

Questions and Answers from the International Course of Lectures Henning Salling Olesen, 26.01.2011

What are the topics discussed in ESREA-Sub-Nets?

You can see a list of the networks, including brief descriptions of their activities and in some cases meeting plans at ESREA's website, www.esrea.org

Which topics will be relevant in the future?

In principle those research topics which are initiated by the members – any member can draft a theme, and if members from at least two countries support the theme the steering com will most likely approve the theme and appoint a convenor or a group of convenors. Of course sometimes a theme can be felt very important, and the SC may invite members to create a network, but the basic idea is to ground activities in actual interests of members.

Why are academic traditions not important for ESREA? Aren't they relevant, too?

Academic traditions are very important, and academic work should reflect its relation to previous research, which is not least situated in academic traditions. But our idea is that our research domain is interdisciplinary by nature, i.e. drawing on theory and methodology from several traditional disciplines. And I personally also believe that the real novel developments in science today are related to reflections on the constitution of scientific knowledge (e.g. disciplines) and its relation to a historical context.

Which disciplines compete with Adult Education (in the field of research)? How is the relation to the other disciplines?

Sociology, political science and psychology are the most obvious disciplines which also deal with adult learning, but to the extent that learning in relation to work life is of increasing importance then also economics, management and organization research are very interested in this research field. And they are real competitors in the sense that institutions and merit systems are stronger in these disciplines so that many researchers may feel it easier to relate to e.g. disciplinary conferences. But in the first place I think the interdisciplinary interest enriches the field. Many ESREA members are not coming from adult education, but are "on the move".

What are the job opportunities in the research of Adult Education?

This question cannot be answered independent of country context. There are of course some jobs in an international labor market of international organisations and academia. But since the development and especially institutional forms of adult learning are extremely different across European countries, the demand for researchers is also – especially on the specialized level of full time or main employment in research. Very much research and very many researchers' activities are carried out in a hybrid connection with

teaching, development and evaluation work. But ESREA sees it as an essential mission to create the space for “research professionalism” for researchers who are full time academia, full time researchers or knowledge workers, or doing research in connection with some other activity in organisations etc.

Which articles (language?) are published in RELA so far?

You can see most of the publications which have been produced by ESREA or as a result of ESREA activities, often published under institutions’ names or as “event publications” at the ESREA website www.esrea.org, and the first issue of our new journal can be seen at www.rela.ep.liu.se

Who might be responsible for an English translation of journal contributions?

For the journal RELA the author is responsible for providing a good English translation once the article has been accepted for publication. In the review process other languages can be used provided the journal has access to relevant reviewers, or less than perfect English.

May “I” use the journal as an open access to publish articles regarding Adult Education and learning?

The journal is an ordinary, peer reviewed and edited journal. We think it is important to have a quality and relevance editing in order to make the journal attractive for readers. The open access is for the readers – free from subscription fee.

Is there a platform for discussions of articles?

No, but I think this is a good idea which I will bring forwards in the work of the editorial committee

Do you try to emphasize somehow the drift from the traditional image of education, Bildung, information (Fr.) again back from only being employable or competitive?

I am not quite sure how to understand the question. We do not “prefer” a specific development, but we find the reflection of these different functions and orientations extremely important. In the journal website www.rela.ep.liu.se you can see the mission statement of the journal which also includes this issue.