



**Regional consultation of Europe Region  
in preparation for the Transforming Education Pre-Summit**

**Online meeting, 23 June 2022**

**9.00-12.00**

**Convened by the Council of Europe and the European Commission  
in partnership with UNESCO**

**CONCEPT NOTE AND AGENDA**

**Background**

The **Council of Europe** (Education Department, Directorate General II) and the **European Commission** (DG EAC and INTPA) are jointly organizing **the Regional Consultation for Europe Region** in preparation of the Pre-Summit and Summit on Transforming Education of the United Nation, to be convened 28-30 June and 19 September 2022 at the UNESCO and UN Headquarters respectively.

The Consultation meeting will be held online on **23 June 2022** in partnership with UNESCO as coordinator of the TES Secretariat. Both European organisations are members of the SDG 4-Education 2030 High-Level Steering Committee, as regional organisations for electoral groups I and II and part of SDG 4/Education 2030 regional coordination mechanisms.

The Regional Consultation for Europe region, as did the other World regions in earlier stage this year, will complement the three Summit workstreams – (1) national consultations, (2) thematic action tracks, and (3) public engagement.

**Context**

Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by governments at the UN General Assembly in September 2015 is the most ambitious, aspirational and universal development agenda to date.

Based on a shared global vision, the Agenda is a commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development for all by 2030. The central principle of “leaving no-one behind” requires that the right to inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning

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opportunities be realized for all children, youth and adults as per the collective commitments outlined in 2015 Incheon Declaration and the Education 2030 Framework for Action.

As both a stand-alone goal (SDG4), as well as a set of education targets related to health, decent work, gender equality and to sustainable production and consumption, **education is at the center of the 2030 agenda and is recognized as a catalyst for the achievement of all its goals**. Since 2015, UNESCO member States in all regions of the world have made efforts to align their national education policies and strategies with the commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This has included efforts to strengthen policy focus on the most vulnerable populations, to ensure more effective and relevant learning both for the world of employment as well as for democratic citizenship, to adapt education sector coordination, management and monitoring, and to strengthen linkages with other development sectors.

Education is key to building and maintaining the kind of society in which we would like our children and grandchildren to live. Education should prepare for life as active citizens in democratic societies and for sustainable employment as well as further the personal development of learners and develop a broad, advanced knowledge base.

Sustainable development requires the commitment of individual citizens and civil society as well as of public authorities and can therefore be fully achieved only in democratic societies. An essential goal of education is to develop the competences for democratic culture that enable democratic institutions and laws to function in practice.

Our understanding of quality education must encompass the role of education in society as well as social inclusion: no education system can be considered of high quality unless it provides adequate opportunities for all learners.

The European Education Area (EEA) embraces a future-looking, holistic and people-centred framework for action and investment in education. It contributes to the European Green Deal and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals through strengthening the resilience of European education and training systems, preparing people for the digital and green transitions, while being deeply rooted in quality and inclusive education for all and across the whole life-course.

In September 2020, the European Commission adopted a Communication setting out concrete means and milestones for the coming years to achieve the European Education Area by 2025, supported by Europe's Recovery Plan (NextGenerationEU) and the Erasmus+ Programme. The Communication stresses that high-quality international cooperation in education and training is vital to address existing and emerging global challenges. It is essential for the achievement of the Union's geopolitical priorities and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.



In February 2021, the EU Member States endorsed their cooperation in the Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the EEA and beyond (2021 – 2030). In it, the Member States agreed that EU-level cooperation is an essential dimension also for the achievement of the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, both globally and within EU Member States.

The Member States and the European Commission, in a Team Europe approach, to education and vocational training, are working to achieve their collective vision for an EEA at all education levels, by focusing their efforts on improving quality and equity in education and training; teachers, trainers and school leaders; digital education; green education; and the EEA in the world.

The Council of Europe advocates through its intergovernmental Education programme :

- Quality education to prepare young people not only for employment, but also for their lives as active citizens in democratic societies, and to ensure their personal development and the development and maintenance of a broad, advanced knowledge base
- Competence based education systems that contribute to the progress of democratization of European societies through the development of a culture of democracy – values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding

The Steering Committee for Education of the Council of Europe has launched preparations for the development of a Strategy for Education in Europe, to be adopted by the Ministers of Education of the 46 member states at the 26th session of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education in 2023.

Several actions should be developed within the three priority areas of the Education Strategy: the renewal of the civic mission of education, the human rights-based approach to digital transformation in education and the inclusive/social dimension of education for sustainable development and sustainable democracy with the transversal theme of competences for democratic culture. The new strategy is aligned with the four HLSC thematic focus areas.

The objectives of both European Commission and the Council of Europe are fully in line with the overall goals of the UN Summit on Transforming Education and its five thematic tracks (1. Inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools; 2. Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development; 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession; 4. Digital learning; 5. Financing of education).



They will allow to build on existing efforts to accelerate progress on education in the UN 2030 Agenda, including on SDG 4.

## Overview of the objectives the Summit and Pre-Summit<sup>1</sup>

Recognizing that education is a foundation for peace, tolerance, human rights and sustainable development, the UN Secretary-General announced in his report to the UN General Assembly on Our Common Agenda his intention to convene a Transforming Education Summit (TES) on 19 September 2022. The Summit is aimed at mobilizing action, ambition, solidarity and solutions with a view to transforming education between now and 2030.

These aims coincide with the call of the International Commission on the Futures of Education to forge a new social contract for education ([UNESCO Futures of Education - A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT](#)) – one that can both deliver on unfulfilled promises of the past and transform the future.

The Summit is being convened in the context of two dramatic and deeply interconnected challenges to ensuring quality education and lifelong learning for all.

First, our world is experiencing a global learning crisis that is depriving hundreds of millions of children, young people, and adults of their right to quality education, leaving many of the education-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) well off track.

Second, the learning crisis is part of a broader challenge relating to the ability of conventional education systems to deliver the knowledge, skills and outlooks needed for children, young people and adults to excel in today's world and contribute to sustainable, healthy and peaceful futures.

In recent years and particularly in response to the COVID-19 crisis, numerous efforts have emerged to tackle these challenges with renewed vigour and focus. At an international level, UNESCO convened two Global Education Meetings to galvanize global action on education, with Member States agreeing to a set of immediate priorities for action, the Paris Declaration: A Global Call for Investing in the Futures of Education and a new SDG4-Education 2030 High-Level Steering Committee on Education, with a clear and relevant functional focus, namely, priority setting, progress monitoring and effective financing.

As the world emerges from the COVID-19 crisis, the Transforming Education Summit provides an opportunity to mobilize greater political ambition, commitment, and action to reverse the

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<sup>1</sup> Transforming Education Summit – Concept Note – April 2022



slide on SDG 4, reimagine education, and accelerate progress on education and the 2030 Agenda more broadly for the remainder of the Decade of Action.

The Summit will take place in New York at the UN Headquarters on 19 September 2022 on the margins of the UN General Assembly's high level week with a view to elevating education to the top of the political agenda and to maximizing public awareness and engagement at the global, regional and national levels. The Pre-Summit will be organized in Paris at the UNESCO Headquarters on 28-30 June 2022 to harness the evolving discussions and generate greater momentum in the lead up to September.

### Objective of the Regional Consultation

Identify, and agree on key **common strategic priority areas**, and key steps going forward for education/learning recovery and system transformation beyond COVID-19, so as to accelerate SDG 4 implementation in the region and **generate recommendations for common action**.

Share a **common understanding of the key questions related to 'education transformation'** that could be addressed, including: **Why** transform education? **What** do we mean by transformation of education and its systems?' and **'How** we intend to transform?

### Outputs and expected follow-up

The Regional consultation is expected to inform the drafting of a succinct (2 pages) Statement of Commitment to Transform Education that will capture the key areas of commitment to action that emerged from the consultation against a time horizon of 2030 and even beyond.

**Date** : 23 June 2022 9.00-12.00 **Venue** : Online **Working Language** : English

### Participants :

- Permanent Representations and Representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO (member States of both the Council of Europe and the European Commission and Canada)
- Representatives of Ministries of Education of member States in the Steering Committee for Education of the Council of Europe (CDEDU) and Canada;
- MFA/development cooperation agencies of EU Member States;

Observers to the Steering Committee for Education of the Council of Europe :

- Education International (EI);
- European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE);

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- European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (EURODOC);
- European Cultural Foundation (ECF);
- European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL)
- European Federation of Catholic Universities (FUCE);
- European Science Foundation (ESF);
- European Students' Union (ESU);
- European University Association (EUA);
- European Wergeland Centre (EWC);
- Federation for Education in Europe (FEDE);
- International Association of Universities (IAU);
- Conference of European Churches (KEK);
- Lifelong Learning Platform;
- Organising Bureau of European School Students Unions (OBESSU);
- SAR – Scholars at Risk.

UN co-convening agencies and affiliated organizations

## PROVISIONAL AGENDA

23 June 2022 - Visio link:

**09.00**      **Welcome Framing and remarks**

ADG/ED of UNESCO

TES Special Advisor

European Commission, Council of Europe

**09.20**      **Remarks from Member States**

TES Advisory Committee – (Latvia, Portugal)

SDG4 HLS Committee – (France, Slovenia)

Co-Leaders of the Action Tracks – (Belgium, Greece, Italy, Romania)

National Consultations – Member States that have launched national consultations

Youth organisations (European Student Union)

**10.00 Discussion Groups –Breakout Sessions**

**Group 1: Recovery from Covid-19 disruption** [short-term]: What additional targeted actions could ensure full recovery from the COVID-19 educational disruption?

**Group 2: Transforming education** [medium-longer-term]: What innovative approaches could be used as levers for game-changing transformations of education policies and practice in the medium and long-term?

**Group 3: Review of national education targets and benchmarks:** What could be the revisions that need to be made regarding national education targets and benchmarks to reflect higher level of ambition required for recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and acceleration towards the achievement of the SDG4?

**Group 4: Ensuring sustainable public financing:** What could be the possible measures to make public financing of education adequate and sustainable?

**11.15 Report Back from group rapporteurs**

**11.40 Summary:** Preliminary key recommendations for the outcome Statement

**12.00 Closing**