

NW 17 (Histories of Education) and NW 7 (Social Justice and Intercultural Education) joint call: Refugees in/and Education throughout Time in Europe: Re- and Deconstructions of Discourses, Policies and Practices in Educational Contexts

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Call for Papers

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Colonial and Post-Colonial History / Studies, Contemporary History, History Education, Human Rights, Social History / Studies

ECER 2020, Glasgow

Educational Research (Re)connecting Communities

24-25 August 2020 - Emerging Resarchers' Conference

25-28 August 2020 - European Conference on Educational Research

This joint call aims to contextualise and historicise discourses and voices of refugees in education. Recent debates tend to see the so-called refugee crisis from 2015/2016 as a singular event which implies new and unexpected challenges for education systems in host countries. The result is over-dramatization and a neglect of already existing resources of both communities and the education system. The aim of this call is to bring refugee immigration and its specific histories back on the agenda and to highlight research that generates a positive impact on improving the situation and opportunities of newcomers. Refuge needs to be understood not only as a single event but also as an intergenerational process related to particular contexts.

The Call

Throughout the years 2015 and 2016 the numbers of refugees who came to Europe and applied for asylum reached the highest level in the post World War II era. In both academic and public discourse, the phenomenon received a great deal of attention. The focus on the presence and actuality of the so-called refugee crisis indicates that the entry of refugees into the European education systems is not only a new occurrence, but also that it had not been researched and discussed before. The result is over-dramatization and a neglect of already existing resources of both communities and the education system.

The aim of this joint call is to bring the history of refugee immigration in Europe back on the agenda, to highlight continuities as well as changes, and to understand refuge not only as a single event, but

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also in a historical context as an intergenerational social process. These aspects are interwoven with given (global and national) power relations that must be taken into account in terms of generating social justice and inclusiveness. Indeed, “[t]he multi-disciplinary field of refugee studies lacks a reflection on conceptual, theoretical and methodological challenges of its historical perspective. Until recently, it faced a historiographical lacuna, with few historians researching forced migration systematically and, in turn, little historical research being adopted in refugee studies (Marfleet, 2007).” (Kleist, 2017: 161) This diagnosis also applies to educational research on refugees. Furthermore, “there is much to recommend in an approach to refugee experiences over time which is sensitive to one or another of the senses of generation [...]” (Loizos, 2007: 207). This is particularly important to educational research. To understand and act in the current situation as educational researchers and practitioners, we need to historicise the phenomenon. We invite papers, which explore the situation of refugees in education in Europe now and then. Papers should address their topic historically and therefore explicitly relate certain timeframes with places/spaces and socio-political contexts.

Some possible areas of focus could be:

- Discourses and policies concerning refugees in different times and spaces

How are refugees addressed; how are they presented in public - in political contexts related to education? What are their living conditions, how are these presented and related to education?

- Voices of refugees now and then - are they heard?

Recently, the discourses on refugees are omnipresent - not least in education. Nevertheless, the voices of refugees and their perspectives are still rare. Hence, we invite papers that present refugees’ voices from different times and spaces. To listen to them would help to learn about the interrelations of the particular living conditions and educational needs.

- Refuge and Refugeeedom as an intergenerational issue

Refuge is an important issue in many families today. Flight does not only impact the actual refugee, but also their children and grandchildren. Hence, biographical research is welcomed to explore the international ramifications of refuge. The concept of ‘refugeedom’ (Gatrell 2016) might offer an interesting perspective here.

- Educational approaches to working with refugees in different times and circumstances

In various contexts educators worked with refugees in schools, childcare, youth work and also vocational education and training. They were inspired by different philosophies and used different approaches. Even though these concepts have to be discussed within their particular historical emergence, we might learn from them today. One aspect would be to listen to practitioner’s voices (Leemann & van Koeven 2018).

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