

ECADOC Lausanne 2016: Final Evaluation Report

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European Doctoral Programme
in Career Guidance and Counselling



General Comments

This report is written for the scientific committee and advisory board of the above project, based on reflections and conversations at the third summer school in Lausanne; it ends with overall comments on the ECADOC programme. The comments should be considered alongside the evaluations of colleagues and 'students' who took part and engaged with other evaluation activities.

It might be expected that the third summer school would be the most successful, bearing in mind that the programme developed over three years and was enhanced following the feedback from the two previous years. It was, but that does not detract from the achievements of the previous summer schools. Importantly it was evident that the programme had been developed and feedback had been paid attention to in the adapted programme for Lausanne. As previously, the week was intensive and the impression gained was, once again, of an event of enormous value to both supervisors and students. The learning that took place appeared to be significant and the exchange between colleagues from different countries, both supervisors and students, was always constructive, working toward the aim of building capacity at doctoral level in the field of career guidance, counselling and development.

The welcome reception was well organised and set the right tone for a productive, collaborative working week. Our hosts provided an excellent venue, with very good facilities for learning and for refreshments and lunch. The cultural visit to the museum was enjoyable, if a little short, and the 'conference dinner' was well attended and a success. Travel within the city was easy and both students and supervisors appeared satisfied with the arranged accommodation. The colleagues at Lausanne are to be congratulated for the preparation and smooth running of an excellent summer school, with very good IT facilities and support.

Specific Comments on the Summer School Programme

1. I assume the selection process followed the same procedure as in previous years and was rigorous and well documented. There were, I believe, two last minute withdrawals of students due to health or family circumstances. A few students returned who had attended in previous summer schools, but the majority were new participants.
2. Preparation for the event, as before, took place via the e:platform and this appeared to be without problems this year. The programme, travel notifications and the like were all sent in good time and the instructions were thorough.
3. The opening sessions were good, not too long with an interesting guest lecture. The 'getting to know each other' event and activity was interesting, fun and achieved its aim.
4. The posters were useful and people did spend time looking at them and talking with individuals – this is important as many students put considerable effort into producing these.
5. The whole day workshop on supervision was interactive and of great value to the work of career guidance and counselling practitioners. The facilitator was very experienced in running such workshops and was well versed in her subject. For many of the students, and maybe some supervisors, this would be new knowledge and I recognise how 'clinical' supervision is a neglected area in our 'careers work' practice. However, I would have liked the links to research to have featured more. It will be interesting to learn of the students' evaluation on this whole day workshop in a (in total) five-day programme dedicated to the development of PhD research.
6. Participants' research presentations were once again very valuable and the method employed was highly constructive, supportive and beneficial. It is important the facilitator is comfortable in their role

and well prepared in advance. I observed two groups and both worked well, particularly when the facilitator demonstrated a quiet presence that steered the group rather than instructed the group. Some colleagues thought more time might have been spent on the activity, but the majority of students in the final session on Saturday did not appear to desire more time.

7. New this year was the activity of running parallel workshops for both qualitative and quantitative research methods (on separate days). This was welcomed by participants and was much more digestible than the whole day 'fixed' presentations with some workshop activity of the previous year. Participants were able to choose the sessions that they thought would be of greatest interest for their research activity. Facilitators had a good amount of time to ensure these were interactive workshops rather than presentations.

8. The whole day workshop on 'Assessment of career counselling and change; an idiographic approach', introduced a methodology to research and analysis that would be new to most of the participants. This was interesting and was an interactive workshop. A little more time was needed to explain the concepts with examples before each interactive exercise, but the facilitator took time to explain further when the group was unsure of the steps to be taken.

9. The policy messages in lifelong guidance research were well presented, offering a balanced view with information valuable for all participants. The input on contemporary challenges in our field that followed, highlighted the issues 'on the ground' for the practical implications of the economic crisis. The powerful message of the speaker was illuminated through a case study. Less time was given this year to reflective exercises – but the programme was full and timing was tight on the day this was on the agenda. Similarly, the session research ethics was short.

10. The participants were informed about the ECADOC book series and of the

research network that had developed previous groups – and examples of resulting research projects were 'showcased'. The future of ECADOC, now that the funding has ceased, was also discussed, supported by the supervisors/partners present.

11. The closing session was well managed with a very well run evaluation exercise that was engaging and productive.

Main Points

The participants' evaluations will be reported elsewhere, but it is useful to note here their five top positive comments and the five top 'areas for development':

The participants valued (1) the excellent organisation of the student presentations,

(2) the possibility to share knowledge with researchers with more experience, (3) the cross-cultural sharing amongst students and academics, (4) being able to choose workshops, and workshops that covered a wide range of topics – and the sharing of ideas and diverse perspectives, and (5) having the posters available to view throughout the programme.

At future summer schools, the participants would like (1) a session on research design, (2) more workshops in small groups, (3) more opportunities for choosing workshops, and (4) to be invited to co-organise seminars with experienced researchers. Finally, they would (5) enjoy the use of different types of presentations other than PowerPoint.

Comments on the ECADOC Programme Overall

ECADOC has been a unique experience for researchers new and experienced in the professional field, and it is a pity that a new programme has not been funded. The willingness to continue in some form was clear from those involved and the commitment from the organisers is exemplary. The three-year programme has been of immense value to the participants and throughout the week in Lausanne, both students and supervisors new to the ECADOC experience praised highly the programme and the opportunity to engage in such intensive work.

It has been a pleasure to take part and to provide this report.

ECADOC Summer Schools: Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Johannes Katsarov, University of Zurich, Switzerland
Programme Manager of ECADOC



The European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance and Counselling (ECADOC), financially supported by the European Commission under the Lifelong Learning Programme from 2013-2016, had two key objectives. The first objective was to formulate a joint research agenda, with the aim of inspiring cooperative trans-disciplinary research in our field in the future. The second objective was to organise a first series of annual summer schools, to support the emergence of a generation of early-stage researchers, who are dedicated to the practice of career guidance and counselling, international and trans-disciplinary cooperation. The sustainability of our efforts – building something to last – has always been at the heart of this project. Hence, questions of assuring quality and reaching excellence have guided us since we first came up with the idea of ECADOC.

The purpose of this article is to share our concepts of quality assurance and enhancement for the summer schools of ECADOC, and to illustrate some of the central lessons, which we have learned over the past three years.

Concept and Goals of the ECADOC Summer Schools

The main goal of the ECADOC Summer Schools is to promote PhD candidates from all around Europe in becoming first-class researchers and respected career specialists – valued members of the academic community and the community of practitioners dedicated to career guidance and counselling – and promote intercultural cooperation among these researchers across Europe. Research on career guidance and counselling lies at the heart of the summer schools. For participants to benefit from the summer schools as much as possible, they focus on supporting the development of a range of important competences and skills needed for a successful career at the forefront of our academic discipline and the career guidance and counselling profession. Activities are balanced to support doctoral researchers in finalizing their individual research projects, in developing their competences for state-of-the-art research using both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, in assuming a role as innovators in research, policy and practice, and in becoming

members and shaping the development of a European research community.

Quality Strategy

So far, we have organised three ECADOC summer schools (Padua 2014, Paris 2015, Lausanne 2016), involving about 100 PhD and senior researchers from more than 30 countries. To secure the quality of the summer schools, we combine several measures:

Selection of participants: We only admit people to ECADOC summer schools as participants, who are currently working on a PhD related to career guidance and counselling. No exceptions are allowed, so to ensure the common goals, status and interests of the group in this respect. To assess the relevance of the research projects, our selection committee reviews a 1-page description of the PhD research project from each participant. Our selection criteria demand a broad national diversity of the participants, and we try to offer financial support in cases, where applicants wouldn't be able to cover their costs for the summer school themselves or through their universities. We accept no more than 28