

European Educational Research Journal

Open Call for Papers

Amplifying refugee voices in European educational spaces

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At the European Conference of Education Research in September 2015, academics convening from across Europe felt the urgent need to raise their voices and seek strategies of collective action in relation to the increasing influx of refugees in European territories. The conference participants expressed a statement that was endorsed by the EERA Council and aimed to incite debates and action within both educational research and practice communities. It was argued that the current refugee issue forms a pressing common concern for European academics. It calls for reflection on how educational research and practice can responsibly engage with these societal developments and related public debates, oriented at actively articulating, challenging, and reworking narratives shaping an understanding of our contemporary world.

The influx of refugees has generated polarized debates of both welcoming and refusal across European societies. Refugees' trajectories of migration and resettlement have pervaded political discourses and public debates, destabilizing our concepts and imaginaries of European integrity, invoking questions revolving around European territoriality, the meaning of the European project, and surfacing geopolitical tensions between old and new member states. Here, it seems clear how the current refugee influx invites us to rethink existing horizons of understanding, as refugees' arrival destabilizes ongoing narratives and notions of living together in European spaces. In this destabilization of existing narratives, not only distant echoes of violence beyond humanity intrude and shatter the shell of safety and mastery we have built around our world; fears of uprootedness and the fragility of our own connectedness to place, territory, and community are also strongly evoked.

This destabilization equally permeates divergent practices of refugees' reception across European states. In receiving societies, refugees encounter practices of solidarity and care, performed by local or policy actors who develop attempts to respond to refugees' plight from a position of hospitality. At the same time, refugees' reception equally involves strong experiences of hostility and exclusion: current practices of dealing with the influx of refugees arriving on boats or trying to cross wired borders show a declining shared sense of solidarity, exacerbated by European asylum policies permeated by discourses of suspicion and security concerns, viewing refugees as potentially submitting illegitimate asylum claims and vectors of violence.

These practices of hospitality and hostility invoke questions on the role of educational practices in refugees' reception. Indeed, European educational spaces are being fundamentally transformed and rearticulated by discourses of hospitality and hostility that emerged from or are exacerbated by the

current refugee issue, raising questions about how to understand and engage with these transformations within educational research and practice. Hence, the current influx of refugees and their urge to find a home within our existing world calls for a reflection on the role of educational practices, in all its forms, shapes and stages, in responding to refugees and the destabilization of ways of being in the world provoked by their arrival.

In this call for papers for an EERJ special issue, we invite scholars across the European space to reflect on possible means of active engagement with this transformation in different forms of educational practice. We aim to develop a shared reflection that fully engages with the destabilization and its coexistence with discourses of hospitality and hostility at stake in contemporary Europe's refugee debate, an engagement with how ongoing transformations of our European educational spaces call us to rethink discourses and notions of shared educational spaces, identities, and responsible action.

Therefore, we invite contributions by educational researchers from different countries, both from within and outside Europe, that reflect on this destabilization of existing narratives invoked by refugees' arrival and experience, engaging with this transformation through articulating its meanings and reflecting on corresponding ways of action in educational research and practice. We aim to bring together scholarship from both within and outside the European space, combining historical, theoretical and empirical contributions, and addressing these issues at the level of educational policy, micro-levels of family, school or community practices, as well as addressing the role of (the methodology of) educational research in connection to public engagement itself through reflective essays or academic manifestos.

More specifically, we are calling for papers (max. 8,000 words) that address one or more of the following questions:

- How does the destabilizing influx of refugees in the contemporary European space invite us to rearticulate common concerns of hospitality in educational contexts?
- How can educational practices engage with practices of hospitality within families, schools, communities, or broader institutional settings, or shape practices of hostility, exclusion or disintegration?
- What are potential conditions of hospitality within educational practices, and how can this lead us to understand the increasing discourses and practices of prejudice, distrust and exclusion?
- What is the responsibility of public intellectuals in this situation? How can academics engage with the debate and take collective action in universities and beyond?
- How can an engagement with the past and developing a temporal lens on the current issue of refugees articulate a thorough interrogation of the present?

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