Council of Europe Contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

4.3 Equal access to technical/vocational and higher education

By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

The Council of Europe contributes to SDG 4.3 through its extensive work in the field of Higher Education. The Council of Europe believes that an educated citizenry is a major pillar of democratic security and that it is important, therefore, that no group of people is excluded from access to higher education. 'Access' in particular refers to "the increase and widening of participation rates, retention rates and inter-institutional transfers in institutions of higher education, particularly for persons belonging to under-represented groups".

It has further contributed to this goal through its work on the foreign recognition of qualifications, particularly for disadvantaged groups, which led to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and other standards in this area. A variety of capacity building activities have been organised through the Joint EU-CoE programme to develop higher education and qualification standards in Council of Europe non-EU member States and assist with the implementation of the Bologna Process which aims at increasing compatibility between education systems to make it easier for students and job seekers to move within Europe. Another Joint EU-CoE capacity building programme focuses on strengthening integrity and combatting corruption in higher education using preventive mechanisms based on Council of Europe standards and practices.

Mapping for Council of Europe Education Activities on SDG 4.3

Standards	Data / Reports	Tools	Activities
Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, Lisbon, 1997 The Convention aims to ensure that holders of a qualification from a signatory country can have that qualification recognised in another. The Convention was developed by the Council of Europe and Unesco. Council of Europe/UNESCO Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications and Periods of Study (adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee at its second meeting, Riga, 6 June 2001) Recommendation on Recognition of Qualifications Held by Refugees, Displaced Persons and Persons in a Refugee-like Situation, November 2017	Monitoring the Implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention - Final Report, February 2016	European Area of Recognition Project (EAR) Manual Guidelines for the recognition of refugee's qualifications - Council of Europe Working party on Refugee qualifications, 1999	ENIC: European Network of Information Centres in the European Region NARIC: National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union The network aims at implementing the Lisbon Recognition Convention and, in general, developing policy and practice for the recognition of qualifications. The Council of Europe is a partner Organisation. Thematic highlights include: Employing a refugee with or without documentation of qualifications; Recognise qualifications held by refugees
			European Qualifications Passport for Refugees It is a pilot project based on the Council of Europe Lisbon Recognition Convention. It is a specially developed assessment scheme for refugees, even for those who cannot fully document their qualifications.
Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, Lisbon, 1997	Report on a fact finding visit to Sarajevo 7-10 June 2010 to review and assess the need for expertise in higher	Towards a European Higher Education Area. 7 Key Strategies and Guidelines to implement the Bologna Process (Strengthening Higher	Joint EU-CoE Programme – Strategic Development of Higher Education and Qualification Standards in Bosnia and Herzegovina

[Council of Europe/UNESCO Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications and Periods of Study (adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee at its second meeting, Riga, 6 June 2001)](#)	[education reform in BiH](#) [Report on a fact finding visit to Sarajevo 19-22 July 2010 regarding Legislation and Quality Assurance and Qualifications Frameworks and an analysis of the laws.](#)	[Education in BiH (2006-2008)](#) [Curriculum Development Good Practice Guide (Strengthening Higher Education in BiH (2009-2011)](#) [An overview of recommendations issued by the joint EC/CoE project "Strengthening Higher Education Bosnia Herzegovina" 2009-2011 related to the legislative framework for Quality Assurance and the Qualifications Framework in Higher Education](#) [Manual for the development and use of Qualifications and Occupational Standards in BiH](#)	Completed Higher Education Projects are available [here](#) This project assists Bosnia and Herzegovina to achieve one of the aspects of its strategic development plan for education 2008-2015: full accession to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The goal is to enable BiH higher education, its institutions, graduates, academics and students to benefit fully from European opportunities and to play its full role for development in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).
[Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, Lisbon, 1997](#) [Council of Europe/UNESCO Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications and Periods of Study (adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee at its second meeting, Riga, 6 June 2001)](#)			[Joint EU-CoE Project: Strengthening Higher Education Reforms in Serbia (ended in 2009)](#) Support and accelerate higher education reforms in Serbia, based on the Bologna Process, in order for Serbian universities to be attractive at European and international level.
[Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)6 on the public responsibility for higher education and research](#)		[Publications of the Higher Education and Research Division](#) The Council of Europe Higher Education Series, launched in 2004, aims to explore higher education issues of concern to policy makers in Ministries, higher education institutions and non-governmental	[Higher Education and Research Activities](#) The work of the Council of Europe in the field of higher education and research focuses on issues related to the recognition of qualifications, public responsibility for higher education and research, higher

		organizations, and student representatives.	education governance and other fields relevant for the establishment of the European Higher Education Area (2010). List of completed activities:
Recommendation CM/Rec(98) 3 on access to higher education PACE Recommendation 1353 (1998) Access of Minorities to Higher Education Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)6 on the public responsibility for higher education and research		List of publications from the project, available here	Access to Higher Education in Europe 1992-1996 Improving access to higher education particularly for under-represented groups was the goal of the CC-HER project

PACE Recommendation 2105 (2017) Promoting integrity in governance to tackle political corruption "4.2. give a prominent role to integrity and anti-corruption education in the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, targeting primary and secondary schools and higher education and vocational training institutions throughout Europe;"			ETINED Platform ETINED addresses the challenge of corruption in Education and seeks to contribute to the development of a culture of democracy and participation based on ethics, transparency and integrity. It links quality education with the promotion of fundamental ethical principles for public and professional life.
CM Reply to Recommendation | Doc. 14528 | 11 April 2018 - Promoting integrity in governance to tackle political corruption Besides its immediate detrimental effects, corruption in education threatens the longer-term foundations of European societies by undermining the culture of democracy that education should play a key role in developing. The references to education	Baseline assessment of integrity in higher education in Kosovo* Baseline assesment of integrity in higher education in Montenegro (in English and Montenegrin)		Joint EU/Coe Programme Fighting Corruption, Economic Crime and Organised Crime: Corruption in Education (2016-2019) The overall objective of these projects is to strengthen integrity and combat corruption in the higher education system through applying

standards and projects in paragraph 4 of the recommendation, including the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture and the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, are therefore particularly relevant. To strengthen work on preventing corruption in education, the Council of Europe has established the ETINED Platform (Platform for Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education), which was launched in October 2015 in Prague. The current focus of this platform is on ethical behaviour of all actors in education as well as on plagiarism and fraud in education, with the latter topic covering fraudulent qualifications. Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on ensuring quality education Final Declaration of the Ministerial Standing Conference in Helsinki (April 2013) "Governance and Quality Education"			preventive mechanisms based on CoE standards and practices. • Strengthen Integrity and Combat Corruption in the Higher Education in Montenegro • Strengthen Integrity and Combat Corruption in the Higher Education (HF 19) in Kosovo* Strengthen Integrity and Combat Corruption in the Higher Education in Serbia