



# **COST ACTION CA23112 - CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CAREER AND CAREER GUIDANCE (COCAG)**

## **WG 1 THE CHALLENGES AND CHANGES IN CAREER IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

Mariana Lucas Casanova  
([marianacasanova@ese.ipp.pt](mailto:marianacasanova@ese.ipp.pt))

Richard Gee ([ricky.gee@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:ricky.gee@ntu.ac.uk))

Limor Kessler Ladelsky ([limor.kessler@biu.ac.il](mailto:limor.kessler@biu.ac.il))

# The evolution of work within WG1 and COCAG

The COCAG launch event Career and career guidance in Europe: Assessing strengths and addressing gaps took place on the 20th and 21st May 2025 at the Manchester Metropolitan University Business School.

During this event:

- Mariana Lucas Casanova presented WG1, framing its scope, goals and critical approach and presented the provisional themes and subgroups
- Ricky Gee facilitated a workshop titled “Building networks and social capital for a paradigm shift”, promoting reflection on what it means to be critical to further frame WG1 members’ critical approaches
- Tristram Hooley presented the keynote titled “Taking a critical perspective on career and career guidance - Setting the conceptual framework for COCAG” which sets out the agenda and conceptual framework for this action
- Many interesting other presentations took place – slides for all can be accessed in the COCAG website.

# The evolution of work within WG1 and COCAG

Tristram Hooley's keynote "Taking a critical perspective on career and career guidance - Setting the conceptual framework for COCAG":

- Analysed the themes for each WG subgroups
- Systematised them based on the discussions that took place during the conference

So, we here present these new subgroups and invite all members to register

# Reformulation of topics for WG 1



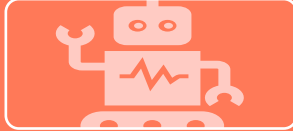
## Careers in crisis

- Capitalism in crisis> Shifting labour markets> Globalisation and nationalism> Precarity, unemployment and work intensification>Green transition



## Lifelong and lifewide learning in career

- Educational crisis> Formal and informal learning> The interaction of education work and other life spheres> Transitions



## Socio-technological careering

- Automation> Digitalisation> Surveillance> Digital enclosure> Human-centred systems



## Diversity and career

- Diversity> Vulnerabilities> Inclusion> Place> Culture> Community



## Career imaginaries

- Possibilities for a better world> Transformation> Wellbeing> Decent work> Social justice



# 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-technological 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 on 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.

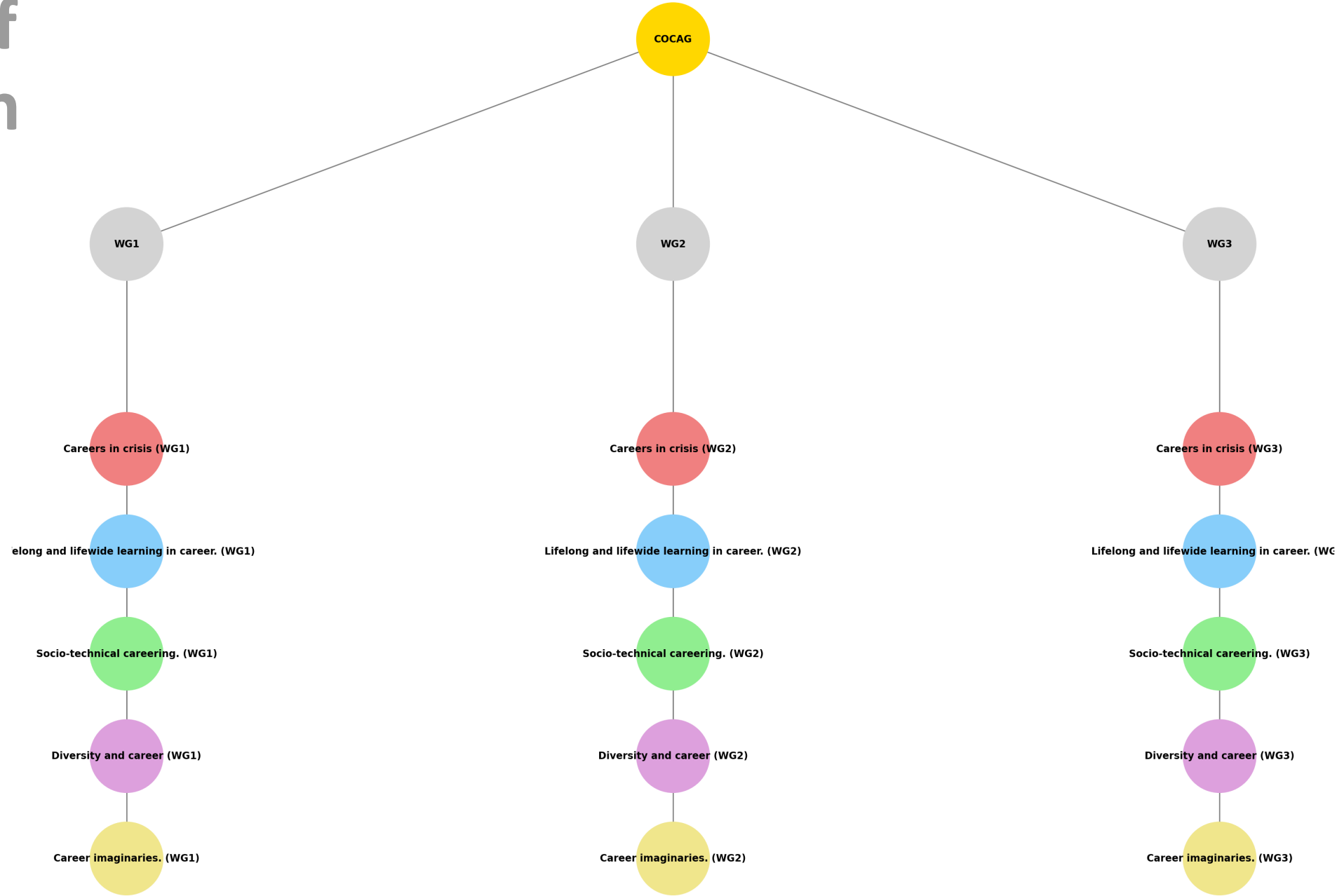


## 5. Career imaginaries

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.

New subgroup topics	Old WG1 subgroup topics
<b>Careers in crisis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The impact of the socioeconomic and political organisation of the labour market</li> <li>- The experience of work and career in specific contexts</li> </ul>
<b>Lifelong and lifewide learning in career</b>	
<b>Socio-technological careering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The impact of automation, digitalization, robotization, AI on the labour market</li> </ul>
<b>Diversity and career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work and career development in relation to geographical space and place</li> <li>- Inclusion and social justice</li> </ul>
<b>Career imaginaries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The meaning and value of work, and the future of work and career development</li> </ul>

# Structure of work within and across WGs



# Next steps

Members who had already registered will be assigned to respective subgroups, according to the reformulation previously presented and do not need to fill out a new registration form.

Members can continue to register to subgroups by filling-out the following registration form: <https://gi.ese.ipp.pt/index.php/231579?lang=pt>



# News

There are members interested in forming consortiums to apply to Horizon in the following topics. If you are interested, contact each subgroup leader, as identified:

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-03: **Working time reduction**: barriers, challenges, benefits and policy implications on page 103 – contact Judit Vegh ([juditvegh@gmail.com](mailto:juditvegh@gmail.com))

HORIZON-CL2-2025-02-TRANSFO-04-two-stage: **Gender differences** in career trajectories of parents and their implications for gender equality and family well-being - page 105 – contact Rosie Ann Alexander [rosiea@edu.au.dk](mailto:rosiea@edu.au.dk)

There are also members interested in an application on **AI (call not identified yet)**. If interested contact ESRA DOGRU HUZMELI ([esradogru001@gmail.com](mailto:esradogru001@gmail.com)) and Róbert Hanák ([robert.hanak@euba.sk](mailto:robert.hanak@euba.sk)) and Limor Kessler [limor.kessler@biu.ac.il](mailto:limor.kessler@biu.ac.il)

# Attention:

Look into the **Call for applications for COST Grant Awards** disseminated by Tristram Hooley as a potential way to get together and work on project applications.

**Deadline for COCAG Grants is 14th July 2025.**

**Please note that the activity must be completed and the report sent to the COCAG admin for approval before October 15th 2025.**