

A research agenda for the ECADOC

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Why a research agenda?

The European Doctoral Programme will allow:

- **To strengthen the collaboration between the teams** doing research in the field of Career Guidance and Counselling across Europe;
- **To create a network** of researchers and of PhD students;
- **To consider several disciplines** and theoretical frameworks;
- To create a fruitful and **stimulating environment** for:
 - Doing research;
 - PhD students.

In order to give **a first scientific direction** to this network of colleagues and researchers, a research agenda might be helpful.



Why a research agenda?

Several new theoretical frameworks have emerged

Since 25 years, several new theories in our field have emerged, such as, the:

- The **social cognitive career theory** (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994);
- The **contextual action theory** in career counseling (Young, Valach, & Collin, 1996);
- The **systems theory framework of career development and counseling** (Patton & McMahon, 1999);
- The **PIC** (Prescreening, in-depth exploration, and choice) **model for career decision-making** (Gati & Asher, 2001);
- The **cognitive information processing theory of career decision making** (Peterson, Sampson, Lenz, & Reardon, 2002);

Why a research agenda?



- The **Life Design paradigm** (Savickas et al., 2009).

New International Book on Life Design
Coming in 2014

Handbook of the Life Design paradigm: From practice to theory, from theory to practice

Laura Nota & Jérôme Rossier (Eds.)

This handbook will present chapters that describe the Life Design paradigm (Savickas, Nota, Rossier, et al., 2009) and examine its applications, methods, and instruments. The authors will discuss how to use life-designing models, methods, and materials to assist people cope with important changes in work settings and migration flow due to economic transformation and social evolutions. After having examined how a life design paradigm might be used for career construction with adolescent, young adults, and adults, special attention will be paid to the potential contribution of the Life Design paradigm in proposing adapted interventions, as career education, career counseling, career coaching, for individuals who experience more difficulties or are vulnerable (people with disability, unemployed, people with low economical resources, migrants, people from different minorities, etc.).

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New International Book on Life Design
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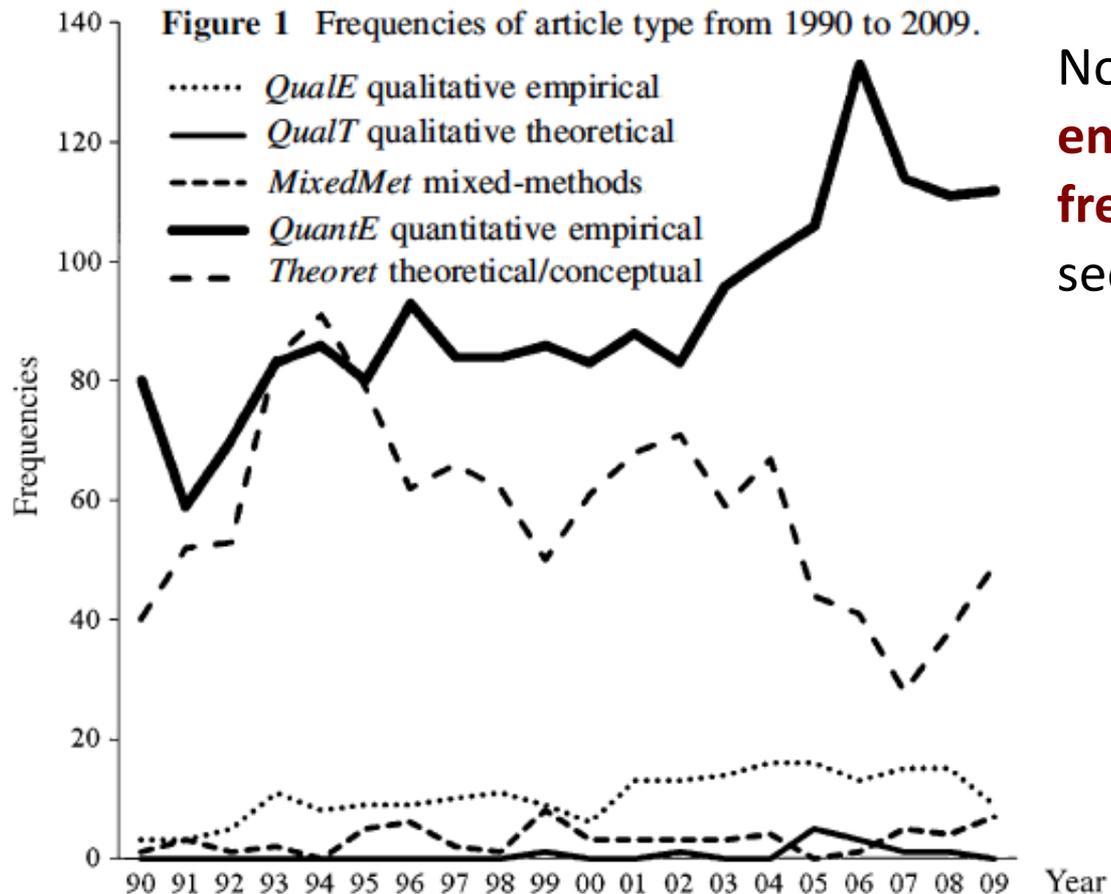
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The development of these new theories creates **new opportunities** to understand our practice, to design our interventions, and for research.

1. Diversify our methods

The first aim would be to use a variety of methods



Nowadays, **quantitative empirical** studies are the **most frequent ones** (for a review see Stead et al., 2012)



1. Diversify our methods

To **increase the use of qualitative or mixed methods**,
Stead and colleagues (2012) suggested:

- To include in graduate-level and doctoral programs, such as this European Program, **classes of both quantitative and qualitative methods** and to train students to refer to a **variety of paradigms**;
- To promote the **use of both** quantitative and qualitative methods **by each university or research group**.

I also would like to suggest that it would be particularly interesting to use more frequently:

- **Mixed methods**;
- Or **narrative approaches**.



1. Diversify our methods

Case studies should also be promoted in the field of career guidance and counseling:

- According to Stiles' (2007) **assimilation model**, case studies can be accumulated and promote the development of theories (*theory-building case study research*);
- It would also be interesting to use methods, used in psychotherapy research, such as the **systematic, pragmatic case study** approach (Fishman & Neigher, 2003).

Several journals publish case studies, such as *The Career Development Quarterly* (CDQ) or the *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance* (IJEVG), but there are only a few submissions using this method.



1. Diversify our methods

Many more **longitudinal studies** should be conducted in order to describe more accurately:

- **Career paths;**
- **Career transitions;**
- **Causality.**

These studies should not only take into account career-related aspects but also aspect of other life-spheres (family and leisure).

Longitudinal studies might also allow **developing more complex models** and promote an **holistic perspective** of career paths.

2. Effectiveness

Systematically study the effectiveness of career interventions

Several meta-analyses and research have shown that career counseling interventions are **very effective** and that their impact **holds over time**.

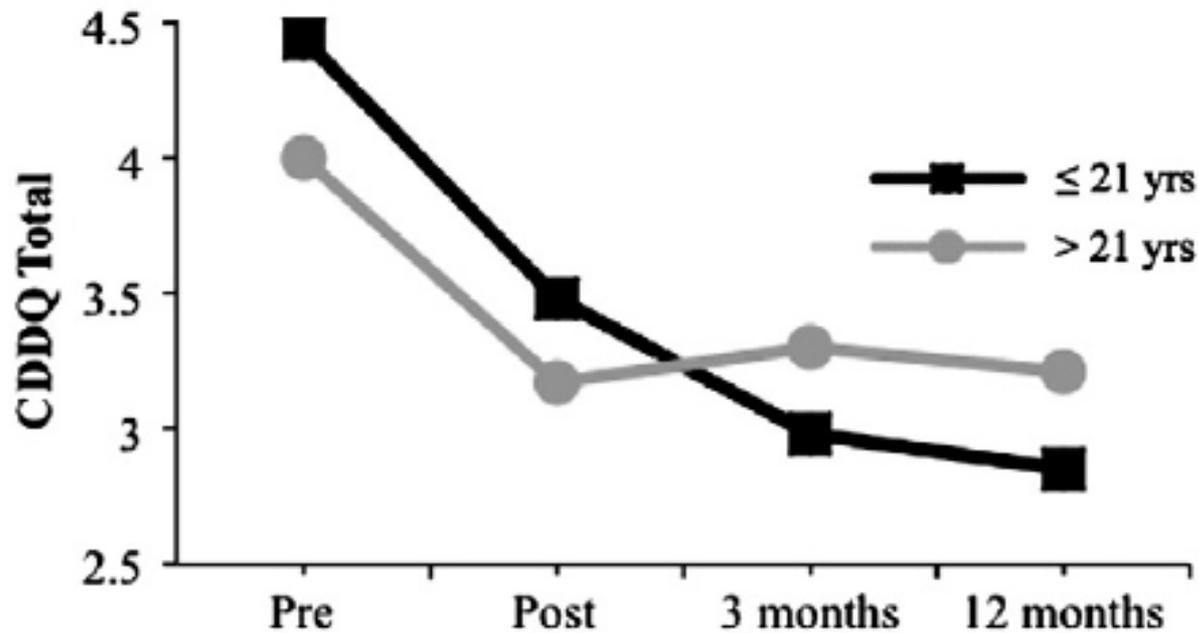


Fig. 1. Long-term effectiveness of career counseling intervention on career decision-making difficulties according to age.

(Perdrix et al., 2013)

2. Effectiveness

Moreover, we know from Brown and colleagues (2003), that the effectiveness varies according to the presence or absence of **some specific ingredients** or according to the number of sessions. These critical ingredients are:

- Help clients to develop **written goals**;
- **Individualized** feed-back;
- Provide opportunities to **search, gather and process occupational information** during and outside of sessions;
- **Show models** who have successfully **coped** with similar difficulties;
- Provide opportunities to consider the **support available** for different options.

2. Effectiveness



more

However, intervention evaluation research in our field should systematically:

- Include **control groups**;
- Consider **processes** underlying this effectiveness by studying mediators and moderators, such as the working alliance (Masdonati et al., 2014);
- Study the interaction between the **type of intervention** and the **type of counselee**, that is almost never done.

Increasing our knowledge in this regard would help us to **design more appropriate career interventions**.



3. Vulnerable and underserved

The contemporary world is especially difficult to cope with

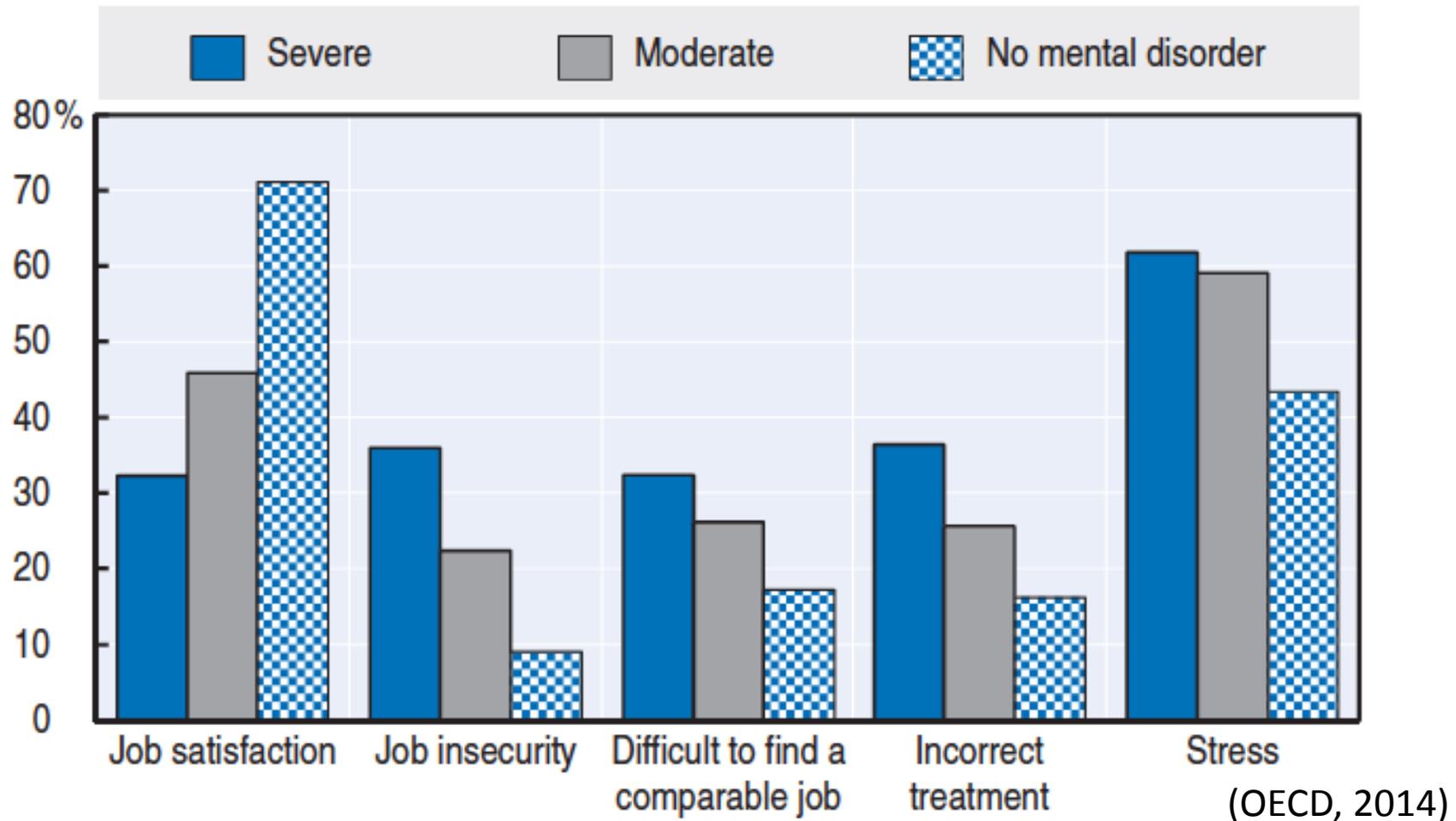
The **contemporary world is** characterized by globalization, by rapid social and technological changes, and uncertainty.

This reality implies that people have to be flexible and **be able to always adapt** to new circumstances. **People with few resources** have more difficulties to cope with this new reality, and can be considered as **vulnerable people**.

For example, migrants, people who did not finish school, who did not complete a professional training, or with a disability are certainly potential vulnerable and at-risk people in the job market (Puertas et al., 2012).

As reported by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2014), people suffering from a mental disorder are especially vulnerable in the job market in Switzerland.

3. Vulnerable and underserved





3. Vulnerable and underserved

The average rate of **people not in education, employment or training** (NEET) in Europe **has recently increased**.

Latest estimates indicate that almost 7.5 million young people aged 15-24 years can be identified as NEET. That represents 12,9% of all individuals falling into this age group (Eurostat, 2011).

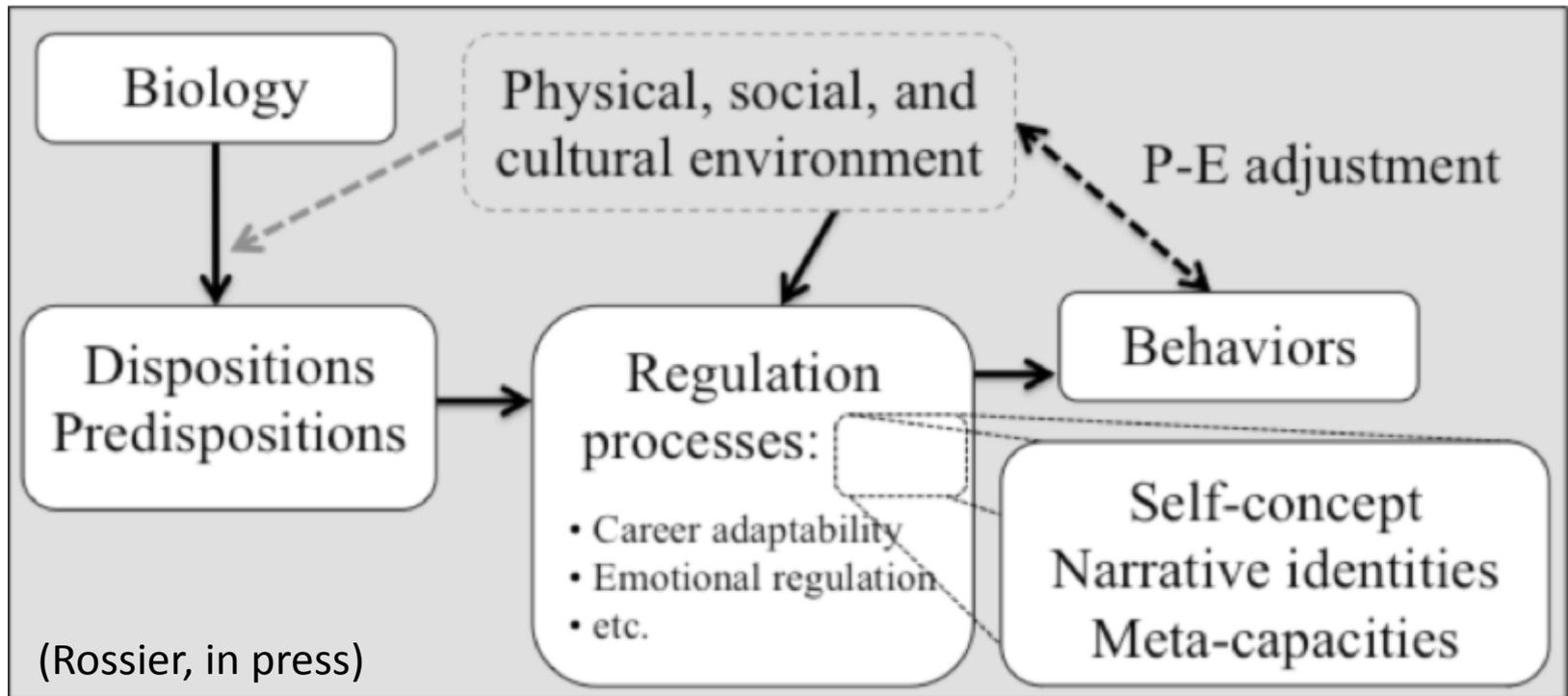
The recent financial crisis and economic recession may partly explain the increasing rate of NEETs.

However, **more research** should be conducted in order to **identify social and personal factors** that can be considered as vulnerabilities to become a NEET or to be marginalized. This should allow to better **understand** the origins of **social inequalities**.

4. Increasing resources

Overcome vulnerabilities by increasing resources

People's behaviors are a function of a **constant interaction** between the environmental and personal dispositions mediated by **regulation processes**.





4. Increasing resources

We know that career guidance counseling can increase these resources (Rossier, in press) but we should do **more research on how** career guidance counseling increases these resources

Knowing better how to increase people's resources, how to **increase their resilience** would certainly contribute to the promotion of social justice.



Thank you for your attention!

Please visit our website at:

larios.psy.unipd.it/ecadoc/pages/index.php

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