Proceedings of the
ISCAE-conference Las Vegas 2012

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**Welcome to the 5th International Conference of ISCAE!**

We want to welcome all participants to our conference in Las Vegas!

Prior conferences have been in
- Bamberg, Germany 1995,
- Radovljica, Slovenia 1998,
- St. Louis, Mo, USA 2002,
- Bamberg, Germany 2006.

Two book-publications came from the presentations at these conferences:

The aim of the ISCAE-conferences is to collect, share, and discuss the actual knowledge about comparative research in adult education. Comparison means to explicitly identify and analyze similarities and differences in two or more countries and includes the attempt to understand why the differences and similarities occur and what they tell us about adult education in these countries. By this we want
- to document and develop the actual knowledge about comparative research and
- to improve theory and practice in the education of adults.

This conference will be held in conjunction with the conference of the Commission for International Adult Education (CIAE), November 4-6, and the annual conference of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) November 6-9. We want to thank AAACE, especially AAACE-President Henry S. Merrill and AAACE-President-Elect Linda Morris for their support and help in making this cooperation happen.

We wish good success for this conference, interesting presentations and challenging discussions – and that the international-comparative perspective helps us to overcome ethnocentric blindness: that we learn, irritated by observations in a foreign context, to better perceive and understand our own field and system. And last, but not least: that many meetings person-to-person will enrich all of us with friendship and understanding!

Michal Bron jr, President ISCAE, Jost Reischmann, Vice-President ISCAE

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**Foreword**

**Alexander N. Charters, Founding President of ISCAE**

During World War II and after peace was established in the world, Adult Education received increasing support from international, national and local organizations of Government and the Civil Society. The necessity for and the means for establishing Adult education became recognized by many organizations and by individuals worldwide. In the 1950’s, descriptive papers in International Adult Education began to increase at the meetings and conferences worldwide. 1970 Roby Kidd and I were invited to speak on Comparative Adult Education at the World Council for Comparative Education Societies in Ottawa, Canada. The Council also arranged for some of us in Adult Education to hold some meetings on Comparative Adult Education at their conference in Sydney Australia in 1996. Over the years, discussions with the Council have been cordial but no statements of cooperation have been made yet.

At the meetings and elsewhere, a few of us in Adult Education began discussing Comparative Adult Education. The generally accepted definition of, and guide to the activities of Comparative Adult Education is: “the study of the same element(s) of the same topic(s) of Adult Education in two or more countries to determine the similarities and/or differences” We frequently gathered informally as individuals, then in groups at Conferences and meetings of International and other areas of Adult Education to discuss Comparative Adult Education. We frequently called meetings sometimes independently of other organizations.

In the beginning there was a reluctance to form a structure to the activity so I continued to act as the facilitator of the group. However as we worked and became known, it was decided to accept a name, “The Committee on Study and Research in Comparative Adult Education” with me as chairman. The focus of the activities and meetings and conferences centered on several activities: The first was to increase the number of members or participants. The second was to have Comparative Adult Education be known to Adult Educators as an area of study distinct from International Adult Education. This separation became evident in the presentations, discussions and written statements. The third was to increase the number of members who volunteered to present papers and became active in Comparative Adult Education. The fourth was on publication. This started out by the authors making copies of their presentations available to the participants at the meetings. As the demand increased, the papers were duplicated for distribution after the presentations. Eventually, the papers became edited and published. Finally, the focus was on more structure. With some hesitation, need for the structure became more evident and so the name was changed to the International Society for Comparative Adult Education (ISCAE). The President, Professor Jost Reischmann was supported by a Committee of a few members. There were still no dues assessed as the members, along with their institutions, provided all of the time, volunteers and supporting services free of charge.

We are grateful to Past President Jost Reischmann and current President Michal Bron who have provided leadership over their tenures and provided this conference as a contribution to knowledge of Comparative Adult Education in our professional development.