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European Educational Research Association

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The European Educational Research Association (EERA) is an association of about 40 national and regional European associations for general educational research. Its activities cover all educational research areas including research on higher education. EERA membership is made up of associations from over 30 countries from all parts of Europe ranging from Norway to Turkey and Ireland to Kazakhstan.

This entry provides an overview of EERA and describes its history, aims, organizational structure, and activities.

History

EERA was founded in June 1994 following discussions among representatives of national educational research associations and several major research institutes throughout Europe. According to EERA's website, the participants in the discussions felt

the need for a European association to foster the exchange of ideas amongst European researchers, promote collaboration in research, improve research quality and offer independent advice on educational research to European policy-makers, administrators and practitioners.

After having been based in Scotland from 1994 to 2008, EERA became a "Verein" (i.e., a nonprofit organization under German law) based in Berlin, Germany, in 2008.

Aim

According to its mission statement, as stated on its website, EERA's aim is "to further high quality educational research for the benefit of education and society." In addition, EERA wants to help establish research that "not only acknowledges its own context but also recognises wider, transnational contexts with their social, cultural and political similarities and differences." The association has a range of activities, such as its annual conference and season schools for emerging researchers; as well, it publishes a journal, the European Educational Research Journal (EERJ), and a book series. Through its activities, EERA seeks to promote free and open dialogue and critical discussion. It takes a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to theory, methods, and research ethics.

To further its mission, EERA works closely with its member associations and participates in other organizations. It is, for example, a founding member of the World Educational Research Association, the European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities, and the Initiative for Science in Europe. EERA is committed to upholding high academic and professional standards and expects all of its member associations to promote ethical educational research by their association members.

Structure

EERA is governed by its council which includes one representative from every member association. Other council members are the editor of EERJ, a representative of the networks' link convenors (i.e., coordinators), and the link convenor of the Emerging Researchers' Group (ERG). Policies developed by council are prepared and executed by the executive committee made up of the president, secretary general, and treasurer. All practical procedures, including the academic part of organizing the annual conference, are coordinated by the Berlin office. Member associations pay a membership fee based on the size of their membership (i.e., the number of individual members) and the gross domestic product (GDP) of their home country.

Activities

EERA's activities include conferences, publications, season schools, and support for emerging researchers

and researchers in countries with a low GDP. The most prominent activity of EERA is its annual conference (European Conference on Educational Research [ECER]) that brings together over 2,800 participants not only from Europe but also from all other continents every year in a different venue. Through keynote lectures, paper and poster presentations, workshops, and discussions, participants share their research results and engage in critical discussions of their work. Conference themes are broad and have included educational reform, education in transition, and inclusion and exclusion. All submissions undergo double-blind review.

The academic work of EERA and especially ECER is organized in 33 thematic networks. These are either discipline oriented (e.g., histories of education, sociologies of education) or focus on certain themes within educational research, such as higher education, educational innovation and quality assurance, teacher education, leadership in education, and organizational education. Since 2010, EERA has financially supported various projects organized by networks such as seminars and meetings, developing publications, and hosting season schools for emerging researchers. One of the aims of this funding is the support for researchers in low GDP countries and emerging researchers. The work of the networks, specifically the program planning for ECER, is done by the network link convenors with help of network convenors. The link convenors meet once a year for network development and program planning.

EERA has an ERG, with free individual membership, which was established so that emerging researchers (including those undertaking a doctorate) would have a research community in Europe. The annual Emerging Researchers' Conference, which takes place the 2 days preceding ECER, provides an avenue for early career researchers to disseminate their research. Year-round contact is maintained between members through e-mail and via the ERG website. The ERG also provides guidance with the production of articles (e.g., the "Best Paper Award") and support for researchers from low GDP countries who wish to participate in ECER. The work of ERG is coordinated by a link convenor and convenors and supported by a senior mentor, an experienced researcher.

Another way EERA supports the next generation of European researchers is through the season schools that bring together early career researchers and PhD students from a number of nations to share and discuss their research and experiences with experts within their own field of research. Themes of these season schools have included Educational Research as Craft and Representation, Writing for Dissemination, and Methods and Methodology in Educational Research.

The EERJ, founded in 2002, is EERA's scientific journal. As noted on EERA's website, EERJ is

interested in the changing landscape of education research across Europe. Education research increasingly crosses the borders of the national through its subjects of study, scholarly collaborations and references. The EERJ publishes education research papers and special issues, which include a reflection on how the European context and other related global or regional dynamics shape their educational research topics.

To complement EERJ, some EERA networks have set up their own journal (International Journal for Research in Vocational Education and Training) or collaborate with other journals (e.g., Quality Assurance in Education and Health Education).

See also [Appendix: American Educational Research Association](#); [Appendix: World Education Research Association](#); [Bologna Process and European Higher Education Area](#); [Bologna Process: Curriculum](#); [Erasmus Mundus](#); [European Union, Higher Education in](#)

Websites

European Educational Research Association: www.eera-ecer.de

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- research associations

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