

Terms of reference of the Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU)

Set up by the Committee of Ministers under Article 17 of the Statute of the Council of Europe and in accordance with [Resolution CM/Res\(2021\)3-consolidated](#) on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods.

Category: Steering committee
Duration: 1 January 2024 - 31 December 2027
Programme: Anchoring democratic values in European societies
Sub-programme: Education

Main tasks

Under the authority of the Committee of Ministers and in the framework of the European Cultural Convention, the CDEDU steers the Council of Europe's intergovernmental work, in the field of education and advises the Committee of Ministers on all questions within its area of competence. The overall aim of the Education Programme is to support member States in developing their policies, legislation and practice in view of promoting democratic, quality, inclusive and corruption-free education systems and advancing education at all levels through a human rights' based digital transformation. The CDEDU focuses on Council of Europe priority areas and covers all levels and strands of education.

In particular, the CDEDU is instructed to:

- i. take due account of the Reykjavik Declaration¹ in conducting its activities and submit proposals for its implementation as appropriate;
 - ii. take account of the relevant key findings and challenges set out in the Secretary General's annual reports on the state of democracy, human rights and rule of law² and contribute, where relevant, to the process towards a New Democratic Pact for Europe;
 - iii. focus on the following tasks:
 - a. develop education policies and guidelines and support the implementation of education practices based on the core values and standards of the Council of Europe;
 - b. exchange ideas, information and good practice among its members, associating, as appropriate, observers and other stakeholders;
 - c. promote and facilitate co-operation and understanding between States Parties to the European Cultural Convention.
- In so doing, it shall draw on the pertinent aspects of the European Convention on Human Rights, particularly linked to the right to education, and build on the European Cultural Convention (ETS 18) and the Lisbon Recognition Convention (ETS 165), conventions for which it has been given supervision by the Committee of Ministers as well as the non-binding instruments that it has prepared;
- iv. ensure the follow-up of the decisions taken by the Committee of Ministers subsequent to the 26th Session of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education on 'The transformative power of education: universal values and civic renewal' and take into account the recommendations by the informal conferences of Ministers of Education organised under the Presidencies of the Committee of Ministers of France (2019) and Greece (2020);
 - v. oversee and support the implementation of the Education Strategy (2024-2030) that provides a vision for the mission and priorities of the Council of Europe Education Programme;
 - vi. develop policy guidelines and approaches to renew the democratic and civic mission of education and increase the effectiveness of education for democratic culture at the European level through the preparation of a new instrument on the establishment of a European Space of Citizenship Education and continued development of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), including the promotion of education for environmental sustainability, vocational education and non-formal education in a life-long learning perspective;
 - vii. develop policy guidelines and encourage practices furthering the social responsibility and responsiveness of education, that value the social, cultural and linguistic diversity of every learner, from early-childhood education to higher and further education in line with Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 on ensuring quality education;
 - viii. in line with Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)7 on the responsibility of public authorities for academic freedom and institutional autonomy, guide higher education policies towards contributing to the promotion of fundamental democratic values of academic freedom and institutional autonomy and participatory democratic higher education governance, the fair recognition of qualifications based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention (ETS 165) and the results of its last monitoring report, including automatic recognition; social inclusion and integration of refugees and migrants through the European Qualifications Passport for Refugee, structural reforms in the European Higher Education Area
 - ix. promote a culture of trust and integrity in education and higher education through the Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED), follow up the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)18 on countering education fraud by setting up an observatory to assist public authorities in charge of higher education in this endeavour and by encouraging the exchange of best practices among higher education institutions and exchange of information on fraudulent activities among public authorities

¹ Reykjavik Declaration - United around our values.

² Cf. Secretary General's report 2025 "Towards a New Democratic Pact for Europe".

- x. develop policy guidelines to advance education through the development of a human rights based approach to the digital transformation of education and the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)10 on developing and promoting digital citizenship education (DCE) and further explore the policy implications of artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies for education and higher and further education, and more specifically for their application in education systems;
- xi. support the preparation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the 2025 European Year of Digital Citizenship Education;
- xii. based on principles of the Common European Reference Framework for Languages, its Companion Volume and Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)1 on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture, support its implementation at policy level, ensuring complementarity with the work of the Partial Agreement on the European Centre for Modern Languages;
- xiii. based on the 'Principles and Guidelines for quality education in the 21st Century', support member States' development of education programmes that enable teachers to deliver quality history education, including on Remembrance of the Holocaust and prevention of crimes against humanity, ensuring complementarity with the work and activities of the Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe;
- xiv. ensure access to online Council of Europe educational resources to member States;
- xv. orient and oversee the work of its subordinate body (cf. separate terms of reference);
- xvi. provide input to the Committee of Ministers in view of the regular, high-level dialogue with member States and partners on delivering on the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy;
- xvii. raise-awareness about Council of Europe standards and tools in its field of competence in the member States and beyond, through the neighbourhood policy and in other international and global fora where relevant;
- xviii. hold an exchange of views annually in order to evaluate its activities and advise the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General on future priorities in its sector, including possible new activities and those that might be discontinued;
- xix. take due account of the following mainstreamed perspectives in the performance of its tasks: gender, youth, children's rights, rights of persons with disabilities, and Roma and Traveller³ issues;
- xx. where relevant, contribute to strengthening meaningful engagement with civil society organisations and national human rights institutions in its work;
- xxi. in accordance with decisions CM/Del/Dec(2013)1168/10.2 of the Committee of Ministers, carry out, at regular intervals, within the limits of the available resources and bearing in mind its priorities, an examination of some or all of the conventions for which it has been given responsibility⁴, in co-operation, where appropriate, with the relevant convention-based bodies, and report back to the Committee of Ministers;
- xxii. contribute to the achievement of, and review progress towards, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular with regards to Goal 4: Quality Education; Goal 5: Gender Equality; Goal 10: Reduce inequality; Goal 13: Climate action; and Goal 17: Global partnership for sustainable development.

Main deliverables

Under the authority of the Committee of Ministers, the CDEDU is instructed to complete the following deliverables, within the following deadlines:

	Priority ▼	Deadline ▼
1. Implementation review report of CM/Rec(2019)10 on developing and promoting digital citizenship education	2	31/12/2024
2. Review report on the implementation of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture	1	31/12/2024
3. Draft Recommendation on the use of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees	1	31/12/2024
4. Resilience toolbox to ensure the right to education in times of emergency	1	31/12/2024
5. Revised and updated version of the former Language Education Policy Profiles in line with CM/Rec(2022)1 on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture as the overall framework	2	31/12/2024
6. Toolbox on inclusive quality education	1	31/12/2025
7. Compendium of revised and new guidelines for decision makers on key aspects of language policy such as the role of home languages, the languages of schooling, constructive alignment, languages in Higher Education, languages for mobility, digitalisation and languages, language support for migrants and refugees, in line with CM/Rec(2022) 1 on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture	2	31/12/2025

³ The term "Roma and Travellers" is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "*Gens du voyage*", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.

⁴ Cf. relevant decisions of the Committee of Ministers (CM/Del/Dec(2013)1168/10.2) and list of Conventions in document CM(2025)132.

8. Guidelines on Romani policy and pedagogy in line with CM/Rec(2022)1 on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture	1	31/12/2025
9. Draft Recommendation on history education	1	31/03/2026
10. Draft Recommendation on teaching and learning about artificial intelligence	1	31/03/2026
11. Proposals for the establishment of the Council of Europe Observatory on countering Education Fraud and promoting Transparency in Education ⁵ building on the work of ETINED, in line with CM/Rec(2022)18 on countering education fraud	1	31/12/2025
12. Policy guidelines on open school data to improve transparency and accountability in education	2	31/12/2026
13. Initiate preparatory work to codify the principles of a European Space of Citizenship Education, with a view to possibly developing a draft legal instrument	1	31/12/2026
14. Gender Equality Scorecard in Education (jointly with GEC), in line with the implementation of CM/Rec(2007)13 on gender mainstreaming in education	2	31/12/2027
15. Proposal for a draft legal instrument on automatic recognition of qualifications in higher education	1	31/12/2026
16. Draft Council of Europe Students' Charter	1	31/12/2026
17. Proposal for the development of a draft legal instrument to regulate the use of artificial intelligence systems in education to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law, applying the provisions of the Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law of the Council of Europe to the sector of education (in collaboration with the Steering Committee for new and emerging digital technologies (CDNET) (cf. terms of reference of EDU-IA)	1	31/12/2026
18. White paper on teaching profession in the digital age	2	31/12/2027
19. Draft guidelines on the use of education data and data analytics in education systems (cf. terms of reference of EDU-IA)	1	31/12/2027
20. Report on the mid-term implementation evaluation of the Education Strategy 2024-2030	1	31/12/2027
21. Feasibility study on the creation of a Fund for the European Space of Citizenship Education	1	31/12/2027
22. Draft Road map for Strengthening digital citizenship education 2027 – 2031	1	31/12/2026
23. Draft Recommendation on learning democracy in vocational education and training in Europe	1	31/12/2027
24. Policy Toolbox on teaching and learning about AI (cf. terms of reference of EDU-IA)	2	31/03/2026
25. European Reference Framework for the Evaluation of Educational Technologies (cf. terms of reference of EDU-IA)	1	31/12/2026
26. Guidelines and best practices for AI-assisted recognition of qualifications of Higher Education	2	31/12/2027

Composition

• Members

In accordance with decisions CM/Del/Dec(2013)1168/10.2 of the Committee of Ministers, in cases where there is no convention-based body including all the Parties, non-member States are invited to take part, with a right to vote, in the committee meetings pertaining to the conventions to which they are Parties. The participation of non-member States referred to by Decision CM/Del/Dec(2022)1429/25 and Resolution CM/Res(2022)3 is restricted to meetings and activities convened pursuant to Art. 6 of the European Cultural Convention.

Governments of the States Parties to the European Cultural Convention are invited to designate two representatives of the highest possible rank representing the general education and higher education sectors, with responsibility at the national level for the planning, development and implementation of policies relevant to the work of the Committee and appointed by their governments and by the competent body or bodies representing universities or other institutions of higher education. Committee members will co-ordinate at national level all elements of government policy relevant to the work of the Committee.

The Council of Europe will bear the travel and subsistence expenses of one representative from each State Party to the European Cultural Convention (two in the case of the State whose representative has been elected Chair).

States Parties to the European Cultural Convention may send other representatives without defrayal of expenses. Each delegation shall have one vote. Where a government designates more than one member, it shall designate the member entitled to take part in the voting.

⁵ Subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources.

- **Participants**

The following may send representatives, without the right to vote and at the charge of their corresponding administrative budgets:

- Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe;
- European Court of Human Rights;
- Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe;
- Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe;
- Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB);
- North-South Centre;
- Committees or other bodies of the Council of Europe engaged in related work, as appropriate.

The following may send representatives, without the right to vote and without defrayal of expenses:

- European Union (one or more representatives, including, as appropriate, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA));
- Observer States to the Council of Europe: Canada, Japan, Mexico, United States of America;
- Arab League for Education Culture and Science Organisation (ALECSO);
- Nordic Council of Ministers;
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);
- Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE);
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

- **Observers**

The following may send representatives, without the right to vote and without defrayal of expenses:

- Israel;
- non-member States with which the Council of Europe has a Neighbourhood Partnership including relevant co-operation activities;
- States having been invited by decision of the Committee of Ministers to participate in the negotiations;
- interested organisations from Civil Society: the Council of Europe welcomes and promotes the widest participation of civil society, in line with the Guidance note on Civil Society Participation in the Intergovernmental Work of the Council of Europe CDDEM(2024)14, as Observers. Observer status may be requested in accordance with Article 8 of [Resolution CM/Res\(2021\)3-consolidated](#) on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods.

Working methods

The rules of procedure of the Committee are governed by [Resolution CM/Res\(2021\)3-consolidated](#) on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods. Online participation in meetings will be available.

	Plenary meetings ▼			Bureau meetings ▼		
	Members incl. Chair	Meetings per year	Days per meeting	Members	Meetings per year	Days per meeting
2024	49	2	2/3	12	2	2
2025	49	2	2/3	12	2	2
2026	49	2	2/3	12	2	2
2027	49	2	2/3	12	2	2

In addition, the following provisions shall apply:

The CDEDU elects a Bureau of six members, of whom the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, representing in a balanced way the general and higher education sectors. Two members of the academic community and two NGO representatives, designated by the CDEDU, participate in the meetings of the Bureau, without the right to vote.

The CDEDU will appoint from amongst its members up to 5 Rapporteurs on mainstreamed perspectives, including a Gender Equality Rapporteur.

Budgetary information *

	Meetings per year	Days per meeting	Members reimbursed	Plenary in €K	Bureau in €K	Working groups in €K	Secretariat (A, B)
2024	2	2/3	49	91.0	19.5	142.1	1 A; 1 B
2025	2	2/3	49	91.0	19.5	142.1	1 A; 1 B
2026	2	2/3	49	106.8	20.2	123.4	1 A; 1 B
2027	2	2/3	49	106.8	20.2	123.4	1 A; 1 B

*The costs include the per diem, travel costs, interpretation, translation and document printing. These costs are calculated on the basis of standard costs.