

Proposal for NERA refugee statement: a response to ECER's initiative

In the ECER initiative "We need to talk about Europe" in September 2015, it is emphasized that both as academics and Europeans, we share a collective responsibility regarding the way 'our' Europe shows itself and speaks today. NERA (The Nordic Educational Research Association) responds to this call by, firstly, emphasizing the need for academically reworking and rethinking the role of education in relation to notions like democracy, equity, social cohesion, the welfare state, citizenship, solidarity – opening them up to diversity and plurality. Secondly, we wish to give voice, through this rethinking, to those who are excluded in current practices and discourses. Thirdly, NERA sees it as a responsibility for its members to participate in public debate and to critically scrutinize and analyse the concrete initiatives that are currently taking place in everyday educational settings.

If education is a particular kind of conversation between the past and the present, the old and the new, the local and the global, residents and migrants, then the way we deal with the present issue is a pressing common concern. One of the educational challenges we are facing today is the questioning of a traditional view of the relationship between education and the becoming of the citizen. In particular we are eager to shift the perspective from asking "What kind of human beings are 'they'?" to asking "What kind of human beings do 'we' want to become and what kind of a society do 'we' want to create?"