

ESREA Network

History of Adult Education & Training in Europe

The network “History of Adult Education and Training in Europe” is continuing and developing further the work of the network “Cross-cultural Influences in the History of European Adult Education”, established in 1991. While the earlier network focused mainly on the period 1880-1930 and on popular adult education, the remodelled network intends to provide wider perspectives and a wider time frame. Therefore, it covers different forms of adult education - popular/liberal, vocational, academic, staff development – and earlier as well as more recent history.

In the context of European adult education, the importance of historical and cultural approach has become evident. The diversity of current adult education and training results from divergent national and cultural developments in the field during the 19th and 20th centuries, and in this way, the history and cultural traditions impact on today’s policies and practices. Additionally, the current trends of globalization and transnationalization have pointed out the significance of cultural influences also in adult education. Thus, in order to understand the special characteristics of different national traditions and the interaction between them, comparative and cross-cultural perspectives are particularly emphasized within the network.

The network provides possibilities for communication between scholars representing different disciplines, such as education, history, sociology and information studies. It organizes seminars every second year, either on its own or in cooperation with national networks. The network is using both ESREA’s publication forum as well as other forums to disseminate and promote research and discussion concerning history of adult education and training.

Co-convenors:

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European Seminar

ESREA Network

History of Adult
Education & Training in Europe

Life Course and Learning in

History: cultural,
societal and individual
perspectives on adult
education and training
in Europe.

University of Turku (Finland)

June 8-9 2009

Life course and learning in history: cultural, societal and individual perspectives on adult education and training in Europe.

Call for papers:

The next seminar of the revised ESREA Network on History of Adult Education and Training in Europe will be organized at University of Turku 8-9 June 2009, in connection with the conference of Finnish History of Education network.

Adult education or training is simply not a question about adults learning but about learning at different stages of the life course and in varied circumstances. The seminar aims at discussing life-long learning in history and the relation between life course and adult education from societal, institutional, individual as well as cultural perspectives.

Educational institutions and practices outside the initial schooling have often been created for certain age groups: adolescents, younger or more mature adults and, even for senior citizens. Sometimes institutions intended for wider audiences may have turned to attract a narrower segment of adult population. Besides institutions specially designed for adults, adults have sometimes studied in schools intended for younger ones which for its part opens an interesting approach to adult learning. Relating these practices, varied social and cultural views, ideas and policies can be found in different historical, geographical and cultural contexts. In the course of time, changes have naturally occurred.

In addition to societal and institutional perspectives, the seminar aims at extending discussion towards the individual experiences and meanings of adult education and training among different kinds of learners throughout their life course. The scarce documentation concerning ordinary people's lives is perhaps possible to overcome by combining the findings and sources from different fields of history to studies on education, social sciences, economics and folkloristic.

Evidently, the life course and learning are closely connected with the issues of gender and social background. These have been crucial factors shaping the individuals' opportunities for education as well as influencing the practices of adult education.

The organizers invite researchers from all Europe to give presentations and to discuss their topics, findings and approaches to the seminar theme. Doctoral students are especially welcome.

Nordic Session

On Monday afternoon (June 8th, 13-18) there will be a session discussing "Nordic adult education".

It welcomes papers from researchers, who are questioning, whether it - as popular, vocational, academic - exists, what it is, what its functions have been and whether it has any relevance any more.

The session will be moderated by Anja Heikkinen.

Abstracts in English with authors name and affiliation, title and max 400 words, should be sent to the address francoise.laot@paris5.sorbonne.fr by 31 March 2009.

The organizing committee of the seminar is

- Kirsi Ahonen (Tampere)
- Anja Heikkinen (Tampere)
- Annukka Jauhiainen (Turku)
- Francoise F. Laot (Paris)

More detailed information about the seminar – fees, travel and accommodation - on the websites of ESREA (<http://www.esrea.org>) and the Finnish History of Education network (<http://www.kasvatus.net/>). Information about Turku and University of Turku can be found on website <http://www.utu.fi>.