

Outcome Statement

Europe and North America Education 2030 Consultation

Strasbourg, 24 October 2018

Preamble

1. We, the representatives of Ministries of Education and of Cooperation and Development, of UN agencies, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, National Commissions for UNESCO, academia, civil society organizations, the teaching profession, and development partners of European and North American States, have gathered at the Europe and North America SDG4-Education 2030 Consultation in Strasbourg, on 24 October 2018.
2. We reaffirm the universal relevance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the centrality of education for reaching all SDGs, and commit to a regional response in dialogue and solidarity with all world regions.
3. Aiming to strengthen interlinkages between regional and global education goals, targets and commitments, the Europe and North America consultation addressed four priority areas. Serving as the region's contribution to the Global Education Meeting (Brussels, 3-5 December 2018), these policy recommendations are in line with the focus of the 2019 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) review on "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality".

The right to education for migrants, refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers

4. We reaffirm the right to quality education and to learning throughout life, based on the principles of non-discrimination, equal opportunity for all, and gender equality. We commit to ensuring that all children and youth have access to at least one year of pre-primary and 12 years of free, publicly funded quality primary and secondary education, with particular attention to those in vulnerable situations, in line with the Education 2030 Framework for Action. We also commit to supporting developing country partners in their efforts to expand equal opportunities for girls to access 12 years of quality education.
5. Recognizing that millions, in particular migrants, refugees, displaced persons, stateless children and asylum seekers, do not access quality education and lifelong learning opportunities because of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, we commit to taking further legal and policy measures to make our education systems more equitable and inclusive. We recognize that the challenge of ensuring access to education for migrants, refugees, displaced persons, asylum seekers, and stateless children is not new, but one that has taken on new political dimensions, requiring new strategic approaches.
6. We commit to further identifying and addressing structural barriers to the integration of migrants, refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers into education systems, including legislation, policies, financing, governance, recognition of skills and qualifications, teacher training and professional development. We commit to supporting communities hosting large numbers of refugees to ensure the inclusion of these children, youth and adults into their education and training systems on equal footing.
7. We will provide fair recognition of qualifications, even when the qualifications of refugees or displaced persons cannot be fully documented, in accordance with the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention. We will also further strengthen policies for lifelong learning, promoting

connections between formal and non-formal education, including vocational skills development.

Education for democratic citizenship and sustainable development

8. Recognizing education as a public good and a public responsibility, we reaffirm its fundamental role in developing the competences and skills that enable students to find meaningful employment, to play active roles as citizens in democratic societies and to support their personal development. We recognize that education plays an essential role in furthering equal opportunities, social inclusion and social cohesion, as well as a sustainable future. For education systems to be considered of high quality, they must provide opportunities for all learners, ensure the training and recruitment of qualified teachers and school leaders, foster educational success, provide safe and inclusive learning environments, and be free of fraud and corruption.
9. We recognize and uphold diverse and plural cultures and identities, considered as sources of strength in our bridging of regional efforts with global aspirations for democratic citizenship. We reaffirm the key role of education in building and maintaining inclusive democratic societies that are respectful of human rights, and in developing the will and ability to conduct intercultural dialogue. We underline the essential role of education in promoting a culture of democracy, peace, non-violence and gender equality, including through the provision of age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education in and out of school. We reaffirm the importance of these dimensions to ensure more peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies.
10. We recognize the urgent need to integrate sustainable development issues, including sustainable production and consumption patterns and climate change, in our education systems, to enable all students to gain the knowledge, skills and tools to understand and resolve environmental challenges, in line with the General Assembly Resolution 72/222, which recognizes Education for Sustainable Development as a key enabler of all the SDGs.
11. We commit to strengthening the provision of education for democratic citizenship and sustainable development at all levels and in all types of education, with specific attention paid to often-neglected areas such as pre-school education, vocational education and training, and higher and adult education. We further commit to supporting teachers and educators through quality training and continuous professional development on inclusive education and the promotion of democratic citizenship and sustainable development. We take due note of the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture and its links to the UNESCO framework of Topics and Learning Objectives for Global Citizenship Education and encourage national or sub-national authorities to implement these Frameworks within their education systems.

Improving domestic and international financing for education

12. We recognize the importance of improving domestic public expenditure for education to meet SDG4-Education 2030 commitments, underlining the importance of the international benchmark of 15-20% of public expenditure and/or 4-6% of GDP allocated to education; of ensuring more efficient and equitable allocation of education resources; of improving efficiency and accountability in expenditure; and of strengthening domestic mobilization through tax reforms, anti-corruption actions and tracking illicit flows, as agreed in the Addis Ababa Conference on Financing for Development.
13. In our position as a “donor region” in a global context, we call for increased volume and predictability of international aid to the education sector, the allocation of a larger share of aid towards countries with the greatest needs, and the strengthening of national public financial management systems in

line with national plans and priorities.

14. We reaffirm our commitment to increasing the share of humanitarian aid to education and improving coordination of funding across development and humanitarian contexts, strengthening cross-sectoral approaches when taking into account funding of education.

Monitoring equity and quality in education

15. We commit to strengthening the monitoring of equity and quality in education by using qualitative and quantitative data and mixed methods of analysis and taking into account the multiple purposes of education and the contextual factors that influence the development of education.
16. We further commit to the meaningful involvement of social partners in the development and monitoring of policies for education and lifelong learning, including through institutionalized and effective social dialogue, and to the inclusion of stakeholders such as youth, students, teachers, school and university leaders, and parents.
17. We commit to optimizing the use of existing data and indicators from an equity lens in order to ensure equal opportunity in access and participation in all levels and in all types of education and training, and a more equitable distribution of learning results and social outcomes.
18. Recognizing the need to ensure coherent sets of national, regional and global indicators and facilitate national and sub-national monitoring and reporting, we commit to better articulating the regional and global SDG4 indicator frameworks for more effective monitoring of quality and equity of education, training and learning. We strive to strengthen coherence between regional indicators and the global monitoring framework for SDG4-Education 2030 with special attention to indicators related to the measurement of equity, resource allocation to disadvantaged populations, and mainstreaming of education for citizenship in a global context and for sustainable development.

Moving forward

19. We commit to further strengthening effective partnerships and cooperation between the European Union and the Council of Europe and their Member States, UNESCO and other UN agencies, OECD, as well as other international organizations and constituencies, by building on the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, and existing consultation and coordination structures and mechanisms to harmonize support and reference frameworks.
20. We adopt this Declaration and agree to regular stocktaking of progress made by Europe and North America in the implementation of SDG4-Education 2030, in particular by contributing to the 2019 HLPF review process and providing political guidance for the UNGA 2019 meeting.

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