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5. CAREER GUIDANCE IN NORDIC SELF GOVERNING REGIONS

Opportunities and Challenges

ABSTRACT

The Nordic self-governing regions (the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands) pose a specific context for careers guidance policy and practice. Characterised by their island topographies, small populations and historically minoritised languages, these regions have in recent years gained greater autonomy over their domestic affairs. As a result steps have been taken towards developing domestic careers guidance policy and practice suitable for their own territories. In this chapter case studies of two of these regions will be presented – Greenland and the Faroes – in order to explore the specific challenges and opportunities facing these communities. With both regions historically subordinate to the Danish crown, these communities have a shared inheritance in terms of education, economic and careers policy, and they also face shared challenges in terms of their distinctive labour markets, language contexts and concerns with migration. However, as this chapter will show the specific manifestation of these challenges, and responses to these challenges has differed between the communities. The findings demonstrate how the communities of Greenland and the Faroe Islands are developing approaches to careers guidance policy and practice which draw from existing Nordic approaches, and benefit substantially from Nordic co-operation, but which also challenge and develop their Nordic and specifically Danish inheritances to create distinctive new models.

INTRODUCTION: NORDIC SELF-GOVERNING REGIONS

The Nordic self-governing regions are distinctive within the Nordic region in terms of career guidance policy and practice, because their growing autonomy has resulted in a drive to create *new* territory-specific policy and systems. Historically, the three self-governing regions have different relationships with the wider Nordic context. The Åland Islands, situated in the Gulf of Bothnia, historically belong to Finland, but are Swedish speaking. Greenland (situated between the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans) and the Faroes (situated in the North Atlantic) are both historically part of

the Danish realm. All three regions are now identified as self-governing regions, with differing levels of autonomy in terms of their domestic affairs. The Nordic context of these regions is established not only through their historical relationships to the countries of Denmark, Finland and Sweden, but also through membership of the Nordic Council, with the Faroes and Åland joining in 1970 and Greenland 1984. Indeed, their influence within the Council has grown since the 'Åland Document' was adopted by the Ministers for Nordic co-operation in 2007 (Nordic Council, n.d., 2007). Through the Nordic Council the territories are engaged in various Nordic initiatives and co-operations.

A key consideration in creating new systems and policies for careers guidance concerns the specific needs of the areas these systems serve. In this respect the context of the self-governing regions have some key features – most notably their island topographies, small populations and particular language contexts. These create specific labour market, education and cultural contexts, all of which can affect the career development experiences of individuals and potential policy and practice responses (Alexander & Hooley, 2018). In this chapter the experiences of two of the Nordic self-governing regions will be explored – Greenland and the Faroes. Comparing these two case studies is instructive, because both share a historical and on-going relationship with Denmark, and in many ways share cultural and political influences which are Danish. However, through exploring the case studies it is possible to show how the specific needs of these communities vary, as do the trajectories they are taking towards moving beyond their Danish inheritances and developing their own career guidance systems. This chapter will begin by exploring some of the contextual influences on career guidance in Greenland and the Faroe Islands, before moving on to considering case studies of the careers guidance systems in these territories and finishing with a discussion of the careers guidance practice and policy implications.

GREENLAND AND THE FAROE ISLANDS: CONTEXT

Both Greenland and the Faroe Islands are island communities. The Faroe Islands are a small North Atlantic archipelago situated about halfway between Iceland, Norway and Scotland, with a total area of about 1,400 square kilometres. Greenland is classified as the world's largest island, having a total area of 2,127,600 square kilometres and covering an area of three climatic zones: high-arctic, low-arctic and sub-arctic. Despite differences in landmass, the populations of the areas are similar with a population in the Faroes of just over 51,000 and around 56,000 in Greenland.

A very significant difference between the Faroe Islands and Greenland stems from the relative connectedness of the communities within these regions. In the Faroe Islands about 85% of the islands are well connected with roads, tunnels, bridges and subsea tunnels, while more peripheral areas are connected with ferries and

Figure 5.1. Members of the Nordic Council (by S. Solberg J., available from https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Location_Nordic_Council.svg, under license CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en>)

helicopters (Føroya Landsstýri, 2018). In Greenland, there are five municipalities, each with a regional main city, however there are no roads between the cities, with settlements only connected by sea and air traffic and digital communications. As a result, in Greenland some of the settlements could be said to be ‘islands’ within a larger island.

In common with other island communities, the sea has a very significant impact on the economy and culture of both Greenland and the Faroes (Alexander, 2016; Hayfield, Olavsson, & Patursson, 2016; Hayward, 2012). The Faroese economy is still largely reliant on the fishing industry (including aquaculture), although there has been some diversification in recent times (Føroya Landsstýri, 2018). In Greenland, historically seal hunting formed a significant part of the economy, and although this has declined in recent years, fishing more broadly remains very significant, and fish is the main export of the country (Statistics Greenland, 2018b). Being small, island economies can be vulnerable to economic fluctuations, and classically for island economies ‘flexible specialisation is the watchword’: being responsive and

capitalising on opportunities as they arise, especially those potentials arising from global connectivity (King, 2009, p. 58). As with other island areas, both territories have pursued some diversification in industry in recent years, with tourism a notable growth industry for both regions.

Migration is also a key feature of island communities (King, 2009), typically with emigration of young people due to the small labour markets of island communities and limited ability to provide a full range of higher education (Sultana, 2006). In the Faroes and Greenland the influence of migration – both emigration and immigration is also acute, and a much larger concern than in other Nordic countries. In other Nordic countries (apart from Norway) the proportions of young people leaving their home countries for educational purposes is below 5%, while this figure in the Faroe Islands has been above 60% for some decades (Reistrup & á Rógvi, 2012), and in Greenland recent figures show that 40% of higher education students leave Greenland to study elsewhere (Statistics Greenland, 2018a). In Iceland the figure is 25% but the vast majority of these return to Iceland after completing their education.

The education system is a significant influence in terms of the career and migration routes of young people. In both Greenland and the Faroe Islands education more or less follows the Danish system. One of the key differences to the Danish system in the Faroes is that Faroese is the main spoken medium of education at all levels, including higher education. However, when reaching upper-secondary education about 80% of teaching materials are in Danish (Johannesarson, 2018). In Greenland the language context is more complex with Greenlandic having three main varieties which are all quite distinct from one another. In schools, children are taught Central West Greenlandic, as well as Danish, and some English. Developing fluency in multiple languages is a central part of the education system in both regions, and this fluency is also necessary for potential migration to other communities on completion of formal education.

In other remote and rural contexts research has demonstrated that through engagement with the education system young people can ‘learn to leave’ their communities (Corbett, 2007). The use of a language and the inheritance of a system from ‘elsewhere’ is one way that in Greenland and the Faroes young people may learn to look beyond their communities for educational and employment opportunities. In addition, experiences of physical mobility are built into the education system, with students from more remote parts of Greenland and the Faroe Islands having to leave their home areas in order to access upper secondary schools.

Higher education is available at the University of Greenland and the University of the Faroes, and these institutions have been instrumental in increasing the range of courses available to students who wish to stay in their communities. However, there remain many professions that it is impossible to train for within the islands, meaning that young people pursuing certain options including medicine, dentistry, art, foreign languages and some engineering specialisations, have to leave. In addition, there is a strong tradition of going elsewhere for higher education, and as a result both

territories see large numbers of young people leave every year for the purposes of study. Out-migration of young people is also supported by funding systems, which mean that higher education is free of charge in Denmark and other Nordic countries, and costs of living are covered through the Danish government's support for students. The information service 'Info Norden' provided through the Nordic Council of Ministers also provides information and support to students to move to other Nordic countries for the purposes of study or work. The Greenlandic and Faroese governments also offer funding for students who wish to study outside of the Nordic region and provide additional annual travel grants for students to return home. Despite the funding available for study elsewhere, Denmark remains the most common destination due to historical connections, the language context and the social context (with students often having family or friends in Denmark).

The movements of young people show some differences between the Faroes and Greenland. Although out migration of young people in both communities remains a concern, recent figures from the Faroes indicate a reverse trend with the majority of those returning to the islands being young Faroese-born couples with children (Sólstein, 2018). In Greenland net-outmigration remains high, with 1,209 immigrants in 2017 and 2,580 out-migrants. In recent years, there has been significant immigration of highly educated younger Danish people who come with professional skills that are needed (for example doctors, dentists, teachers, engineers etc). These migrants are often responding to labour market needs and leave Greenland after a short working period. There is a saying amongst the locals that the young Danish teachers in the 'gymnasium' (upper secondary schools) are 'pædagogikum ryttere', which means riders who come to Greenland merely to get their professional teacher training, staying for two or three years before returning to Denmark. This is significant especially given the context where many young Greenlandic students who choose to study in Denmark and gain professional skills choose not to return.

Migration in Greenland and the Faroes is also significant for adult workers. Economic fluctuations in small economies with a reliance on sea-based industries, has meant that historically migration patterns related to employment have varied greatly. Examples include some periods of high emigration from the Faroes linked with fluctuations in the fishing industry (Føroya Landsstýri, 2013) and high levels of immigration in the 1950s and 60s in Greenland when the country was industrialising. Within Greenland, supporting internal migration in order to meet labour market needs remains a priority and adults are able to apply for funding to enable them to move around Greenland in order to access work. It is notable that in both communities, the structure of the labour market is highly differentiated by gender. Within the fishery highly skilled technical jobs are mostly male, and fish processing work is mostly female, and this has a knock-on impact in terms of the rest of the economy. In the Faroes Hayfield et al. (2016) have noted that between 75–92% of employees in care, cleaning, health, sales and food production are female, and between 97–99% of employees in electronics, construction, transport and fisheries are male

(see also Hayfield, 2018; Hovgaard, 2015). Migration patterns therefore also show some impacts of gender, with immigration to Greenland in the 1950s and 60s for example being largely Danish men (Langgård, 1995) with some men later marrying Greenlandic women and settling down. In the Faroes, high levels of emigration by women in the past has been balanced in part by an immigration of women from other parts of the world. Indeed, in the last couple of decades the islands have experienced an increase in in-migration with people coming from different parts of the world, notably from Asia, Eastern Europe and Africa (Hagstova Føroya, 2011).

GREENLAND AND THE FAROE ISLANDS: CAREERS GUIDANCE

Having considered some of the contextual factors within Greenland and the Faroe Islands, this section looks specifically at the career guidance policy and practice context and developments in these communities. This is presented as a case study of each region.

The Faroe Islands: Career Guidance and Counselling

In the Faroe Islands, career guidance was first introduced in upper-secondary education in 1974 with the establishment of a two-year higher preparatory course (HF), mainly aimed at adults who wanted to prepare for further or higher education (Róin, 2018), and was later offered in all upper-secondary schools, in secondary education, vocational education and higher education (Holm, 2014). The early guidance practitioners, who were teachers, did not have access to any education and training, but participated in events in Denmark that were organised for practitioners in upper-secondary education. In 1989, leading guidance practitioners in the Faroes formed a Guidance Association, (Vegleiðarafelagið), and The Ministry of Education offered a six-week training course for practitioners, based on a Danish model. The first group completed this basic training in 1991 (Róin, 2018), but following this only occasional modules from the course have been offered.

In 2013 a significant step towards creating a specifically Faroese guidance system was achieved when an MA degree in careers guidance was launched at the University of the Faroe Islands. This came about after nearly two decades of advocacy work by practitioners who saw the growing need for competence development and professionalisation of the field. Until this point careers guidance was referred to as ‘vegleiðing’ in Faroese (similar to the Danish vejledning), while the new course introduced the terminology of ‘Career Guidance and Counselling’ (CGC) to the region. The development and planning for the MA was undertaken by a university based working group, with assistance provided by a coordinator from Iceland, who was instrumental in designing a programme acceptable to all stakeholders. The Faroese Guidance Association also provided a central contribution. Drawing on the wide-ranging expertise of the inter-Nordic VALA network, which is a network of

career guidance and counselling programmes at higher education institutions in the Nordic and Baltic countries, it was possible to offer a full MA programme on a part-time basis to Faroese guidance practitioners. From the outset, the aim was to create a nationally coordinated lifelong guidance system through the development of the MA. Through the course students have worked on topics that are relevant to establishing a Faroese approach to career management skills and guidance. These include developing a needs analysis among stakeholders, and a jointly developed strategy for lifelong guidance in the Faroes. The strategy was built on local needs identified by practitioners and stakeholders, on expertise developed through the dissertation topics of the students (which were targeted on key issues), and on evidence from research and good practice. The European resource kit for lifelong guidance policy development from the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN, 2012) was used as the basis of the strategy development. The strategy proposal was handed to relevant ministries and stakeholders at a conference about lifelong guidance and ICT in guidance in Tórshavn in 2017.

Although careers guidance has mainly been offered within the formal education system in the Faroes, there have been a few exceptions. Until 2010, there was an adult guidance service in Tórshavn, the capital, which offered guidance to people outside the education system a few hours a week. Another exception was the establishment of the International Office (Altjóða Skrivstovan), originally intended to provide guidance to school leavers who wanted to pursue higher education outside of the Nordic region. The most recent and innovative initiative is a part-time lifelong guidance service offered at the Distance Education Centre (Fjarnám) in the northern municipality of Klaksvík. This innovation is part of a movement in the guidance community in the Faroe Islands, building on the work of the MA course and proposed strategy, to establish a nationally coordinated lifelong guidance service for the whole island community (Hansen, 2017).

Greenland: Career Guidance and Counselling

In Greenland, careers guidance first appeared in legislation in 1982, which required careers guidance to be provided in primary schools and through municipality offices through the labour office. This legislation made coordination a requirement between educational and vocational career counselling and careers guidance provided for citizens generally. However, in practice careers guidance provision was conducted differently in different areas, and the guidance counsellors did not have a common education as counsellors. In 2000 the importance of collective education for careers and education counsellors was recognised and a basic career counselling education course (Vejledergrunduddannelsen) was funded. In 2011, the Department of Education further recognised the importance of a national overview of career and educational guidance in Greenland, and a review of provision was ordered (Jessing, 2011). This review led to new legislation and the development of a National Centre for Guidance (vejledning).

In addition to provision in the education system, careers guidance in Greenland is also provided in Majoriaq centres. There are 17 Majoriaq centres in Greenland with one centre in each town. The centres provide career guidance and support for young people and adults to upgrade their qualifications. Historically, Majoriaq centres were established in a period (1980–1990) where there were many young people who did not finish primary school and therefore needed some documents to evidence their basic education and skills. The Majoriaq centres provide support for studying general subjects such as Greenlandic, Danish, English and Maths and allow individuals to get a completion document for compulsory education.

In addition to careers guidance services, and in recognition of the, sometimes acute, social challenges in Greenland, school students and everyone who attends a Majoriaq centre has access to psychological and social assistance through the “Studenterrådgivningen”, which is a student guidance service. This system is inspired by the Danish system, but whereas in Denmark it started as an NGO, in Greenland the system is embedded in policy and has official funding – demonstrating the recognition of the importance of this service.

The National Centre for Guidance was established in 2014 and is the responsibility of the Education Department of the Naalakkersuisut (n.d.) (The Government of Greenland). The Centre was established in order to coordinate all the career guidance services in different places including the education system and the Majoriaq centres. The Centre is also responsible for educating career guidance counsellors. The education provided uses a Danish curriculum, with resources also primarily in Danish (although one of the educators is Greenlandic speaking). In 2011, the review of career guidance in Greenland made a number of recommendations, one of which was to consider aligning the education provision to diploma or master’s level (Jessing, 2011). However, this recommendation has not yet been taken forward.

Because of the geographic size of Greenland and the difficulties of transportation between communities, there is a risk that some careers guidance counsellors could be quite professionally isolated (Vahl, 2018). Therefore, the Centre for National Career Guidance arranges several regional network meetings for practitioners every year in cooperation with local careers guidance institutions, as well as organising a national conference every second year. The National Centre for Guidance is also the host organisation for the Nordic Network for Adult Learning NVL (NVL, 2017a).

DISCUSSION: CAREER GUIDANCE PRACTICE

The communities of the Faroe Islands and Greenland share many key issues in terms of their context: they have small and distinctive economies with a reliance on sea-based industries, a minoritised language context, embedded experiences of migration, and an education system which is largely based on Danish models. However, there are also significant differences between the communities, in areas such as connectivity between communities, the language context, relationships with

Denmark, and trends in migration. Although these contexts share some similarity with other island communities in the Nordic region (of which there are thousands), and with other rural or remote areas in the Nordic region (see for example Bakke, 2018), these communities are distinct because of their capacity to develop their own careers guidance policy and practice, rather than being governed by policy and practice determined by mainland or urban areas. In this section, the impact of context on the practice of careers guidance is considered, establishing a clear need for context-specific systems and policy.

A key impact on practice is that the distinctive nature of the economies of these regions means that for careers practitioners it is vitally important that they have a strong, detailed understanding of the specific nature of the local labour market. However, given the importance of flexibility and responsiveness in island economies, and the relatively small labour markets, a culture of careers guidance which fosters individuals' capacity for adaptability and flexibility is also likely to be important – resourcing individuals to have 'chameleon careers' in Sultana's terminology (Sultana, 2006). The need for flexibility is particularly acute in a minoritised language context, such as Greenland or the Faroes, where the capacity to bring in labour through immigration may be limited, with some professional roles requiring functional literacy in Faroese or Greenlandic (and often Danish too). However, in Greenland where the diversity of Inuit languages is immense in practice many immigrants from Denmark can remain monolingual and as such there may be fewer barriers to immigration, although potentially some additional barriers in terms of integration of migrants (Langgård, 1992).

In terms of resourcing individual flexibility, all-age careers guidance services are vital, and it is no surprise that the existence of the Majoriaq centres in Greenland recognise the value of adult guidance, as does the development of adult guidance services through Fjarnám in the Faroe Islands. Indeed, the practitioner groups in both the Faroes and Greenland, view such services as vital, and have a clear vision of lifelong guidance services that are holistic, cross-sectoral and nationally coordinated. Such services are not widely available in other Nordic countries (NVL, 2017b) despite the fact that calls for lifelong guidance services are apparent across the region. However, the need for such services is perhaps more acute in the self-governing regions, and given that these regions are currently thinking about and designing their own systems, there is considerable potential for the development of new models that are suitable for their contexts.

With mobility a key feature of the lived experience of people in the Faroes and Greenland both in terms of work and educational transition (Hovgaard & Kristiansen, 2008), migration must necessarily become a key concern for careers professionals. Given that the migration literature also shows that the ability to migrate (mobility capital) is not evenly distributed among individuals (Corbett, 2007; King, 2009), consideration of different forms of mobility capital (e.g. financial resources, educational qualifications, social connections, fluency in multiple languages) is an

important part of careers services (Alexander, 2018; Alexander & Hooley, 2018). Practical implications for advisers are that as well as an in-depth understanding of the local economy, careers professionals require significant knowledge of international education and career systems. International knowledge includes Denmark certainly, but increasingly as the colonial ties to Denmark loosen, and international study to nations outside of the Nordic countries is also supported, this knowledge comprises other European and global nations. The importance of guidance for international mobility is clear when we consider that in the Faroes an International Office was set up specifically to provide guidance to school leavers who wanted to pursue higher education outside of the Nordic region.

Mobility, including the different capacities of individuals to migrate, and the challenges of immigration into different language contexts also raises important questions about ethical practice within careers provision in these communities, and more widely equalities and social justice issues. Within the Nordic context, arguably equality and social justice are strong social values and ensuring everyone has the ability to pursue the paths they wish is a strongly held value. The existence of generous funding in the Faroes and Greenland to enable young people to pursue Higher Education study elsewhere is part of this commitment to social equity. Nordic initiatives such as the information service 'Info Norden', and wider European initiatives such as the Euroguidance network (which supports guidance practitioners in 34 European countries and specifically aims to raise awareness of the value of international mobility), are also specifically designed to reinforce and support mobility. However, facilitating mobility through the provision of finance potentially overlooks the importance of other forms of resource in mobility decisions, including social and familial background, and issues of identity in how young people relate to their communities and the choices they make (Bakke, 2018). To truly enable individuals to have equal access to pathways outside of their communities would require additional focus on these other forms of resources. Further there are challenging social justice issues around the facilitation of movement when 'what is good for the individual may be in tension with the needs of society' (Hooley & Sultana, 2016, p. 4). This is particularly clear in Greenland where young people leave to train in professions that may be needed in the community, but then choose to stay away, potentially leaving the community depleted, and instead Greenland experiences a steady throughput of young Danish professionals. How careers services and professionals address issues of inequality in mobility, and balance the needs of individuals and communities is a key challenge in these areas.

Other ethical and professional challenges may come from meeting issues of multiple disadvantage created through migration patterns and embedded structural issues – for example working with immigrant women to the Faroe Islands, who are potentially multiply disadvantaged by their gender, and the language context which can require functional literacy in two additional languages: Faroese and Danish (Holm, O'Rourke, & Danson, 2019). Issues of social integration are also an

important theme, particularly in terms of immigrant populations to the Faroe Islands, and more broadly in terms of the domestic population in Greenland where some communities experience significant geographical isolation and social challenges. Ensuring additional support for social integration is important, and it is notable that such support is available through the Majoriaq centres in Greenland.

DISCUSSION: CAREER GUIDANCE POLICY

Despite the specificity of the context of Greenland and the Faroes, the establishment of careers guidance policy and practice within these communities has been heavily influenced by Danish approaches. Education for careers professionals has traditionally been based on Danish curricula, using Danish materials, and often, Danish educators. Indeed, in both communities it is still the case that even where careers guidance may be delivered in Greenlandic or Faroese, the majority of careers resources are written in Danish. Drawing on Sultana's (2006) observation of the challenges of importing careers resources to small states, it is clear here that there are potentially challenges around the relevance of Danish materials and frameworks to Faroese and Greenlandic contexts – how far for example do these materials take account of the specificity of the labour market, and the importance of migration in these contexts?

Developing an approach to careers guidance policy and practice, which is distinctly Faroese or Greenlandic is not just important for meeting the specific needs of the communities, but also as part of establishing the autonomy and identity of the Faroes and Greenland in their own right. Indeed work in other communities has explored the potential of developing careers guidance frameworks as part of an emancipatory process, which incorporate and account for specific cultural contexts – for example in New Zealand incorporating Maori culture, and in Hong Kong incorporating Chinese culture (Luk Fong, 2005; Miller, 2012). The question of cultural identity is a complex and challenging one, and the development of appropriate policy is likely to differ between regions. In Greenland, with a strong Inuit culture, and with contemporary critics of Greenlandic education noting a clash between Inuit and European culture (Egede, 2016), there may be particular value in exploring models that take Inuit culture into account. Addressing what a 'good life' looks like for individuals in Inuit communities and providing appropriate guidance is also important to address issues of social integration – with Flora (2007) noting that some Greenlandic young people in remote areas find it difficult to identify a value in education when they do not see any purpose to education in their own communities and do not see it as a way to have a quality of life.

The importance of policy extends beyond just career guidance policy, to areas such as education, labour market, economy and language policy. The interrelation of these areas of policy is a key theme in these areas in terms of structuring the opportunities individuals in these territories have. So, for example, how the

administrations in the future balance supporting international mobility for education, and also support the development of their local universities is likely to significantly influence the options available for young people and the choices they make. The role of language policy is also key as the extent of support for competence in Danish and / or English for young people and adults will affect how possible it is to travel for study and employment. Similarly, the extent of support for adult immigrants in terms of learning Greenlandic, Faroese and Danish will impact on the ability of these individuals to secure appropriate work. In both communities the significance of language learning is recognised – for example in Greenland an organisation (Oqaatsinik Pikkorissarfik) has been set up to provide language education (including Greenlandic, Danish and English) to adults using technology to allow all adults to improve their language skills. However, fully recognising the impact of language policy is important and there have been calls for more pro-active policy initiatives to embed and maximise valuable human resources (Brown & Danson, 2008). Considering adult immigrants particularly, policy initiatives need to straddle several areas including language education, recognition of prior qualifications and lifelong guidance systems.

Although recognising the wider policy context is important, considering careers guidance policy specifically three important themes in the process of policy development can be identified – the role of co-operation, education, and innovation. These are discussed further below.

Co-operation between Nordic nations has been central to the development of Faroese and Greenlandic careers guidance policy. Representatives from both communities have actively participated in Nordic networks, working groups and conferences, especially through the Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL), which supports Nordic cooperation in careers guidance from a lifelong learning perspective, and more recently through the VALA network. In particular an NVL working group was formed in 2015 which focused on guidance provision in the three self-governing countries, Greenland, Åland and the Faroe Islands (NVL, 2016, 2017a). This group has organised two regional conferences so far, one in the Åland Islands in 2016 and one in the Faroe Islands in 2017. These international collaborations have helped to strengthen the guidance associations within the territories, allowing international expertise to be utilised by local practitioners. In addition, a key strength of these small territories is the close connection between practice ‘on the ground’, and policy development, with practitioners’ groups actively involved in influencing local policy makers and leveraging the expertise of the international guidance community. A further important point to note is given the specific ethical and contextual challenges of delivering guidance in these communities, practitioner networking between the self-governing regions, and between practitioners within each region itself, has also been important as a way of developing and supporting professional practice.

A particularly strong example of collaboration is the development of the Masters programme in Career Guidance in the Faroes, which utilised expertise from across

the Nordic regions – the programme was led from Iceland with expertise drawn from Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and the Faroes. This collaborative approach to developing careers education is an excellent example of how the Faroese approach to guidance is seeking to draw from and align to careers guidance policy, practice and education in other parts of the Nordic world, while also establishing its own unique approach. Co-operating in the development of educational provision has also been instrumental in the development of a national strategy for careers guidance and counselling in the Faroes. This highlights the significant potential of training, and specifically higher education and research provision, in terms of wider policy and practice innovation, and it is therefore no surprise that the development of Masters level education has also been proposed in Greenland.

Innovation is also a key feature in the development of Greenlandic and Faroese approaches to careers guidance policy and practice. A good example of this is the special emphasis within the NVL working group for the self-governing regions on exploring how ICT in guidance can widen access to guidance (see also Kettunen, Lindberg, Nygaard, & Kardal, Chapter 11, this volume). The importance of ICT innovations in these communities recognises that although Greenland and the Faroes are ‘small’ territories (in terms of population), they are not homogenous, and not all communities are equally accessible. Finding ways to address issues of geography through ICT innovation is both a practical solution for these communities and also demonstrates how despite being small, these communities are at the forefront of developing solutions which may be of benefit to other larger communities. This accords well with the findings within the island studies literature of the value of small communities and particularly island communities as sites of innovation (Baldacchino, 2007). A particularly exciting possibility for future innovation is the development of an approach to careers guidance policy and practice in the Faroes which seeks to build on the existing Masters programme to develop a three-fold approach whereby careers education, careers research, and careers policy making are all developed alongside each other. There have been discussions in the community about developing this model into a globally unique training programme for guidance counsellors which could be organised like a research hospital. The development of practice would take place in real context with the dual aim to (1) develop consistent and coherent lifelong guidance services for the citizens in the Faroe Islands in accordance to the local conditions and jointly agreed policy priorities, and (2) to produce academic results in co-operation with international experts.

CONCLUSION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Danish models and approaches have traditionally heavily influenced careers guidance policy and practice in the Faroes and Greenland. As this chapter has demonstrated developing models of practice and policy which are distinctively Faroese or Greenlandic is important in order to address the context-specific needs and

circumstances of these communities, as well as part of establishing an autonomous identity. In developing new approaches to careers guidance policy and practice, the importance of co-operation with other Nordic countries, the co-operation of local practitioners, development of education programmes, and a focus on innovation have been emphasised as key features. The Faroese development of Masters level training for careers guidance practitioners drawing on collaboration from across the Nordic region is particularly notable; as is the way that this educational provision was connected to developing appropriate models of practice and policy within the community. Alongside the development of territory-specific approaches to careers guidance, this chapter has shown how guidance policy exists in close interrelation to broader education and language policy, as well as more widely to economic policy, and how these need to be considered together. A further significant conclusion is how a lifelong approach to guidance is vital for these communities, allowing the management of individual career flexibility, wider economic flexibility of a small economy, and supporting incoming workers operating within a minoritised language context.

As the case studies show, Faroese and Greenlandic models of careers guidance policy and practice are emerging. In the future, there is a need to progress further with embedding the training of careers guidance practitioners – in Greenland such educational provision is only just emerging, and in the Faroes the Masters in Careers Guidance has only run for one cohort of students so far. In addition, in both communities there is a need to further reinforce and establish appropriate careers guidance policy, recognising its interrelation with (and importance to) other aspects of policy, including economic, education and language policy. The strength of the careers guidance community within both the Faroes and Greenland, and the support of the wider Nordic careers guidance networks have been essential in supporting the development of Faroese and Greenlandic models so far, and it is likely that these factors will remain significant in developing the models still further.

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