



European Society *for* Research *on the* Education of Adults

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Dear ESREA Members and Associates,

As we move towards the summer break, this edition of the ESREA newsletter reaches you at the beginning of a summer that has already brought extreme heat to many parts of Europe. We hope that all our members and readers are staying safe and finding opportunities to pause and recharge in the weeks ahead.

This edition brings together a wide range of updates and reflections from across our community. It includes news from the Presidium, reports on recent activities, and contributions highlighting the ongoing work of ESREA members and networks. We are particularly pleased to announce the launch of the **new ESREA LinkedIn page** and invite all members and colleagues interested in adult education to follow us there for updates on ESREA activities, publications, events, and opportunities for exchange.

This issue features reports on two successful ESREA network conferences, reflecting the lively exchange and research activities taking place across the networks. It also includes contributions from individual ESREA members who have shared news about recent publications and interesting initiatives from their own contexts. In addition, we draw your attention to an interesting interview with the RELA editors in *ELM Magazine* on the future of academic publishing — a timely topic as ESREA is currently working on new arrangements for its book series, including a future publishing partnership and a new editorial structure.

Last not least, we would like to remind you to save the date for the **ESREA General Assembly 2026**, which will take place online on **23 November 2026**. Further information will be shared in due course.

Before the summer break begins for many of us, we would like to thank all members, network convenors, authors, and contributors for their continued engagement and commitment to ESREA. We wish you a relaxing summer, inspiring encounters, and an enjoyable read of this newsletter.

Susanne

From Presidium and Secretariat

Spring Presidium Online Meeting

The ESREA Presidium met online on 8 May 2026 for its regular coordination meeting, bringing together updates from across the Society's governance and working groups.

Work continues on the future publication arrangements for the ESREA book series, with discussions focusing on possible publishers and the next steps towards setting up a new editorial structure. The ESREA archive is also moving forward, including the preparation of guidelines to support Convenors in collecting, preserving, and sharing relevant network materials. Support for early career researchers remains a key priority, with preparations underway for doctoral schools and related initiatives across several ESREA networks. Work is also progressing on the ESREA Triennial 2028. Cooperation with partner organisations such as DVV International and EAEA was reviewed two years after the signing of the respective Memoranda of Understanding, and there is a shared intention to renew and further develop these collaborations.

A number of practical and operational matters were also addressed, including improvements to website hosting and storage systems, as well as the restoration of the ESREA LinkedIn page (see item news below).

The next Presidium meeting will take place online on 7 September 2026.

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ESREA Has a New LinkedIn Page

The European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA) is pleased to announce the launch of its new LinkedIn page.

Due to technical issues, our previous LinkedIn account is no longer active and will no longer be updated. To continue receiving news and updates from ESREA, we warmly invite all members, researchers, practitioners, and colleagues interested in adult education to follow our new page.

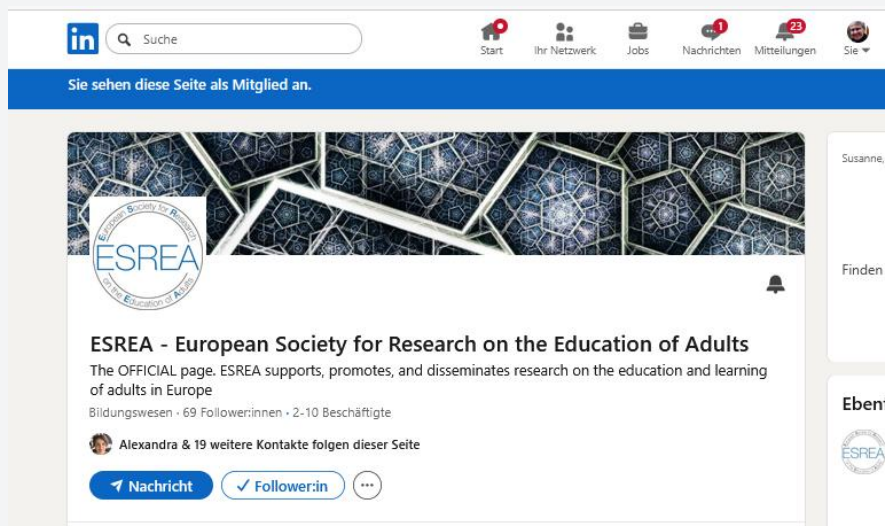
Through our LinkedIn presence, we will share information about ESREA conferences, research networks, publications, events, funding opportunities, and initiatives that support collaboration within the adult education research community.

We would greatly appreciate your support in helping us reconnect with our network. Please follow the new page and share it with colleagues and partners who may be interested in ESREA's activities.

Together, we can continue to strengthen the European and international community of adult education researchers and foster new opportunities for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to connecting with you online.

Follow ESREA on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/esrea-european-society-for-research-on-the-education-of-adults/>



Filiz Keser-Aschenberger, ESREA Presidium Member

ESREA beyond Europe

ESREA is collaborating with its partner organisations in Canada and the US to strengthen adult education research internationally. In Canada, the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education / Association Canadienne pour l'Étude de l'Éducation des Adultes (CASAE/ACÉÉA) is the respective organisation, and in the US it is the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE). This year, both CASAE and AAACE held their annual conferences together in Vancouver at the University of British Columbia. They met under the title «Crossing Borders, Building Bridges: Adult Education in Times of Transformation», with a rich and diverse programme featuring symposia, paper sessions, a poster walk, and alternative sessions. As part of the pre-conference, a «solidarity meeting» was scheduled and led by Lili Jardine, the current secretary of CASAE/ACÉÉA. A similar meeting had already taken place virtually at the 2025 conference, and the major topics of concern for adult education had been identified through a group process. They were presented at the 2026 meeting and taken further. ESREA has been part of the process, with Maria Gravani taking part in 2025 and Katrin Kraus in 2026. The four topics of major concern for adult education research emerging from this discussion among an international group of adult education researchers are as follows

- What adult educators care about: social justice, participation, learner agency; holding diverse ways of knowing
- Changing the landscape: digitalisation, vocational pressures; metrics, accountability, shrinking infrastructure
- Role of scholarly associations: space for critical scholarship, connection research, practice, community
- Cross-border collaborations: responding to shared pressures; building partnerships and solidarities

Both associations also held their annual assemblies in Vancouver and discussed, among other topics, strengthening international cooperation in adult education research, opening the organisation to more members from marginalised groups, and fostering cooperation with the field of practice – topics we know very well from our discussions in ESREA. Both associations highlighted the important role of adult education for society, especially for a more inclusive society, and for shaping the transformation process we are in at the moment rather than only experiencing it.

During this meeting, the PIMA initiative was also introduced (<https://www.pimanetwork.com>). It describes itself as "A global network of adult and lifelong learning educators, activists, and scholars". That could be of particular interest to ESREA members, and you could easily join PIMA's mailing list.

Katrin Kraus, ESREA Presidium Member

ESREA Convenor Meeting

On 25 June 2026, ESREA Network Convenors from across the 13 thematic research networks came together for an online networking meeting organised by the Presidium Working Group responsible for liaising with the networks. The meeting provided an opportunity for the new Presidium team to introduce themselves, exchange updates, and discuss current activities and support needs.

Representatives from most ESREA networks shared news about upcoming events, publications, and developments. The discussion highlighted the strong activity across the networks and the growing collaboration between them. At the same time, there is a shared interest in experimenting with new and more engaging formats for scholarly exchange and networking.

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ESREA Network Conferences

Where Research Networks Meet: Inspiring Dialogue in Vilnius

Joint-Conference of the ESREA Networks Education and Learning of Older Adults (ELOA), Life History and Biography (LHBN), and Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professional Development (ReNADET)



The joint conference *Research Diversity in an Ageing Society*, which took place at Mykolas Romeris University in Vilnius on April 22-24, 2026, marked a significant step forward in bringing together three ESREA networks: ELOA, LHBN, and ReNADET.

This cross-network collaborative initiative created a unique interdisciplinary space for dialogue between scholars and different research traditions, combining perspectives on ageing, biography, and the professional development of adult educators. Participants, including PhD students from across Europe and beyond, such as South Korea and Canada, contributed to a rich and diverse exchange of ideas and experiences.

The conference connected perspectives on ageing, biography, and vocational education, with sessions addressing intergenerational learning and life course, identity and professional development of adult educators, wellbeing and community engagement in ageing societies.



Group photo and venue



*Conference Host Irena Žemaitaitė,
University of Vilnius*

The deliberate effort to privilege plenary sessions, and move beyond parallel discussions towards shared reflection and collaboration, made this conference particularly noteworthy, meaningful, and unique. Two symposia - “Abduction in biographical research: diversity, dilemmas, and lessons learnt” and “Understanding the Experiences of Adult Educators: Narrative Lessons for Professional Knowledge, Values and Practice” - performed a deep conceptual dialogue across diverse methodological and professional perspectives. All the sessions raised intense discussions across the networks.

The conference demonstrated the great potential of ESREA networks to work together in collaborative and innovative ways, strengthening collegiality, intellectual exchange and community building in the field of adult education research.

The conference, organised in collaboration with the three networks, was wonderfully conducted by the great team from Mykolas Romeris University, led by Professor Irena Žemaitaitė. We are very thankful and pleased with the cooperation and excellent organisation of the conference.

We also thank all the participants for their inputs, interesting and insightful presentations and discussions over these days.



Conference Team and Snapshots of Participants



The authors from left to right: Larissa Jõgi (ReNAdET co-convenor), Laura Formenti (LHBN co-convenor), Bernhard Schmidt-Hertha (ELOA co-convenor), Malgorzata Malec- Rawinski (LHBN co-convenor).

Conference website → <https://rdas2026.mruni.eu/>

All pictures provided by the conference organisers

Adult Learning and Education: Widening the scope for action.

Report from the conference of the Policy Studies in Adult Education network in Hamburg,
May 13-15, 2026

Hosted by the University of Hamburg for the first time, May's ESREA network conference sought to offer a ray of hope in difficult times, with adult and continuing education increasingly facing funding cuts, external pressures, and risk-averse policies.



Bringing together the conference community - participants gathered in the plenary hall

The conference was promoted by ESREA, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (represented by Raúl Valdez-Cortera's welcome address), and DVV International. This collaboration opened the conference to a global audience, with colleagues from Brazil, Japan, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and many other non-European countries. In the first keynote, Bernd Käßlinger (Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany), outlined the conference's approach by quoting Leonard Cohen: "There's a crack in everything – that's how the light gets in". He argued that adult education can promote emancipatory approaches more actively, advocating for more than simply understanding adult learning and education as a victim of political crises - adult education can reclaim its political core and act as a laboratory for democratic and economic revival.

The second keynote, presented by UNESCO co-chairholder Robert Jjuuko (Gulu University, Uganda), offered insights on adult education programmes at a time when a number of Global North governments are pursuing their own populist domestic interests at the expense of international co-operation, with emancipatory adult education programmes being affected in particular. Local actors have had to navigate these challenges and have proven to be resilient, e.g. by making use of volunteers.



Keynote speakers Bernd Käßlinger (left) and Robert Jjuuko (right)

Research contributions were presented across four parallel session blocks throughout the day, facilitating thorough exchange between the more than seventy presenters and participants. Indeed, ESREA's tradition of providing adequate time for discussion was reported as one of the major advantages of the conference. However, widening the scope for further action is not always easy, with authoritarian governments or parties in several countries looking to restrict programmes such as migrant language provision.

Better adult basic skills programmes, better adult education provision, and long-term lifelong learning policies all make a strong case for investing in large-scale assessments. Politicians and organisations like the European Union advance this perspective in order to persuade national governments to invest in skills. Anja Meierkord, data analyst at OECD, presented findings from the thematic report "Trends in Adult Learning", a follow-up study based on the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). Its findings revealed the participation rates, themes and training hours in formal, non-formal, and informal adult learning related to the workplace. Anne Larson (Aarhus University, Denmark) raised a critical question: does PIAAC actually have an impact on national ALE policies, or do countries only use PIAAC to legitimise what they already intended to pursue? Whatever the case



may be, the audience agreed that it made sense for all, academics and supra-national organisations alike, to collectively advocate for better adult education policies.

Policy Dialogue, from left to right: Anja Meierkord (OECD), Anke Grotlüschen, (University of Hamburg), Anne Larson (Aarhus University)

The conference participants also had the opportunity to visit one of the most diverse areas of Hamburg and go up the Green Bunker, a former anti-aircraft tower. The journey up many steps provided ample opportunity for the conference guests to chat and culminated in a panoramic view of the city, with the university area, the harbour, and landmarks like the *Sankt Michaelis* church and the *Elbphilharmonie* concert hall on display. The following evening was dedicated to Asian fusion cuisine, with some later finding their way to bars around the university in line with academic tradition: *Gaudeamus igitur!*



On top of the Green Bunker

Anke Grotlüschen, University of Hamburg

Conference website → <https://www.conferences.uni-hamburg.de/event/606/>

All pictures provided by the conference organisers

ESREA Publications

RELA Journal



The **European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults (RELA)** is published on behalf of ESREA. RELA is a refereed academic journal creating a forum for the publication of critical research on adult education and learning.

Recently published:

Vol. 17 No. 2 (2026): Rhythms, spaces, and times of transitional processes in adult education.

→ <https://doi.org/10.3384/rela.2000-7426.2026172>

All RELA issues can be found at: → <https://rela.ep.liu.se/>

RELA Calls for papers

Topic: **Rethinking and promoting adult learning and education (ALE) in ubiquitous workplaces: challenges and concerns**

Submission deadline: September 30, 2026

→ <https://rela.ep.liu.se/libraryFiles/downloadPublic/183>

Open papers may be submitted any time, see the call:

→ <https://journal.ep.liu.se/RELA/libraryFiles/downloadPublic/19>

Keep checking: All upcoming calls will be made available at → <https://rela.ep.liu.se/cfp>

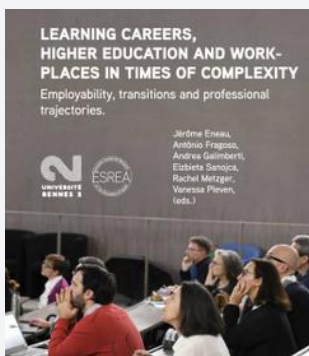
RELA Editors Reflect on the Future of Academic Publishing

RELA co-editors Fergal Finnegan and António Fragoso recently spoke with *ELM Magazine* about the challenges facing academic journals today. In the interview, they discuss the growing pressure of academic overproduction, the role of editors, and the future of scholarly publishing.

Read the interview →: <https://elmmagazine.eu/rela-editors-journals-face-massive-overproduction-of-academic-articles/>

ESREA Network Publications

Network “Access, Learning Careers and Identities”



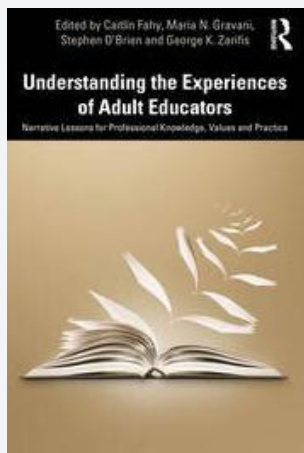
Eneau, J., Fragoso, A., Galimberti, A., Sanojca, E., Metzger, R. & Pleven, V. (eds.). **Learning Careers, Higher Education and Workplaces in times of Complexity. Employability transitions and professional trajectories.** University Rennes 2.

Open Access. Download → <https://cread.recherche.univ-rennes2.fr/article/parution-lebook-learning-careers-higher-education-and-workplaces-times-complexity>

This open-access book brings together contributions from the ESREA network *Access, Learning Careers and Identities* following its network conference held in Rennes, France, on 27–29 March 2025. The volume explores learning careers, transitions, and the relationship between higher education and workplaces in times of complexity.

News from ESREA Members

Edited Volume on Adult Educators



Fahy, C., Gravani, M., O'Brien, S. & Zarifis, G. (eds.) (2026). **Understanding the Experiences of Adult Educators Narrative Lessons for Professional Knowledge, Values and Practice**. Routledge.

Publisher's link: <https://www.routledge.com/Understanding-the-Experiences-of-Adult-Educators-Narrative-Lessons-for-Professional-Knowledge-Values-and-Practice/Fahy-Gravani-OBrien-Zarifis/p/book/9781032888705>

This edited volume offers an in-depth exploration of adult education through the professional journeys of adult educators and the meanings they attach to their experiences. Using a narrative approach, it shows how diverse backgrounds shape teaching and learning practices across different European contexts.

Transnational and multidisciplinary PhD Course on Ageing Societies at Malmö University

Ageing society and elder issues can be met in relation to interdisciplinary collaboration, in this PhD Education plays a role. As part of a transnational collaboration, an ongoing PhD Education course relate to this. The course connects Doctoral students from 16 universities and 10 countries. This has been developed in the research network CareSam.

CareSam Network → <https://caresam.mau.se/>

PhD Course → <https://caresam.mau.se/gallery/>

Related publication:

Liveng, A., Eriksson, J., & Christensen, J. (2025). Pedagogical reflections from a PhD course in ageing: How to facilitate preconditions for resonance?. *The Danish Journal of Higher Education/Dansk Universitetspædagogisk Tidsskrift*, 20(37). <https://doi.org/10.7146/dut.v20i37.144456>

Contributed by: Jonas Christensen, University of Malmö

Digital Archive on Adult Education Initiatives in Seine-Saint-Denis Launched

A new digital archive platform has been launched as the result of five years of collaborative research with partners in the Seine-Saint-Denis department in the northern suburbs of Paris.

The project brings together a wide range of sources documenting adult education initiatives in the region since the 19th century, including cultural, socio-political, linguistic, and vocational activities. These initiatives have played an important role in the lives of working-class men and women and successive migrant communities who have shaped the area.

The platform provides access to archival collections from departmental and municipal archives as well as associations, trade unions, political parties, and other organisations. It also includes thematic sections introducing the collections and invites further contributions to expand this evolving database.

Website → <https://safo.huma-num.fr/s/safo-93/page/accueil> (currently only in French; an English site is under construction)

Contributed by: Françoise F. Laot, Université Paris 8 | Vincennes – Saint-Denis

Forthcoming Events

ESREA General Assembly 2026

SAVE THE DATE: 23 November 2026:

The General Assembly 2026 will take place online on **23 November 2026**. The exact will be confirmed

Venue: Online. The link will be sent out together with the invitation and agenda two months before the meeting.

ESREA Network Events

23–24 September 2026

Conference of the ESREA Network on Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning (ADCAL)

Title: “Learning and practicing active democratic citizenship in the struggle against growing authoritarianism”

Venue: University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

→ [Call for Papers](#) (closed)

SAVE THE DATE: 14–16 October 2026

Conference of the ESREA Network on Gender and Adult Learning

Title: “Gender and Adult Learning for Democracy, Inclusion and Citizenship”

Venue: University of Huelva, Spain

SAVE THE DATE: 18–20 November 2026

Conference of the ESREA Network on Access, Learning Careers and Identities

Title: “Adult Learning: Future possibilities and spaces for changing identities and transformations”

Venue: University of Linköping, Sweden

Keep checking for updates on ESREA Network events → https://esrea.org/activities/conferences-seminars/

ESREA Seasonal Schools

14–18 September 2026

The Klagenfurt Research Retreat (KRR)

Title: “Research on Adult Education and Transformation – Mapping Possibilities and Embracing Complexity.”

Venue: University of Klagenfurt, Austria

Call (closed): → <https://esrea.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Call-for-applications-KRR-2026.pdf>

Conference website: → <https://www.aau.at/erziehungswissenschaft-und-bildungsforschung/arbeitsbereiche/erwachsenen-und-berufsbildung/forschung/doctoral-school-klagenfurt-research-retreat/>

14–19 September 2026

International Perspectives on Education Policy (IPEP) 2026

Title: “Geopolitical dis/rupture and education policy.

Venue: Verona, Italy

Call (closed): → https://esrea.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/IPEP-SS-2026_Leaflet_Save-the-date.pdf

Conference website: → <https://sites.dsu.univr.it/irc-glocopos/2026-summer-school-vii-ipep-geopolitical-dis-rupture-and-education-policy/>

Keep checking for updates on ESREA Seasonal Schools → https://esrea.org/activities/seasonal-schools/

How to become a member of ESREA

Membership in ESREA is open to both individual and institutional members. All members get a reduced fee at ESREA activities, information in the field of research on the education of adults through the ESREA mailing list and newsletters. Individual members have the right to vote at the general assembly that takes place each year (online through postal ballot). As an institutional member, all employees of your institution are entitled to participate in ESREA activities at a reduced fee. Note that institutional members have only one vote in the general assembly.

If you want to become a member the process is the following:

Please download the document at → <https://www.esrea.org/about-us/membership/>

Fill in the membership application form and e-mail it to: → esrea_sec@die-bonn.de

Within two weeks at the latest you will receive a confirmation of your membership by e-mail

An invoice for your membership fee will be issued: 50 EUR for individual members, 25 EUR for students and PhD students and 150 EUR for institutional members. Payment of membership fees can only be made through an international or EU bank transfer. Cheques are not accepted. Any foreign bank fees are to be borne by the applicants.

ESREA bank details:

Bank: Sparkasse KoelnBonn

Account holder: European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA) e.V.

Account number: 1934820174

IBAN: DE73 3705 0198 1934 8201 74

BIC: COLSDE33XXX

VAT Number: DE324070933

About this Newsletter

The ESREA Newsletter is the association's newsletter for ESREA members, published three times a year – in February, June, and October – by the ESREA Secretariat.

It shares news and updates from the ESREA Board and Secretariat, from our networks, and from individual ESREA members – especially when their work has an international angle and might be of interest to others in the community.

We're always looking forward to receiving contributions from ESREA members! These can include (but aren't limited to):

- Events like conferences, doctoral schools, research retreats, or online symposia
- New publications such as edited volumes or special issues
- News about recently completed PhD theses
- Awards and recognition received by members
- Updates on ongoing or recently finished (international) projects

Contributions can be brief or more in-depth, and images are welcome too. We encourage both informative reports and more reflective pieces. Opinion articles on European developments in adult education (research) are also very welcome.

If you would like to contribute, please contact the ESREA Secretariat by e-mail: mailto:esrea_sec@die-bonn.de

Newsletter release schedule

Planned in 2026/2027:

end of October 2026

end of February 2027

end of May/June 2027

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