

CALL FOR PAPERS



European Seminars in Philosophy of Education (ESPE)

The founding meeting of
European Seminars in Philosophy of Education
will be held at the

University of Humanistic Studies,
Utrecht, The Netherlands

July 3-4, 2025

The first seminar will deal with the theme:
**Philosophy of Education:
Rethinking European Traditions**

Contemporary philosophy of education benefits from a long legacy of thinking about education in Europe. Many of the concepts, theories, forms of argument and methodological approaches used today stem from traditions born and developed on the European continent, even if researchers are not always aware of these connections. At the same time, much of the European legacy to education has remained outside the scope of contemporary philosophy of education. Since much of the work done in the philosophy of education occurs in the English language, and English is only one of many languages spoken on the European continent, not all of the European conversation has made it into the current repertoire of ideas. In fact, some of the most important voices and ideas within this conversation have had almost no reception by Anglophone philosophers. European traditions of educational thinking deserve our attention not only because they have been overlooked, however, but also because our colleagues throughout the ages have seen in them a promise of making our encounters with young people more meaningful, more productive, and more focused on what really matters in a human life.

What are the European traditions that influence the contemporary philosophy of education, perhaps from the background? Which European traditions, ideas, theories or approaches has contemporary philosophy of education overlooked? What qualifies a tradition or idea as “European”? And how might these traditions be reappropriated, reunderstood or reconceived in light of contemporary political and social challenges?

The European Seminars in Philosophy of Education aims to place these questions in the center of its inaugural meeting in July 2025. Not only because they are connected to the very notion of being “European”, but also because they have become particularly pertinent at this current socio-political moment. Europe is under strain. While the idea and reality of Europe have never been uncontested, we appear to have come to a historical juncture, perhaps even a moment of crisis. How, if at all, will Europe deal with the continuing war in the Ukraine, the resurgence of anti-Semitism, climate change, its colonial past? What geopolitical role is there for Europe in a world dominated, quite possibly, by China, India, and (still, for some time) the United States? Can Europe find ways to maintain itself without ruthlessly closing and patrolling its borders? Can Europe promote a more peaceful and more just world? And if so, what do we need to do in schools or other educational institutions to promote these goals?

All of these questions bear on education in many ways. Education is a space where identities are created: local, national, or transnational; cultural, moral, and personal identities. It is also a (re)generative space for communities and geopolitical entities. Historical narratives are transmitted through education, and new, more honest, self-critical and just historical narratives can be created and begin to take root there. At the same time, education can be and has been used as a tool merely to promote economic growth or to spread political ideologies. Education in Europe is at the forefront of many such tensions.

In reflecting on these issues, it is worth returning to European traditions in educational thinking, broadly conceived to include both formal and informal education and child-rearing, that can offer fruitful ways forward. These may be traditions or perspectives that remain marginal in the Anglophone world of philosophy of education or enclosed within the borders of single European nations. A Europe that is open to the world also needs to be open within itself.

The deadline for submissions for the 2025 conference is 1st of March 2025. Submissions should be anonymized as well as sent along with your name, title and affiliation (university and department) in a separate file. Contributors will be informed whether their submissions are accepted by the 1st of April 2025.

Please send your submissions to: ESPE_conference@hotmail.com

Submissions are invited for:

1. Papers (45 minutes):

Papers should be between 2000 and 4000 words (excluding footnotes and references). Presentations based on the papers should be between 15 and 20 minutes long, allowing for 25-30 minutes of discussion.

2. Contributions to roundtable sessions (30 minutes):

Potential contributions to roundtable sessions include papers that are work in progress (1500-3000 words; excluding footnotes and references) as well as posters. Contributors will have 10 minutes to present their papers or posters and then will receive feedback by a respondent (5 minutes). After this there will be 15 minutes for discussion.

3. Symposia (90 minutes):

A symposium comprises three papers focused on a single theme. Submissions should consist of an abstract that describes the form and focus of the symposium (1500 words) as well as outlines of the three papers (no longer than 1000 words each). We welcome symposia that represent perspectives from different European countries.

If you are interested in receiving news from ESPE, please subscribe to our email list: <https://www.listserv.dfn.de/sympa/subscribe/espe>

Please check your spam folder in case you do not receive a confirmation mail.

ESPE Mission Statement:

European Seminars in Philosophy of Education (ESPE) strives to provide a space for constructive discussion among philosophers of education throughout Europe. Regular (in person) seminars taking place at institutions with which members of ESPE are affiliated offer opportunities for the presentation and critical analysis of work-in-progress. Participation in ESPE is possible by invitation or after the acceptance of a submission to an open Call for Papers. ESPE aims at creating an intellectually vibrant academic community that includes diverse perspectives and is committed to avoiding class-, gender-, nation-, race-, sexuality-based or other forms of discrimination.

Founding Members

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