



COMPARATIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY IN EUROPE

"Covid-19 and Distance Education: Its impact on education and learning"

CESE virtual seminar, Friday 22 October 2021: 17:00 (CET)

Distance education - or rather, the transition of the educational process to digital environments - has provided an answer to the difficulty of face-to-face education during the Covid pandemic. The experiences of this form of education by learners have brought to the fore discussions about its benefits and costs, and the further digitalization of the education sector. This seminar, therefore, aims to discuss a series of themes related to this form of education and learning.

As governments around the world had to introduce digital environments urgently in response to the pandemic, a series of problems were highlighted, especially poor public education funding and the absence of the preconditions to support distance education. These include: teachers' and students' poor levels of digital knowledge and skills and the shortage of the necessary educational materials for distance education.

However, digitalization was also seen by some as contributing to innovation and quality improvement, learners' autonomy and creativity and even improved educational access and equity. In parallel, evidence from research has shown that the pandemic and the accelerated digitalization of education provision has exacerbated the longstanding problems of inequality and exclusion, while also acting as a catalyst for private investments seeking profit from extended crises of public education systems. With respect to higher education, in particular, concerns have also risen with regard to the unwillingness of many governments to create the preconditions for return of the academic community to the normal environment of the university campus, especially in view of international organizations' (e.g. the EU) promoting blended learning and hybrid learning environments in higher education. These developments open up critical questions as to how this wave of distance education, promoted in a time of crisis, will affect the role of education as a public good, its impact on learning and who will ultimately benefit.

To facilitate a deeper engagement in this discourse, Prof. Terri Kim, Prof. Lesley Gourlay and Dr. Margarita Langthaler will offer their presentations, as invited speakers.

The seminar will be conducted via Zoom.

Topic: Covid-19 and Distance Education: Its impact on education and learning

Time: October 22, 2021 05:00 PM Amsterdam, Berlin, Rome, Stockholm, Vienna

Link: contact Eleni Prokou for details: eprokou@panteion.gr

Speakers:

Terri Kim, PhD (London) PFHEA is Professor of Comparative Higher Education (Hon. full prof. at UEL); Academic Visitor at St Antony's College, Oxford (<https://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/people/terri-kim>); Honorary Senior Research Fellow at UCL Institute of Education in the UK. Previously she was a research consultant to OECD/CERI; Brain Korea 21 contract professor at Seoul National University; Visiting Scholar at LSE, International Relations Dept, and the Collège de France, I.E.C. in Paris; and Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Monash University Faculty of Arts in Melbourne. Her scholarly interests centre on the relations of territory, mobility, knowledge, identity, and network; transnational academic mobility and identity capital; ethnic nationalism/internationalism, diasporas and higher education internationalisation; state-university relations and the academic profession. She serves on the editorial board of *Comparative Education*, *Intercultural Education*, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, and *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*. She has published one book, five edited volumes (Special Issues) and over 50 articles internationally.

Lesley Gourlay is a Professor of Education in the department of Culture, Communication and Media at University College London Institute of Education. Her scholarship focuses on the interplay between technologies and the knowledge practices of students and academics, with a particular emphasis on textual practices and the digital. Her recent theoretical work has focused on sociomaterial and posthuman perspectives on engagement in the university, exploring themes of space, inscription, nonhuman agency, and digital media. She is a contributor to national and global debates surrounding digital literacy and education, serves on the editorial boards of several international higher education and technology journals, and has recently published the monograph *Posthumanism and the Digital University: Texts, Bodies and Materialities* (London: Bloomsbury Academic). She is a recent recipient of a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship (2021-2024), which will provide funded (80%) support for her to write a new monograph on the topic of *The Datafied University: Documentation and Performativity in Digitised Education*,

Margarita Langthaler holds an MA in Roman and Slavic philology and a doctoral degree in political science from the University of Vienna. She is a Senior Researcher with the Austrian Foundation for Development Research (ÖFSE) and a lecturer at the University of Vienna, Department of Development Studies. Her work focuses on education policy in developing countries, technical and vocational education and training in developmental contexts, and education and development cooperation.