



## ***First Call for Papers***

# **Adult education and struggles for democracy in precarious times**

A conference organized by the **European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA)** Research Network on

## **Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning**

**Date:** 19–20 October 2018

**Venue:** Building Key, Campus Valla, Linköping University, Sweden.

**Local hosts:**

Division of Education and Adult Learning &

Mimer – The Swedish network for research on popular education

We warmly invite you to participate in an international conference on **Adult education and struggles for democracy in precarious times**.

This conference is being held by Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA) and it will bring together researchers and scholars from across Europe interested in democracy and citizenship in relation to adult education.

Historically, adult learning and education has played a crucial role in fostering active democratic citizenship and the making of democratic societies. The social and political context in Europe has changed radically since the foundation of this network, which started in the 1990s during, and in response to, a period of profound transitions in Central and Eastern Europe. Today the political and educational landscape is very different. Many of the hopes associated with community empowerment and active civil society that defined the 1990s have past. In many countries, there is what the political scientist Philip Mair has called a “democratic void” linked to the unravelling of social democracy and the erosion of the legitimacy of mainstream political parties. In part, this reflects how forms of ‘extra-territorial’ power – linked to the rise in influence of transnational bodies such as the OECD and the EU. The globalisation of production and finance has also reconfigured the role of the nation state and this has even led commentators such as Nancy Fraser to argue that the Westphalian-Keynesian state – so long the dominant frame for discussions of justice and democracy has been eroded. The disappearance of familiar frames for thinking about and enacting democracy has had significant consequences. This, alongside rising inequality and increased elite power has led to growth of various forms of populism in Europe on the left and the right. Of particular concern is the rise of fascist movements, xenophobia racism which is a direct threat to democratic cultures and movements.

In the same period adult education as a field has also gone through a series of transformations through the development of lifelong learning policies and the move towards

tighter integration between adult education provision and labour markets. In many but not all, national contexts adult education has been more fully integrated into state educational policy leading to increased visibility for the field but also formalisation and professionalization which has arguably created greater distance between democratic movements and adult education providers. One of the questions that arises then is whether the adult learning for citizenship and democracy remains and important characteristic of our field?

As a community of researchers of scholars, academic-activists and practitioner-researchers we are concerned with exploring these questions and dilemmas in a critical way with the aim of deepening possibilities for socially just, environmentally sustainable, and democratic societies. We look to the past as we confront a “fierce new world” and want to explore these significant political, socio-spatial, economic and educational changes at the conference.

What does promotion of democracy mean and require from adult education as research and practice and the researcher as an (academic) actor? The conference invites scholars to discuss adult education and struggles for democracy in precarious times providing a space to approach this from a variety of perspectives.

We welcome in particular papers and presentations, which explore adult education and learning in relation to:

- ***specific histories and traditions of democratic education*** (for example popular education in various forms, radical community education, critical pedagogy, Politische Bildung, social movement education, social pedagogy in Italy and Spain, civic education etc.)
- ***current experiments and initiatives of democratic learning*** (inside and outside formal educational structures).
- ***analyses of the key sources of power and configurations of power and agency in relation to democratic adult education*** (for instance what role does the state, transnational organisations, political parties, NGOs, movements, civil society and virtual networks play in reimagining democratic education).
- ***challenges to democratic education*** (for example the rise of xenophobia, racism and authoritarianism, as well as the more subtle undermining of democracy through processes of depolitization, technocratization and privatization).
- ***accounts of the specific research traditions and methodologies in research on democracy, learning and citizenship.***

The conference is open to researchers from all disciplines and perspectives relevant to adult education and involved in the full range of sectors and sites of practice linked to adult learning. We actively encourage various formats and modes of communication of research at the event.

We intend that this will be a convivial, stimulating and dialogical event. As a result, the conference will be structured in a way that ensures high level of exchange and discussion. To create a rich conversation we want to invite participants who are wish to present a paper, or make another substantive input, to also prepared to read carefully 3+ papers of other participants in advance of the event.

We welcome you to submit your abstract,

*Fergal Finnegan, Maynooth University*

*Henrik Nordvall, Linköping University*

*Annika Pastuhov, Linköping University and Åbo Akademi University*

*Jenni Pätäri, University of Tampere*

– *The conveners of the ESREA Research Network on Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning*

## Abstract and paper guidelines

The deadline for the submission of abstracts will be May 25, 2018 (acceptance will be announced by mid-June 2018).

Early bird registration by June 30, 2018

Full papers (5,000- 8,000 words) should be submitted by September 14, 2018. We welcome other modes of dissemination apart from written papers (such as film, drama piece etc.). Please ensure that the content and structure used in such alternative formats are described in the proposal.

Abstracts should be one side of A4 maximum (500 words in 12 point, in a Word or PDF format references using APA) and should include a title but not the author/s name/s or institution/s. The author should submit a separate document with name, institutional affiliation, and contact details as well. Abstracts and author detail documents should be submitted [annika.pastuhov@liu.se](mailto:annika.pastuhov@liu.se)

The conference language will be English.

The following criteria will be used to review proposals:

- The relevance to adult education theory, policy and/or practice
- The relevance to the conference themes
- The clarity of the theoretical and conceptual framework
- If the proposal is empirical, the background, method, results and implications should be clearly set out.

Details of the membership of the Scientific Committee will be posted shortly on the conference website.

Please send your abstracts to: [annika.pastuhov@liu.se](mailto:annika.pastuhov@liu.se)

To find out more about our network please see  
[www.esrea.org/networks/active-democratic-citizenship-and-adult-learning/](http://www.esrea.org/networks/active-democratic-citizenship-and-adult-learning/)

For more information visit the conference website: [liu.se/esrea2018](http://liu.se/esrea2018)

## Conference Fees and Venue

	Early Bird Fees (deadline June 30, 2018)	Registration Fees
PhD-Students	60 €	100 €
ESREA Members	125 €	175 €
Non-Members	200 €	250 €

*Conference fee includes: coffee breaks, lunches and conference dinner. VAT (25 percent) is included in prices.*

**About the Venue:** The conference will take place at Linköping University, in the [Key Building](#) at Campus Valla. Linköping is strategically situated next to highway E4 and the main railway between Malmö and Stockholm. The position makes it an easy destination to reach. Linköping also has its own airport with international traffic to Amsterdam with KLM.

**Accommodation:** For suggestions see for example [visitlinkoping.se/en/plan/accommodation](http://visitlinkoping.se/en/plan/accommodation)

## About ESREA and ESREA Membership

ESREA's mission is to support the advancement of high quality research on the education and learning of adults in Europe by sustaining:

- co-operation among researchers, in the European context conceived in the broadest geographical terms;
- development of research and dissemination of results in all areas of adult and continuing education;
- training of early researchers and continuing professional development of researchers;
- relationships with other European organizations and the appropriate national organizations.

To find out more about ESREA please visit [www.esrea.org](http://www.esrea.org)

To apply for membership please visit [www.esrea.org/about-us/membership](http://www.esrea.org/about-us/membership)