

Dear colleagues,

The Education department of the ETUI in collaboration with the Free University of Brussels (ULB) is organising a conference entitled 'Adult Education: A Way to Emancipation. "What Remains of Paulo Freire's Thinking?" ' which will take place from 27 (PM) to 28 (AM) October in Brussels, and we would like to invite you to join us online.

The conference will feature plenary sessions and panel discussions during which faculty members; members of Paulo Freire institutes and trade unionists will present their insights.

Background

Paulo Freire (1921-1997) was an educator and political philosopher who laid the foundation for popular education, a theory and teaching methodology "of the people" that emerged in the 1960s amid the struggle for social justice and socialism in Latin America.

Initially utilized by community educators and religious leaders working with impoverished populations in Brazil, Freire's approach has significantly influenced adult educators worldwide.

Freire's most renowned work, "The Pedagogy of the Oppressed," first published in 1968, is one of the most cited educational texts, particularly in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

The traditions, theories, and methodologies of popular education have been employed in workers' education with the specific aim of building working-class organizations for social change. Additionally, trade union education has also been shaped by Freire's ideas.

Objectives

The overall objective of the conference would be to revisit Paulo Freire's thinking in light of contemporary socio-political context marked by multiple crisis, right-wing populism and a decline in unionization. The conference will challenge our educational practices in their abilities to empower us to have an impact on the world we live in. In other words, it will question the political and emancipatory dimensions of education.

This conference aims to address questions such as:

- What is the relevance of Paulo Freire's thinking in a context characterized by rising inequalities, deregulation, flexibilization and precarization of work and privatisation of public services?
- What role does emancipatory pedagogies play today amidst various crises (social, ecological, and a crisis of representation)?
- How does Paulo Freire's thinking strengthen democratic values in training and in society as a whole?
- How can trade union education, rooted in popular education principles, contribute to trade union renewal?

Working language

English, French and Spanish

Programme

The draft programme is attached.

Participants' registration

Individual registrations can be done by filling the online form available at this link:

<https://crm.etui.org/form/adult-education-a-way-to-emancip>

The deadline for enrolments is on **13 October 2025**. The link to the zoom platform will be sent to you upon registration.

Additional information

Should you need any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me, Tsela Ceulemans,
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