

Editorial

ADULT EDUCATION Critical Issues is a new project of the Greek Adult Education community. After 49 issues in the last 15 years, the Hellenic Adult Education Association (HAEA) journal is becoming bilingual, hosting works in English and Greek, in order to serve not only as a bridge between the Greek and the international community, but also, as a reflection step on developments in the field of Adult Education all over the world. Our intention is underlined by our strategic choice to be an open-access journal, without fees. The identity of the journal also underlines the orientation of the articles it will host, depicted in the thematic focus of the journal. *Critical issues* are connected to research, good practices and proposals on transformative processes and critical approaches in education, society, governance, policies and other areas of interest, related to the field of Adult Education; redefinition or reassessment of problematic perspectives, theoretical views, or social phenomena; exploration of multiple, different, alternative, ambivalent, controversial perspectives; challenge of taken-for-granted or unjustified assumptions and practices; analysis of the power dynamics of a situation and exploration of disregarded or undermined, however interesting and challenging perspectives. We hope that with this orientation and content the journal will contribute to the promotion of the ideas and principles of Adult Education with an emphasis on critical reflection and learning aimed at change.

The launch of the journal comes at a time when humanity is facing a twin crisis: an environmental crisis due to the climate change and a sanitary crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The short-term and long-term consequences of these crises are expected to influence -and even determine- the future of the current and the future generations. Although the existing landscape can only create feelings of pessimism, it is obvious that we are facing changes that require not simple management-type changes, but radical transformations - transformations as the results of collective actions. At such a pivotal moment, Adult Education can only hand the role which has been historically recorded in several corresponding periods so far, that is, a critically formative and influential role. What we have referred to as challenges, urge for human-centered developments regarding personal advances through one's potential, but also collective initiatives that can ultimately lead to more inclusive and fair societies.

This first issue of our journal coincides with the 100th anniversary of the birth of one of the most influential thinkers in our field, Paulo Freire. The thinker who saw the future not as an enclosed territory for those who have the ability to manipulate trends, innovations and advancements, but as an open possibility determined by the action of those on the 'opposite side', the thinker who rejected all sorts of one-way streets that the few decide for many, the thinker who believed that "by reading the word we read the world". The Greek Adult Education community has always had a special relationship with the ideas of Paulo Freire, who in the late 1980s had visited Greece, in the context of the activities of the Popular Education. As a tribute to the 100 years from the birth of Paulo Freire, we quote in this issue an interview he gave when he was in Greece, which we consider to be of particular interest to those who are inspired today by his perspective on education and the world.

The launch of the journal also coincides with the founding of the International Transformative Learning Association (ITLA), of which the Hellenic Adult Education Association is an affiliated member. It is rather obvious that even today, more than ever, the humanist and critical theoretical approaches and rich experience from transformative learning applications are needed to deal with dysfunctional views and assumptions. Our first issue coincides as well

with two interventions by UNESCO, which justifiably create optimism, emphasizing that the future is still open, as long as the present is creative and assertive. This is the publication *Reimagining our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education*, a visionary text for the future of education. Like its distant ancestor (1972), the Faure Report entitled *Learning to Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow* is expected to have a major impact on the future directions of education, formal, non-formal and informal. The second UNESCO intervention, also known as the *Paris Declaration* (A Global Call for Investing in the Futures of Education, November 2021), emphasizes the need for governments to prioritize education funding through concrete measures (4-6% of GDP and / or at least 15-20% of total public expenditure).

We take the opportunity through the Editorial of this first issue, to sincerely thank all the contributors of the Greek-language edition of the journal (2004-2021) and for their valuable contribution and at the same time to welcome the members of the International Editorial Board of this new, bilingual edition, distinguished scholars of the field of Adult Education, whose presence is a guarantee for the quality of the contributions we hope to receive. We would especially like to thank the members of the Editorial Team who have most contributed to the realization of the issue you are now reading, namely Alexis Kokkos (Editor-in-Chief), Dimitris Vergidis (Consulting Editor), Natassa Raikou (Review Editor), and Christos Kaltsidis (ICT Editor).

We aspire to make this publication a constant challenge for the scientific dialogue on critical issues of Adult Education, which can lead to the exploration of new approaches to the significant issues we mentioned, placing Adult Education in the role we all envision, as regards the advancement of modern societies in a humanitarian and critically reflective direction. We hope that achieving this goal does not merely concern the Editorial Team, but mainly all contributors and readers.

With these thoughts we welcome you to this new endeavor of HAEA and we are looking forward to a creative cooperation.

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Editors of *ADULT EDUCATION Critical Issues*