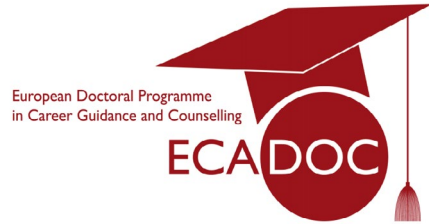


Miika Kekki

University of Eastern Finland



Platforms bringing together senior and junior researchers. Experiences from three European Doctoral Programmes for Career Guidance and Counselling (ECADOC) Summer Schools

I am currently working as a doctoral researcher at the University of Eastern Finland and preparing my doctoral dissertation on the career counselling for adult migrants. During the past three years, I have had the opportunities to participate in ECADOC Summer Schools, targeted globally to doctoral students in the field of career guidance and counselling.

The themes of the Summer Schools vary each year, depending on an agreement between the organising committee and the university in charge of the practical implementation of the summer school. The organisers of the Summer Schools I have participated in have been the University of Malta in 2019, Jönköping University, Sweden in 2020, and Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland, in 2021. In Malta, the theme was Researching career guidance for social justice, in Jönköping Lifelong guidance in the contexts of lifelong learning, and in Edinburgh Career theories. The Summer School in Malta was the only one of the three I have attended that was organised as a face-to-face event, whereas the other two have been held online.

The Summer Schools bring together doctoral students and senior researchers from around the world. The programme consists of lectures and presentations provided by experts in the field, but also on other kinds of activities, such as group discussions, reading discussions and methodological and theoretical training. In Malta we also had the chance to meet guidance practitioners and hear how practical guidance issues are tackled there. Each year, a central role there was played by the Collective Academic Supervision (CAS), where doctoral students can discuss and get feedback on an issue related to their doctoral projects. The issue can either

be related to some part of the process of their doctoral studies, or to some methodological or theoretical questions they are pondering about. The CAS is implemented in small groups with 3-4 doctoral students and 1-2 senior mentors. The CAS supervision is done in a very supportive, constructive, and empowering manner which differs to some extent from a more traditional academic setting of doctoral seminars, for instance. Contrary to more traditional seminars, the students leave the CAS session thoroughly inspired, encouraged and full of energy to continue with their doctoral work. An added bonus for me has also been that my very first CAS group that met in Malta continued as an online peer support group: we have met approximately once every two months and discussed how we were coping with our respective doctoral study projects. Especially during the pandemic this kind of remote peer support has proven to be extremely valuable and supported one's well-being.

Indeed, one of the greatest benefits of the Summer School has been meeting with fellow doctoral students. Doing a PhD can be a lonely business and sharing one's experiences with others in similar situations can be very rewarding and even soothing. Becoming a doctoral student does not necessarily take place overnight but requires opportunities to build and strengthen one's identity, and here the meeting of peers can really be an asset.

The Summer Schools also offer an excellent venue for creating networks and a forum for planning future cooperation with other researchers. At my very first ECADOC Summer School, I started discussing with a fellow Swedish doctoral student about the opportunity of co-writing an article, and now, this autumn we submitted our joint article to a journal, hoping it to be published some time in the near future. This might not have happened without us sharing some preliminary thoughts during coffee breaks at the summer school.

In addition to building networks with other doctoral students, the ECADOC Summer Schools have also created the opportunities to meet and get to know some of the most eminent scholars in the field of career guidance and counselling. The intimate settings of the summer schools have enabled also more informal encounters with senior researchers and thus opened also new horizons and fresh perspectives for the doctoral work. It would seem that the tradition and culture within the ECADOC Summer Schools is such that the potential hierarchical distance between senior and junior researchers becomes narrower and the threshold to acquaint oneself with established researchers becomes much lower. Thus, the Summer Schools make up truly a platform bringing together all kinds of researchers in a constructive and collegial manner.

From the Editors

We would like to acknowledge prof. Rie Thomsen for her permission to make use of the report on *European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance and Counselling (ECADOC) Eighth Summer School Edinburgh, Scotland 21 st 25 th June 2021*, prepared together with Dr Anouk Albien as a complement to Miika Kekki's experiences and information on the next summer school:

We welcome applications for the 9th ECADOC Summer School for doctoral students in career guidance and counselling, to be held in Pristina, Kosovo on 6th September 10th September 2022. The Summer School will be hosted by the organising committee of Lea Ferrari (Univ. of Padova), V. Scott Solberg (Boston Univ.), Johannes Katsarov (Univ. of Zurich), Chong Park (Boston Univ.), Valbona Rraci (Helvetas), Alejtin Berisha (Universum College), Shqipe Gerguri-Rashiti (Universum College), Arlinda Qehaja (Universum College), and Hadis Karatashi (Universum College). The event is sponsored by the Enhancing Youth Employment (EYE) project, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC. We will welcome up to 30 current doctoral researchers at the Summer School. Scientific contributors include Jaana Kettunen (Finnish Institute for Educational Research), Anthony Mann (OECD), Kimberly Howard (Boston Univ.), Peter Weber (HdBA, Univ. of Applied Studies), Nikos Drosos (European Univ. Cyprus), Nurten Karacan (Hacettepe Univ.), Isabel Janeiro (Univ. of Lisbon), Siobhan Neary (Univ. of Derby), and Angela Andrei (Stefan cel Mare Univ. of Suceava). This year's Summer School will have shared activities with the NICE Academy. Deadline for applications is 31st of March 2022. All applications must be submitted via <https://forms.gle/48GrkKjmwGAIKoLz9> a rich, learning experience for all of us.

Dr. Anouk J. Albien & Professor Rie Thomsen

(AJA final 10.12.2021 ECADOC Scotland Summer School 2021 Newsletter RT).