

# NEWSLETTER of the ESDVC

*European Society for Vocational Designing and Career Counseling*

---

## In this issue

- **ESVDC General Assembly** 2
- **Tribute to Ronald Sultana** 3
- **ESVDC Webinar on Advocacy Counseling** 4
- **News from ECADOC** 7
- **News from NICE Academy** 9
- **Calls for Nominations** 10

## A look back...

### **ESVDC 2023 GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

On October 19, 2023, the ESVDC held its annual General Assembly. In addition to the traditional topics, the Executive Board submitted to ESVDC members the proposal to cancel our annual fees. Indeed, on the one hand, few members pay their fees regularly. On the other hand, costs incurred within the ESVDC have dropped significantly. This is largely due to the increasingly online nature of the ESVDC activities. With this in mind, we put the cancellation of annual membership fees to the vote. The proposal was unanimously accepted by the members present. As a result, **membership of the ESVDC will no longer be dependent on any fee from 2024 onwards**. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those members who have regularly honored their membership fees to date.

ESVDC Executive Board

## 2023 ESVDC Award for distinguished contributions A TRIBUTE TO RONALD SULTANA

During the GA, the Executive Board had the immense pleasure of presenting the **2023 ESVDC Award for distinguished contributions to vocational designing and career counseling** to our dear colleague, **Professor Ronald Sultana**, just a few weeks before his unexpected passing.



Ronald G. Sultana was a Professor of Educational Sociology and Comparative Education at the University of Malta and head of the Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Educational Research (EMCER). He authored or edited 40 volumes and published over 120 papers. He had been an advisor to several international agencies, including UNESCO and UNICEF. His work related to educational innovation and the linkages between education and work, including career guidance. In 2020, Laval University (Quebec) awarded Professor Sultana a Doctorate Honoris Causa in recognition of his “exemplary and outstanding achievement and influence.”

Ronald’s candidature was supported by **Prof. Hazel Reid**, who considered Ronald as “the first among equals in terms of his distinguished contributions to the sector,” and by **Prof. Tristram Hooley**, who highlighted that Ronald was “the premier intellectual working in the field of career guidance at the moment.” Professors Reid and Hooley also underlined Ronald’s unique human qualities, including his humility and sense of sharing and hospitality. Finally, the ESVDC president, **Prof. Jonas Masdonati**, emphasized Ronald’s fundamental role in our field. Indeed, he was a scholar who always knew how to question things that seemed taken for granted, with a sociological eye that is healthy for reflecting on the fundamental mission and purposes of career guidance and counseling. His critical look at certain “trendy notions,” as stressed in his recent paper titled “Four ‘dirty words’ in career guidance: from common sense to good sense” is emblematic of this critical perspective.

While very saddened and affected, both humanly and professionally, by his premature departure, the ESVDC is pleased to have been able to recognize his contribution and communicate it to him in person. This makes the award even more symbolic and heartfelt. On behalf of the ESVDC Executive Committee, we would like to underline Ronald’s fundamental contribution to our field and are convinced that his legacy will continue to be an inspiration for many years to come. Our thoughts are with his closest friends and colleagues, and with his bereaved family.

May Ronald rest in peace

### 3<sup>rd</sup> ESVDC Webinar, October 19, 2023

## ADVOCACY IN CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

On October 19, 2023, the European Society for Vocational Designing and Career Counseling (ESVDC) organized its 3rd webinar, titled “Advocacy in Career Guidance and Counseling: International Perspectives.”



With this webinar, the ESVDC executive board (Jonas Masdonati, Jenny Bimrose, Paulo Cardoso, Laura Nota, and Jacques Pouyaud) aimed to further pursue the critical, transnational, and comparative perspectives that characterized its first and second editions—addressing Next Generation EU and Guidance and migration challenges, respectively. This year’s topic was based on the observation that vocational psychologists and career counselors are increasingly considered key players in promoting social inclusion, with

advocacy counseling emerging as an appropriate intervention approach to support clients struggling with systemic barriers. However, both research findings and the experiences of advocacy-oriented career guidance and counseling (CGC) remain rather fragmented. The webinar sought to broaden the understanding of what CGC research states about advocacy counseling, as well as to pave the way for operational and effective advocacy interventions in the career field. International scholars were asked to address the following questions: Why should CGC advocate for social inclusion? Under which conditions is the application of advocacy counseling in CGC relevant and viable? What evidence supports the validity of advocacy counseling and its application in the career field? What are examples of best practices of advocacy counseling in the career field? What guidelines and standards for effective advocacy CGC could be formulated? Four internationally recognized scholars were invited to share their visions on these questions (see also [www.esvdc.org](http://www.esvdc.org) to access their slides).

**Ronald G. Sultana**, Professor of Educational Sociology and Comparative Education at the University of Malta, head of the Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Educational Research (EMCER), and recent recipient of the ESVDC award, presented a paper entitled *Troubling Advocacy: The Indignity of Speaking for Others*. In his keynote, Ronald Sultana noted the “social justice turn” in critical reflections on career guidance, which has led to a greater interest in advocacy on behalf of vulnerable groups. This is an important development, but Sultana cautions against adopting the notion of “advocacy” in too facile and uncritical manner. Advocacy presumes the activity of “giving voice,” or of “amplifying the voice” of those who are silenced, unheard, or misheard. The notion of “speaking for others” is,

however, deeply problematic, for both structural and existential reasons. Our social class gendered and racialized subjectivities can easily lead us to define oppressive situations in particular ways, and to consider some options of transformative practices over others. Liberal, status quo-maintaining views and strategies are readily preferred since these ultimately reflect and further our own interests, even if justice would be better served by significant systemic change. This is precisely why self-advocacy on the part of the oppressed is so important, justifying the assertion “Nothing about us without us.” In supporting the struggle for social justice, as this is defined by subordinated and vulnerable groups, we should therefore beware transforming the Other’s voice and life stories into mirror images of our own. Here the work of the philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas is most relevant, for it helps us understand how important it is to recognize the “Other” as being separate from ourselves. In our engagement with the “Other” and on their behalf, we must not reduce them to our sameness. It is this recognition of “alterity,” the “not-me,” that engages our response-ability, challenging us to be respectful and just, and to truly listen to truly serve.

**Elisabetta Camussi**, licensed psychologist, Associate Professor of social psychology at the Department of Psychology of the University of Milan-Bicocca, and vice president of the Italian Guidance Society (SIO), gave a talk titled Gender Equality and Advocacy Counseling: is Awareness enough? According to Elisabetta Camussi, the phenomena of gender inequality and unequal opportunities often materialize through systemic discrimination, stereotypes, and biases in educational and professional contexts. These attitudes and behaviors are learned unconsciously during socialization by both men and women and act on people subconsciously. They generate expectations based on stereotypical, superficial, and generic descriptions, such as making us consider certain dimensions as relevant only to femininity and not masculinity, and vice versa. Gender stereotypes and biases do influence educational and career choices, limiting one's free expression, particularly in women, afraid of violating social expectations. Counselors must be aware of these processes and adopt a gender-sensitive approach, based on a non-traditional epistemology, such as Feminist Epistemology. This involves self-reflexivity in research and interventions and a critical examination of one's social position and its possible impact on the conduct of our counseling. Interventions must be tailored to understand the complex intersections of class, ethnicity, religion, gender, and so on. The methods must adapt to the needs of contemporary social realities. The contribution addressed these topics from a theoretical point of view and also offered some practical suggestions.

**Catherine Tourette-Turgis**, founder of the University of Patients, Professor and Chairholder at the Sorbonne University, Paris, presenter the paper Advocating for the return to work of cancer survivors: Presentation of a cancer-sensitive skills assessment pilot center. In her presentation, Catherine Tourette-Turgis introduced an ongoing national experiment in France that aims to create a competency assessment sensitive to health challenges, starting with cancer. This experiment is led by the Chair of Competencies and Vulnerabilities at the Patients' University - Sorbonne University. Prof. Catherine Tourette-Turgis, an experienced counselor with extensive expertise in HIV and cancer counseling, presented the psychosocial impacts of cancer and her experience in training employees of a large company in peer-to-peer counseling related to cancer and work. She suggested discussing how counseling in the field of cancer recovery can make a significant contribution to career counseling for individuals of working age who are cancer survivors.

**Jane Goodman**, Professor Emerita of counseling at Oakland University in Michigan, vice president for the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance, and past president of The American Counseling Association, The National Career Development Association (NCDA), and The Counselors for Social Justice, addressed a talk titled *A Counselors Guide to Advocacy: A Three Dimensional Model*. In her presentation, Jane Goodman sustained that Counselors have an opportunity to advocate both with, and for, the people with whom we work. According to her, we can empower our clients to advocate for themselves by teaching them advocacy skills. We can also (perhaps at the same time) advocate for them by developing allies and representing their interests at the organizational and systemic level. In her session, Prof. Goodman described the American Counseling Association three-dimensional advocacy model using the metaphor of starfish, salmon, and whales. She also looked at how we can use advocacy to engender hope, a critical component of individual change.

In summary, several key messages emerged from these presentations. Generally speaking, advocacy is a complex, multi-level form of CGC intervention, covering both actions involving oppressed or marginalized social groups and actions on behalf of these populations. In any case, the “target groups” for advocacy counseling are extremely varied, which raises the question of whether general guidelines are relevant, given that each cause involves specific leverages and struggles. What is more, speaking “on behalf of others” can be sensitive and double-edged, and lead to the imposition of the dominant worldview on oppressed groups. Another pitfall is that of overlooking our own biases and stereotypes in providing support, for instance with regard to gender issues. Although more complex, support involving these groups and creating the conditions to enable them to speak—rather than speaking for them—thus seems more promising and ethically sustainable. In concrete terms, this can be achieved by drawing on existing initiatives that, for example, empower people living with illness (by transforming the illness experience into a source of learning and competence) and strengthen the hope of marginalized social groups.



## News from ECADOC

### 10<sup>th</sup> ECADOC SUMMER SCHOOL 2023

By Miika Kekki, ECADOC program manager



The European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance and Counselling (ECADOC) has offered annual summer schools since 2012 for doctoral researchers working on topics related to career guidance and counselling and careers, more widely. The 10th edition of ECADOC summer school was hosted this year by the Doctoral School of Arts, Aarhus University, Denmark, and took place 14th - 18th August 2023 at Sandbjerg Estate near Sønderborg. The summer school was organised in collaboration between Aarhus University, FinnFram (Swedish doctoral school on career learning, career guidance and transitions between school, further education, and work) and Euroguidance Denmark.



The summer school focused on the theme of “Research in the field of career guidance and development - Collaboration between research, practice, and policy.” The goal of the summer school was to share and discuss how the different actors involved in careers work and career research could better learn from one another, and to build bridges between practice and research. There were altogether 32 doctoral students participating in the summer school from 12 different countries. The programme included keynote lectures with an emphasis on cooperation between researchers and practitioners, and workshops on different research methods. As a new element, an interactive workshop was introduced. The idea of this workshop was to create a playful

space for the exchange of perspectives on real-world career guidance cases with local career guidance professionals, the University of Southern Denmark kindly hosted this activity.

### Next ECADOC Summer School

In 2024, the 11th ECADOC summer school will be hosted by Associate Professor Nikos Drosos at the European University of Cyprus, and it will be held **10th – 14th June 2024**. The programme, consisting of readings, keynote presentations, and group work sessions, will present contextual, collaborative, and collective perspectives to research on career guidance, career learning and career management skills. We will be welcoming applications from doctoral students in career guidance and counselling, more information about ECADOC and registration can be found at: <http://www.larios.fisppa.unipd.it/ecadoc/>

The call for the next summer school will be released in December 2023 and the application deadline is **February 29th, 2024**.



## From the joint venture ESVDC-NICE NEWS FROM NICE ACADEMY



Nice Academy continues the joint venture with ESVDC. We are thus happy to share some news from our NICE Academy colleagues.

### **NICE Academy in Deventer, Netherlands**

The NICE Academy will be hosted in Deventer, Netherlands, from the 18th to the 21st of September in 2024. This event holds extra significance as it marks the 10th anniversary of the NICE Foundation. Individuals and institutions are invited to apply for Foundation membership, which comes with exclusive benefits, including reduced registration fees for academies and free access to newsletters and webinars.

### **Foundation Membership Review and Applications**

NICE will be reviewing the list of Foundation members with voting rights for the board. Individuals and institutions are invited to apply for Foundation membership, which comes with benefits including reduced registration fees for academies and free access to newsletters and webinars.

To become a Foundation member, there is a one-time payment of 50-100 Euros for individuals (depending on GDP) and 350 Euros for organizations. This membership is a unique opportunity to actively contribute to the growth of the NICE Foundation.

## Call for Nominations (I)

### 2024 AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED CONTRIBUTIONS TO VOCATIONAL DESIGNING AND CAREER COUNSELING

The European Society for Vocational Designing and Career Counseling (ESVDC) is seeking nominations for the “**2024 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Vocational Designing and Career Counseling**”. This annual award recognizes distinguished contributions to the advancement of a European and International perspective and research in Vocational Designing and Career Counseling.



The focus of these contributions can be either in the candidate’s home country (e.g., serving as an advocate for a European and International perspective in Vocational Designing and Career Counseling in one’s country), across multiple countries, or through various international and European associations or journals. Candidates may be from any country and can be ESVDC members as well as non-members. Recipients of the award will be featured in the ESVDC Newsletter and honored at the next General Assembly of the ESVDC.

Nominations should include:

1. A supporting statement (max. 500 words)
2. A current vita
3. A list of relevant publications
4. Letters of support from two people familiar with the nominee's relevant contributions

An Awards Committee appointed by the ESVDC President will review nominations. Nominations and supporting materials should be sent to the Chair of the Awards Committee: Prof Jonas Masdonati (e-mail: [jonas.masdonati@unil.ch](mailto:jonas.masdonati@unil.ch)). The deadline for submission is **February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

## Call for Nominations (II)

### 2024 EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS AWARD



The ESVDC aims, among others, to promote research in the broad field of vocational designing and career counseling. ESVDC chose to create a **special award for persons who are engaged in this field of research and recently earned a PhD degree**. This award will recognize their excellent contribution to the field of Vocational Designing and Career Counseling research.

The competition for this award is open to non-tenured early career researchers working in Europe who earned their PhD degree (doctorate) after March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Candidates may come from any country and can be ESVDC members as well as non-members. Researchers holding – at the moment of the application deadline (February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024) – a temporary teaching or research contract or a grant at public or private research institutes and universities or other institutions of higher education are eligible. Tenured staff or faculty members cannot participate in the competition.

Applicants should submit the following documents:

1. A request to participate to the “ESVDC Early Career Researchers Award” (indicating name, surname, education and position), certifying satisfaction of eligibility criteria;
2. A detailed description (in English) of the research submitted to the selection procedure (no longer than 2000 words). This should include
  - a. Introduction
  - b. Research aim(s)
  - c. Participants and measures
  - d. Procedure and data analysis
  - e. Results
  - f. Discussion
3. A CV that gives special attention to their publications.

Please submit the application electronically to Prof. Paulo Cardoso (e-mail: [pmsc@uevora.pt](mailto:pmsc@uevora.pt)) **by February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024** and specify the object: “**ESVDC Early Career Researchers Award**”.

An ad hoc committee will evaluate manuscripts. Participants will be notified on the results of the selection procedure by the beginning of March 2024. Recipients of the award will be featured in the ESVDC Newsletter and honored at the next ESVDC General Assembly.



WISHING YOU ALL A  
PEACEFUL NEW YEAR !