

ECADOC Summer School in Lausanne 2016

Restoring Hope: Career Concerns in Times of Crisis—Participants' Perspective on the Event, edited by Anouk Albien (Stellenbosch University, South Africa)

In introducing the reflections of ECADOC 2016 summer school participants, I would like to invite you as the reader to reflect on the events, personal experiences, relationships and collaborations that may have shaped your career path until now. Could you describe how the current socio-political developments may have shifted your past and future career aspirations and hopes?

Creating and re-creating a coherent career story and vocational identity is a challenge that entails continuously weaving together diverse activities and complex relationships within a web of past, present and potential influences and barriers. This exact challenge is faced by the career counselling and guidance discipline, as well as professionals within this field, as they construct their careers within a fluid, plural and diverse world of work in the 21st century.

Correspondingly, ECADOC aims to support early-stage researchers in acquiring research competences and has held summer schools for the last three years. In 2016, the ECADOC summer school was hosted by Jérôme Rossier at the University of Lausanne. The event was organised by ECADOC's scientific committee, including Laura Nota, Johannes Katsarov, Rachel

Mulvey, Jérôme Rossier, Rie Thomsen, and Peter Weber. Twenty-eight PhD students from twenty-four countries were selected as participants to present their research projects, network, and create innovative research teams to collaborate on issues that affect career research, policy and practice.

The programme included a workshop on supervision in career counselling by Susan Whiston and an idiographic approach workshop held by Paulo Cardoso. Parallel sessions were held on qualitative methods that included consensual qualitative research (Jonas Masdonati), interpretive and biographical research (Rie Thomsen) and the use of sociological theories (Anna Bilon, Alicja Kargulowa, Michal Mielczarek, & Joanna Minta). In addition, parallel sessions were held on quantitative methods such as survey research (Caroline Roberts), challenges of causal inferences in longitudinal surveys (Grégoire Bollman) and cross-cultural assessment (Sif Einarsdóttir). Contemporary career challenges were also discussed, inviting participants to reflect on research ethics (Maria Eduarda Duarte), practical implications of career counselling in times of economic crisis, using Greece as a case study (Nikos Drosos), and career research perspectives (Annelies van Vianen). Furthermore, participants were



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exposed to previous joint research endeavours of the ECADOC community and were guided through reflection exercises facilitated by Mark Holloway.

The summer school also included other cultural activities to foster the international community of career guidance and counselling researchers: an aperitif offered by the LIVES' doctoral program, a joint dinner at the restaurant Lausanne Moudron, a visit to the Art Brut Museum and a picnic by Lake Geneva.

This article serves to give voice to the experiences of the future career counselling and guidance researchers who were selected.

Personal reflections and highlights from PhD students



Christina Pernsteiner*,
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The Greek meaning behind the word crisis refers to making a choice. When looking at worldwide social and political developments this year, I'm wondering more than ever where we will all end up. In career guidance, this question is a very powerful one: "Who will you become?" Even before we are born, this theme follows us in different ways, from fitting into expectations and norms to having the freedom to be unique. My research is about how children understand work and their role in it over time. It amazes me with what self-confidence they express educational and vocational ideas. A seven-year-old girl explains without a sign of doubt that she will continue with her schooling and afterwards go to university. A five-year-old boy describes himself as an apprentice. Their choices are reflections of the worlds they live in and the connections they make. In a crisis, the feeling of being connected and belonging is sometimes shaken to the core. The recent decision of Great Britain to leave the European Union is a good

example. While many people support this development, it also brings despair and fear, especially in the world of science, which is based on creating and sharing knowledge. This brings me finally to the ECADOC summer school. One of the important strengths of the programme is its power to connect researchers from different worlds. This includes various themes, disciplines, ages, career stages, and geographic regions. After visiting the school for the second time, the feeling of belonging to a research community has gotten even stronger. In times of crisis it is an uplifting feeling to know that in almost every country in Europe, or even further, there are people we can all turn to.

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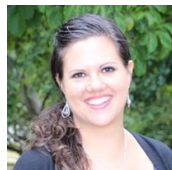
Sanna Makinen*,
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Finland

When I think about ECADOC, there is a particular word that comes to my mind. Hope. Career guidance and counselling has a lot to do with making space for empowering narratives and building vocabularies of hope. This summer school's various presentations demonstrated how guidance and counselling could help people whose world has been burdened with economic, social, and personal setbacks. Sudden life turns and critical events call individuals to cope and manage with the resources they have, sometimes meagre. Guidance services can and do help people in these life situations. Guidance practitioners can bring hope to people who are burdened by uncertainty, fear, hopelessness, disappointments or desperation. These emotions are present in the lives of so many people, young and old. This can be seen when we look at unemployment or poverty rates or the number of young people struggling to find their place in working life or education.

To increase the well-being and hope of individuals and communities, we as young researchers in guidance and counselling seek to find political and organisational solutions, tools, methods, and concepts. One strength of our research community is our methodological and theoretical diversity. We are also small enough to be in dialogue. Dialogues between different traditions are actively sought, and critical reflective questions are asked. I believe that

in our guidance research community there is a genuine will to build bridges between different schools of thought and research traditions. This is demonstrated in the various research endeavours, which have been put forward by many of the PhD students who have participated in ECADOC summer schools. This work will continue, fuelled by our shared goal: our will to bring hope.

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Anouk Albien*,
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Whether a career-life story is about success or failure is partly a matter of interpretation. I consider success stories to include reframing of trauma, loss, struggle, desperation, and obstacles, revealing resourcefulness and resilience of the human spirit. In South Africa, inequality is a pertinent issue that affects diverse population groups in their career choices. In my work with township youth, I see the need to be able to create future selves, which centre around a restoration of hope. Without hope, meaningful goals seem impossible to envision, and the belief that positive outcomes are likely to occur by taking specific actions, seems unimaginable.

However, the most difficult task I see in township youth, is for them to stay steadfast in a career trajectory and not be swayed by surrounding negative voices. Recently, my days have been filled with violence, riot police, stun guns, pepper spray and fires as protests rage across the country against inequalities in access to education. In the face of this turmoil, I observe what measures desperate individuals resort to, and I wonder if we have not all failed them.

We are equipped with knowledge regarding the impact of discrimination, oppression, and injustice. We can help address these issues using counselling practices, theory, and social action if we dare to step outside of the boundaries of traditional career counselling practice. When I reflect on my involvement over the last two years with ECADOC, my thinking has been stretched and altered by the organisers, participants and workshops presented. I see that this community is at the forefront of addressing

career experiences which relate to a loss of identity, discrimination, unemployment, powerlessness, and anxiety about future employment. This is a community I want to be part of for many years to come. Thereby I hope to intervene at relational levels where individuals make meaning and contribute to dismantling systems that strip away identity, knowledge, and power from minority groups.

*Anouk Albien is working on a PhD titled "A mixed-methods analysis of black adolescents' vocational identity status and career adaptability competencies in a low-income township".



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During his short "Time for Reflection" workshop, Mark Holloway proposed an exercise: "Think back over an event which is relevant to your professional role." That is what I want to do now. I am a doctoral student, an experienced counsellor and a "novice" teacher of counselling. This week's training at the ECADOC summer school was an opportunity for me to alternate between three aspects of my identity and to develop each of them. These reflective learning processes sometimes occurred over the course of a whole session; sometimes a single sentence set them off.

For example, Susan Whiston's supervision workshop helped me to revisit and reflect on my roles as a counsellor and teacher, and consequently on my research topic: the counselling interview. Speaking about policy, Pedro Moreno da Fonseca asked: "What is research for?" And I thought: "What is my research for? How useful will it be?" After Maria Eduarda Duarte asked "What place is for ethics?", I read the Nuremberg Code and looked at the Belmont Report to evaluate how ethical my own research methodology and goals are.

"Developing reflective practice helps with learning - it speeds up the learning process and deepens the level of your learning," said Mark Holloway. The ECADOC summer school is relevant not only for the information it offers, but also for the reflective learning processes it triggers in each student's head!

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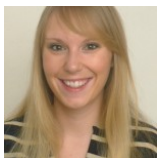


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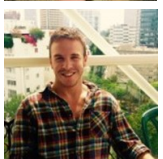
ECADOC has been a fantastic experience. Over the course of two summer schools, I have met researchers from all over the world and my knowledge of career work and career research in different countries has been vastly improved. I have gained a great deal from working with others from different national contexts and researching careers from different theoretical paradigms. This has allowed my thinking to be challenged, and I have been encouraged to consider many new and different perspectives. The spirit of collaboration and openness within the group has allowed some incredibly fruitful conversations and meetings.

I feel like we have established a strong community of career researchers, with a strong joint commitment to progressing the European research agenda in career guidance. I'm sure that the community will prove to be a valuable resource for us all in years to come.

*Rosie Alexander is working on a PhD titled "The impact of island location on students' higher education choices and subsequent career narratives: a case study of the Orkney and Shetland Islands."



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The participation in professional gatherings still constitutes for us a venture into the unknown. When we attend a conference, we need to discover these new environments and make decisions: what are our goals? How do we want to interact with the people we meet? How do we interact in reality? What information do we wish to disclose about our work and ourselves? Although the ECADOC summer school indicated the gap between our initial planning and actual behaviour, we were guided and assured by the summer school aims and programme.



Since the 2016 ECADOC summer school, participants (pictured above) have begun to create international research collaborations that will result in cross-cultural and comparative research contributions. Thank you ECADOC 2016 for providing this opportunity to emerging researchers from all over the world!

Indeed, the ECADOC summer school – with one of its main aims to create new collaboration among doctoral students within our field – guided us with ready-made answers: share your knowledge, learn from others, work together, inspire each other. The summer school encouraged us to establish and build further scientific collaboration. In response to this challenge, the two of us, after identifying our shared interests, decided to design a research project together, focusing on the interplay between university students' Career Decision-Making Profiles (CDMP) and their study choice behaviours using the Study Choice Task Inventory (SCTI). We plan to develop and implement Croatian and Hebrew versions within our local contexts. And, in the spirit of our community, we invite any member of our community, to join us and take part in our emerging collaborative project.

*Iva Černja is working on a PhD titled "Career Maturity as a Determinant of Successful Career."

**Nimrod Levin is working on a PhD titled "Analog and Digital Coding of Information, the Measurement of Preferences, and the Axiomatic Foundations of Decision Theory."



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In the new context of globalisation, the development of international collaboration between young researchers from all over Europe is encouraged. In career counselling and guidance, European doctoral students

and researchers are involved in collaborative projects to develop more creative research approaches, more fruitful international discussions, and the capacity to look at cultural differences as a resource. ECADOC, in line with this aim, supports the creation of international teams, offering researchers the opportunity to experiment in cross-national research groups to share experiences, methodologies, competencies, ideas and aims. The ECADOC summer school, in fact, offers training in collaboration, in order to facilitate the creation of research networks.

For many participants, such as me, the possibility to be involved in an international research group presents stimulating experiences, new challenges, and opportunities. In my opinion, international collaboration can provide some benefits: such as opening possibilities, achieving new research aims, and expanding research knowledge bases; because "alone we are smart, but together we are brilliant" (Anderson, S.).

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The ECADOC project has been funded by the European Commission under the Lifelong Learning Programme. The Commission cannot be held responsible for any aspects of this communication or of the ECADOC programme.