



Pascal  
International

## **PIMA Newsletter No. 9**

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## 1. Editorial

### Who can get things done, and how?

Chris Duke

#### Brave new world



Fifteen years on. Another 9/11: another day of global drama and shock in the world's most powerful country. This time not US-style 9/11 but the alternative 9<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month: the US Presidential Election, and the choice of an unusual President-elect. In June, Britain voted to leave the European Union (only England and Wales voted thus among the four UK nations); for many people the referendum process demonstrated a massive failure of national lifelong learning. So far has the impossible become normal that the talk is now of another far Right presidential triumph: for French *Front National* leader Marie Le Pen. Maybe we have at least now collectively learned 'never to say never'.

Trump's triumph sets the world, including us in PIMA, a new test, one relevant to other upcoming referenda and elections in Europe and worldwide: how to relearn the ethical conduct of open democracy as citizens and as political parties in a world of mass media and very rich and powerful lobbying interests, when national apathies and alienations encounter the threats of harassment, bullying and overt violence to achieve political ends. Our aspiration to think outside the box about lifelong learning and 'the crisis in western democracy' demands attention as never before.

PIMA is one global network among many. In the spirit of Big Tent it seeks to work with ethically like-minded global and local networks: to influence, from education and learning, place, communal and societal knowledge perspectives, the linked issues that threaten civilisation and ultimately existence. Is an ethic of competitive acquisitive individualism at the root of the malaise? PIMA needs to collaborate non-defensively and non-competitively at a deep cultural level with other agencies, networks, organisations and individuals to address what is now called existential threat. This needs the energy and ideas of all PIMA members and partner networks to think and talk through in action.

#### Snatches of dialogue

Agreeing and setting up the first Special Interest Group (SIG) on the SDGs (see below) involved much e-mail dialogue. This small sample of extracts first places a question mark against our previous Newsletter extolling of UNESCO:

*From the Association for Women in Development (AWID) conference there is a strong sense that what we need is "systems change not climate change". As the critiques of the UN systems mount, with growing concern over the influence of TNCs [trans-national corporations] in the workings of the UN, how far the UN can lead change through the SDG process is being seriously questioned. This then raises the question as to what scope there is for the spaces created by SDGs to be used to try to influence a more radical 'systems change' agenda? It would be important to agree on what is the 'political' project which has any chance of influencing these processes.*

*If there is to be a PIMA SIG on SDGs please let it be focused. I would prefer the focus towards local learning for personal and community development by citizens for and by themselves. How can PASCAL and PIMA enable local flourishing for local good? Let's have less policy for the policy-makers' sake.*

*My overall objective would be for PIMA to develop a plan which would enable our talent to directly help citizens and communities to determine for themselves their own ways of constructive action to enable them to flourish for themselves.*

*At the heart of it all is always what can PIMA usefully do among the plethora of networks, newsletters etc?*

*While we need to discuss the challenges to education both globally (see SDGs) and locally (e.g. integration of the many thousands of refugees from the Near East and other regions/countries, primarily through education), we also need to formulate or identify concrete projects that we as PIMA can lead or contribute to. In both cases, we cannot do it alone but need to partner with other groups and/or institutions. The challenge before us requires answers to the following questions: What are such possible projects, and who should we partner with?*

*Let's do something that results in something concrete. For example a panel at a conference, a joint research proposal to a research council or the EU, a jointly authored article in a widely distributed scholarly journal, another PURE-like activity with some region, large municipality, or small country.*

Readers of this Newsletter are invited and encouraged to help answer these questions. What do you think PIMA can best do? And what will best meet your own civil society and professional aspiration?

The first PIMA SIG has now been launched. Please add your voice as it defines and pursues sought-after outcomes by writing to [bruce.wilson@rmit.edu.au](mailto:bruce.wilson@rmit.edu.au) cc to [chris.duke@rmit.edu.au](mailto:chris.duke@rmit.edu.au)

### **Highlights in this Issue**

Readers are also invited to respond to any elements of this and other newsletters that feel relevant. Here you can read about the new and first PIMA Special Interest Group (SIG) on the Sustainable Development Goals, and two other proposed SIGs now under consideration. Before this **Roger Boshier** ensures in lively and well-informed ways that 'lifelong learning' is no sacred cow. **Colin Flint** critiques the treatment worse than neglect that has befallen the unglamorous non-university part of post-secondary education, at least in England, while **John Field** probes Germany's LLL approach to refugees, the same challenge as was posed at the Pascal 2015 Catania Conference. We profile **Steve Garlick's** service as a political party creator and leader (and welcome return to active leadership in the PIMA Committee), and welcome several new members. **Bruce Wilson** looks at Brexit not from the more usual inward UK perspective but from the direction of the Continent. Other items update members on PIMA management and development, inviting participation in choosing its new leadership for 2017-18, and in identifying future activities in which you may wish to take part. Note, in particular **Enrico Jacobs'** warm invitation to the next big Pascal Conference, the task set there, and the participation invited.

### **And on a lighter note? \***

"As democracy is perfected, the office of president represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire at last and the White House will be adorned by a downright fool and complete narcissistic moron." \*HL Mencken, *Baltimore Evening Sun*, July 26th 1920. Thanks to Hans Schuetze for this 'from an early visionary'. Maybe we will yet all be surprised.

Please continue sending contributions for future Newsletters to [chris.duke@rmit.edu.au](mailto:chris.duke@rmit.edu.au) and [charlotte.scarf@sydney.edu.au](mailto:charlotte.scarf@sydney.edu.au).

## 2. Opinion

### Brexit + Trump - what went wrong with the learning society?

#### Roger Boshier

*New Zealand-born Roger Boshier, now emeritus professor at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, moved to Canada and became one of the continent's leading adult education academics and critical thinkers. He is also a leading authority on adult education and lifelong learning in China. A prolific writer and hands-on Kiwi, he lives and labours on an island off Vancouver, a venue well known to some of the world's leading lifelong learning scholars. Here he encapsulates the sorry narrative of 'lifelong learning' from genesis to and in 2016.*



Within hours of Brexit referendum results being announced a large number of UK citizens typed "European Union" into Google for a quick social studies lesson. Had they voted for something they knew nothing about?

Soon thereafter, in a televised U.S. Presidential "debate" moderator Anderson Cooper (from CNN) asked Donald Trump if he realized sexual assault (and groping women without their permission) was against the law. Did Trump have the needed knowledge? "Do you know it is against the law?" said Cooper. Trump dodged the question. Groping comments were "locker-room talk." "They were just words," he said.

Being proclaimed a crypto-fascist, sexual predator and man who has little respect for learning made no difference. On election day even fundamentalists in the U.S. bible belt shuffled over to their polling places and voted for Trump. It was a campaign thick with insults but devoid of policy. To what extent did US voters know (or care about) what they were voting for? In the meantime, Trump has announced a hard line on China. "I will sort them out," he said.

In the 1970s, if learning had become a societal preoccupation would it be reasonable to expect UK citizens now to know something about the European Union? In 2016 should a U.S. Presidential candidate know sexual assault is a crime? If knowledge is power, do ordinary citizens have it? Faure (1972) and other architects of the learning society hoped people would learn across all stages of the life cycle and within a significantly expanded range of non-formal and informal (as well as formal) settings.

Citizens have good reasons to worry about widespread ignorance and a psychology of exclusion, racism, anger and hatred inside Brexit and the 2016 U.S. Presidential election. Why? Because all over the world elites have a vested interest in fostering the ignorance of citizens. A good example involves China and Japan where political squabbles are conducted so citizens have few (if any) chances to bump into anything resembling the truth. It was much the same in Canada where the Stephen Harper government spent ten years lying about climate change, resource extraction, marine safety and other issues. Although 'committed' to the knowledge economy Harper's government had a strong need to keep citizens in the dark.

In a liberal-democratic state, citizens should know what they are voting for. Hence, the learning society was intended to help people know about who is doing what to whom and why. The Faure Report was a master concept for educational reform and the interconnected nature of its

components presented a stern challenge for policy makers. Most policy analysts ignored the holistic nature of Faure's proposal and opted for a disaggregated (atomized) version of lifelong education.

*Here are a few pointers on what went wrong:*

◆ **Confusion concerning settings**

Faure wanted to foster learning in out-of-school settings. For this purpose UNESCO Commissioners drew on the trichotomy of learning settings (formal, non-formal and informal) developed by Phil Coombs and Manzoor Ahmed. Many people thought the settings referred to types of learning. There is plenty of learning in non-formal settings and vast mountains of it in informal settings. Really important things – like sex – are mostly learned in non-formal and informal settings. But there is no 'formal learning,' 'non-formal learning' or 'informal learning'. Instead, there is 'learning-in-non-formal settings' and so on.

◆ **Missing kids**

Architects of lifelong education wanted to embrace learning across the entire life-span. However, then as now, there was a noticeable absence of kids. This is partly because influential scholars had one (or both) feet in adult education. Many problems have arisen from the fact some people wrongly consider 'lifelong' a synonym for 'adult' education. Early-childhood educators understand learning in out-of-school settings and how to hook the three parts together.

◆ **Foregrounding formal settings**

A central emphasis of the Faure Report concerned the need to break down barriers separating learning in formal from that in non-formal and informal settings. Yet, lifelong education discourse too often gets forced into the deadly frameworks of formal education where, with few exceptions, the course outline and Powerpoint snoozefest silences students and fosters their docility.

◆ **Lifelong learning as a 'market'**

A former UBC President considered lifelong learning a market for continuing education. In her world view, there is school, university and then lifelong learning. Candidates for this market would be university graduates seeking what was once called extension or continuing education.

◆ **Disaggregation of the master concept**

Some people thought Faure's ideas were impractical. Hence, politicians, policy analysts and educators picked out bits they liked and ditched the rest. Many places experimented with distance education – soon to be repackaged as 'open' (or "lifelong") learning. Others developed ways of giving credit for experience or engaging in "prior learning assessment". By themselves, these developments were congruent with Faure's desire to engage with learners in their own contexts. But, by themselves, they were not lifelong education.

◆ **Jumping on the latest bandwagon**

These days, getting research grants requires applicants to use trendy buzzwords. Instead of learning society the prudent applicant opts for best practices in the knowledge economy. They also stress the evaluation plan and pragmatic or applied nature of their work. China is worse because research should not mention "sensitive" issues (like liberal democracy) or involve "useless" theory.

◆ **Promise of learning cities**

At the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most talk was about a scary Y2K virus. Faure died 30 March, 1988. If anyone cared about Faure's (1972) master concept, they were not saying much. However, after Peter Senge (1990) wrote *The Fifth Discipline*, and people launched learning organisations, there was

a renewed interest in UNESCO's master concept. Learning in formal, non-formal and informal settings acquired new focus and energy.

After learning organisations came learning cities, learning towns, districts and, in China, the audacious Shuang Yu learning village (Boshier & Huang, 2007). By scaling down the master concept and applying it to places with clear boundaries, vast and impossible tasks of the 1970s seemed manageable.

There are still problems. It is people – human beings – that do the learning. So, could we talk about learning-in-cities? Despite difficulties, we should welcome projects occurring under the banner of learning cities. With the help of UIL, PASCAL and other enthusiasts, these initiatives (mostly in informal and non-formal settings) have the potential to snatch robust ideas from the dustbins of history.

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## **Messing up the neglected sector: England's failed provision for further education and lifelong learning in the tertiary years**

### **Colin Flint**

*Colin Flint was for many years a leading College Head and contributor to professional and public debate in and on UK, and specifically English, further education (FE). (With partial devolution to the four nations of the United Kingdom diversity has evolved between the systems which could be a basis for comparison and shared learning.)*

*Given the vital social as well as economic importance of the non-university sector of tertiary and higher education worldwide (vocational education and training or VET, the College sector in the USA, TAFE in Australia) Colin was invited to reflect on what has happened to FE in England, in today's turbulent times. He writes as follows:*



Source: New York Times. 2012

Two days before the most brutal and divisive election in American Presidential history Kwame Anthony Appiah delivered the last of the 2016 Reith lectures. He is Professor of Philosophy and Law at New York University, grandson of Sir Stafford Cripps who was a leading member of the Attlee government after WW 2, the son of Peggy Cripps and Joe Appiah, Ghanaian lawyer. His subject was: *There is no such thing as western civilisation*. Appiah wasn't talking politics, but the events of 2016 do nothing to counter his argument. The ill-conceived 'Brexit' referendum in Britain and the vote to leave the EU, the extraordinarily nasty US Presidential campaign and its result, and the delight of the "alt-right" (neo-fascist) in France, Holland, Poland and elsewhere in Europe are warning enough. It would seem that we are in for a rough ride.

What has this to do with Further Education, the subject on which I was invited to write, or lifelong learning? I spent my career in FE, twenty years of it as a College Principal. I was a founder and active

member of the Further Education Campaign Group which sought to raise the profile and image of FE in an educational landscape that seriously undervalued vocational training and was dominated by academic studies and pre-university Advanced Level (A-level) examinations. When the FE Funding Council was created in 1992, followed by the Labour victory in 1997, it looked like the beginning of a golden age. Funding became fairer and more generous, student numbers boomed – especially with adult returners - and partnerships with higher education (HE) were formed.

### **Reasons to be cheerful**

A major review, *14-19 Curriculum and Qualifications Reform* was commissioned, and reported in 2004. Review Chair Mike Tomlinson advised the Secretary of State that “the status quo is not an option. Too many young people leave education lacking basic and personal skills: our vocational provision is too fragmented ... Our report sets out a clear vision for a unified framework of 14-19 qualifications”. It proposed a framework of diplomas, and a mixture of academic and vocational teaching to provide a basis for work-based learning, higher education and employment.

It was a visionary document. Implemented enthusiastically it would have had a major impact on the historical weaknesses of the British educational system. Prime Minister Blair ducked it: it proposed subsuming A-levels into the diploma structure, and Blair feared a middle-class backlash. Aspirational parents understood A-levels, which was what they had done. The change sounded too revolutionary; despite his “Education, education, education” election mantra Blair would not risk it. He has been vilified for the bigger mistake of invading Iraq, but domestically the shelving of Tomlinson was also big. Further education in class-dominated England still lacks the protective middle class individual interest and political support enjoyed by both secondary and higher education. Instead of vision English FE was condemned to drift, a bureaucrats’ plaything ignored by those of influence.

There have been all sorts of FE initiatives and wheezes ever since, to add to the many initiatives and wheezes we had before. Instead the Labour government introduced a new category of secondary schools called Academies, enthusiastically expanded by the Cameron Coalition Administration from 2010. This removed the co-ordinating role of educational authorities, creating rich opportunities for educational entrepreneurs. The funding of Britain’s universities has increased by 25% since 2010 as a result of increased student fees, while the funding of Further Education has been reduced by 24%: clear evidence of how vocational education and training are undervalued.

### **Dancing in the dark**

Late in 2016 the new Conservative Prime Minister proposed to create more grammar schools, a system long judged socially divisive and destructive. Chief inspector of schools Wilshaw and many other very well-qualified observers judged this hugely retrograde: a policy that risked reversing all the progress made in recent years in driving up standards in secondary education, instead causing greater social division: “Grammar schools will actually lower standards for the great majority of children. Which great education system has selection at 11? I don’t know of any.” Despite experience gained entirely in schools, Wilshaw now says “if you are going to make a success of Brexit, vocational education should be the number one priority of government”.

In the second quarter of 2016 843,000 people aged 16 to 24 in Britain were classified as “NEETS” – i.e. not in employment, education or training: 11.7% of the age group. Successive changes to apprenticeships, usually in the direction of making them the responsibility of employers, have contributed to this waste of potential. IPPR, the Institute of Public Policy and Research, identifies a particular problem: level 2 apprenticeships are too job-specific, do not include enough off-the-job training, last for only one year, and are no longer required to lead to a recognised qualification. There are many excellent examples in Europe of countries with high-quality programmes that are progressive, enabling young people to move up the skills ladder while earning and learning.

Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway have all solved this problem and have far lower levels of youth unemployment than the UK. The British are doing it on the cheap; students and college-based programmes do not gain enough work experience, while those on employment-based programmes do not receive enough off-the-job education.

In 1990 the FE Campaign Group published its manifesto. It included:

- ◆ that FE at its best is responsive, dynamic, pragmatic and innovative in providing learning opportunities for the diverse needs of individuals, communities and industry.
- ◆ that the harnessing of these characteristics to a properly resourced and coherent strategy for post-16 education and training would transform the economic and social well-being of the UK.

What was wanted then is needed now; but I doubt whether the present decimated and neglected FE system is now capable of delivering. In the between-child-and-adult never-never land of NEETS, sustained support for learning is fatally breached for the non-middle class.

It would be facile to argue that the toxic events in Britain and America in 2106 are the result of failing education systems. Yet the savage murder of UK Member of Parliament Jo Cox by a man shouting “Death to traitors. Freedom for Britain”; the misogynistic and xenophobic language of Ku Klux Klan-endorsed Donald Trump: the effective licensing of hate crimes: all these at the very least cast doubt on the level of civilised behaviour and knowledge-based culture that we share. Our education systems have to do more and do it lifelong, countering susceptibility to hate-based emotion with better understanding and better acting to save our societies in need. Middle-class school and university education cannot create an inclusive learning culture and society.

I’m with Kwame Appiah. ‘Western civilisation’ at least in England is today falling through the gap left by giving up on universal tertiary education and training.

### **Refugee integration – what kind of educational issue?**

#### **John Field**

I’ve spent most of this year in Germany, where refugee integration is a major issue. Nowhere has the debate been sharper than in Cologne, where I had the great good fortune of enjoying a guest professorship in the department of adult and further education. I arrived early in the 2016 New Year, in time to catch the media scandal over the sexual assaults during the festivities, and while the debate raged over Chancellor Merkel’s unilateral decision to accept what turned out to be hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers.



Source: Commondreams.org, 2015

The consequences of Angela Merkel’s announcement continue to reverberate. Politically, she has seen her own party fall below 30% in the opinion polls, with some voters opting for the anti-Islamic Alternative für Deutschland; the effects have also spread beyond Germany, helping fuel-heated debates over migration in Austria Hungary, France, Slovakia and elsewhere.

But there were also enormous practical challenges within Germany itself. The Chancellor’s slogan – “Wir schaffen es”, or We will manage – rapidly became a target for mockery as it became clear that there was simply not enough infrastructure to cope. Local authorities commandeered school sports halls and empty army barracks as well as anything else they could find to house people. They provide everyday support, though the turnover of social workers in this area meant constant disruption. The



*Länder* aren't geared for this number of asylum applications, so that some asylum seekers have waited for over a year with no result. When claims are rejected, there aren't enough police to ensure that failed applicants leave the country.

Yet in some respects, Germany is coping. At the most basic level, thousands of individual citizens have made up for the shortcomings of the state, from arranging accommodation to serving as mentors. I visited one adult education centre where asylum seekers – who at best spoke some broken English - were seeking educational guidance; each was accompanied by a German citizen, usually an older adult, whose English was only marginally better, but who understood the details of the German system.

The adult education system has also responded to the situation. While some services are struggling to mount enough 'integration courses' for the numbers currently coming through the asylum process, by and large the system seems to work in preparing people for the citizenship tests (one for language, one for civic knowledge). The adult education system also offers a second chance of skills training, and there has been some sign of willingness to modify the celebrated dual system of apprenticeship slightly for people who can show that they have an existing skills certificate.

I was also impressed by the extent to which the adult education system was providing a space for the existing German population to debate the refugee crisis. I attended a number of these discussions, some of which were provided by the *Volkshochschulen* (adult education centres), one by the Catholic Church's adult education service, and one by a private bookshop. All were well attended, and all provoked highly animated discussions. It probably says something about the adult education milieu that there was not a single outburst of racism, but there were certainly criticisms of individual Muslim males, as well as much more indignation about headscarves than I'd have expected.

The message that I took was that these were open spaces for participatory debate, where a variety of voices were heard. Government agencies were usually represented on the platform, as were a variety of voluntary initiatives, though ironically only the Catholic service featured a speaker from an Islamic background. For me, this was an important complementary activity that runs alongside the major programmes aimed at asylum seekers and refugees. The big question is whether this lesson is transferable to poorer countries that are grappling with even larger numbers of refugees.

*As this was going to press we learned that Angela Merkel has decided to stand for another term of office. Ed.*

### 3. Member News and Profiles

#### Committee member profile

##### **Steve Garlick**

I am a spatial economist, applied ethicist and wildlife behaviourist, with interests in higher education and regional engagement, environmental sustainability and the emotional and cognitive lives of wild animals.

After 14 years as a senior executive with the Australian Government I have for the past 17 years held various professorial positions in regional engagement and sustainability at a number of Australian universities. I am currently a visiting professor in the Centre for Compassionate



Conservation at the University of Technology Sydney.

I'm a past co-chair of the editorial committee for the *Australasian Journal for University Community Engagement*; a former Vice-Chair of the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance; a former Board Member of the Pascal International Observatory; a former Board Member of the Commonwealth Government's National Innovative Regions initiative; an advisor to the OECD on regional development, higher education and sustainable development; and an associate of the international academic network *Sustainability Frontiers*. I have been involved in or led 14 international evaluation projects in higher education and regional development in various regions in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Netherlands, Canada and Australia.

Because of my interests in animal wellbeing I founded the Animal Justice Party (AJP) in Australia in 2009. I have been its national president and CEO for 7 years, retiring from both these voluntary roles in October 2016. During this period the AJP has grown to having more than 6,000 members, is registered as a political party in five jurisdictions, and had a member elected to the Legislative Council in the State of New South Wales.

Successfully bringing together volunteers, the passionate topic of animals and politics in a single dynamic organisation requires respect for all, an ethical and innovative vision, strategic thinking and action, as well as an eye to the kind of accountability that is necessary in the modern world of political parties. I believe these skills will be useful in helping PIMA achieve its goals. My academic research interests are in regional development theory and policy, human capital, regional innovation, applied ethics, animal welfare ethics, environmental sustainability, higher education management and policy, institutional performance assessment, and university engagement with regions and communities. In recent years I have written particularly about the role of human capability, ethics, animal welfare, animal behaviour and knowledge systems, sustainability and community and regional engagement.

Now that I have retired from my roles as President and CEO of the Animal Justice Party I will have more time to offer PIMA and will return to more active research and publication. In particular, I am interested in how through PIMA we can reveal and more fully utilise hitherto little known knowledge systems to enable communities and their partners, including universities and other learning institutions, better achieve ethical goals for the benefit of all.

I hope I can bring my skills and experience in critical thinking, applied ethics and knowledge systems to help address the disconnection between current neoliberal economic systems and human capability in community contexts around the world.

## **The Future of Europe, Post Brexit**

### **Bruce Wilson**

*On 19 October Anne McNaughton of the Centre for European Studies at the ANU addressed an RMIT EUC seminar on what the future EU27 might do, with insights from the Bratislava 'summit': "The leaders of the 27 European Union (EU) Member States, who will remain after the United Kingdom leaves the EU, met in Bratislava in mid-September 2016 for their first major 'summit' after the British referendum decision. Their focus was on the future of the EU in the wake of the British departure. Clearly, this conversation was*



Source: World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh 2016

*complicated by the level of uncertainty related to the outcome of negotiations between the EU and the UK. Indeed, many other serious issues also continue to confront the European leaders. However, this was an important opportunity to set the tone for debate on the future of Europe. What did they decide? How does the outcome of the 'summit' sit in the wider debates about the future of the European Union?"*

EUC Centre Director, Bruce Wilson, writes:

Following the British referendum on membership of the European Union, which resulted in a significant margin for the United Kingdom to leave, dramatic events followed. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron, resigned and Theresa May was elected in his place. Considerable uncertainty continues about how this story will unfold, although we now expect the formal notification of the United Kingdom's decision to leave, under Article 50 of the European Treaties, to occur before the end of March 2017. However, the terms even of negotiations let alone an agreement are yet to be clarified, and the implications for the European Union are just as murky. This is complicated even further by the recent judicial decision that the activation of Article 50 requires the involvement of the British Parliament.

These issues were discussed at a seminar in Melbourne, conducted under the auspice of the European Union Centre at RMIT, which serves also as a Centre for Pascal. At the seminar, it was noted that European leaders had responded to the referendum result with disappointment and concern, yet some determination to look to the future of the European Union itself. However, the first informal Summit of the European Council, with all the leaders of the other EU Member States (without the UK), on 16 September 2016 did not make much progress on this topic. There are too many examples of national agendas impeding the kind of open and creative thinking that will be necessary for a broader, European view to prevail. At this stage, the most likely scenario is for a less cohesive, more federal set of arrangements to emerge, in which some nations actively seek closer integration, while others remain less connected.

## **4. Committee News & Developments**

### **4<sup>th</sup> PIMA Committee meeting, October 2016**

The Committee met by Skype on Thursday October 27, for a very fruitful discussion and decision-making session.

It was decided that in addition to welcoming organisational members, PIMA would also seek membership of other organisations recommended by current members; and that members represent PIMA in those organisations' activities.

The Committee recommended that the benefits of setting up Network Partner arrangements for PIMA be investigated with the view that these could provide collaborative platforms and enhance the shared development, dissemination, and influence of PIMA's work.

Establishment of Special Interest Groups:

1. A PIMA Special Interest Group on the Sustainable Development Goals and Lifelong Learning has been established in partnership with PASCAL. It will be led by from the RMIT EU Centre by Director Bruce Wilson, Australia, [bruce.wilson@rmit.edu.au](mailto:bruce.wilson@rmit.edu.au), and his colleague, Morgen Verstegen-Newton, [3572513@student.rmit.edu.au](mailto:3572513@student.rmit.edu.au). For more detail see the next item revised and republished from the previous Newsletter.

2. Following the recommendation of the Strategic Development Sub-Committee, a PIMA Special Interest Group on Higher Education and community engagement will be established to be led in the first instance by Hans Schuetze, Canada and Germany, [hans.schuetze@ubc.edu.ca](mailto:hans.schuetze@ubc.edu.ca)
3. It was also proposed that a PIMA Special Interest Group on the learning of older persons be established. This will be further explored and led in the first instance by Thomas Kuan, Singapore, [kuanthomas@gmail.com](mailto:kuanthomas@gmail.com)

PIMA members are encouraged to register their interests in participating in these SIGs with those leading the chosen Group, or with Secretary-General [chris.duke@rmit.edu.au](mailto:chris.duke@rmit.edu.au) and to join in the shaping and work of the Group.

### **Special Interest Group on the Sustainable Development Goals and Lifelong Learning**

Unlike the previous (2000-2015) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) apply to all countries in all stages of development. They also harmonise strongly with issues and actions to be vigorously addressed for global ecological sustainability in the face of global warming. Lifelong learning (LLL) features strongly in one of the SDGs (Goal 4). It is also integral, and we maintain essential, to successful achievement of many of the other Goals.



Source: United Nations 2015

This Special Interest Group (SIG) may yield a number of different outcomes over a longer than the usual SIG lifespan. It may 'parent' or at least connect to the work of other PIMA-driven SIGs to be established. For example Water use and management, especially at local community levels in a context of national and global strategies, has commanded strong support. It features in the February 2016 PIMA Melbourne seminar on the subject of the LLL, SDGs and other Goals in addition to SDG 4 where LLL is clearly crucial.

The SIG on the SDGs and LLL will be led and facilitated by Professor Bruce Wilson who will provide an opening discussion paper, together with Morgen Verstegen-Newton, also at the RMIT EU Centre, the PASCAL Asia-Australia Region Centre. The purpose of the SIG will be to monitor, comment and advise on the better integration of LLL practices into effective implementation of the SDGs, as they are acted out in different countries and regions. There will be special interest in the role of civil society and action at local community levels; and in inter-regional learning and exchange of good practice, especially between the SE and East Asian region and Europe, via ASEM and in collaboration with the Pascal Europe Centre in Glasgow and other regional partners.

Outputs may include advocacy and policy advisory notes, short papers, and postings on the PASCAL and other Websites. There may be applied action research studies in linked countries. A medium-term output may be a study in a prospective PIMA-led series of 'new Hot Topics'. Purposes, priorities, processes and products will be on the initial agenda.

The initial SIG membership comprises: Bruce Wilson and Morgen Verstegen-Newton co-convenors (Australia); Jim Falk (Australia); Daniella Tilbury (Gibraltar); Heribert Hinzen (Germany); Pat Inman (USA); Peter Kearns (Australia), Kate Sankey (Scotland); Susie See (Malaysia); Shirley Walters (South Africa); and ex officio: Dorothy Lucardie and Chris Duke.

*If you are interested in joining this SIG please write to [bruce.wilson@rmit.edu.au](mailto:bruce.wilson@rmit.edu.au) and Morgen Verstegen-Newton [s3572513@rmit.edu.au](mailto:s3572513@rmit.edu.au).*



## 5. New Members

### Yuan Dayong

Dr Yuan Dayong is a researcher at the Institute of Vocational and Adult Education (IVAE) at Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences (BAES). His research mainly focuses on vocational education and adult education, international and comparative education. He is currently working on research projects about vocational education in Beijing, especially the qualification framework in vocational education, for building the lifelong learning system. At the same time, he provides consulting and academic service to Beijing Municipal Education of Commission and to vocational colleges in Beijing. He is also responsible for international exchanges and cooperation in his institution. He has been an academic visitor to several European universities and a CONFINTEA Scholar at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong learning. He has published in English *Towards the Learning City of Beijing: A review of the contribution made by the different education sectors* (Glasgow Caledonian University), and many articles in Chinese journals.

### Ralf St. Clair

Ralf St.Clair began his involvement in education as a community educator in Scotland in the early 1980s. After moving to Canada at the end of that decade he became more focused specifically on adult education, literacy, and First Nations. He was sucked into the academy in the mid-1990s and has not yet managed to escape. Ralf has worked at universities in Scotland, the US, and Canada, and has learned a great deal as he went along. Now based on beautiful Vancouver Island, he serves as Dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC to support community engagement, Indigenous education, and non-formal adult education. Ralf recently published *Creating courses for adults: Design for learning* with Wiley.

### Sumedha Sharma

Sumedha is a consultant who has been working in the field of social development nationally and internationally for the last 21 years. She has worked across sectors on issues related to Basic and Adult Education, Local Governance in India, Occupational Health & Safety, Gender, Prevention of Sexual Harassment, within a rights-based framework. Her organisational journey started with PRIA where she worked for 6 years, then moved on to The Hunger Project for 3 years. Her longest stay was with ASPBAE for 9 years. Each of these organisations taught her a lot and were generous in giving exposure to hone her skills on capacity-building, research, monitoring and evaluation, and advocacy. At present Sumedha works with small organisations on building their capacities on issues of gender mainstreaming, advocacy, strategic planning and social analysis.

## 6. Upcoming Events



### 14<sup>th</sup> Pascal International Conference

*Prof Enrico Jacobs, Vice Chancellor of The Belgium Campus, is co-organising the next Pascal Conference together with Dr Marius Venter of the University of Johannesburg. Venter is a director for Pascal Observatory in Africa, the director of the Centre for Local Economic Development (CENLED), chairperson of the Economic Development Council of South Africa (EDCSA) and deputy chairperson of the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA). Enrico Jacobs established the Belgium Campus in 1999 and nurtured it into a highly respected higher education institution, providing quality education and producing graduates who are in great demand by the industry. He joined Pascal in 2010 during the conference in Botswana and has been an enthusiastic participant since. Addressing prospective participants, Enrico writes:*

I take great pleasure in hosting the next Pascal conference Trends, *Which Way to Go*, in October 2017 and would like to extend an invitation to each of you to join us for this event. This is the first time that this conference will be hosted in South Africa, and our aim is to exhibit all the characteristics, opportunities and challenges of an emerging country.

South Africa leapfrogged into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with modern cities that contrast with vast undeveloped rural areas. This dichotomy allows us to use the South African example to consider challenges experienced in other parts of the world due to the gap between wealthy urban centres and (often forgotten) rural areas. We need to consider employment opportunities, long-term city planning, infrastructure, investment, but also the brain drain.

We should ask whether our vaunted successes in cities are sustainable, and whether these advances created new challenges that need to overcome. Do these challenges prevail during recessions or periods of political instability, or are they ubiquitous?

South Africa is a country where these questions are very visible. Do we have to follow trends? Do we have a solution to globalisation? How do we keep our own identity, address our own needs, strengthen our economy and combat high unemployment rates? Are we an example for the continent? How do we address the mushrooming informal settlements that pop up in and around our cities, often creating a sterile urban jungle where there is no real economic activity, but a new cultural melting-pot?

As South Africa represents a unique profile in the world, we are also taking a unique approach with this conference: hosting a conference on learning cities far away from a city. The Kruger National Park is not only known as the country's main national park, but also for hosting many national and international conferences. It has become a common trend in South Africa to host conferences away from bustling cities, allowing the opportunity to share time together. It can be seen as part of an old African tradition. In West African countries there is the tradition of *l'arbre à palabre*, in South Africa there is the tradition of the *bosberaad* (bush council) and the *kgotla* and *lekgotla*, the old tradition



Source: Pascal International Observatory

where a council dialogue is organised and where everybody speaks their piece, often to decide on strategic planning. As such, going somewhere in the bush for dialogue and counsel is a very African way of doing things.

This has the added value that the conference attendees get to spend more time together instead of having to return to hotels or restaurants in the evening.

There is an opportunity for participants to join a tour before the conference to experience the diversity of South Africa. The tour will start in the financial capital, Johannesburg, via Pretoria to the learning city of Lydenburg to the location for the conference, Skukuza.

The tour will highlight the contrasts within South Africa and the opportunities and challenges that exist, stimulating our conversations in anticipation of the conference proceedings. It will also be interesting to see how organisations and institutions in South Africa run community development projects, large and small. The University of Pretoria, for example, is running the Mnisi Community Programme. This is a multidisciplinary platform for research, teaching, learning and community engagement within the 'One Health' philosophy. Central to this programme is the Mnisi community with their animals and the conservation areas surrounding the community, on the doorstep of the Kruger. Another example is found in the Kruger Park itself, which is running a number of community projects with the adjacent communities, including: economic empowerment, community outreach, and a skills and learnership programme.

I look forward to this *lekgotla* bringing together experts and leaders to discuss current and future trends, the challenges we are facing and the answers to these challenges. Examples of good practice presented and papers on place making and place management, on the creation and use of social capital and how we are all people as individuals and as communities that are continuously learning to create a communal growth mindset. I am excited to see us use all that to further a positive development of society, all over the world.

For guidance on how to take part in this Conference and on travel, registration, etc., please consult the PASCAL Website where this is prominently displayed.

If you would meanwhile like to contribute to this dialogue, please send your comments to [chris.duke@rmit.edu.au](mailto:chris.duke@rmit.edu.au) for this Newsletter or write direct to [enrico@belgiumcampus.ac.za](mailto:enrico@belgiumcampus.ac.za).

## **PIMA seminar on the Sustainable Development Goals and Lifelong Learning**

The seminar will be held at 10am-4pm on Saturday February 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 at RMIT, Melbourne, Australia. The Draft Program includes the following:

**Bruce Wilson** Director RMIT EU Centre: An Introduction to the SDG, and to SDG 4

**Robbie Guevara** Immediate Past President ASPBAE: SDG in the Asia-Pacific region  
Summary Presentations of the issues related to Goal 4 followed by discussion.

**Jim Falk** Goal 13- Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

**David Campbell** Goal 6- Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

**Ken Thompson** Goal 11- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable

**Steve Garlick** Goal 16- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective and accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

**Bruce Wilson** Overview from the PIMA/PASCAL SIG on SDG

**Chris Duke** Going forward

For further information and guidance on taking part, please contact Mary Serafim, Dorothy Lucardie, or Chris Duke: [mary.serafim@rmit.edu.au](mailto:mary.serafim@rmit.edu.au) , [Dorothy.lucardie@gmail.com](mailto:Dorothy.lucardie@gmail.com), [chris.duke@rmit.edu.au](mailto:chris.duke@rmit.edu.au).

## **PIMA 2017 AGM, Annual Report and Elections - Notice of Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of PASCAL International Association (commonly known as PIMA) will be held at 10 am on Sunday February 12<sup>th</sup> 2017 at RMIT, Melbourne, Australia. The business at the meeting will be to receive the Annual Report, to announce the election of office-bearers and members of the Committee, confirm the minutes of the previous AGM, and deal with business items that have been circulated to the members 21 days prior to the meeting. Separate notification of the nomination and election of the Committee will be sent to all members by email in December 2016 and will include nomination forms and proxy forms to be completed by members who are unable to attend the AGM.

## **EFAFE 2017 Meeting and Conference**

PIMA member **Thomas Kuan** cordially invites fellow PIMA members to the EFAFE 2017 Meeting and Conference which will be hosted by Universiti Malaysia Kelantan 8-10 January 2017. The theme for the 2017 Conference is "Extending Universities' Roles in Adult and Lifelong Learning: East Asia Perspectives and Practice". If you wish to submit a paper or seek more information about the conference, please contact: [eafae2017@gmail.com](mailto:eafae2017@gmail.com). For further advice, PIMA Members can also contact Thomas Kuan direct at this [eafae2017@gmail.com](mailto:eafae2017@gmail.com) address.

## **OECD higher education stakeholder forum**

The annual OECD Higher Education Stakeholder Forum will be on 21-22 September 2017 in Paris. It is part of a stakeholder dialogue to support Enhancing Higher Education System Performance, which asks how well are higher education systems are performing, why some systems perform better than others, and what countries can learn from one another to improve their own systems; see <http://www.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/oecdhighereducationstakeholderforum.htm>

The Forum provides an opportunity for feedback on their higher education work from a broad range of stakeholders and to enrich its quality and relevance. It helps keep the OECD in touch with new developments and challenges in the HE sector as a first step in an ongoing consultation between the OECD and HE stakeholders.



Participants will work together to provide input and feedback on the OECD's work on higher education and exchange views. The number of participants is limited to around 200 key stakeholders from around the world. Participation in the forum is free of charge. You can pre-register for the Forum, as Hans Schuetze and Chris Duke have done. Contact [highereducation@oecd.org](mailto:highereducation@oecd.org).

Hans has also suggested that PIMA organize a meeting in Paris then for those from PIMA who are able to go to attend the Forum (which is free of fees). Our fringe or end-on meeting could discuss what modern universities are all about, what new missions/tasks they should assume to serve and remain/become relevant to the community, and what role PIMA can play, for example through an HE Special Interest Group.

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Responses to news items and opinion pieces, other feedback and material for publication are always welcome. Please send your contributions to Chris Duke at: [chris.duke@rmit.edu.au](mailto:chris.duke@rmit.edu.au)