



NETWORK FOR INNOVATION IN
CAREER GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING IN EUROPE

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IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial

More than a year has now passed since we have issued the last issue of the NICE Newsletter. A lot has happened since. From a political perspective, we have been witnessing a new surge of nationalistic movements across the globe, especially in Europe. European politics, at the same time, is struggling to find solutions for many concurrent challenges (distribution of refugees, financial crisis, tax competition, etc.).

While we value diversity and national sovereignty, we are worried about these tendencies: Many of the contemporary challenges of the World call for more international collaboration, even stronger global or regional institutions, not less. The European Union brought decades of peace to a war-ridden continent. The United Nations' action plan for the reduction of climate change is probably humanity's only chance to prevent massive catastrophes in the near future. In Europe, we need more solidarity and cooperation, not less, in order to solve many of the problems, which various nations are facing: Together we are strong—in isolation, we are weak.

As researchers and lecturers concerned with career guidance and counselling, we have a good understanding of how political and economic instability affects people. We know how the loss of a job, a questionable future, or a wrong educational decision can drive people into resignation, debt, or worse. This is in part why we believe that career guidance and counselling is so important in our contemporary societies. Not only in politics do people look for (overly) simple solutions to complex problems. With all the technological innovation and the globalization of the work force, we can only speculate about the labour market of the future.

Citizens need professional support in figuring out, how to shape their careers—no matter how much some of them may be hoping to hear a “wise old man” tell them exactly what to do. We need to educate people to manage their career develop-

ment autonomously and responsibly (Career Education). Quite obviously, though, even many citizens with well-formed career management competences will benefit from the provision of career counselling—and we shouldn't forget that professional career counselling is probably one of the best ways to train people in managing their careers autonomously in the first place. Even with the best career information systems and tools for self-assessment in place, competent career practitioners will be needed to assist people in making well-informed and reflected decisions, to support them in facing critical personal and interpersonal situations—beyond the initial training of citizens.

Our network is dedicated to excellence and innovation in the academic training of career practitioners across Europe. Since 2009, we have already achieved a lot. We have learnt a lot from each other: Many of us have renewed their degree programmes over the past years, or even set up new programmes, drawing on insights from international exchange. We have generated common ideas of the main professional roles of career practitioners in Europe, supporting the professionalization of career guidance and counselling. And finally, we have agreed on common European competence standards for the academic training of three types of career practitioners: Standards, which are already being used to quality-assure degree programmes across Europe, and to ensure that citizens will only work with competent career practitioners in the future. Our news from across Europe in this issue, and the reports about the European Doctoral Programme and the upcoming conference in Padua demonstrate that this is probably only the beginning of our cooperation in Europe.

Sincerely,

Lea Ferrari, Nikos Drosos, Johannes Katsarov, and Inge van der Putten (Editors)



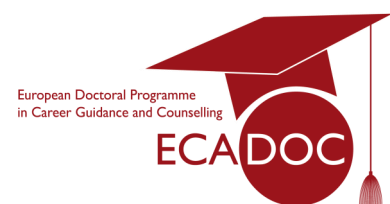
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