



# DARE

Depolarisation Activism for  
Resilient Europe

## DARE to Care: International Youth Exchanges

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# DARE to Care: International Youth Exchanges

## Background (about the DARE project)

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The 'DARE - Depolarization Activism for Resilient Europe' initiative was created to inspire a critical learning space and youth-led and action-oriented dialogue about various contemporary challenges such as polarisation, radicalisation, mental health, human rights violations. The DARE educational materials seek to strengthen active citizenship and European values and promote and amplify youth voices and civic engagement.

For more information, please visit the project website: [www.depolarisation.eu](http://www.depolarisation.eu)

## Lesson Themes

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- DARE to Care theme - an insight into a young person's motivation and commitment to volunteering for a particular cause and through doing so, serving one's community;
- International youth exchanges - how they can positively shape one's life, expand one's horizons, and how volunteering for something at a young age can sometimes lead to it becoming your profession later in life.

## Context

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Youth exchanges allow groups of young people from different countries to meet, live together and work on shared projects for short periods. They take place outside the school environment. On a youth exchange, you can expect to participate in activities such as workshops, exercises, debates, role-plays, outdoor activities and more.

(Source: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/opportunities/opportunities-for-individuals/youth-exchanges>)

This lesson is designed to demystify international youth exchanges and promote their positive effects on individuals, groups and societies.

## Goals

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- To raise awareness and spark students' curiosity about international youth exchanges;
- To promote volunteering and international youth exchanges as a way of exploring one's interests;
- To build understanding of how volunteering can sometimes shape our professional life.

## Learning Outcomes

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It is expected that as a result of the class, the students will be able to:

- Explain what are international youth exchanges;
- Identify different types of opportunities for international youth exchanges;
- Analyse and articulate what type of youth exchanges they would personally benefit from, aligning it with their interests.

## Material and Equipment Needed

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Laptop; beamer/projector; speakers; internet/wi-fi; flip-chart papers and markers for group work activity

## Duration

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45 minutes (one standard lesson)

## Overview of Lesson Activities (Process)

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### Introduction (5 minutes)

The instructor starts the lesson by asking students to raise their hands if they have been a part of an international youth exchange activity or event. If some students raise their hand, ask them to share briefly with the rest of the class what kind of activity was it. (Where did you go, what did you do, or learn, who did you meet, etc.) If nobody raises their hand, perhaps the instructor themselves can share an example of an exchange they attended in their youth.

The instructor then announces that the class today will be about international youth exchanges. Students are asked to pay attention to the following short video, as the class will have a discussion immediately after watching it.

### Short DARE to Care video clip viewing (5 minutes)

Play the video clip for the students: [depolarisation.eu/youthexchanges](http://depolarisation.eu/youthexchanges)

### A brief discussion about the video clip (15 minutes)

Useful exploratory and follow-up reflection questions:

- What are some of the positive things or benefits that you can gain from attending international youth exchanges? (Traveling influences and shapes our personality and enriches our experiences; we learn about different topics, etc.)
- What are some of the negative aspects of international youth exchanges? (you don't know the language of the country you are in; it can be expensive to attend; etc.)
  - What are some possible solutions to the aforementioned challenges or potentially negative aspects?

### "Exploring Youth Exchange Opportunities" - Group Work Activity (20 minutes)

Randomly assign the students into three groups (ideally, 8 students per group though more or fewer also works). Each group should have one piece of flipchart paper and markers, to prepare their presentation.

Take the group work challenge assignments from the next page (ideally, printed and cut out so that each group has its own assignment in front of them). Give the groups 10 minutes to discuss their challenges, and come up with their responses or solutions.

Facilitate the presentation of each group's results (3 min per group), allowing other groups to ask questions, offer suggestions and feedback.

## "Exploring Youth Exchange Opportunities" - Group Work Activity (continued)

Group 1: Research short-term international youth exchange opportunities that exist or are available to youth in your country. Check out the following helpful websites (but also look beyond, if possible, for e.g. National Agency for Erasmus+, or different embassies in your country, etc.):

- Erasmus+ (<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/opportunities/opportunities-for-individuals/youth-exchanges>)
- International Cultural Youth Exchange (<https://www.icye.org/>)

Create a poster informing your peers about these different opportunities.

Group 2: Research longer-term international youth exchange opportunities that exist or are available to youth in your country. Check out the following helpful websites (but also look beyond, if possible):

- AFS Intercultural Programs (<https://afs.org/>)
- Rotary Youth Exchanges (<https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/youth-exchanges>)

Create a poster informing your peers about these different opportunities.

Group 3: Imagine you are the hosts of an international youth exchange activity, in your school and town. The activity will last 4 days. What kind of program would you create for this youth exchange? What sights would you show them? What kind of activities would you organize and implement? Create a day-to-day schedule for this exchange activity.

## Sources

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- DARE project, documentation and videos can be found on the project website: [www.depolarisation.eu](http://www.depolarisation.eu) or [www.resilienteurope.eu](http://www.resilienteurope.eu)

## Activity Adaption for Online Implementation

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This lesson easily transfers to online education, as much of it focuses on student reflection and conversation. The group activity should be carried out in online breakout rooms, while all other activities are to take place in the online plenary (everyone together).

## Assessment and Evaluation Options

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The goal here is to raise awareness about international youth exchange opportunities and benefits, so this lesson plan is not very well suited for traditional assessment and evaluation options. You can assess students' participation and active involvement in class discussions, or evaluate their homework assignments.

## Homework Ideas

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- Individual assignment: each student should further research international youth exchanges, both long-term and short-term ones, as well as scholarship opportunities. They should write a one-page essay on one opportunity they would want to pursue, explaining why, and what steps they will take in order to apply and take part.