

# The Career Development Profession: Professionalisation, Professionalism, and Professional Identity

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## Our chapter

- The importance of the overall question in the chapter title
- Three key perspectives:
  - Trait approach
  - Regulatory bargain
  - Subjectivity
- How is the sector 'doing' in relation to the second point in particular
- Conclusions

# How do 'jobs' become 'professionalised'

- Trait approach – what essentially distinguishes a profession from a job, e.g., higher levels of knowledge; trust; control of the entry criteria...
- Regulatory bargain (as per Larson, 1977):
- *Professions are occupations with special power and prestige. Society grants these rewards because professions have special competence in esoteric bodies of knowledge linked to central needs and values of the social system, and because professions are devoted to the service of the public, above and beyond material incentives*



‘Society grants these powers...’?

- Professional body has structural power
  - Control of the entry route, e.g., the content of the curriculum; credentialising it; regulating supply and demand
  - Policing the profession and professionals with legal authority to enforce standards
  - Esteem and influence, esp. with government
- ...the battle with government is one of exclusivity v. marketisation...
  - And: professionalism v. managerialism

## How is Career Guidance 'doing'?

- Generally, it has not secured a regulatory bargain with government...with some exceptions
- Importance of alignment with government policy (Scotland)
- Defining criteria for training/qualifications required (Ireland, Iceland)
- Legal requirement for professional qualifications/licence to practice (Finland, Poland, Iceland)
- Legal requirement to adequate careers education and guidance (Finland)
- Hybrid models – integrated within other roles initially and expanded to become specialist (Malta)

# Subjectivity...

- Shouldn't this be about the 'everyday power' that practitioners can use and 'feel'?
- Our research on professional identity
- The important role of PG education
- The common and shared features of an identity across all delivery environments...



# Conclusion

- Confirming the continuing importance of the question
- Exemplifies the continuing debate concerning agency and structure
- Important to understand the necessity of structure power...
- Whilst understanding the power individuals exercise despite, within and because of everyday structures

