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UNIT 4 STATEMENT – THE GIST OF IT

We have seen that the world of work is in rapid transformation. Challenges like globalisation, digitalisation, and demographic change mean that demand for new skills and capabilities will require efforts in and support for lifelong vocational learning and frequent occupational reorientation in more flexible and unpredictable careers. (Unit 1) This also means that more support and guidance is needed throughout employees' careers. In organisational human resource development, the need to support individual growth within and as part of a learning organisation is increasingly recognised (Unit 2). At the same time, in career guidance and counselling new approaches respond to the need to support individual career development so as to fit into their personal biographical trajectories within changing socio-economic conditions (Unit 3)

Existing HRM and CGC literatures as well as *Connect!* research among practitioners and experts show that a closer cooperation between the two fields will be beneficial – and in fact integration of elements of CGC into organisational practices of human resource development is widely seen as desirable. Among the key advantages for HRM would be the uncovering and eventual development of hitherto undetected productive potentials and stronger involvement of employees in a learning organisation. Employees would benefit from fuller recognition of their capabilities and more opportunities for personal development and organisational participation. In some cases, first steps towards such an integration are being made, but for the greater part cooperation and integration are yet to be established. However, on both sides there are clear tendencies to react to this need in that elements of individual counselling and career assessment (e.g. coaching, talent management, mentoring in HRM, career guidance for employees in CGC) are becoming more prevalent.

Small and medium-size enterprises in particular would stand to gain from such integration. However, they have fewer resources in terms of specialised HR functions and for contracting out career counselling to external providers. Therefore, networks of companies, professionals, agencies, chambers and third-sector organisations are crucial in facilitating the application of CGC as part of strategic HRM in SMEs. Professionals in the field need to add abilities to operate in such contexts to their expert knowledge and methodological skills.

Another field where we expect positive impact of CGC with and within organisations is the potential to work with members of disadvantaged groups. Although it is now generally acknowledged that it is economically irrational and socially unjust to neglect the capabilities and potential of members of non-dominant groups, little progress is made. CGC, if done in a critically-reflexive and attentive way can provide better access and open up development paths.

The potentials of CGC in organisations are palpable. However, it does not appear to be widespread in practice. Given the benefits, it is worth thinking about possible pathways to implementation (Unit 5). What are the obstacles in general, with regard to smaller organisations and with respect to disadvantaged groups and how can they be overcome?