



## Summary of First Scientific Committee Meeting

*The first meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) of the ECADOC project for setting up a European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance and Counselling took place at Aarhus University in Copenhagen from December 19-20 in 2013.*

*The meeting was hosted by Dr Rie Thomsen (SC) and involved Prof Laura Nota (SC, Scientific Coordinator), Prof Valérie Cohen-Scali (SC, per video connection), Prof Rachel Mulvey (SC), Prof Jérôme Rossier (SC), Dr Peter Weber (SC), and Johannes Katsarov (SC, Program Manager). Dr Ole Henckel, an expert from Aarhus University, participated on the first day of the meeting, and contributed many valuable ideas.*

*This summary aims at sharing our thinking with interested actors in our field. We thank you for your interest and would appreciate any kind of feedback.*

*On behalf of the Scientific Committee,*

*Laura Nota and Johannes Katsarov*

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## 1. Goals – Making the EDP Meaningful

We began our meeting by sharing our hopes and expectations with each other, explaining what makes it meaningful for us to work together on the ECADOC project as members of the scientific committee. For us, the following aspects are particularly important:

- **Sustainable Research Infrastructure:** Setting up a program which is accredited in the existing structures and which can be sustained over many years; which stimulates research activities for future researchers through summer schools and a joint research agenda for our field; which supports PhD researchers and Post Docs in accessing the funds for large scale research projects (e.g. Marie Curie, Horizon 2020).
- **Inclusion and Intercultural Sensitivity:** Creating awareness for different economic realities and research in different countries and contexts; fostering a European and intercultural dimension in research related to CGC; stimulating social inclusion and prevention of drop-out and discrimination as values for CGC: not only in research, but also values to transform/innovate the practice of CGC; giving doctoral researchers time to experience positive behaviours
- **European Research Community:** Giving doctoral researchers a chance to meet people who support their line of thinking and inspire them; creating a motivating and secure environment and an international network of fellow researchers and colleagues, a European research community which we belong to beyond the borders of our countries and our individual research projects
- **Professionalization of CGC:** Forging a new and shared identity related to CGC – as a community of professionals; owning our own research agenda, focused on careers, integrating thinking from different disciplines (sociology, economics, psychology, pedagogy etc.); fostering interdisciplinary problem-based learning and research; stimulating new development in the European society through the development of the CGC profession and practice



## 2. Achieving First Successes AND Building Something to Last

In our following discussion, we realized that we need to combine different perspectives in our work, coordinating the ECADOC project. We have to think all of them together, but distinguish them from each other in our planning:

- **In the short term...** we need to organize the first summer school in Padua, a 5-day event with a first group of doctoral researchers from around Europe.
- **In the medium term...** we need to make sure that the complete project is a success: The three summer schools need to build on each other in some way – at least as a learning experience. Also, we need to formulate a European Research Agenda and create connections with existing doctoral initiatives.
- **In the long term...** we need to realize an actual program, which we can take further over the years, perhaps even a joint degree.

For now, we need to primarily concentrate on realizing the first summer school. Yet, our medium and long-term plans need to already be addressed at this first summer school.

## 3. Thinking Far Ahead – Options for Sustainability

The distinction between different perspectives actually began when we talked about our long-term aspirations in more detail. In particular, we discussed three options:

### **Professional Doctorate Program**

Professional doctorates prepare people for practice in a particular profession at a very high level. In the UK, “ProfDocs” are valued highly by employers and the innovative potential of such programs has also been acknowledged by the European University Association (EUA). Professional doctorates also expect doctoral students to conduct authentic original research and submit a doctoral thesis – but they include far more training than structured PhD programs, which is why they are sometimes also referred to as “taught doctorates”.

Setting up a professional doctorate program could be an interesting option for the future, as long as the main focus of the doctorate remained on research related to the professional practice of career guidance and counselling. Realizing this idea would mean that in the long term, doctoral researchers would need to become official PhD students of a degree program.



### **Joint Doctoral Degree Program**

Joint doctoral degrees are an innovative scheme funded by the European Commission for 4 years. The European Commission provides full scholarships to 15 people for 3 years for international research projects. Doctoral researchers are awarded a degree from several universities at the end of such a program (after completion; of course they need to finalize a PhD thesis). Since the complete program needs to be launched within 1 year after funding is received (including the selection of fellows), joint doctoral degrees need to be planned extremely well in advance.

A joint doctoral degree program could be an interesting option to make the EDP sustainable and find funding for innovative international research. At the same time, offering joint doctoral degrees would be very challenging from an institutional point of view – particularly with a large partnership. Of course, a joint doctoral degree could also be a professional doctorate (see above). Anyhow, people interested in doing a PhD would need to apply for a doctoral scholarship through the program.

### **European Think Tank**

A third option would be to establish a relatively loose infrastructure for large-scale research projects at the European level, connected with the coordinated organization of regular summer schools in different locations. The involved doctoral researchers would formally be enrolled in only one of the partner universities (no joint degree), but could be involved in multilateral research projects, conducting their PhD research and writing their PhD thesis related to a grand theme or a longitudinal study.

A European think tank of this kind would be closest to the current conception of the EDP. It would be easiest to organize such a think tank. Yet, the question is whether the chances of such a structure would be adequately helpful in organizing joint doctoral training and acquiring funds for international research projects, as for tighter cooperation structures.