

ESREA

Minutes of the ESREA Steering Committee meeting, Berlin, 1-2 April 2006

Department of Education, Humboldt University, Berlin

Present:

Michal Bron (Sweden), Wolfgang Juette (Austria), Larissa Jogi (Estonia), Ewa Kurantowciz (Poland), Barbara Merrill (United Kingdom), Henning Salling Olesen (Denmark), Rudolph Tippelt (Germany), Risto Rinno (Finland), Linden West (United Kingdom), Barry Hake (Netherlands).

Absent:

Paula Guimares (Portugal) Antonio Frago (Portugal), Edmée Ollagnier (Switzerland) with clear reasons.

1. Welcome by Henning, ESREA Chair, especially to Wolfgang Juette as 12th member of ESREA SC.
2. Agreement of proposed agenda with additions made by Michal Bron
3. Minutes of meeting in Munich. Approved unanimously.

4. ESREA Networks

4a: Learning and Working Life

Henning reports Slovenian Adult Education Centre will organise a seminar for the network 9-11 November 2006. Linköping will organise the network seminar in 2007.

4b. Active Citizenship

Michal reported that the next network seminar will be held in Braga June 2007. More information will be provided at the SC next meeting.

4c. Life History

Linden distributed a paper comprising a critical review of the network. He emphasized that the meetings of the network were getting too large and amorphous with too little room for active dialogue and exchanges. Linden referred to tensions between the interests of institutions such as ESREA and the wish of local agencies to profile themselves.

Henning responded and said that he found Linden's presentation to be very valuable. There is a problem of continuity in the network, there is a community of core scholars but little space for the development of a common developing discourse. He suggested that the focus in the work of the network should place more emphasis on adult education and learning. Large meetings can be inclusive but also a source of exclusion. It is a question of balance and the clear definition of purposes of the network. Barry referred to tensions in terms of language and cultural differences and the significant decline in French-speaking participants in the network.

4d. Older Learners

Barry reported that Tarja's Tikkannen's commitment is primarily to the CEDEFOP project on older workers which would be laterally related to the ESREA network. ESREA members have been asked to indicate names of colleagues who are working in the area of older workers rather than older learners.

4e. Migration, ethnicity

Barry and Henning reported a lack of clarity surrounding the communication with John Grayson of Northern College, UK.

Michal referred to a distasteful discussion on the ESREA E-mail list about immigrants and the role of Ian Martin in steering the debate in positive direction.

As a short-cut to reactivating the network, it was proposed to ask John and Ian to take an initiative with regard to the network.

Action: Michal Bron will take the initiative.

4f. Cross-cultural influences

Barry reported that a seminar will be held at the Sorbonne in late June 2006. About 30 participants have registered for this event organised by Francoise Laot, Anja Heikkinen and Barry.

4g. Gender

It was reported by Linden that the network continues to struggle in terms of the numbers of active participants. A Polish colleague was interested in organising a meeting but nothing more was heard. Following a suggestion by Henning, Linden indicated that he would not wish to combine the work of the gender and life history networks.

Edmee has indicated that she is not keen to take the lead in organising future meetings.

Henning asked how does gender fit into current national/European discourses?

The group of activists will meet in the summer and will report back to SC in October. Barry reminded SC of the volume of edited papers from the network which has been positively reviewed.

4h. Access

Barbara reported on the modified title and remit of the network and the renewal of an active role by Etienne Bourgeois. Barbara and Etienne will organize the next seminar in December 2006. John Field has agreed to participate.

4i. Community Development

The general outline of proposal and programme for the first meeting in Faro in October 2006 was approved.

There was some discussion of the budget posts for travel and hotel costs of 7 key speakers. It was agreed to discuss this with Antonio.

5. ESREA series with Peter Lang

Linden reported that the manuscript for his volume was almost ready and would be submitted to Lang in the near future.

Henning reported progress on the volume on Learning and Working-life with Keith Forrester as co-editor. Authors have been invited to submit texts for May 2006. It is hoped to have it camera-ready in late 2006.

Additional material from the network will be offered to NIACE for a separate volume.

It was agreed that the proposed volumes intended for 2007 will require to submit pro forma's. It was agreed that this would be submitted to the next meeting.

Questions were raised about the distribution of series by Lang. Should ESREA itself be more pro-active in promoting the Lang series?

There were also suggestions to control the review process and promotion by Lang.

It was also proposed to provide more information on the ESREA website about publications.

Barry suggested to request Lang to send flyers to upcoming conferences.

Action: Indications of upcoming conferences should be submitted to Barry within 7 days.

Barry will draw things together.

Barry raised his own role in the future since he is the contact person with Lang. Linden indicated that he was OK with Barry as contact person in the future. Barry indicated that he personally had serious reservations about his role as contact person with Lang when he has no responsibility within ESREA from January 2007.

6. ESREA 2007

Barry reported upon his negotiations with Seville which he concluded were positive.

Henning indicated that he is confident about the organisation in Seville. However, he would prefer to spend most of the available time on a discussion of the thematic approach to ESREA 2007 which still needed some consideration. During this discussion the following issues were raised by SC members:

the problem of a too heavy emphasis on a narrow understanding of literacy;

need to explore cultural differences in different European regions;

more emphasis on a cultural studies perspective on literacies rather than literacy;

where is gender?;

illiteracy, exclusions and cohesion as issues;

reference to social capital is needed;

do we give way if literacy must be in the conference title?;

consensus about multiple literacies is a positive option;

culture is a central concept which should be in the title;

what about the digital divide and exclusion?;

Action: need to work further on title and themes. Barry to give feedback to Sevilla and negotiate a new text together with the members of the conference scientific committee..

Michal remarked that we need to discuss the economics of the conference.

Revised budget with lower participant fees was discussed and approved.

7. New location of ESREA secretariat

Henning explained that there were in effect serious proposals from two institutions.

Following a general discussion it was agreed that more information is needed from the two institutions. This information should include:

curriculum vitae of potential candidates for ESREA Secretary;

need for more information about competencies of the candidates;

working relationships in new ESREA Secretariat location;

more information about the institutions;

what is the motivation of the two locations?

need expressed to have more contact with the candidates.

Action: Henning will contact the two potential locations and request a detailed written proposal from both. A small delegation (e.g. Henning, Linden, Edmée and Barry will on

behalf of the ESREA SC visit both locations in September. Funding will be covered by ESREA recommendations to SC in October meeting.

8. Financial report and membership

Barry reported on the definitive annual account for 2005. This was approved.

Barry reported on the financial prognosis for 2006. This was approved.

Barry reported that ESREA has 149 registered members following an update of the data base.

The majority of members are institutional members rather than individual members which means that the effective active membership in ESREA activities is much larger.

9. AOB

9a.

Michal raised the question of organizing discussion for a on the ESREA website.

Action: Michal will look further and report back.

9b.

Henning reported on a DIE initiative for an EU Accompanying Measures project on the professionalisation of adult educators.

10. Next meeting

It was agreed to hold the next ESREA SC meeting in Seville. This is strategic with regard to ESREA 2007. Some members will transfer to the seminar in Faro.