



International Society for Comparative Adult Education

Thursday, June 3, 2021

Virtual pre-conference in association with AEGT2021

7:00-9:00am PDT / 4:00-6:00pm CEST

Panel: *Populism and adult education – comparative perspectives*

Across the world, the hegemony of “neoliberal globalisation” is challenged by “populism.” From Austria and Bulgaria to India and Italy, from “Brexit” to “Trumpism,” forms of populism have taken hold. Most are strongly nationalistic. Many are also influenced by other kinds of “identity politics”: by ethnicity, religion, region, class, language, gender. Often, identity is expressed less in loyalty than in anger against supposed threats: from immigrants, from groups – women, ethnic minorities, and so forth – previously subordinated but now claiming equal status. Populist politicians and parties often claim to act for – and to be supported by – those excluded from the benefits of neoliberalism: the unemployed, communities and cities “left behind.”

Populisms are, of course, frequently associated with authoritarianism, scepticism about democratic institutions and methods, and the elevation of “leadership” and the charismatic leader. Often, or so many claim, they are strengthened by modern social media’s “confirmation bias” – not to mention the forms of interaction it facilitates, from cyberbullying to surveillance.

This panel will explore how resurgent forms of populism are affecting adult education. What are the differences between countries and types of populism, and do they have different implications for adult education? Are there lessons to be drawn from experience in other countries, or other times – populism has a long, complex, sometimes colourful, often cruel, history. Have national or international policies – including policies toward adult education – played any part in the resurgence of populism? What approaches have adult educators evolved to survive amid populism – and challenge it?

- ***Introductory Remarks***

John Holford, University of Nottingham, UK

- ***Pierre Rosanvallon’s analysis of neoliberal paradigms such as the ‘Equality of Chances’ as a central cause for populism***
Anke Grotlüschen, University of Hamburg, Germany
- ***Far-right populism and the COVID pandemic in Brazil: Adult education in survival mode***
Timothy Ireland, Federal University of Paraiba, Brazil
- ***Reflections on emancipatory adult education in an era of populism and polycrisis***
Fergal Finnegan, Maynooth University, Ireland
- ***Populism in different ideological contexts***
Katarina Popović, University of Belgrade, Serbia

Presentations I

9:30-11:00am PDT / 6:30-8:00pm CEST

1. Jinhee Choi, Seoul National University, South Korea
“Who is your neighbor?”: Autoethnography of an ethnographic journey with North Korean migrants
2. Borut Mikulec, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia & Paula Guimarães, University of Lisboa, Portugal
The role of the OECD in adult education policy: Adult learning systems through the lens of skills’ strategies in Portugal and Slovenia
3. Sofia Antera & Manos Pavlakis, Stockholm University, Sweden
University teaching in the Covid era: Is this the dawn of a new paradigm shift?

Presentations II

11:30am-12:30pm PDT / 8:30-9:30pm CEST

4. Alan Knox, University of Wisconsin – Madison, U.S.A., Simone Conceição, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, U.S.A. & Terry Gibson, University of Wisconsin – Madison, U.S.A.
Stages for international comparative inquiry
5. Mai Atta, The Pennsylvania State University, U.S.A., Maria Alicia Vetter, Independent Researcher, U.S.A., & John D. Holst, The Pennsylvania State University, U.S.A.
A comparative study of youth and adult education in two social movement contexts