

# LECTURE 6. Social Education within the European Union

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# The EU has interest on unifying educational politics of its members

**Bolonia's Declaration (1999):** with this Declaration the Bolonia Process started, reinforcing the European Higher Education Area (Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior). Further information about this:

<https://education.ec.europa.eu/es/education-levels/higher-education/inclusive-and-connected-higher-education/bologna-process>



**European Education Area**

Quality education and training for all

# The EU has interest on educational and professional mobility

For example, Erasmus+ virtual exchanges (2018-2020):

[https://youth.europa.eu/erasmusvirtual/exchanges\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/erasmusvirtual/exchanges_en)



The Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange project proposes different models of Virtual Exchange activities with different formats, duration, time investment, thematic scope and number of participants.

# The EU has interest on educational and professional mobility

For an effective professional mobility of Social Educators, it is necessary to establish a common theoretical and practical framework



However, there are differences between countries in their formative plans and in their conceptualizations of social professions

These differences can enrich professionals' performance, but at the same time they pose a challenge

# The EU has interest on educational and professional mobility

**Fundamental questions to be addressed in the Social Education field:**

Does Social Education exist as a European profession?

Are there any key conceptual elements shared by different countries?



# Does Social Education exist as a European profession?

**Nowadays it is complex to delimitate a common European concept of the Social Educator profession. Reasons for this:**

Terminological and language diversity. For instance, sometimes Social Education and Social Pedagogy are employed as if they were synonyms.

Different perspectives and theoretical assumptions behind the use of terms. Those differences lead to nuances: Social pedagogic approach, Social work education, Social Pedagogy... In Spain: Social Pedagogy and Social Education are regarded as different concepts

# Does Social Education exist as a European profession?

**Nowadays it is complex to delimitate a common European concept of the Social Educator profession. Reasons for this:**

The spotlight is on delimitating the profession instead of on concepts or theories. As a result, the professional becomes legitimized, but scientific development is at risk

Different countries give different answers to the same social questions. Their responses differ according to contextual and cultural factors, as well as according to political and economic interests. For instance: action in case of migratory issues.

# Does Social Education exist as a European profession?

**Nowadays it is complex to delimitate a common European concept of the Social Educator profession. Reasons for this:**

Irregularities in the development of the Social Pedagogy profession make this discipline to be confounded with other social professions

Not enough attention has been payed to the ideological dimension of Social Education: socialization and social control vs. Society's transformation and fostering



# Does Social Education exist as a European profession?

- **Social Education as a regulated profession and a socially recognized professional category:**

Spain, Slovakia, Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland, Iceland

- **General field of Social Work (discipline that encompass all social professions, and not only what we understand as Social Work in Spain):**

Bulgaria, Cyprus, Hungary, Letonia, Malta, United Kingdom, Sweden, Greece

# Does Social Education exist as a European profession?

- **Specialized fields within Social Education (there is not a recognition of Social Education as a general profession):**  
Slovenia, Norway, Poland and Czech Republic

**Activity: How would you explain (in English) to a foreigner what is to be a Social Educator in Spain? (studies, specialization, work areas...)**

# Are there any key conceptual elements shared by different countries?

**Different formative approaches that translate into professional practice (Quintas, 2001):**

**Anthropocentric approach:** common in North European countries. The goal is to improve social services performance depending on people's needs. The aim is to improve people's secondary needs and life quality (given that the countries already have a significant economic development). Social Education contributes to improve and transform society.

# Are there any key conceptual elements shared by different countries?

**Different formative approaches that translate into professional practice (Quintas, 2001):**

**Sociocentric approach:** common in Eastern European countries. The goal is social intervention is to promote the individual's socialization, that is, the individual's inclusion in the society. Social action is designed from the political sphere, so action is influenced by political ideology. This approach guarantees good quality of social services, but lacks strong theoretical basis.

# Are there any key conceptual elements shared by different countries?

**Different formative approaches that translate into professional practice (Quintas, 2001):**

**Psychocentric approach:** common in Holland and Belgium. The goal of the intervention is the individual's adaptation and better self-knowledge of capacities and limitations. Communication and social relationships are important in therapeutical intervention as they favor social participation and coexistence. Individuals own more self-determination in their exercise of rights and duties in the community

# Are there any key conceptual elements shared by different countries?

**Different formative approaches that translate into professional practice (Quintas, 2001):**

**Bidirectional approach:** intervention is regarded as a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the society. The State gives support (money, technical resources, programs...) to social initiatives coming from social groups, associations, collectives... This social initiative is able to deal with multiple social needs and is carried out by non-governmental organizations. Social Education understands that solidarity and individual and social commitment are necessary for reaching social changes

# Are there any key conceptual elements shared by different countries?

In Spain, Social Education follows different conceptual approaches, none of them is predominant. **It adopts an integrative approach**, promoting social and communitarian participation, the attention to individuals' needs and individuals' socialization, and movilization for social change. Social Educators' practice may be based on scientific knowledge and must adapt to a reality that constantly changes

Different associations (national and autononomical):

ASEDES: <https://www.eduso.net/red/asedes.htm>

AMES (Madrid): <https://www.eduso.net/red/ames.htm>

APESA (Andalucía): <https://www.eduso.net/red/apesa.htm>

APESCyL (Castilla y León): <https://www.eduso.net/red/apescyl.htm>

# Social Education in Spain

**Activity: In which three areas do Social Educators mainly work nowadays in Spain?**

My link:

<https://admin.sli.do/event/x5DF7NbNVz2VwX927QQRbz/polls>

1-Go to Google to look for information

2- Go to slido.com and write this code: 1918445 **or scan this code:**

