

Development of a European Research Space

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EERA was founded at the same time as the integration processes in the EU began to churn – the Knowledge Economy goals, Bologna and Lisbon process, the Ljubljana process [the ERA] etc This may have been a coincidence but it doesn't feel like it. EERA began to struggle to define itself, to run good conferences and to support the organization of networks from the late 90s onwards. Its first real journal, the EERJ, began soon after.

The EERJ came out of thinking within the Council and the ECER. The research question was – what was a European association supposed to be doing? Subsidiary questions included – what was our relation to Brussels? What distinguished an ECER paper from a national conference paper? Were we a serious academic association or a form of tourism? [this was expressed forcefully by different parties]

In a way, EERA began to model the idea of a European Research Area in its own practice. Indeed, the then President and Secretary General {Sverker Lindblad and myself} went to a Brussels meeting armed with a paper called 'the European Educational Research Area' early in this decade. EERA had begun to develop a consciousness about itself and its identity even though it was unclear exactly what 'space' it was in. Since that time, a few short years ago, enormous changes to research and its organizations have occurred in Europe: for example, the rise of the European University Association, the Framework and EuroCores programmes, the European Doctorate, the European Research Council and Research Mobility. Simultaneously, research data based on pan European performance in education, the inclusion of new states in the EU, and the products of a large number of networks and programmes have widened the number of collaborating academics and their subjects of study. [The EERJ Roundtable at the ECER tries to bring current research policy issues into a research forum each year].

The EERJ was created to represent these changes and the work of the EERA. *It is a forum for constructive dialogue that recognizes particularity and difference in educational research and its issues in Europe, that acknowledges and seeks to address the relative weakness of links between social science and education research in Europe, and that seeks to develop methodologies for studying the new 'European space' of educational research.*[EERJ website].

A sample of EERA network descriptions include

- A European perspective on inclusive education and students' rights.
- promoting a common European research culture
- the history of European educational spaces, their national or theoretical discourses and educational networks
- to promote pan-European research collaboration and dissemination
- to advance university-based teacher education in a European context

EERA networks have consistently constructed the cross border study of education issues through the use of symposia, as well as in their criteria for making judgements about papers.

So, as a journal, the EERJ follows the interests the networks: it is about the new frontiers of Europeanization in educational research and publishes aspects of educational research dealing with the emerging borderless space of European educational research. However, like the networks, it does not define Europeanization and does not reflect an orthodoxy [as political science would, for example] yet it will reject papers that deal with national issues without regard wider European reference. It asks that authors speak out to a wider audience than their local one. This can take some doing! It is also surprising when the paper has already been given at ECER. Individual papers can manage their obligation in different ways. They may use a national case study to draw implications for a wider Europe; they may illustrate a European effect inside a national case; their references reflect other European national research literature; they may be comparing two European cases etc

Published ECER symposia are effective in exploring Europeanization issues through a cumulative process of description and argument: for example, on the *Emergence and Development of Educational Research in Europe*, *Changing Forms of Educational Governance in Europe*, *the Theoretical and Methodological Significance of Information and Communication Technology in Educational Practice* and particularly on *Didactics: learning and teaching in Europe*. Within a symposium issue, it is possible for a more national case to be relevant because of the other cases clustered around it. Special collections of papers, produced by projects, seminars or networks in Europe have the same function: for example, the *European Educational Research Space: vocational and lifelong education research*; *Civic Education*; *Ethnography of Education in a European Educational Researcher Perspective*; *Travelling Policy in Post-socialist Education*; *Public Education, Democracy and Supra- and Transnational Agencies in Europe*; *Local Autonomy or State Control? Exploring the Effects of New Forms of Regulation in Education and the Multicultural Question and*

Education in Europe. Using the Report section to publish useful European project reports, for example, on Benchmarking the Quality of Education, underpins this obligation to describe the emerging field of European education.

This obligation to face cross border contexts and references has made the EERJ quite distinctive within the community of educational journals. It has also made it quite successful in its short life.

This chance to discuss the work EERA, and in particular its Networks, in relation to the above issues and the EERJ is welcomed. It is hoped that it may be reported back to the Editorial Board of the EERJ.

Martin Lawn
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Mapping the European Educational Research Space: Policy, Governance and Cultures

The European Educational Research Journal would like to produce a **special issue** on the processes and subjects of Europeanization in education for **Vol 9 in 2010**. Papers are invited; they should be submitted to the EERJ Editor by December 1st, 2009

The EERJ works within the idea that European education exists today within a borderless space containing significant flows of ideas, policies and academics, between countries, in networks and associations, and in projects. From its beginning, it has encouraged research across European borders and across the field of educational studies: it has published symposia and network papers in a range of fields on European education policy, market reforms, travelling policies, public education, social capital, the technology of numbers, mobility, didactics and social justice.

The effects of cross European comparisons, joint research projects, benchmarking developments and regulatory growth suggest that Europeanization processes in education are wide but also deep. They are occurring within and between national policies, research communities and experts. New actors, or national actors working in new ways, in the public and the private sector in education, and at its different levels, are producing new effects. The field of education was not one of the core areas of EU policy but the adoption of knowledge economy discourses, the Open Method of

Coordination and Bologna Agreement, global technology convergences and common performance measuring has transformed its position in European policy.

It is possible to view this process and these effects as constituting a European Education Space; a term that recognizes what is happening signifies a new condition in European education. It is having consequences for what is studied, what is not studied and what needs to be studied.

The Editors of the special issue will be Prof Lisbeth Lundahl [Umea University, Sweden], Prof Stefan Hoppman [University of Vienna, Austria] and Prof Martin Lawn [University of Edinburgh, UK].