



EAEA statement to the Paris Declaration of the European Education Ministers

The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) welcomes the Paris 'Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education'. EAEA strongly agrees with the key contribution that education makes to personal development, social inclusion and participation, by imparting the fundamental values and principles which constitute the foundation of our societies. We believe that this aspect of education and learning has taken a backseat in the policies and strategies of the last few years and are delighted that the ministers now recognise its importance. We agree that this aspect is crucial for children and young people in the formal system, but want to underline that non-formal learning and adult education can make a big contribution to promoting citizenship and common values among adults, too. All the competences that the Paris declaration mentions, such as:

- understanding and accepting differences of opinion, of conviction, of belief and of lifestyle, while respecting the rule of law, diversity and gender equality;
- the ability to think critically and exercise judgement so that, particularly in the context of the Internet and social media, they are able to grasp realities, to distinguish fact from opinion, to recognise propaganda and to resist all forms of indoctrination and hate speech;
- a sense of initiative and engagement in order to strengthen social ties as well as generate a sense of belonging

are important for adults as well.

EAEA therefore proposes:

- To strengthen non-formal learning for both adults and young people across Europe
- To strengthen outreach to disadvantaged groups
- To strengthen Adult Education institutions as meeting places and safe environments for debate

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The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) is the voice of non-formal adult education in Europe. EAEA is a European NGO with 116 member organisations in 43 countries and represents more than 60 million learners Europe-wide.