

Closing STATEMENT of THE 2017 EASSW and UNAFORIS PARIS CONFERENCE.

Almost 90 years ago, Social Work Educators from all over the world gathered for the first time to an international conference in the city of Paris to debate and articulate a social work vision for the future. We, the more than 1000 social work educators from 39 countries from 5 continents, meet up again in the same city, sharing the same commitment but facing very different challenges.

After, celebrating our biannual Conference, under the title “Social work education in Europe: challenging boundaries, promoting a sustainable future” we would like to make the following statement:

1. The Conference extends support to all victims of terrorist attacks all over the World. We express our categorical rejection of any form of violence and we commit to greater respect for all kinds of diversity.
2. It also symbolizes our solidarity to people and communities suffering the consequences of social, economic and environmental unsustainability, such as forced migration..
3. These days of rich human and academic exchange have served to reiterate our firm commitment to all and each one of the key elements that define social work internationally: an academic discipline and education linked to a practice-based profession that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people, and whose central principles are social justice, collective responsibility and respect for diversities. We have critically reflected on social work knowledge, ethical challenges and looked for new ways of engaging people and social structures to contribute to sustainable societies and enhance wellbeing.
4. We have proactively worked through the following four key themes of this conference within more than 500 contributions:

a- Prospects, methodology, research and innovatory practice in the social work education.

b- Development of curriculum and course content in social work.

c- Ethical issues: teaching ethics and being ethical teachers.

d- Structural and organizational conditions and professional status.

5. Social workers and social work educators meeting in Paris would like to call the attention of European politicians and citizens to support our intention to promote the qualification standards of social work education throughout Europe as one of the most demanding academic discipline. This concerns also the working conditions of those involved in educating the future social workers, and those that nurturing the best possible learning environment for social work students.
6. Although we value and celebrate differences we are also firmly committed to all themes that unite us. After the conclusion of this conference and for the next couple of years until our next conference in 2019, we will be focusing on learning from each other, transferring knowledge and defending best standards of education, ensuring that our profession's achievements in higher education will not be eroded.
7. We participants of the Paris conference invite policy makers to take an unconditional turn towards an inclusive and more just society, which would end hate and instead nurture social and human capital. We demand that politicians put people first and look for human development avoiding the orthodoxy of economic dominance. We uphold the values and knowledge of Social Work in contributing enormously towards this direction.