



# Adult education in times of crisis and change: perspectives on access, learning careers and identities

First Call for Papers

ESREA Access, Learning Careers and Identities Network Conference

University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal,

14-16 July, 2022<sup>1</sup>

At the 2013 conference of this network in Linköping, Sweden the theme was 'Times of change: The role of adult education in times of crisis. The notion of 'times of change' has become relevant again as a result of the pandemic and its effects on adult education, and the lives of both adult students and adult educators. The ESREA Access, Learning Careers and Identity Network Conference held in 2017 in Rennes, France moved to a different theme and interrogated the concept of learning contexts and identity. In Coimbra we built on the Rennes conference but also went back to aspects of the Linköping conference with the theme of 'Adult education as a resource for resistance and transformation: Adult student voices, learning experiences and identities and the role of adult educators.

At the Faro conference we want to link back and extend on the ideas of changing times, transformation, access, learning approaches and identity. We cannot ignore the immense impact that the pandemic caused by COVID-19 has had on adult education and communities and society more widely. The theme of this conference stems from this issue and the consequences of this for a changing adult education. More broadly many countries have experienced an intense economic crisis, an increase in unemployment, intense changes in the working world, and an increase in social inequalities and poverty. It has also resulted in specific changes in higher education policies and practices, with the intensification of debates regarding learning and teaching using distance instruments and digital teaching.

This crisis has changed access to adult education, and the learning and teaching approaches as face-to-face teaching has been temporarily lost and replaced by digital teaching and distance learning in all forms of adult education (community education, further and higher education, work-based learning). This raises both old and new issues as the experiences of adult students have been transformed, especially regarding learning as a social experience. Having to teach remotely and digitally has also significantly changed the teaching experiences of adult educators. The mandatory use of online platforms resulted in the possibility to record lessons and offer an 'asynchronous' learning experience. On the one hand, this has helped non-traditional students with children at home or with full time jobs. This chance was, in some ways, 'more' than what they could afford in a non-pandemic situation. On the other hand, the lack of face-to-face social relationships may have caused a deep loss as relationships and social networks play an important role in the learning trajectories of these students (Finnegan, Merrill and Thunborg, 2014) and are crucial to the building and diversity of social capital (Field, 2000, 2005). Is this opportunity still in a possibility in an online learning environment? Is this possible with online learning or is it related only to face-to-face teaching in an educational institution?

Periods of confinement due to the new conditions in higher education and adult education more generally might also affect women and men differently, both students and educators alike. Did gender inequalities increase during the crisis in which we are living and how has this affected their learning and teaching experiences and family and community lives? If so what and how can we combat this through adult education? What impact has the new way of learning had on class, race, age and disability inequalities as well as the issues of access, learning careers and learning identities? The changes towards digital learning might also change the teaching experiences of adult educators. How did they

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<sup>1</sup> In 11-13th July it will be organised, in the same venue, the meeting of the ESREA Gender and Adult Education network conference. If you want to participate in both events, please look at the ESREA web page for more information.

change their professional practices in order to maintain their commitment to enhance people's opportunities and learning within these new limitations and constraints?

Taking the crisis and its consequent changes as a departure point, we want to invite researchers to reflect on a multitude of dimensions of adult education in its broadest sense and in a range of contexts such as community education, further and higher education and workplace learning (informal, non-formal and formal contexts), as well as analysing inequalities such as class, gender, race, age and disability. And to discuss the positives as well as the negatives. We would also like to explore the impact this has had for researchers researching issues of access, learning careers and identity. Reflecting on past and current situations we would like to project to the future possibilities and implications and changes for adult education. What can we learn as adult educators and researchers from across Europe and beyond?

The conference welcomes papers, roundtables, and symposia which address one or more of the following themes:

- How has access to adult education and learning been affected by digital learning and what are adult students' experiences of these processes.
- How is the general uncertainty raised from the crisis we are living in affecting the work and professional identities of adult educators in community education, further and higher education and workplace learning?
- Have inequalities such as class, gender, race, age and disability – already present in our system – increased or are at risk of being intensified in the near future?
- How are different educational institutions innovating their practices/initiatives after the recent critical moments?
- Methodological approaches and research in a time of crisis
- What will adult education look like in the future?

## References

Field J., (2000) *Lifelong Learning and the New Educational Order*, Routledge, Stoke on Trent.

Field J., (2005) *Social Capital and Lifelong Learning*, The Policy Press, Bristol.

Finnegan F., Merrill B., Thunborg C. (eds.), (2014) *Students Voices of Inequalities in European Higher Education: Challenges for theory, policy and practice in a time of change*, ESREA/ Sense Publishers, Rotterdam.

## Keynote Speakers

Keynote speakers will be indicated in the Second Call for Papers

## Proposals

Proposals are invited for papers, symposiums and roundtables. Please submit abstracts in two separate files: one including the paper title, the name of author/s, affiliation, address, e-mail of each author and information on whether it is a paper, symposium or round table; and the second one including the paper title and abstract. Abstracts should be one side of A4 maximum with Arial, 12 points. Please send your abstract in RTF-format.

Please submit your abstract by email to [aalmeida@ualg.pt](mailto:aalmeida@ualg.pt) (António Fragoso) and [svaladas@ualg.pt](mailto:svaladas@ualg.pt) (Sandra Valadas) by 28th February 2022. Acceptance of papers will be confirmed by 18th March 2022.

If accepted for presentation, the final versions of papers (no more than 5.000 words including references) must be submitted by the 3rd July 2022, also via email. Please use Times New Roman, 12 and the Harvard reference system.



The main language of the conference is English but abstracts will be accepted in languages where we have members of the committee who can translate such as in French, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian. **Full paper must be submitted in English.** Presentations will also be in English.

### Information for contributors

A paper is proposed and submitted in the form of an abstract by one person. Up to three other people can be named as co-authors in the abstract proposal.

For each participant, a maximum of two such proposals may be submitted in which the person is named as an author or co-author.

The abstract proposal must indicate which of the named authors will be presenting the paper. All those authors attending must register for the ESREA 2022 Conference for Access, Learning Career and Identity.

The author or one of the named co-authors is responsible for communicating with the ESREA Conference Organisers about the paper, roundtable and symposium. .

Accepted abstracts will be downloadable in PDF-format on the **Conference website**.

Further information on accommodation, travel to Faro and tourist information will be available on the website.

### Bursaries and support to participating graduate students

As a way to support graduate-student's participation in the conference, there will be three bursaries for this conference. To be able to apply, one needs to be a graduate student (e.g. PhD-student, EdD-student, master student); a member of ESREA (either individual or covered by an institutional membership) and one needs to submit a paper to the conference.

Students are to use the bursary money in expenses related to this conference (accommodation, flight, etc.) up to the limit of 300 €. ESREA will refund these expenses against the presentation of receipts. Applications or questions regarding the application procedure should be directed to Alexandra Ioannidou: [ESREAsecretary@die-bonn.de](mailto:ESREAsecretary@die-bonn.de)

Applications should be submitted no later than 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2022.

### Conference fees

ESREA member: 110 €

Non-member: 170 €

Student: 50 €

The conference fee includes conference materials, lunches, coffee-breaks, a light dinner (14th July) and the book of the conference.

The conference dinner (15th July) will be optional.

### Conference Book

To be edited after the conference via a double peer reviewed process.

### Registration and Payment



Please look for the registration form in the webpage of the conference (will be available soon)

Payments should be made via bank transference (details to appear in the second call for papers and in the conference webpage)

### Important dates

Dead-line	Action	Additional Comments
28 February 2022	Submission of abstracts	Send to <a href="mailto:aalmeida@ualg.pt">aalmeida@ualg.pt</a> (António Fragoso) and <a href="mailto:svaladas@ualg.pt">svaladas@ualg.pt</a> (Sandra Valadas)
18 March 2022	Acceptance of abstracts confirmed	
15 April 2022	Registration and payment	Please book your accommodations as soon as possible
03 July 2022	Final papers must be submitted	Send to <a href="mailto:aalmeida@ualg.pt">aalmeida@ualg.pt</a> (António Fragoso) and <a href="mailto:svaladas@ualg.pt">svaladas@ualg.pt</a> (Sandra Valadas)
14-16 July 2022	Conference	

### Scientific Committee

Andrea Galimberti, University of Milano Bicocca, Italy

Adrianna Nizinska, Gothenburg University, Sweden

Agnieszka Bron, Stockholm University, Sweden

António Fragoso, University of Algarve, Portugal

Barbara Merrill, University of Warwick, UK

Cristina C. Vieira, University of Coimbra, Portugal

Fergal Finnegan, Maynooth University, Ireland

Jérôme Eneau, Rennes 2 University, France

Sandra T. Valadas, University of Algarve, Portugal

### Organising committee

Andreia Romeira, Liliana Paulos, Rui Zacarias, Sandra Lami, Sílvio Ponte, Sandra Valadas, António Fragoso (University of Algarve)

### Organising Institutions

**ESREA** is a European scientific society. It was established in 1991 to provide a European-wide forum for all researchers engaged in research on adult education and learning and to promote and disseminate theoretical and empirical research in the field. The European Society for Research on the Education of Adults promotes and disseminates theoretical and empirical research on the education of adults and adult learning in Europe through research networks, conferences and publications.

ESREA provides an important space for the (re)definition of adult education and learning in relation to research, theory, policy and practice to be reflected upon and discussed. A significant part of the periodic scientific debates is made through the meetings organised by ESREA research networks.



ESREA also organised a triennial conference – the next will be in 2019, September – and runs the European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of the Adults (RELA - <https://www.rela.ep.liu.se/>). To learn more about ESREA, please follow the link: <https://www.esrea.org/>

The ESREA [research network on Access, Learning Careers and Identities](#) was established in 1996 and a first network conference was held at the University of Leeds in the UK. At that time the network was called the Access research network reflecting the focus of adult education research at that time. The conference book publication entitled Participation and Organisational Change (Hill & Merrill, 1997) illuminates the narrow theme of the network as it only addressed access and participation in higher education. This focus of the network continued to dominate the following two network conferences in Barcelona and Edinburgh. Subsequent network conferences (held every two years) were located at University of Barcelona (2000) for a second time, Louvain University, Belgium (2006), University of Seville, Spain (2008), University of Aveiro, Portugal (2011), Linköping, Sweden (2013) and again at the University of Seville (2015), University of Rennes, France (2017) and University of Coimbra, Portugal (2019).

The [University of Milano Bicocca](#) is a public higher education institution established in Milano (Italy) in 1998. The campus is located in the Milanese district of the same name, which was once home to large industrial companies such as Pirelli and Breda. There are over 32,000 students enrolled along twelve departments and three schools. The university offer 31 undergraduate and 39 postgraduate courses as well as 16 PhD programmes in 7 subject areas. The majority of students is concentrated the areas of business and statistics (1,775 or 26.5%), mathematical, physical and natural sciences (1,215 or 18.2%) and educational sciences (1,175 or 17.6%). The Department of Human Sciences for Education “R. Massa” was founded in 1999 and has a strong interdisciplinary tradition: pedagogists, sociologists, philosophers, antropologists, historians and linguists are in constant dialogue in order to focus the different dimensions of educational phenomena.

The [University of Warwick](#) was established in the UK in 1995 alongside five other new universities as part of Government policy to widen access to university for 18-year olds. These ‘new’ universities were known as green-field universities as they were situated on the edge of cities on a designated campus. Since then it has become a leading research and teaching university. It now has 18,441 undergraduate students and 9,949 postgraduate students. There are three faculties: Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Science, Engineering and medicine. There is also a School for cross-faculty Studies. A department focusing on adult education was established in 1985 and was called the Department of Continuing Education. It is now known as the Centre of Lifelong Learning offering pre-degree, course, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Its main aim has always been to widen access and to offer educational opportunities for local adults.

The [University of Algarve](#) is a young Portuguese public Higher Education Institution located in the southern region of Portugal, the Algarve, having three campi in Faro and one campus in Portimão. With about 9.000 students, including over 1.600 graduate students, the University of Algarve has teaching and research as its core activities in different scientific areas: science and technology, management and economics, natural sciences, social sciences, health, medicine and biomedicine. The University of Algarve operates 55 undergraduate and 97 postgraduate courses (72 master's and 25 doctoral programmes), with about 700 permanent teaching and research staff who developed a significant number of research projects. Among its faculty and alumni activities, the University of Algarve has well-established research centres in several fields such as marine sciences, biomedicine, electronics, chemistry, arts and communication and social sciences.

The Research Centre on Adult Education and Community Intervention ([CEAD](#)) was created in 2020 and funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology ([FCT](#)), this is the first Portuguese research centre dedicated to adult education only. CEAD activities focus: i) the processes of innovation and adult education research both in the European and Portuguese context; ii) the processes of communicating and disseminating our findings, both within the scientific community and society; iii) building closer relationships with the civil society institutions that act in adult education, in Portugal. It is very important for us to create an environment adequate for the less experienced researchers to integrate new networks and have opportunities to go forward in their professional careers. To learn more about CEAD: <https://cead.ualg.pt/> E-mail: [cead@ualg.pt](mailto:cead@ualg.pt)



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For further information about the conference please contact Barbara Merrill:  
Barbara.Merrill@warwick.ac.uk

### **Website**

A website will be set up shortly.

### **Conference Venue**

To see images of the University of Algarve, please click:

<https://www.ualg.pt/galeria/banco-de-imagens>

### **Conference Times**

The conference will begin at 14.00 h (Portuguese Time) on 14th July 2022 and finish at 12h 30m on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2022.