

## Reflections of the European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance and Counselling (ECADOC) Sixth Summer School Malta 9<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> June 2019



### RESEARCHING CAREER GUIDANCE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE:

Anouk Jasmine Albien

In introducing the reflections of the ECADOC 2020 summer school participants, career counselling techniques and research methods that included social justice in the field of career guidance and counselling (CGC) was the focus. This year, the ECADOC summer school was hosted by Ronald Sultana (Director, Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Educational Research) at University of Malta. The event was organised by an organizing committee, which consisted of Manwel Debono (Centre for Labour Studies, University of Malta), Josette Barbara Cardona (Doctoral student and Summer School assistant), Christine Garzia (Doctoral student, Summer School assistant,) Dorianne Gravina (Chair of the Malta Career Guidance Association). The national organizing committee was aided by Tristram Hooley (University of Derby, UK and Inland Norway University of Applied Science) and scientific committee members Rie Thomsen (Aarhus University, Denmark) and Anouk Jasmine Albien (University of Bern, Stellenbosch University) and supported by Peter Weber (University of Applied Labour Studies - HdBA, Mannheim). Twenty-two PhD students from 17 countries were selected as participants to present their research projects, network, and discuss future innovative research collaborations. The sponsors of ECADOC 2019, who graciously contributed to the Summer School 2019, are the Centre for Labour Studies (University of Malta), L-Università ta' Malta, ESPLORA, Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Educational Research and Heritage Malta.

### Malta Summer School 2019 Feedback: Reflections from the participants.

**Gill Frigerio (UK)** *Career development & theological perspectives on calling: supporting Christian women in working lives* [G.Frigerio@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:G.Frigerio@warwick.ac.uk)

The ECADOC summer school in June 2019 was an enjoyable, engaging and intellectually stimulating experience that has been thought provoking for both my research and my practice. I can see the impact it has had already and foresee a continuation as my research unfolds. The summer school brought to life the twin texts on social justice that organisers Ronald, Rie and Tristram have edited, which make such a rich contribution to our field. The morning sessions, comprising of a presentation from the author and a response from a group of student participants, helped me get much more insight. Overall, the week made me think about my own commitment to social justice and particularly to whom I am accountable, as both a researcher and a teacher of a MA in Career Development. I've been challenged throughout the



week to consider how I can work in inclusive and reciprocal ways that value practitioner knowledge for the benefit for our clients (especially those excluded from full participation in work) but also my students, my colleagues, my employer and our profession. The week highlighted some of the points of tension and helped me consider how I will negotiate those and advocate for those who need it most. I had a particular role in responding to David Blustein's input, with four papers on his work to review. The idea of the 'psychology of working' in opposition to the 'psychology of career' challenged me to think hard about the problems of using terms that exclude. Constraints in practice can require us to use such terms, but we can reclaim them and make them our own, positioning them carefully in different contexts. My research is about the idea of calling and using faith as a way of widening our thinking so we can break the cycle where careers work benefits those who are already privileged. The response in my Collective Academic Supervision (which we did each afternoon) was heartening and convinced me of the value of what I am proposing to do – motivation and encouragement indeed! Our host Ronald Sultana went way beyond the call of duty in ensuring we experienced all of Malta's charms. I felt that I made new friends from across Europe and cemented and developed existing working relationships, and that these networks will serve me well as my work develops. This is true of students and speakers alike, and we were truly fortunate to have so many international speakers join us for the week. Those who couldn't make the trip were even able to make some input via skype and pre-recorded videos. In fact, one of those was from Aditi Arur in India, and I now find I will be able to meet her on her forthcoming trip to London. I certainly hope I will be able to experience ECADOC again, and would recommend it to anyone researching in our field. Smaller than a conference, with interaction needed throughout, it's a great way to build a network across Europe for our work.

**Christine Garzia (Malta)** *Career guidance and livelihood planning with the poor in the global South PhD title: Invisible Women: Strategies for livelihood*  
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It is so great to be part of the ECADOC community! Connecting with fellow academics and practitioners from the career guidance and counselling field from all over the world was a truly unique experience. The Malta ECADOC Doctoral Summer School provided a stimulating space for sharing and discussing ideologies and practices in relation to social justice (and beyond), as well as the opportunity to challenge – and learn from – each other. The talks and discussions were thought provoking and facilitated personal reflection both during, and especially after, this inspiring week. The Collective Academic Supervision was such a useful tool to bounce off ideas and view things from multiple perspectives, a much-needed exercise especially in the early stages of a PhD! The Doctoral Summer School also provided the space for old and new colleagues to network and discuss future collaboration. All in all, it was a truly intense week during which we learnt from each other, built and strengthened relationships and also had fun!



**Marta Bartusiak (Poland Lower Silesia)** *Designing (career) counselling to combat homophobia*

[marta.medynska92@gmail.com](mailto:marta.medynska92@gmail.com) Inspiring, developing and supporting. These three words come to mind when I try to describe my experience of the Summer Doctoral School. It was already the 6th edition but I participated in this event for the first time. I can say one thing - it was worth it! The whole event was rich and intense. However, I would like to distinguish three things. First of all - the organisation! The event was very well organized. Although it was my first visit to Malta I did not feel lost at all. The organization of lectures and classes was similar. We were assigned to groups much earlier, so everything went very smoothly.



The second thing worth emphasizing is the scale of the event. Meeting people from all over the world in one place is an extraordinary experience and broadens your horizons. Listening to all these people, what they say about themselves and their lives in various parts of the world was amazing. This creates a situation which allows one to look at oneself and one's

research from a completely different perspective. And so I move on to the third point I would like to appreciate - the meeting within the framework of Collective Academic Supervision. I think I will not be the only one to write how much I appreciate this method. The feedback received during the classes is really valuable, bringing concrete guidelines for further research work. I very much appreciate the opportunity to participate in this summer edition of ECADOC and I am very happy to be a part of it.



**Miika Kekki (Eastern Finland) *Social justice in CC of adult immigrants***  
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For me, the ECADOC Summer School was a game-changer. I started my doctoral studies last autumn, alongside my two jobs throughout the year. I've also felt rather lonely, as there is not anyone else in my doctoral programme doing research on career guidance or counselling. So, prior to ECADOC, I didn't really identify myself as a doctoral student but rather as someone who's acting as one and trying to do his best while not being fully able to achieve it. But as I (finally) met some other fellow students, all dealing with issues related to guidance and counselling, it all started to make sense to me. I gained confidence that my field is a relevant one, that there are others out there who can support and help me if need be, and most importantly: that I'm on a decent track when it comes to planning my doctoral journey.

I appreciated the general atmosphere where we were all equals, and where the teachers/tutors or the more advanced students didn't look down to us beginners and newcomers. There was a good mix of different working methods, although I would have preferred to have more time for the CAS sessions. As for my research, the outcome was that I'm more eager now to proceed with it. Unfortunately, I need to cope with combining my doctoral studies with my jobs for this autumn, which makes me quite stressed and creates varying amounts of pressure. I did get some useful tips from ECADOC where to look for information, and what to read so there was also very concrete help for me. However, I would say that the main outcome for me was the doctoral student's identity that I adopted in Malta, and the valuable network of colleagues and friends that I now have gained. As a whole, the ECADOC week was a superb experience, and I believe I will always be ever so grateful for getting the opportunity to participate in it!



**Jeanine van Halteren (Netherlands , Oslo) *The invisible dimension: people's experiences with unconventional Career Counselling.*** [jeavan@oslomet.no](mailto:jeavan@oslomet.no)

At OsloMet - Oslo Metropolitan University in Norway, I am surrounded by students, highly qualified colleagues, lecturers and researchers (in Vocational and Educational Teacher Training), but alone with my research on career guidance. As a researcher, I have felt obliged to expose injustice through norm criticism, discourse analysis and reflexivity, but needed more knowledge, practice and power. The ECADOC summer school in Malta, focusing on research for social justice, seemed "heaven sent". Here, I belonged to a community of fellow researchers and role models who challenged, inspired and supported me on my doctoral journey. Through group assignments, panel discussions and leisure activities I learned that in research, solitude is important, but community is the key to learning.

**Mariana Lucas Casanova (Portugal) *(Un)Employment in Times of Uncertainty - Vocational/Professional Development and Psychological Empowerment***

[casanova.mariana@gmail.com](mailto:casanova.mariana@gmail.com) After discovering ECADOC in 2018, participating in the Summer School in Athens that year, which allowed me to connect with researchers and practitioners in the area of CGC from around the world, the opportunity to participate in the ECADOC edition of 2019, in Malta, exceeded all previous expectations. Focused on social justice and emancipation within research and practice of CGC, this summer school promoted an in-depth reflection and analysis of the political implications of how CGC is performed and how it can better serve individuals and communities, not merely concentrating on



the adaptation of individuals to the labour market and its demands. In a society dominated by neoliberalism, individualism, and competitiveness, which create inequality, uncertainty, precarity and psychological ailments, political concerns and power relations should be at the core of the work of vocational and career counsellors. And so, the analysis and discussion of the two volumes created by the summer school lecturers (and other authors) are of the utmost importance for the development and the future of CGC. Through this experience, I feel I became part of a network of activist practitioners and researchers that are truly working towards the construction of a better society concerned with equality, social justice, and the genuine empowerment and emancipation of workers.



**Rosie Alexander (Scotland)** *The impact of island location on students' H.Ed. choices & subsequent career narratives* [rosie@rosiealexander.co.uk](mailto:rosie@rosiealexander.co.uk)

The theme of this year's ECADOC summer school was social justice. We were also split into small groups and tasked with reading and responding to a selection of chapters. This structure offered us a means of drawing in a great deal of scholarship, while also giving us time to explore our own work through the means of Collective Academic Supervision. Meeting and working with Rie Thomsen again who has done a great deal on the importance of Careers Guidance in Communities, and Ronald Sultana who has done a great deal for thinking about guidance in Small States, was fantastic

for helping me to think more about the role of communities in careers guidance (particularly small communities). I spent a great deal of the week thinking about how neoliberalism not only mobilises individuals but also dis-embeds them from local communities. Re-focusing on communities then is therefore potentially vitally important in redressing the individualising and the mobilising tendencies of neoliberalism (as well as the value that communities can have in themselves, including as a potential source of emotional wellbeing and support). ECADOC Malta was, for me, nothing short of a transformative experience. The week was challenging and thought provoking and helped me extend my consideration of social justice in a number of ways. I also feel like I have made some direct changes in terms of the organisation of my personal and professional life as the result of the summer school. However, all of this feels like just the start. One of the best things about the summer school was the feeling that this was a group of emerging scholars all heading out on a journey together to try and explore social justice in terms of careers guidance theory, policy and practice. During the week we built the basis of a strong community, and I'm looking forward to finding out what the future holds! I would like to end this short piece by thanking everyone who attended the summer school, and particularly the organisers for a fantastic week. Visiting Malta was also a wonderful experience – for me, I have read so much about Malta through the work of Ronald Sultana and Godfrey Baldacchino (who writes a great deal about islands), so it was lovely to finally be able to visit.

**Iva Černja (Croatia)** *Career maturity as a determinant of a successful career transition* [iva\\_cernja@yahoo.com](mailto:iva_cernja@yahoo.com)

After the four summer schools I attended, I also returned to ECADOC Summer School in Malta. Again, I was surprised at how different each summer school is and how each one provides a unique experience. The importance of the topic of social justice is emphasized from the perspectives of numerous experts and from numerous perspectives. I particularly liked the involvement of all participants in the discussions and the intense work on students PhD studies. The beautiful landscape of Malta also gave us an opportunity for social events where we met new colleagues and met some old ones. Creating a research community has always been an ECADOC priority and that's why I came back every year. I hope I will stay part of this community after I finish my PhD because ECADOC always gave me a new, beautiful experience!





## 7<sup>th</sup> ECADOC Summer School, in Career Guidance and Counselling

Jönköping, Sweden, 8-12 June 2020

**Call for applications**

### **Lifelong guidance in contexts of lifelong learning**

*Exploring effects and implications for career guidance and counselling in an age of uncertainty*

Dr Ingela Bergmo Prvulovic, [Ingela.bergmo-prvulovic@ju.se](mailto:Ingela.bergmo-prvulovic@ju.se) is the coordinating host for the event in 2020. ECADOC 2020 is hosted by the School of Education and Communication, within the frames of the research school, in collaboration with the Swedish National Center for Lifelong learning. Information about ECADOC as project and summer schools for the previous years, you will find on the following website: <http://www.larios.fisppa.unipd.it/ecadoc/>. All applications must be submitted to Karolina Boberg, Research Coordinator at School of education and communication, Jönköping University, by the **11 of March 2020** via the email address: [Karolina.boberg@ju.se](mailto:Karolina.boberg@ju.se)