

DARE Forum statement on the role of DEAR in view of the growing polarisation around the issue of refugees and immigration

Due to war, poverty and environmental disasters, caused partly by European policies and global political and economic structures, refugees are seeking protection and a decent life in Europe. In accordance with its humanistic values and international agreements, Europe has the responsibility to welcome these refugees. At the same time, racism and xenophobia are rising within our society. Verbal aggression and physical violence against refugees are worryingly growing. European society is becoming increasingly polarised on the issue of immigration and refugees.

The DARE Forum of CONCORD calls upon all Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) actors within Europe to react on this worrying situation. Refugees/immigration and racism/xenophobia are likely to remain one of the most important political issues in Europe in the coming years. DEAR actors must now use their resources, their expertise in making complex global interdependencies understandable and their experience with intercultural issues and deconstructing stereotypes to make a contribution to an open European society, to a culture of solidarity within Europe and to a constructive dialogue with those who react with fear and hostility to changes in their lives.

The members of the DARE Forum take the commitment to prioritise this issue in our own

- (a) strategies,
- (b) capacity building efforts and
- (c) actions of awareness raising, advocacy, education, dialogue and conflict resolution.

We call upon all DEAR organisations, programmes, projects and practitioners at European, national, and local levels to do so as well.

We call upon all funders of DEAR – the EC, member states, local and regional authorities as well as private funders – to prioritise in their funding schemes actions contributing to better understanding of immigration and to a culture of openness and solidarity, dialogue and cohesion within Europe.

Brussels, 28 October 2015