



Thematic issue of RELA: MIGRATION AND THE EDUCATION AND LEARNING OF ADULTS

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Migration changes lives. Conditions of globalization have created new and radical challenges for contemporary societies. "New societies" emerge in part through migration. The 'indigenous' find themselves with new neighbours. Situations of migration create tensions within host societies, governments react in diverse ways and educational institutions and individual citizens develop coping strategies.

In studying migrating populations in the USA and Europe, Thomas and Znaniecki reported in the 1970s that a society in which "emigration had appeared ceased to be as cohesive as it used to be before it commenced" (1976, p.21). Particularly in Europe where modernization has been advanced historically through the construction and consolidation of nation states, the belief in the uniqueness of members (their qualities, culture, history, principles and values) and the sense of unity rooted in citizens' solidarity has been at once constructed and challenged. Consequently, models of citizenship, democracy and social participation have mutated. Identities associated with nations have been both reinforced and dissolved into hybridity. A primary cause of the cultural and political change observable in current European societies is perhaps that of migration and migration effects.

Contemporary social research is interested in how migration processes influence individuals and social relations in host societies. This tends to raise questions about social cohesion and integration. Far less effort is put into the study of the motivations for migrants in leaving a homeland, or migration as a process of learning. Individual motivations for migration, of course, vary considerably. Decisions are often made quickly. Migration is no longer understood as a decision taken for life. Facilitated by border mobility, economic globalisation, the omnipresence of communication technology and the



consequences of war, etc., migration can also occur swiftly. Related to this, learning and education in the migratory context is an intriguing and complex issue. Learning is involved for migrants, host country residents and those staying behind. Education and learning (formal and informal) may be identified explicitly as a solution to problems related to the restoring of stability into lives, but it may also be that learning is 'inescapable'. In their conversations *On Education* (2012, p. 3), Zygmunt Bauman and Riccardo Mazzeo identify learning as an inescapable practice and art in such situations:

(...) conversion and assimilation, that early modern recipe for dealing with the presence of strangers, is not on the cards in the present context of a multcentred and multicultural world. The need to develop, to learn and to practice the art of living with strangers and their difference *permanently* and *daily* is inescapable (...).

Individual and collective learning is necessary in relation to migration in contemporary societies. Newcomers create learning opportunities for themselves and the societies they enter. They live on the verge of two worlds and cultures; an educational challenge they need to face (Ligus 2011, p. 191-202). Societies act, often controversially, to give a place to newcomers and make citizens more familiar with new conditions. Education can provide relevant sites to enhance that learning. Education and learning are important strategies in the face of "sequent effects" of migration processes.

In exploring adult learning and education in connection with migration processes, questions pertaining to societies, individuals and educational institutions are posed. What educational potential is generated by migration for individuals and societies as a whole? What educational policies are developed by societies to deal with the challenge of migration? To what extent do researchers of adult and continuing education and learning study and discuss the phenomenon of migration and its consequences?

We invite papers in relation to the above questions. Submissions should be sent no later than October 15th, by e-mail, to ewa.kurantowicz@wp.pl formatted according to the instructions for authors available at www.rela.ep.liu.se



References

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Bauman Z. (2012). *On Education: Conversations with Riccardo Mazzeo*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Ligus R. (2011). Migration and global learning spaces, In: A.Fragosso, E.Kurantowicz, E. Lucio-Villegas (eds.) *Between Global and Local. Adult Learning and Development*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, pp. 191-204.