which has four centres and has been offering such services since the 1950s.

insurance compensation in injury/accident cases can be a lucrative sideline). Only in Quebec are the titles of career counsellor and guidance counsellor currently protected by law (see para.73): of the 2,183 individuals who are officially registered there, 27% are in private practice on a full-time or part-time basis.<sup>30</sup>

38. There are some signs that the private sector may be increasing. This may be driven at least in part by parents' awareness of the deficiencies of career guidance provision within the public school system. There is also a growth of interest in career coaching, which may comprise coaching in job-search skills or may involve a more long-term supportive relationship, usually for senior executives. On the other hand, one informant suggested to the review group that private-sector career counselling services were showing signs of decline, because of the growth of self-help materials, on-line information, and career development programmes in high schools.

39. The growth of the private sector has also been stimulated by government. As noted earlier (para.22), employment services including career development services are contracted out not only to the community-based sector but also to for-profit organisations – though profit margins tend to be limited.

40. Within many larger companies and government organisations, there are human resource development professionals who work with employees on issues relating to career planning. Some organisations have developed extensive career development programmes for their staff, though these tend not to cover staff at all levels. In Quebec, such programmes may be encouraged by the legal stipulation that employers must demonstrate that they spend 1% of their payroll on employee training, which may include career development services leading to training plans. Some trade unions, too, provide career/employment counselling services for their members, either on their own or through Sector Councils (see para.76); sometimes these services have been set up as part of redundancy programmes, perhaps with funding support leveraged by HRDC through its Labour Adjustment Services. Trade unions may also seek to include the introduction of career development services in collective bargaining agreements.

41. The private sector also plays a prominent role in the development and delivery of career information. Many leading publications and web-based products are produced by private companies. These may be funded by advertising, by charges to consumers, or in some cases by funding support from HRDC or Industry Canada – linked either to career and labour market information programmes or to learning technology programmes designed to encourage private investment in the application of technology to learning (including career development). The market for such products is at present largely unregulated, except in the case of the school system, where provincial ministries of education may review and identify selected career information products and services as 'approved learning resources' to be used with the official curriculum: this is done, for example, in British Columbia.<sup>31</sup> FLMM's LMI Working Group (see para.66) is currently developing some standards for information products<sup>32</sup>, but whether and how they will be enforced is as yet unclear.

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30. Quebec questionnaire response, section 6.2 and 7.6.

31. British Columbia questionnaire response, section 9.1.

32. Federal questionnaire response, section 9.5.

## 5. KEY POLICY ISSUES

### 5.1 Converting information into action

42. Career and labour market information is clearly recognised in Canada as a public good which should be freely accessible to all. It 'is important because it enables Canadians, including employers, workers, job seekers and educational institutions, to make a range of informed labour market decisions'.<sup>33</sup> The public investment in such information is considerable, and the products are very impressive (paras.28-29).

43. Public policy tends at present, however, to focus mainly on the collection and publication of such information, rather than on its effective utilisation. This may be explained in part on economic grounds in terms of the limited marginal costs involved, but also in part by the fact that collection and publication are areas where the legitimacy of federal action can be recognised most easily and progress readily made – issues relating to utilisation tend to cross jurisdictional boundaries.

44. But public investment in information is of little value if its potential users are not able to access the information they require, to understand it and relate it to their personal needs, and to act upon it. In the case of many individual workers and job seekers, there are grounds for doubt about their capacity to meet these requirements. There is clearly a need for more research in this area, including research on how people find and use information (see para.80). But meanwhile there are good grounds for believing that information, while necessary, is not sufficient, in at least three respects:

- Equity of access. Most information requires good reading skills, and is not accessible to adults who do not possess such skills. In addition, information has tended to be more accessible to people in urban than in rural areas. As more information is delivered in electronic form, this marginalises those who do not have access to ICT or do not have the skills or confidence to use it effectively.
- Difficulties in finding the information one needs. Most people are now faced with a surfeit of information. The ways in which they access and sift information are often very ad hoc rather than systematic: often they look for information only when they need it, and do so at the last minute, taking the quickest and easiest information source they can find.<sup>34</sup> This means that their actions may be influenced by the information they chance upon rather than being based on a systematic trawling of a reasonably comprehensive range of relevant information.
- The widely expressed need to 'talk it through' with someone. Many people feel a need to discuss information with someone before they feel able to convert it into action. This 'someone' may be a friend or relation. Often, though, people feel it needs to be someone who is knowledgeable about the content of the information, and skilled in the process of helping them to relate it to their needs and to develop their confidence to act upon it.<sup>35</sup>

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33. Government of Canada (2002), op. cit. (ref.6), p.43.

34. Research review conducted at the University of Sherbrooke, cited in the federal questionnaire response, section 9.4.

35. The demand for such support was, for example, articulated clearly by young people during the Quebec Youth Summit in 2000 (Quebec questionnaire response, section 8.2.1).

45. This suggests that the strategy for developing career and labour market information as a public good needs to include the development of a network of forms of skilled personal support. This is particularly important if it is to be linked to a proactive strategy for lifelong learning designed actively to encourage all Canadians to reflect regularly on the development of their skills, learning and work throughout their lives. Some such support can be provided within the educational system, particularly if the place of career development within this system is made more coherent and accountable (Section 5.2). But the network also needs to embrace employment services, extended to include employed people as well as marginalised groups (Section 5.3).

## **5.2 Coherence and accountability within the educational system**

46. At present, provision for career development within the education systems in Canada is very patchy. There is considerable variation between provinces. There is also much variation within provinces between different institutions. This latter is particularly the case at post-secondary level, but to varying degrees across the provinces is also true in relation to schools. With the exception of mandatory guidance courses where these exist (para.11), most guidelines are largely optional and are not strongly enforced. This is potentially enhanced by the trend in some provinces towards funding based on performance criteria, in which institutions are given discretion to allocate funds in whatever way they consider most likely to meet these criteria. Unless the criteria include adequate attention to career development of students, there is a risk that within such an approach the delivery of career development services to students will be based on whether or not these are viewed by school boards and senior management as according with their management priorities. Arguably, this is not good enough. If lifelong learning requires placing the individual at the centre, making the provision of support to the individual dependent on congruence with institutional goals and interests is inadequate.

47. At present, there appears to be a lack even of systematic information on what is happening across the country in relation to the delivery of career development services within educational institutions in the different provinces. Such information is essential at provincial level as a base for accountability and for identifying gaps and deficiencies which need to be addressed. But it could also provide a base from which provinces could learn from each other about the strengths and weaknesses of different models of delivery. Federal systems potentially represent natural laboratories, in which innovative practices can be introduced, different models tested, and their benefits shared. But this requires more systematic provision for data collection, comparative evaluation, and exchanges of practice than is evident at present in the career development field in Canada.

48. The delivery of career education programmes within the school curriculum would seem to be one area where sharing of experience could be beneficial. Provinces appear to move between various forms of specialist and infused delivery with little learning from elsewhere and much repetition of wasteful mistakes. In particular, there is repeated evidence of the dangers of asking teachers of other subjects to teach such programmes without adequate in-service training. In some schools guidance counsellors or co-operative education teachers may be heavily involved in teaching career education, but in most a lot of the delivery is done by teachers of other subjects who may have had little if any training in career education: their knowledge of the world of work may accordingly be limited, as may their skills in the distinctive teaching methodologies required by a curriculum area which necessarily includes exploration of the self.<sup>36</sup> Much the same is true in relation to the need for in-service training to support the introduction of portfolio systems (para.14).

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36. 'There is the risk, and this has happened many times, that classroom teachers are assigned guidance curriculum with no preparation and the results have usually been dismal' (federal questionnaire response, section 6.5 (also 3.0)).

49. The need for more opportunities for students to learn about the world of work has recently been highlighted by a report from the Expert Panel on Skills. It notes, tellingly: ‘Most high school students study social, health and family life issues to prepare them to become responsible citizens. Oddly, however, only a fortunate few learn directly about the forces and factors that will shape their ability to earn a living.’ It accordingly recommends that the ministers of education and school boards (through CMEC), in collaboration with business and industry, should ‘develop a concerted strategy for sharing best practices and for progressively incorporating “work studies” and experience-with-work programs as core elements of elementary and secondary curricula’.<sup>37</sup> The review team endorses this proposal, with the caveat that the remit should be extended to cover not just work studies but career education as a whole.

50. A degree of harmonisation regarding the content of career education programmes has been introduced by the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs, which includes competencies and performance indicators for elementary school, middle/junior high school, and high school, as well as for adults. They are sorted into three areas: personal management, learning and work exploration, and life/work building. The Blueprint was adapted by the National Life/Work Centre from some work in the USA, and has subsequently been developed further through a careful consultative process. Some provinces have explicitly adopted it, or mapped their programmes against it. Orientation training has been introduced to accompany implementation of the Blueprint: this is important to prevent it being applied in simplistic ways in which learning outcomes are ‘ticked off’ without being understood in any depth. The systematic publication of data linked to the performance indicators could provide one way of introducing more accountability into the system. The feasibility of such an approach merits investigation.

51. A potentially complementary approach is to seek more accountability at local level. The Canadian School Boards Association has recently produced a discussion paper on school board accountability: career development is one of the three major goals within the accountability framework outlined (the other two are intellectual development, and personal and social development).<sup>38</sup> Meanwhile, the evaluation framework for the Ontario ‘Choices into Action’ programme (para.14) requires each school principal not only to ensure the development of a comprehensive written guidance and career education programme plan, but also every three years to conduct a survey of students, parents, teachers and other partners to evaluate the delivery and effectiveness of all components of the programme. Such forms of local accountability are worth exploring further, particularly if provinces or school boards can establish audit or inspection procedures to ensure that all schools adopt them.

52. In relation to the provision of work experience through co-operative education programmes and the like (para.13), there is evidence that inadequate provision is made in some provinces for the brokerage arrangements that are required to make such programmes effective. It seems that in some cases these kinds of programmes have suffered disproportionately from cuts in school budgets. Some schools have experienced difficulties in securing placements. Brokerage through business-education councils and the like is essential if these problems are to be overcome. At present such councils exist in some areas but not in others. More systematic arrangements for such partnerships are needed.

53. The review team was impressed by the concept of the ‘guidance-oriented school’ being developed in Quebec (para.15), including the extensive consultations on which it has been based, and the fact that it starts with elementary school and represents a whole-school approach, with a strong concern to harness the resources of parents and the wider community. It is still at an early stage of development, and in due course some elements of the kinds of whole-school approaches developed in some other provinces (e.g. the ‘Choices into Action’ programme in Ontario – see para.14) may need to be added. It also arguably

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37. Expert Panel on Skills (2000), *op. cit.* (ref.24), pp.54-55. Ottawa.

38. Canadian School Boards Association (2002), *Discussion Paper on Accountability*. Ottawa.

needs to be based on a more dynamic model of career development: some parts of the current policy document read as though the process ends with the crystallisation and implementation of a career choice rather than with laying the foundations for lifelong career development.<sup>39</sup> But the approach represents a promisingly ambitious one, which merits attention from other provinces.

54. One of the implications of the move towards whole-school approaches is the need to redefine the role of the guidance counsellor as a resource person rather than being concerned solely with direct service delivery. This requires significant consultation skills, and suggests that the development of such skills needs to be given more attention in training programmes. In addition, sustainable whole-school approaches require attention to guidance and career development not only in transitional in-service training programmes (see para.48 above) but on a long-term basis within the initial training of all teachers.

55. In general, links between schools and employment services tend to be weak or non-existent. In times past, employment counsellors from the federal employment service used to visit schools fairly regularly. Now, however, such links are commonly confined to occasional events like career fairs. Although publications on career and labour market information are distributed to schools, links which might help to activate and flesh out such information are largely absent. There are however signs in some provinces (e.g. Quebec) that the devolution of employment services to the provincial level (para.7) may make it easier to strengthen their links with schools. This would be eased across the board if the role of such services in relation to lifelong learning is clarified and affirmed (as suggested in Section 5.3 below). In the view of the review team, the development of closer links of this kind should be strongly encouraged.

56. If stronger frameworks are needed for career development services in schools, then this is even more the case in relation to universities and community colleges. There appear to be no provincial guidelines in relation to such institutions. In at least one province (Quebec) institutions are required to provide guidance services, and there is notional per capita funding for this purpose, but institutions can use such funds for other purposes if they wish. Indeed, there seems not even to be any systematic information available on the extent and nature of career development services in post-secondary institutions (para.17). Yet many of the most able Canadians spend some of the most formative years of their lives in such institutions, and the quality of the career decisions they make has considerable implications for the social yield from the substantial public investment in post-secondary education. It seems that in recent years there have been cuts to career development services in some institutions, and that fewer post-secondary students who ask for career development assistance now get appropriate individual help.<sup>40</sup> We suggest that provinces should be encouraged, through CMEC, to conduct an immediate review of current career development provision in universities and colleges and of its adequacy in relation to student demand, and then to develop appropriate guidelines for such provision.

57. Within the review suggested, particular attention should be given to the roles and training of staff in career development services in post-secondary institutions. Clearer differentiation is needed between the roles of career counsellors, employment counsellors, and career information specialists. Specification is needed of the competencies required for each of these roles, and the training necessary to acquire them. At present, it seems that outside Quebec<sup>41</sup> many institutions are lax in this respect (which is ironic in view of the fact that this is the sector responsible for most of the training in the wider career development field).

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39. Quebec Ministry of Education (2002), op.cit. (ref.18).

40. Federal questionnaire response, section 3.0. Also British Columbia questionnaire response, sections 2.2 and 5.7. In Quebec, however, funding for career guidance services in universities is now being increased (Quebec questionnaire response, section 1.2.1).

41. Where professional standards are strongly protected (see para.73).

The Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (paras.72ff) should be a useful instrument for this purpose.

58. In addition, as part of their accountability, institutions should be required to publish systematic data on the destinations of former students and to make this information available to potential incoming students. This issue has been raised recently in relation to private-sector colleges, which sometimes encourage individuals to invest substantial sums of money by making false (implicit or explicit) promises about their career outcomes. Arguably, however, it applies equally to public-sector institutions. In principle, the data-collection process for this purpose could be linked to the new Enhanced Student Information System developed by Statistics Canada to improve tracking, performance measurement and accountability in the learning sector; this should be fully operational by 2003/04.

59. Within the context of lifelong learning, there is an argument for career development and guidance services within universities and colleges to be accessible not only to current students but also to the wider community. Particularly important in extending access to learning are community-based outreach services. Some institutions do offer services to prospective students, but where this is the case, there is a need for clear quality standards about the impartiality of the services that are being offered: if they are viewed as a recruitment tool, and this restricts the range of the guidance they offer, such restrictions need to be explicit and transparent to the user. Some also offer some services to alumni and/or to the wider public on a fee-for-service basis. There is scope for such services to be extended, but if so, the issue of who should pay for them needs to be clarified.

### **5.3 Extending services to employed adults**

60. At present, as noted in Section 4.3, most publicly-funded career development services for adults are targeted to specific disadvantaged groups, seeking to reintegrate them into the labour market as quickly as possible. Services available to other disadvantaged groups (e.g. early school-leavers, workers displaced by employers who do not provide outplacement services, individuals who have been out of the labour market for a time and are not entitled to employment services linked to social assistance) may be very limited. Services for employed adults are largely restricted to services in the private sector.

61. Recently, however, HRDC has published a major discussion paper – *Knowledge Matters* – which is designed to stimulate a national dialogue on lifelong learning. It is linked to the Innovation Strategy which is being driven by Industry Canada. Although from a career development perspective it bears the imprint of some of HRDC's current restrictions<sup>42</sup>, it places HRDC at the heart of the lifelong learning dialogue, which could in due course have major implications for the future role of employment services. In particular, it could enable these services to subsume their targeted return-to-work agenda within a universal learning and skills agenda, encouraging all workers to review opportunities and learning needs on a regular basis. As part of this broader agenda, we suggest that employment centres might be converted into career development centres, building on their current resource centres (para.32) but making them central rather than marginal. This would mean redesigning the centres to appeal to a wider clientele (the design of the Café Jeunesse – see para.24 – provides a possible model), with benefit-claimant services discreetly partitioned or located elsewhere nearby. The upgraded centres should include comprehensive information on learning and work opportunities, with stronger staffing for information support than the centres have at present: the staff should be provided with appropriate professional training, including

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42. In particular, explicit references to career development services are confined to the production of information (cf. para.42): e.g. the statement that 'the ability of working Canadians to make the right learning decisions is hindered by incomplete labour market and learning information for adults' (Government of Canada (2002), op. cit. (ref.6), p.41).

assessing information needs, using LMI, and helping process skills. Clear national branding should be adopted, with appropriate provincial customisation, to aid public recognition; this should be accompanied by a co-ordinated marketing campaign. The branding might also be applied to satellite centres in community-based agencies and the like. If career/employment counselling is not provided as part of the service, information should be provided on where it can be obtained, and any costs involved.

62. Alongside such centres, consideration should also be given to strengthening personalised career development services delivered at a distance, through telephone, videoconferencing and e-mail. While web-based information is highly developed in Canada, the use of ICT for personalised services appears to be limited. Current examples include a career information hotline in Alberta, distance career counselling services at Memorial University and the University of Waterloo, and an e-mail counselling service as part of HRDC's support services to its Student Loans Programme. The review team was told that HRDC had considered the possibility of setting up a large callcentre in this area, but had rejected it partly on the grounds of the perceived difficulties of attracting and retaining adequately skilled staff for such work. Such problems have however been surmounted in other countries.<sup>43</sup> A significant initiative in this area, possibly using a national toll-free number linked to a network of provincial callcentres, could be a very proactive way of promoting lifelong learning, and of activating and supporting web-based information provision, as well as addressing the issue of equity of access to services in rural areas.

63. If the role of employment services in relation to lifelong learning strategies is strengthened and made more explicit, it will need to be reflected in revised Labour Market Development Agreements with the provinces. In principle, the process of devolution to the provinces could make it easier to adopt such a wider role, by facilitating the partnership arrangements it will require. In Quebec, for example, Emploi Quebec has been structured on a partnership basis within the government apparatus, with representation from employers, unions, educational institutions, other community bodies, and other government departments; there has also been strong devolution to parallel structures in 17 regions within the province. The policy statement of the Quebec Ministry of Education on adult and continuing education emphasises that 'there must be very close relations between the education system and the public employment services and collaboration must take place on a daily basis among the different points of service, while respecting their specific features'.<sup>44</sup>

64. A particularly important issue for liaison between education and employment authorities is prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR). This includes recognition of learning acquired on-the-job or in other informal ways. There is currently increasing attention to the importance of such processes in strategies for lifelong learning: it is noted that 'recognition of informal and non-credit learning would motivate more adults to build on their skills and would remove a significant barrier to full participation and mobility in the labour market for many Canadians'.<sup>45</sup> The processes can focus on the technical task of determining whether the individual's assessable informal learning meets the requirements of specified qualifications. But they can also focus in a more open-ended way on the career development task of helping individuals to identify and value the knowledge and competencies they have acquired informally

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43. See Watts, A.G. & Dent, G. (2002), 'Let your fingers do the walking': the use of telephone helplines in career information and guidance. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 30(1), pp.17-35.

44. Quebec Ministry of Education (2002), *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*, p.27. Quebec City. The action plan for the policy includes providing each school board with a resource 'envelope' for reception, referral, counselling and support services in every adult education centre, and asking the external resources of the Emploi Quebec network and independent community action groups 'to help improve reception and referral services and to offer counselling and support services to adults engaged in a training plan' (Quebec Ministry of Education (2002), *Action Plan for Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*, pp.7-8).

45. Government of Canada (2002), op. cit. (ref.6), p.31.

and to explore new opportunities to which they might be transferable. We suggest that this should be given at least as much importance as the technical task, and should be reviewed as an important feature of career development provision, with employers and employment authorities actively involved in promoting it alongside education authorities, and with professional training implications addressed through the Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (paras.72ff).

65. Along with the roles of the employment services and the education systems in relation to adults in general, attention is also needed to the roles of employers and trade unions in supporting employed individuals in their career development. In particular, consideration should be given to ways of encouraging employers to improve the support they offer. The Expert Panel on Skills has recommended that the ministers of Industry and HRDC should initiate a programme modelled on the UK 'Investors in People' programme to provide some appropriate form of recognition to organisations that meet specified standards of good practice in human resource development.<sup>46</sup> We support this recommendation and suggest that the standards should include career development processes for helping individuals regularly to develop and review personal learning plans, linked to their own goals and to the organisation's goals. Government funding should be provided for consultancy to help employers develop processes that will meet these standards. Offering such consultancy could then be an important task for career development practitioners.

66. In relation to labour market information, an FLMM Working Group has recently been looking at ways in which current provision might be improved; HRDC also has an internal task force looking at similar issues. One issue is the need to provide more information on career paths, and from the perspective of adults in transition. There is for example inadequate information on earnings potential from this perspective, and cross-pathing between information on learning and work opportunities could be extended.

67. It is also pointed out that most LMI at present uses occupations as the unit of analysis, and that this means that it does not capture changes within occupations and is slow in capturing and describing new occupations.<sup>47</sup> Basing LMI more on skills and competencies might in addition help individuals to move more flexibly across occupational boundaries, so enabling them to respond more flexibly to decline of demand within existing occupations or opening up of new occupations. There may be opportunities, using Canada's sophisticated LMI data-collection systems, to do some cutting-edge work in this area. But there may also be limits to what can be done here: lists of skills and competencies tend to be complex, and one of the virtues of collecting information by occupation is its parsimony. This may accordingly be a further reason, to add to those listed in Section 5.1, for emphasising the importance of human-assisted processes which can move across and beyond the boundaries which formal information imposes. In this respect, career development processes can be viewed as a powerful tool for opening up the labour market.

68. Enhanced attention is also needed to some target-groups. These include the four equity groups identified by the federal government as requiring special consideration in relation to labour market integration: women, Aboriginal people, visible minorities, and people with disabilities. More attention is needed to the distinctive needs of these groups in relation both to LMI and to wider career development service delivery. With immigrants, the selection and settlement processes are viewed sequentially, and employment services are provided as part of the settlement process. Well-qualified prospective immigrants, however, might want to have access to these services to inform their decision on whether to come to Canada or not. If Canada wishes to attract these immigrants, as it does, it might be well advised to provide such access.

69. Another group which merits more attention is older workers and other 'third age' individuals. A new FLMM report points out that the ageing population will result in increased health and old age security

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46. Expert Panel on Skills (2000), *op. cit.* (ref.24), p.63.

47. *Ibid.*, p.42.

expenditure. To relieve the pressure on public resources caused by the swift pace at which the retired population is growing, it proposes that public policy should aim to maintain employment among older workers and promote their re-entry into the labour market, linked to continuous training and adjustment, rather than on encouraging early retirement and reliance on income support measures. It also mentions that one of the features of successful programmes abroad is a client-centred approach that acknowledges the diverse circumstances, abilities, interests and goals of older people.<sup>48</sup> This could be linked to more flexible approaches to managing the transition to 'retirement'. It is an area where career development services could have a strong contribution to make.

#### 5.4 Quality assurance

70. A key trend in the career development field in Canada in recent years has been a move away from models of professional delivery within bureaucratic frameworks which contained their own quality-assurance processes, towards more diversified models of delivery, involving many different kinds of practitioners in a growing variety of settings. This trend is evident, for example, in whole-school approaches to guidance delivery (para.15), in the establishment by employers of career development review processes (para.40), in the contracting out of employment services (paras.22-23) and in the growth of services in the community-based and private sectors (Sections 4.4 and 4.5). There is a risk that, while increasing access to services, it may mean a lowering of professional standards and of the quality of service delivery.

71. There is indeed evidence that this may be occurring to some extent. There seem, for example, to have been reductions in the numbers of professional career development staff.<sup>49</sup> In the employment services, there are signs that standards of quality are still significantly being set by staff inherited from the old model. This is, inevitably, a dwindling asset. It is accordingly important that new quality-assurance processes, adapted to the new models, are put in place quickly enough to maintain momentum and generate new energy. There is also a need for clarity about the role of career development professionals within the new more diversified service-delivery models: to what extent is it concerned with setting high standards of service delivery, including intensive counselling, which address the full complexity of career decision-making processes; and/or with developing, managing and supporting a wider range of resources?

72. A key instrument for addressing these issues is the Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners. This provides a framework within which a variety of roles can be identified and distinguished. It has been developed through a careful process of consultation and consensus-building. The framework outlines a number of core competencies which all career development practitioners need to have, regardless of their employment setting, plus a range of specialised competencies the need for which will vary according to the nature of the service being provided, the type of work setting, and the client groups that are being served. It is currently being field-tested in a wide variety of settings to explore the diverse ways in which it might be used. It is hoped, for example, that it may bring greater consistency to training and professional recognition of practitioners in the field. This will not occur, however, without strategic leadership.

73. The current position regarding training and professional recognition in the career development field is fairly chaotic. The only province in which the profession is legally regulated is Quebec. Here anyone who wants to practise as a guidance counsellor or career counsellor has to be a member of l'Ordre

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48. Forum of Labour Market Ministers (2002), *Older Workers in the Labour Market: Employment Challenges, Programs and Policy Implications*. Winnipeg.

49. Federal questionnaire response, sections 2.3.5 and 6.2. Also British Columbia questionnaire response, section 6.5.

des Conseillers et des Conseillères en Orientation et des Psychoéducateurs et Psychoéducatrices du Québec (OCCOPPO). This has been in existence since 1963 and is one of 45 *ordres* which regulate a select number of professions in the province. Members have to possess a master's degree in guidance and counselling and to submit themselves to periodic professional inspections. Moves towards licensing career development professionals are also taking place in Alberta. Here and elsewhere, however, anyone can currently describe themselves as career counsellors or career development practitioners. The Canadian Counselling Association is seeking regulatory status for the counselling profession in a number of provinces and has introduced a 'career development' category of membership, but its counselling orientation and its restriction to those with a relevant master's level qualification may limit its appeal. Even where regulation takes place, those who do not use the restricted titles are able to operate as career practitioners without meeting the requirements. There are also a large number<sup>50</sup> of other professional associations in the career development field, mostly at provincial level and operating in particular sectors, and sometimes even for different linguistic groups, each with different membership restrictions.

74. The Standards and Guidelines seem to be broad and flexible enough to be attracting support from most of these different groups. The combination of the core competencies and the specialised competencies on career counselling come close to a master's level qualification; on the other hand, the range of other specialities makes it possible to recognise and legitimate a variety of other roles. They thus seem to provide the best prospect of introducing much-needed coherence into a disparate field. They could also provide clearer career paths for the large number of career development practitioners.<sup>51</sup>

75. There would seem, however, to be a need for a stronger structure to house the further development and implementation of the Standards and Guidelines. The current structure, based on a national steering committee elected periodically by a Stakeholder Liaison and Advisory Council, has proved very effective during the initial development phase. But implementation would seem to require something more robust, particularly in the light of the recommendation from the Expert Panel on Skills that FLMM in collaboration with CMEC should develop standardised professional certification procedures for guidance and career counselling.<sup>52</sup>

76. An option currently being considered is to establish a Sector Council in the career development field. The initial 23 Sector Councils were set up in 1997 to address a wide range of issues related to technological change, quality standards, planning and human resource development. They at present cover around 25% of the workforce, are growing in number, and have recently received enhanced federal funding (though sectors are expected to cover some of the costs). Most are structured on an industry basis, which raises the question of whether career development is an 'industry': arguably, it is an occupational cluster covering a variety of 'industries'. But the Sector Council concept is a flexible one (one of the councils, for example, deals with Aboriginal human resource development, a second with women in trades and technology, and a third with technology human resources) and able to embrace a variety of agendas. One advantage of going down this route would be to give career development a legitimate status within an established national network. Another is that it would invite participation from employers of career development practitioners as well as from the practitioners themselves: this is problematic because the

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50. One expert suggested to the review team that there might be 40-50 professional associations in Canada representing career development practitioners of one kind or another. A published estimate is 'more than 20' (Hiebert, B. (2000), Competencies for providing quality careers services: a look at Canadian standards for career development, *Revista Española de Orientación y Psicopedagogía*, 11(19), pp.5-19).

51. It is estimated that over 100,000 people are involved in providing career development services, and many consider this estimate to be too low (federal questionnaire response, section 4.0).

52. The panel's main (and rather limited) concern was that these procedures should be 'based, in part, on the ability to interpret and use labour market information' (Expert Panel on Skills (2000), op. cit. (ref.24), p.44).

employers are so diverse, but on some representational basis would seem important if the Standards and Guidelines are to have operational status, and might also encourage the employers (whether educational bodies or private companies) to view career development as a whole-institution activity (cf. paras.15 and 40).

77. The review team was told that an initial (unpublished) feasibility study conducted by HRDC to explore the possibility of establishing a Sector Council in the career development field had concluded 'maybe, but not yet'. It had suggested that as a first step, the field needed to be mapped more systematically, particularly in terms of the numbers of career development practitioners, where they practise, their salary levels, etc. This should include an exploration of alternative structures – a Sector Council, an Alliance of relevant professional organisations (possibly on the model of the Canadian Alliance of Education and Training Organizations), or a Centre of Excellence – for bringing co-ordination, cohesion and leadership to the sector as a whole.<sup>53</sup> The review team strongly endorses this proposal. Whatever body is created needs to contain strong career development expertise and to have credibility in the career development community.

78. Alongside the Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners, there is also a good case for developing organisational quality standards for service delivery in the field. The need for such standards is evident in the community-based services and in the private sector; it is also, however, evident in the educational sector, in relation to such issues as impartiality (para.59). Some standards exist for employment assistance services contracted out by HRDC (para.23); and FLMM's LMI Working Group is developing some standards for information products including websites (para.41). A fair number of organisations have also developed their own standards, sometimes with support from materials developed by such bodies as the Canadian Career Development Foundation, but this process is still largely informal and lacks a clear implementation strategy. This is an additional issue which a Sector Council or other co-ordinating body in the field might be asked to address. It could also provide a basis on which the full range of quality-assured career development provision could be made transparent to potential users at local level (para.86), so facilitating a continuum of access. Along with the Standards and Guidelines and the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs, it would provide a strong base for quality assurance and for the development of the field, particularly if care is taken to ensure that these three strategic instruments are appropriately harmonised.<sup>54</sup>

79. Linked to the issue of quality is the need for a stronger evidence base in the career development field. There are pockets of expertise in various parts of the country. One of the strongest is in Quebec, where an inter-university research centre has been established by Laval University and the University of Sherbrooke, with links with researchers in other Francophone countries. Because it is confined to Francophone researchers, its work is little known elsewhere in the country. There is an opportunity for Canada, with its bilingual policy, to provide stronger interaction between the Anglophone and Francophone traditions in career development research, which could be of wider international value and strengthen Canada's leadership role in the career development field (cf. para.87).<sup>55</sup> We accordingly suggest that discussions should take place to explore how this research centre might be extended to, or establish effective links with, other provinces.

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53. Federal questionnaire response, section 6.1

54. Encouragingly, the invitation for the current field tests of the Standards and Guidelines included support for field-testing them alongside the Blueprint.

55. The Francophone literature is well-informed by the Anglophone literature, especially from the USA, but references to Francophone work in the Anglophone literature are conspicuous by their paucity.

80. The recent launch of the *Canadian Journal of Career Development* is another promising development in the research area, as is the proposal to convene a think tank of researchers to articulate an applied research agenda in the field.<sup>56</sup> This might lead to the establishment of an applied research programme on career development, to include research on key policy-related issues: for example, how people find and use information, including web-based information (cf. para.44)<sup>57</sup>; on the demand for career development services<sup>58</sup>; on testing and evaluating new career development models<sup>59</sup>; and on the costs and benefits of different career development interventions<sup>60</sup>. The review team supports the think-tank proposal, and suggests that a further item for its agenda should be to identify additional infrastructure which is needed to support sustained co-ordination in the research field and in its links with policy and practice.

## 5.5 Strategic leadership

81. Hitherto, much of the strategic leadership in the career development field at national level has come from HRDC, working with a number of key community partners. Bodies like the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) and the National Life/Work Centre (NLWC) have played important roles. It seems significant, however, that HRDC's support for co-ordination and leadership activities appear to have been stronger and more systemic in the area of labour market information than in the wider field of career development. It provides core funding for bodies like the Canada Career Consortium, the Canadian Career Information Partnership and Canada WorkInfoNet, whereas its support for bodies like CCDF and NLWC has been on a project-by-project basis.<sup>61</sup> There seems almost to be 'over-kill' in the information area but 'under-kill' in the career development area. This is no doubt linked to the fact that HRDC's remit is clearer in the information field (para.28).

82. Another influential mechanism has been the annual National Consultation on Career Development (NATCON) – sponsored by HRDC and by a private trust, the Canadian Counselling Foundation – which brings together large numbers of practitioners from a wide variety of sectors across the provinces. There is currently a suggestion that NATCON might be converted into a membership organisation, using its national and cross-sectoral nature to establish other linkages and work towards a national action plan in areas considered important to the advancement of the sector as a whole.<sup>62</sup> Alongside the possibility of a new Sector Council or similar body, discussed in Section 5.4, this seems to be an idea which is well worth pursuing.

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56. Federal questionnaire response, section 12.6.

57. HRDC has recently commissioned the Social Research Demonstration Corporation to conduct a 'laboratory experiment' on the use of loans, grants and savings incentives in fostering adult education, which will include testing the role of information in career and learning decision-making. The rationale for the project includes the opportunity it presents for the government to 'establish a much needed research agenda that delves into an examination of how information matters to Canadians, and how it is used and translated into knowledge for decision making' (HRDC internal briefing note, March 2002).

58. The market research conducted by MORI for the Guidance Council in the UK could be a useful model here.

59. As in the earlier, influential CAMCRY programme (see federal questionnaire response, section 12.6).

60. Perhaps using the performance indicators in the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs (para.50) as a starting-point and framework.

61. Federal questionnaire response, section 9.1.

62. Federal questionnaire response, section 11.7.

83. A further proposal currently under consideration is for a National Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy. This follows two highly successful international symposia on this topic held in 1999 and 2001, and a provincial symposium held in Alberta in April 2002.<sup>63</sup> For the proposed National Symposium, an interim National Steering Group has been organised with representation from the FLMM LMI Working Group, CMEC, the Alliance of Sector Councils, HRDC and CCDF.<sup>64</sup> Such symposia can have valuable catalytic benefits, and the very process of preparing the symposium could be a valuable opportunity to consider key priorities in the field and how these might be addressed. The present report, along with the questionnaire responses prepared for this Review, may be useful inputs into this process.

84. At governmental level, while HRDC's leadership role remains crucial, there is a risk that its understanding of the field tends to be restricted by its own limited operational remit. This will be eased if this remit is extended beyond the confines of the Employment Insurance Act to cover a stronger role in relation to lifelong learning (para.61). This will give it broader spaces to work in, and will enable the more imaginative and strategic career development activities in which it has already engaged to become more mainstream within its activities. It will however require strong partnership arrangements with other jurisdictional bodies in order to ensure effective action. If career development is to be an integral part of the lifelong learning agenda, it needs to be broadly owned. The roles of FLMM and CMEC in harnessing strong provincial ownership are crucial. Both need to work in partnership, along with other federal government departments like Industry Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada; links with the private and voluntary sectors also need to be strong. The arrangements are likely to be complex, further complicated by the different jurisdictional arrangements in different fields. In the longer term, whatever national arrangements are made for strategic leadership in relation to lifelong learning need to embrace leadership in relation to career development. It may be, however, that career development is an area where immediate progress might be made. We suggest that the form this might take is a key issue for the National Symposium mentioned in para.83. It may be indeed that an appropriate mechanism could grow from the National Steering Group assembled to plan the event.

85. National arrangements need to be mirrored at provincial level. At present the Northwest Territories is the only jurisdiction that has a strategy for career development services across the lifespan of learning and work. In other provinces, the lack of clear goals, division of responsibilities and co-ordination arrangements is evident.<sup>65</sup> All provinces need a co-ordinated strategy, indicating how the variety of institutions and agencies involved – schools, colleges, universities, employment services, employers, unions, community-based agencies, and private-sector agencies – can work together to provide a continuum of support. The provincial symposia mentioned in para.83 could be helpful in initiating this process, as could the career development action groups which have been formed in some provinces. Quebec, with the strength of its partnership arrangements and with career development at the heart both of its school reforms (through the concept of the 'guidance-oriented school' – see paras.15 and 53) and, potentially, its adult learning policy (para.63)), has an opportunity to develop a particularly strong model which may be of wider interest.

86. Finally, local partnerships are also crucial, to provide leadership and co-ordination at local level.<sup>66</sup> Some models already exist. HRDC has published a *Partnership Handbook* for use by its regional and local offices: this seems designed to encourage a collaborative rather than purely competitive culture in

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63. Two further provincial symposia are currently being proposed: in British Columbia and in the Atlantic provinces.

64. Federal questionnaire response, section 11.7.

65. See e.g. British Columbia questionnaire response, section 2.3.

66. See Bezanson, L. & Kellett, R. (2001), *Integrating Career Information and Guidance Service at a Local Level*. OECD, Paris (mimeo).

relation to the contracting out of employment services. In Toronto, a partnership has been formed between the HRDC employment offices and a number of community agencies, aimed at providing seamless services to clients. Some of the work of the Regional Representatives within the Career Circuit programme (para.36) has been concerned with community capacity building, fostering networking at local level between organisations offering career development services to young people. These models need to be extended to bring together at local level all organisations providing quality-assured career development services on a lifelong basis (see para.78), so that they can co-ordinate their provision, identify and seek to fill gaps, and promote themselves in a coherent way to clients.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

87. The strengths of the career development system in Canada include:

- The extent and quality of the labour market information (though there are still gaps which need to be filled).
- The development of creative resources (like The Real Game).
- The development of strategic instruments (notably the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs and the Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners).
- The creative support for public-private partnerships and for third-sector initiatives, both at national level (supporting social entrepreneurship through bodies like the Canadian Career Development Foundation and the National Life/Work Centre, plus cross-sector partnership through bodies like the Canada Career Consortium, the Canadian Career Information Partnership and Canada WorkInfoNet) and at local level (supporting community capacity building). A good example is Career Circuit (see para.36) which effectively combines the two levels.

In all of these respects, Canada is widely recognised as being a world leader, a position endorsed and reinforced by the two recent international symposia on career development and public policy (funded by HRDC and managed and co-ordinated by the Canadian Career Development Foundation).

88. It is significant that HRDC has had a significant role in all four of these areas, sometimes as deliverer, sometimes as initiator, and sometimes as funder. Other organisations have played important roles too, but HRDC's support and leadership have been crucial. This arguably reflects its creativity in responding to the structural constraints imposed on it, in two respects:

- Its jurisdictional limitations, as a federal ministry operating within a constitutional and political structure in which many governmental powers (including responsibility for education) are held by the provinces and in which the political dynamics favouring greater devolution have been strong.
- Its operational limitations: although it has a broad HRD remit, which implies a long-term remit in relation to all Canadians, its service-delivery functions are strongly framed by the

Employment Insurance Act and are therefore addressed to specified target-groups and short-term outcomes, especially getting the unemployed back to work with maximum speed.

89. But if the strengths of the Canadian career development system reflect HRDC's creativity in responding to these restrictions, the weaknesses of the system also stem from these restrictions. They include, in particular:

- The focus on production of labour market information and of other resources rather than on their effective utilisation.
- The lack of a coherent framework for career development services within the educational system.
- The fact that career development services for adults are based largely on a crisis-oriented deficit model addressed to specific target-groups rather than on a proactive developmental model engaging all Canadians, including those in employment.
- The lack of adequate quality assurance across the career development field.
- The lack of strategic leadership capable of co-ordinating the breadth of career development provision.

90. The lifelong learning agenda potentially opens up a much wider view, in which all Canadians are encouraged and supported in planning the development of their skills, learning and work throughout life. Within such an agenda, addressing the five weaknesses identified in para.89 becomes a matter of high priority. Our analyses and suggestions in Section 5 have addressed each of these issues in turn. We hope that they will be helpful in enabling Canada to implement its lifelong learning agenda and to maintain its international leadership role in the career development field.

## **APPENDIX 1: OECD REVIEW TEAM**

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## APPENDIX 2: REVIEW TEAM PROGRAMME

### **Tuesday 2 July: Ottawa**

- 8.30 National Headquarters, Human Resources Development Canada: meetings with senior officials and managers on labour market policy, skills and learning, applied research, youth initiatives, student loans programme, LMI task force, and Aboriginal programmes

### **Wednesday 3 July: Ottawa**

- 8.00 National Headquarters, Human Resources Development Canada: meeting on human resources partnerships
- 8.30 Round-table meeting with national career development organisations (Alliance of Sector Councils, Canada Career Consortium, Canada Career Information Partnership, Canadian Career Development Foundation, National Life/Work Centre, Canada WorkInfoNet)
- 13.00 Visit to Human Resource Centre of Canada (HRCC) Ottawa Centre and Youth Employment Centre
- 14.15 Visit to Tecsalt Eduplus Inc.
- 15.30 Meeting with Canadian Alliance of Education and Training Organizations (CAETO)

### **Thursday 4 July: Toronto**

- 8.30 Meeting with senior officials at HRDC Ontario Region offices
- 10.00 Meeting with Head of Guidance Counselling Branch, Province of Ontario Ministry of Education
- 11.00 Meeting with trainer from George Brown College
- 13.00 Visit to Jewish Vocational Services
- 14.30 – 16.30 Meeting at Canadian Foundation of Economic Education

### **Friday 5 July: Winnipeg**

- 8.30 Meeting with senior officials from HRDC Information Services, Winnipeg Employment Centre
- 11.00 Meeting with Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) Secretariat
- 12.00 Lunch meeting with Deputy Minister and other senior officials from Manitoba Education, Training and Youth and with HRDC Regional Office officials
- 13.45 Round-table discussion with managers and practitioners from the Manitoba Ministry of Employment and Training Services on career development programmes relating to schools, youth, adults, social welfare, unemployed, immigrants and refugees, disabled groups, and Aboriginals

**Monday 8 July: Quebec City**

- 9.00 Meeting with senior officials from Quebec Ministry of Education
- 11.00 Visit to Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi
- 13.00 Lunch meeting with research directors from Laval University and the University of Sherbrooke
- 15.00 Meeting with various service-delivery providers within the education network in Quebec

**Tuesday 9 July: Montreal**

- 9.00 Meeting with senior officials from Emploi Quebec
- 14.00 Meeting with two senior university researchers
- 15.00 Meeting with President of l'Ordre des Conseillers et des Conseillères en Orientation et des Psychoéducateurs et Psychoéducatrices du Quebec (OCCOPPO)
- 16.00 Meeting with staff of Student Services at University of Quebec at Montreal

**Wednesday 10 July: Montreal**

- 8.45 Meeting with senior officials from HRDC Quebec Region
- 11.00 Visit to Café Jeunesse
- 13.00 Debrief and feedback session to senior officials from HRDC Headquarters, HRDC Quebec Region and Quebec Ministry of Education

### APPENDIX 3: SUMMARY OF SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<b>Suggestion/recommendation</b>	<b>See para(s).</b>
The strategy for developing career and labour market information as a public good should include the development of a network of forms of skilled personal help	45
If lifelong learning requires placing the individual at the centre, funding policies in relation to educational institutions need to ensure that the delivery of career development services to students is not dependent on whether or not these are viewed by school boards and senior management as according with their institutional goals and interests	46
More systematic information is needed on the delivery of career development services within educational institutions in the different provinces, as a base for accountability and for identifying gaps and deficiencies which need to be addressed	47
The potential benefits of Canada's federal system, as a natural laboratory in which innovative practices can be introduced, different models tested, and their benefits shared, should be exploited in the career development field through more systematic provision for data collection, comparative evaluation, and exchanges of practice	47
The repeated evidence of asking teachers of other subjects to teach career education programmes without adequate in-service training should be attended to	48
The recommendation of the Expert Panel on Skills that the ministers of education and school boards (through CMEC), in collaboration with business and industry, should develop a concerted strategy for progressively incorporating 'work studies' and experience-with-work programmes as core elements of elementary and secondary curricula should be implemented, but extended to cover not just work studies but career education as a whole	49
The feasibility of systematically publishing data linked to the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs performance indicators should be investigated, as a way of introducing more accountability into the system	50
Means of developing local accountability to students, parents and the wider community should be explored further, particularly if provinces or school boards can establish audit or inspection procedures to ensure that all schools adopt them	51

More systematic local arrangements are needed for brokerage through education-business councils and the like, to support work experience programmes for students	52
The concept of the 'guidance-oriented school' being developed in Quebec should be watched carefully by other provinces, particularly if it is developed to incorporate some elements of whole-school approaches developed elsewhere and a more dynamic model of career development	53
In the training of guidance counsellors, more attention should be given to the development of consultation skills	54
If whole-school approaches to guidance and career development are to be sustainable, attention needs to be given to these areas in the initial training of all teachers	54
The development of closer links between schools and employment services should be strongly encouraged	55
Provinces should be encouraged, through CMEC, to conduct an immediate review of current career development provision in universities and colleges and of its adequacy in relation to student demand, and then to develop appropriate guidelines for such provision; within this work, particular attention should be given to the roles and training of staff in career development services	56-57
As part of their accountability, post-secondary institutions should be required to publish systematic data on the destinations of former students and to make this information available to incoming students	58
Wherever possible, career development and guidance services within universities and colleges should be made available not only to current students but also to the wider community; the issue of who should pay for such extended services needs to be clarified	59
Employment centres run by HRDC and the provinces should be converted into career development centres, to include comprehensive information on learning and work opportunities, with staffing for information support; these staff should be provided with appropriate professional training	61
Clear national branding should be adopted, with appropriate provincial customisation, for the new career development centres, and should be accompanied by a co-ordinated marketing campaign; the branding might also be applied to satellite centres in community-based agencies and the like	61
If career/employment counselling is not provided within the new career development centres, information should be provided on where it can be obtained, and any costs involved	61
Alongside such centres, consideration should be given to strengthening personalised career development services delivered at a distance, through telephone, videoconferencing and e-mail, possibly using a national toll-free number linked to a	62

network of provincial callcentres	
If the role of employment services in relation to lifelong learning strategies is strengthened and made more explicit, this should be reflected in revised Labour Market Development Agreements with the provinces	63
Arrangements for prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) should be reviewed as an important feature of career development provision, addressing professional training implications through the Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners	64
The recommendation of the Expert Panel on Skills that the ministers of Industry and of HRDC should initiate a programme modelled on the UK ‘Investors in People’ programme to kitemark organisations that meet specified standards of good practice in human resource development should be implemented; the standards should include career development processes for helping individuals regularly to develop and review learning plans, linked to their own goals and to the organisation’s goals; and government funding should be provided for consultancy to help employers develop processes that will meet these standards	65
The FLMM Working Group on LMI should be encouraged to examine: the need for more information on career paths, and from the perspective of adults in transition; the need for more cross-pathing between information on learning and work opportunities; and ways of basing LMI more on skills and competencies rather than occupations	66-67
The role of human-assisted processes in enabling individuals to explore across and beyond occupational boundaries should be viewed as a powerful tool for opening up the labour market	67
Enhanced attention is needed to the distinctive career development needs of women, Aboriginal people, visible minorities, and people with disabilities, in relation both to LMI and to wider service delivery; prospective immigrants should be able to access career development services to inform their decision on whether to come to Canada or not	68
More attention is needed to the career development of older workers and ‘third age’ individuals, linked to more flexible approaches to managing the transition to ‘retirement’	69
Greater clarity is needed about the role of career development professionals within the new more diversified service-delivery models	71
A stronger structure is needed to house the further development and implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners; as a first step, the field needs to be mapped more systematically; this should include an exploration of alternative structures – including the possibility of setting up a new Sector Council – for bringing co-ordination, cohesion and leadership to the career development field; whatever body is created needs to contain strong career development expertise and have credibility in the career development community	72-77

The new Sector Council or other body should be asked to address the need for organisational quality standards for service delivery in the career development field, taking care to harmonise them with the Standards and Guidelines and with the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs	78
The inter-university research centre established by Laval University and the University of Sherbrooke should be encouraged to explore how it might be extended to, or establish effective links with, other provinces, to establish stronger interaction between the Anglophone and Francophone traditions in career development research	79
A think tank of researchers should be convened to articulate an applied research agenda in the career development field; this might lead to an applied research programme on career development, to include research on key policy-related issues; it should also identify additional infrastructure needed to support sustained co-ordination in career development research and its links with policy and practice	80
The possibility of converting NATCON into a membership organisation should be explored further	83
In the longer term, whatever arrangements are made for strategic leadership in relation to lifelong learning need to embrace leadership in relation to career development	84
The proposed National Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy should be asked to consider more immediate arrangements for strategic leadership at governmental level in relation to career development, including the possibility that an appropriate mechanism might grow from the National Steering Group assembled to plan the event; the present report, along with the questionnaire responses prepared for the OECD Review, should be considered as possible inputs into this process	83-84
All provinces should be encouraged to develop a coherent strategy for career development services, indicating how the variety of institutions and agencies involved can work together to provide a continuum of support	85
Local partnerships of career development providers should be encouraged, to co-ordinate their provision, identify and seek to fill gaps, and promote themselves in a coherent way to clients of all ages	86