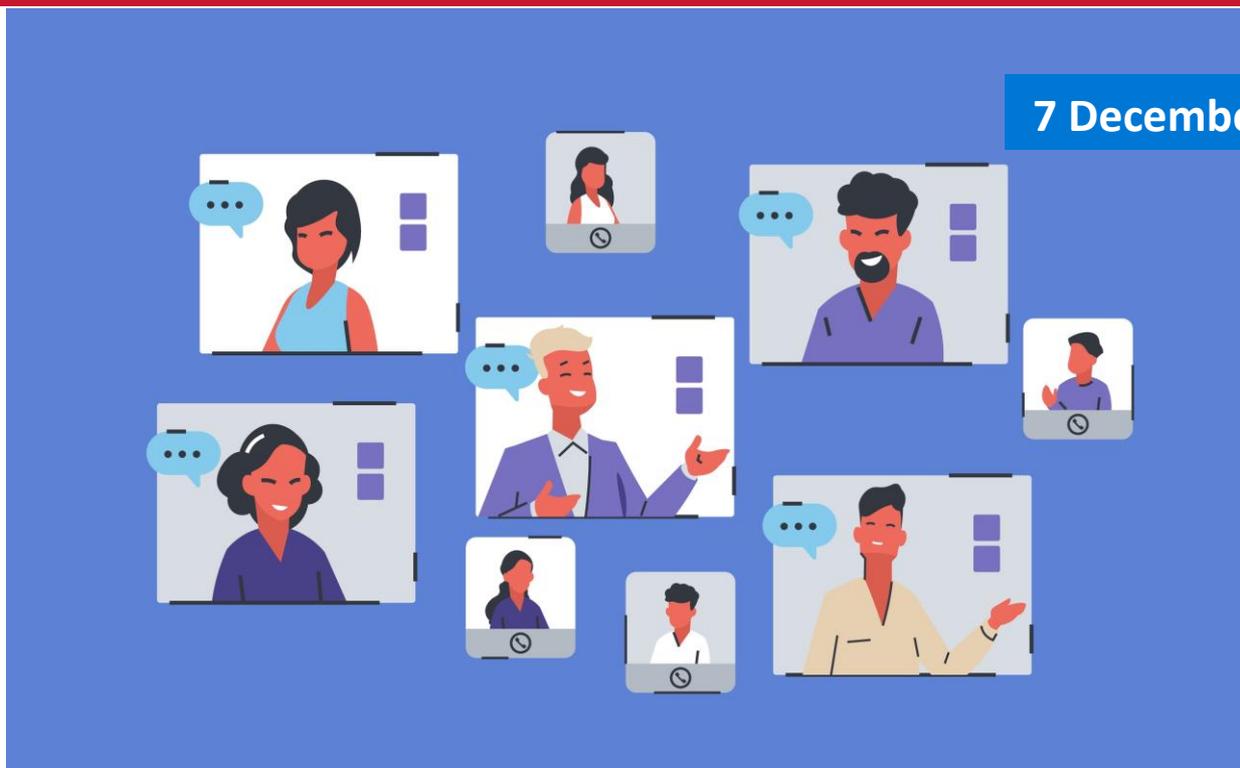


7 December 2021



Organizational arrangements

Date and time: Tuesday, 7 December, 13:00 – 14:00 (CET)

Format: Zoom webinar. Prior registration is required.

https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_v8VkhRNiS4ybAU7gX9BOrw

Target audience: Policy makers and higher education stakeholders

Languages: English/French, with simultaneous interpretation

Background

Higher education has changed dramatically over the past decades, whether in terms of increasing enrolment, student mobility, the diversity of provision or research dynamics. Although the digital revolution transformed higher education more profoundly than any other level of the system in the past decades, the COVID-19 pandemic has been no less hard-hitting.

A recent global survey conducted by UNESCO shows that COVID-19 has caused setbacks in research activities and heavily affected international student mobility. It has increased the multiplicity of providers and the diversity of degree offerings, and revealed the urgency to strengthen the digital infrastructure as governments plan the future along hybrid lines.

Beyond the crisis, the international community must also speed up efforts to transform higher education to tackle global challenges and contribute to the SDGs. The [Futures of Education Report](#), launched on 10 November 2021 by UNESCO's International Commission, reveals that universities and other higher education institutions must be active in every aspect of building a new social contract for education. This will require reimagining of the ways that higher education not only draws from the knowledge

commons but supports its further growth and greater inclusiveness.

Universities house much of the world's potential for knowledge and research production and must be better connected. The circulation of knowledge and research between them, facilitated by the entry into force of the [Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education](#) and [regional recognition conventions](#), is thus key to the future of higher education and global sustainability.

Objectives and Agenda

This is the second in the series of Higher Education Conversations in the leadup to the [3rd World Higher Education Conference](#) (Barcelona, 18 – 20 May 2022). It aims to bring together policy makers and higher education stakeholders to discuss how higher education must transform itself, as it faces one of the greatest periods of uncertainty in its long history, including the digital aspect.

Key questions to be examined:

- What are the key implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on higher education?
- How can higher education institutions gear up their programmes and research to tackle global challenges, from climate change to social inequality? What should be their focus?
- What kind of digital transformations must higher education undergo to ensure equal access?
- How can the quality of higher education be ensured, amid increasing enrolment and a proliferation of providers?
- What is the future of the physical campus?

Tuesday, 7 December 2021	
13:00 – 13:05	Opening Ms Maki Katsuno-Hayashikawa, Director of the Division for Education 2030, UNESCO
13:05 – 13:20	Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr Ka Ho Mok, Vice President and Lam Man Tsan Chair Professor of Comparative Policy, Lingnan University• Mr Noah W. Sobe, Senior Project Officer for the Futures of Education Initiative, UNESCO• Ms Mpine Makoe, Commonwealth of Learning Chair in Open Education Practices/ Resources, University of South Africa Moderator: Ms Phoebe Kirkup, Secretariat of the 3 rd World Higher Education Conference
13:20 – 13:55	Question and answer session
13:55 – 14:00	Wrap up Ms Phoebe Kirkup, Secretariat of the 3 rd World Higher Education Conference

For information on upcoming conversations, please visit: <https://en.unesco.org/news/higher-education-conversations>