# Critical perspectives on career and career guidance (COCAG)

# WG3 - Meeting 3

**JUNE 25TH 2025**

HTTPS://COCAG.CO.UK/

# Agenda

Presentation of the COCAG website

**Update from the Manchester launch conference**

New structure for subgroups

Leadership of subgroups

Your thoughts and comments and next steps

# WG3 members

**Dr. Kristina Mariager-Anderson**
WG3 Leader,
University of Aarhus, Denmark

**Dr. Nurten Karacan Özdemir**
WG3 vice leader,
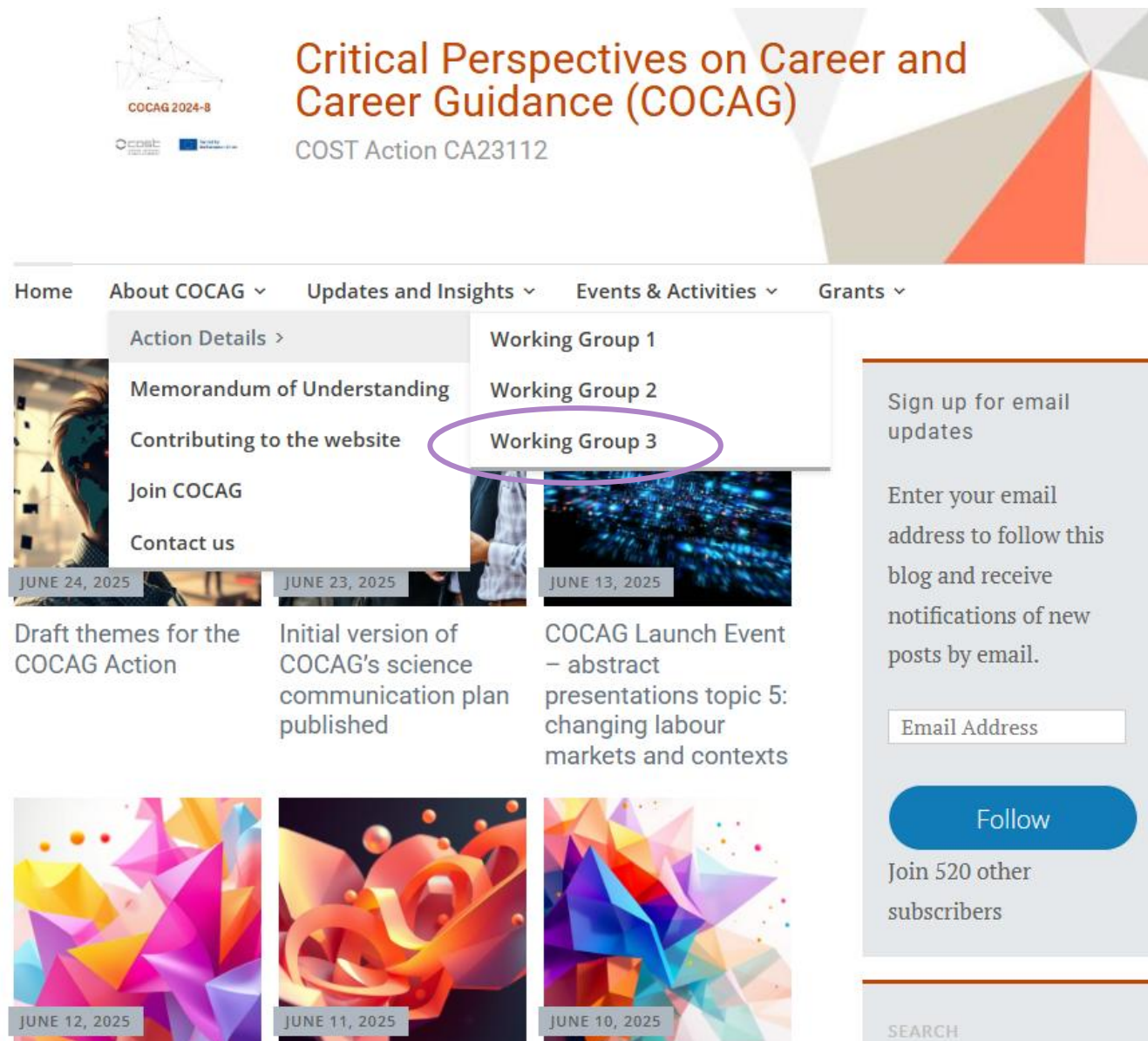Hacettepe University, Türkiye

**Dr. Neha Basnet**
WG3 vice leader,
Wittenborg University of Applied
Sciences, The Netherlands

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Find **information** and **updates** about COCAG and the WG's at the website: https://cocag.co.uk/

# COCAG launch conference, Manchester, May 2025

**Day 1** - Working group presentations

**Day 2** - Keynote from Tristram Hooley suggesting five main cross-cutting

https://cocag.co.uk/2025/06/05/cocag-launch-event-keynotes-and-wg-presentations/
(find slides for all presentations)

# The five main cross-cutting themes

1. Careers in crisis

2. Lifelong and lifewide learning in career

3. Socio-technical careering

4. Diversity and career

5. Career imaginaries

**The five themes are explored through the frame of the research questions and working groups.**

**WG 1** is interested in examining how we understand the context in relation to each of these themes, what is driving the phenomena within the themes, in whose interest do they work, how can we better theorise such phenomena and what is the possibility for changed?

**WG2** will primarily look at how policymakers are responding to these issues, why they are they doing this, how this intersects with career guidance, what other possibilities exist for policy and how researchers, practitioners and the populace might exert influence on policy?

**WG3** will explore how these issues impact on and can be addressed by career guidance practice, where the difficulties and challenges lie, and what approaches offer more possibilities?

# 1. Careers in crisis

- This theme addresses the contemporary career and asks how it is being changed and transformed by shifts in the political economy. We view the present time as being one of crisis and explore how the labour market is responding to phenomena such as the interplay between globalisation and nationalism, the growth of precarity and inequality, rising unemployment and work-intensification and the green transition. Finally, this theme also explores the way that these phenomena shape and frame career guidance policy and practice.

# 2. Lifelong and lifewide learning in career

- This theme addresses the process of career learning and the context of the education, training and skills systems. It views the education system as a key part of the political economy and recognises that wider crises will lead to changes in the education system. It also explores the relationships, interactions and transitions between formal and informal learning and between education and employment. Finally, it is interested in the context that the education system provides for people's career development and for career guidance.

# 3. Socio-technical careering

- The Action has developed a particular interest in exploring the interaction between technology, society and career. Within the Action technology is viewed as a socially and historically created and situated construct rather than an actor in its own right. Key technologies which have been focused on include automation and artificial intelligence, the internet and digitalisation, as well as socio-technical phenomena such as the growth of digital surveillance, digital enclosure, the platformisation of the labour market and algorithmic decision-making. The theme explores how these developments are impacting one careers and on the policy and practice of career guidance.

# 4. Diversity and career

- The Action recognises the dangers in creating totalising grand narratives about what is 'happening' in career and career guidance, and correspondingly has a strong focus on the diversity of experiences. This theme explores the variety of ways in which people are different from one another (gender, race, geographical location and so on) and examines how these forms of diversity and difference have been used to make people vulnerable as well as how this diversity can be a source of strength and resource for people in their careers. Key concepts within this theme include culture and community and examine the complex ways in which these concepts interact with careers and career guidance.

# 5. Career imaginaries

- Finally, the Action includes a theme which is imaginative in nature and looks forward to the building of a better world. This includes the examination of normative concepts which exist to improve people's careers and lives such as decent work, wellbeing, sustainability and social justice as well as more utopian imaginaries of what careering might be like in new and different forms of society. A key question within this theme is how people's careers and the policy and practice of career guidance can contribute to forms of social transformation.

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# So, how does this connect with the themes WG3 had developed?

| 2nd analysis incorporated survey data |  |
|---|---|
| 1. Technology and Digital Transformation | |
| 2. Critical Professional Practice and Development | |
| 3. Educational Settings and Life Stage Transitions | |
| 4. Cultural, Contextual and Community-Based Influences | |
| 5. Methodologies and Knowledge Production | |
| 6. Career Crisis | *Suggested by members at 2nd meeting* |

| | WG3<br>Critical professional practice and development<br>Methodologies and knowledge production |
|---|---|
| | *How do these issues impact on practice?* |
| **Careers in crisis** | Career crisis |
| **Lifelong and lifewide learning in career** | Educational settings and life stage transitions |
| **Socio-technological careering** | Technology and digital transformation |
| **Diversity and career** | Cultural, contextual and community-based influences |
| **Career imaginaries** | |

# Moving forward and finding leads for the subthemes

1. **Careers in crisis**

2. **Lifelong and lifewide learning in career**

3. **Socio-technical careering**
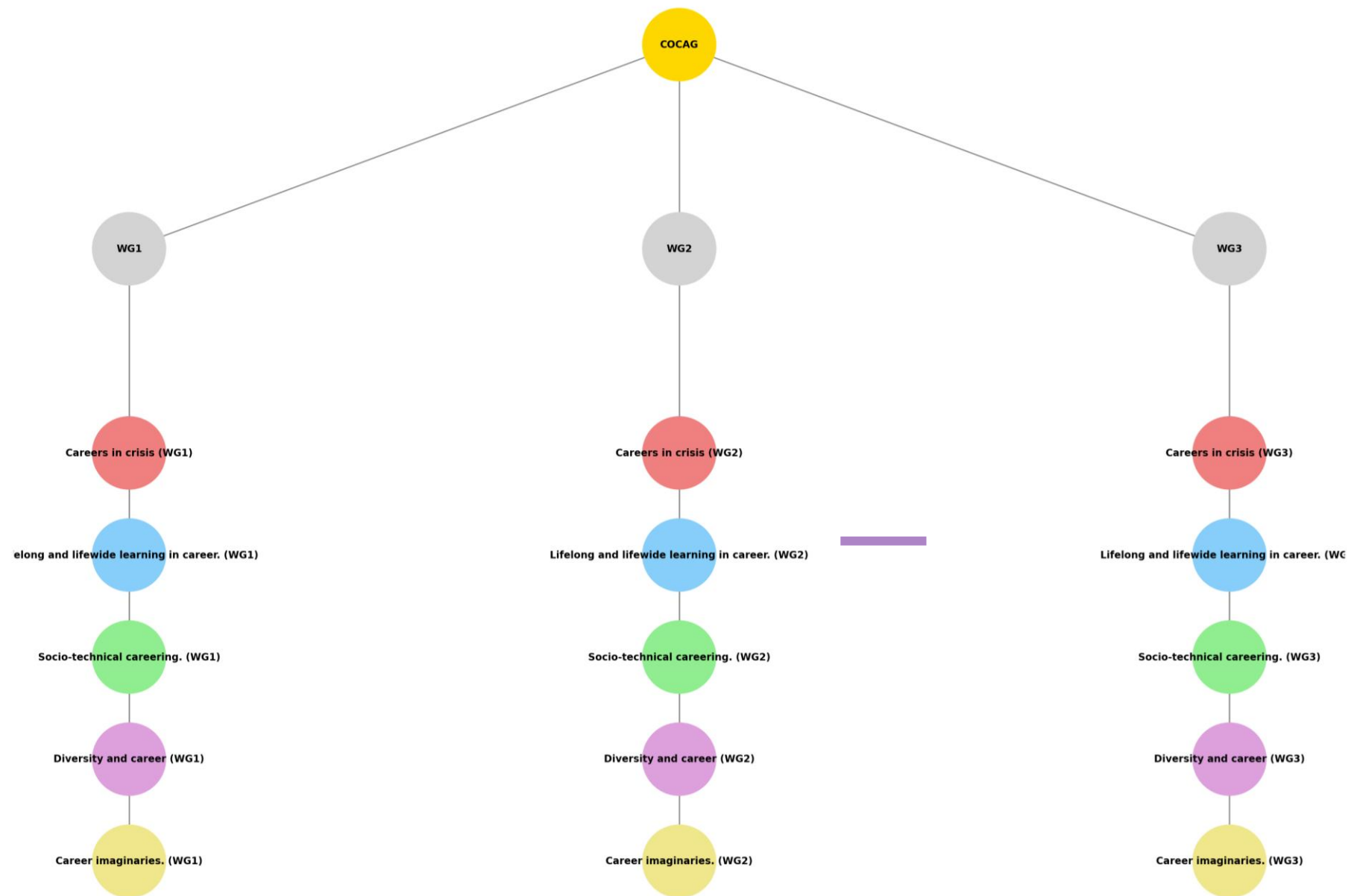
4. **Diversity and career**

5. **Career imaginaries**

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**Moving forward and finding leads for the subthemes in and across working groups**

1. **Careers in crisis**
2. **Lifelong and lifewide learning in career**
3. **Socio-technical careering**
4. **Diversity and career**
5. **Career imaginaries**

# Your thoughts ☺

# Invitation to apply for a leadership role



https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1WjzAqWRjLylUf
NmS5wlb0uy7Faz-NzCVIE9el6N7EfA/edit?gid=0#gid=0

- Follow the link

- Write a short entry with your interest (you might use previous statement)

- **Deadline August 15th 2025**

- While these themes will serve as the foundation for subgroups across the working groups, all working groups are able to establish more if we feel the need.

# Next steps

**Finalising our organisation**

- Most importantly we need to finalise the themes, the subleads and organise a process for members to join

- Subleads will be invited to start organising events


- Short Briefing from ECADOC 2025

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER 😎

# THANK YOU!

PLEASE CONNECT ON LINKED-IN☺