

EERA Network 23 Annual Business Meeting
University of Hamburg, 1215-1330, Thursday 5th September 2019

Thirty-five network members attended the business meeting

Welcome

The meeting began with the presentation of a book that had resulted from a network symposium in Copenhagen 2017. The book took its starting point from the presentations in the symposium, and concerned resistance towards neo-liberalism.

Edited by Lyn Tett and Mary Hamilton, 'Resisting Neoliberalism in Education: Local, National and Transnational Perspectives' is published by Policy Press in August 2019.

Conference 2019

Submissions, rejections and withdrawals

There were 114 submitted papers for presentation, 92 were accepted including 5 redirections, 5 were rejected and 22 withdrawn. Some borderline submissions received feedback to respond to, and they either did this or withdrew their papers. There were 14 symposia submissions, one of which was a redirection, all were accepted and none withdrawn. 1 poster was submitted but rejected, and 1 ignite talk was submitted but rejected.

We are getting far fewer papers redirected from other networks, and this year we had no poster presentations.

Reviewers and chairs

This year there were 29 reviewers and 15 chairs.

The success of the conference is down, in large part, to the quality of the reviewers and the chairs. We have a strong group of conscientious reviewers who give their time freely and provide clear, helpful and considered feedback on the many submissions. A good number also act as chairs. Many thanks to all.

Programme, symposia and paper presentations

We have had 14 symposia presented and 87 individual papers. Paper sessions are organised thematically, and assigned chairs with relevant expertise wherever possible.

This year we had no joint sessions. The office is trying to reduce the number of joint sessions due to the complexity with the number of participants. This is a change in policy, since it used to be encouraged.

Special call

This call was 'Collaborative Comparative Critical Policy Studies in Education', and relates closely to the conference theme. It builds on our Networking Seminar in University College, Copenhagen in August 2017,

'Promoting Inclusive European Collaborative Education Policy Research', which was generously supported by a grant from the EERA Council, and our Capacity Building Workshop with the same title in Free University, Bolzano in September 2018.

We sought papers and symposia each addressing methodological challenges in collaborative and/or inclusive education policy research, collaborative and/or comparative education policy research, especially where this involves diversely constituted research teams, and research comparing diverse cultural and policy contexts and socio-economic conditions across Europe. The call attracted 11 paper submissions, 9 of which were presented, and two symposia.

Developments and the network social event

As we decided last year, a welcome email was sent to all whose papers were accepted by the network with information on network events including the business meeting and social. However, because of the distance of from network presentations to centralised refreshments, we were unable to promote more informal gatherings of network members.

Many thanks to Anne Larson and to Klaus Buddeberg from the University of Hamburg for organising the network meal at the Ristorante Opera on Wednesday evening, which 43 members attended.

Feedback on the conference

The venue is good, and it is good that Hamburg is large enough for everybody to find a hotel relatively close by. Free ticket to public transportation is a very good idea.

From the point of view of the network, the conference has been very successful. We have had a high number of high quality papers that have provoked interesting and engaging discussions. Most of the papers in themed sessions fitted well together. Symposia are scheduled for Thursdays and Fridays, but as these are typically very popular, some participants have had to make difficult choices. Finally, the number of people taking part in the network meeting has increased, which is very positive.

Unfortunately, at the beginning of the week, there were a number of technical problems, and in some rooms, the slides could not be seen unless the lights were turned off. Rooms were generally quite small, and this often led to overcrowding. Finally, having refreshments between sessions centralised meant there were fewer opportunities for informal discussions within the network between sessions.

Review 2018-19

In relation to our plans for last year, in the reviewing process the convenors were more aware of proposals that were poorly expressed because of English language difficulties, but otherwise acceptable, taking this into account when making decisions and offering further support for their authors. Three new reviewers and a number of new chairs have been appointed for this year's conference. Communication at the conference, including invitations to the business meeting and a social event, have been improved.

There remains an inequality in where the papers come from, with relatively few from Southern and Eastern Europe. Despite this being our focus for three years, this is something on which we will have to continue working.

Suggestions for 2019-20

Ideas about how we can involve more people from the new member-countries and encourage them to take active part in the network were discussed. Members from new member-countries attending were encouraged to spread this message. Another solution could be to consider identifying reviewers and chairs from new member-countries. Convenors will think about which countries to approach, and if we could use those already involved in the network or via national organisations.

One participant asked whether there could be more network communications between conferences. Members were reminded about the network mailing list, which they can opt in to. This is intended for sharing information of relevance for the network as a whole.

It was asked whether we might get funding from the EERA for a summer or winter school. On the one hand, the network got funding for a capacity building workshop in 2017 and 2018, and on the other, there is a winter school on education policy held annually in Verona in November. One of the organisers is Palle Rasmussen. Further information on this will be forwarded through the mailing list for the network.

Finally, another participant asked if we could compile an archive of conference abstracts. The feasibility of this will be explored by convenors, and may form the basis for a future funding bid.

Links to Emerging Researchers Group (ERG)

We briefly discussed how we could use our close relations with the ERG to encourage new researchers to get involved in the network. Convenors will think about how we can provide support at conference for those new to NW23 and/or ECER including emerging researchers at ECER 2020. Xavier Rambla, convenor, is the network link with the ERG.

Final remarks

No other issues were raised at the meeting. We look forward to seeing you in Glasgow in 2020.

The Convenors of EERA NW23: Peter Kelly (link-convenor), Anna Tsatsaroni, Anne Larson, Linda Rönnerberg and Xavier Rambla, Hamburg, 5th September 2019