
1544th meeting, 26 November 2025

7 Education and culture

7.1 Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU)

a. Abridged report of the 8th plenary meeting (Strasbourg, 23-25 September 2025)

Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

The Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) held its 8th plenary meeting in Strasbourg on 23-25 September 2025, with Marie-Anne Persoons (Belgium) in the Chair.

The agenda of the meeting is contained in Appendix I. The full list of decisions including the list of participants and the working documents of the session are available at MyCloud.

Items for decision of the Committee of Ministers

1. The CDEDU submits the proposal to organise the 27th Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education under the Montenegrin Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, as contained in Appendix II, to the Committee of Ministers for approval.

Items for information of the Committee of Ministers

2. The CDEDU noted the communication from Matjaž Gruden, the Director for Democracy, on the political context, regarding the New Democratic Pact for Europe, as a strategic framework for strengthening democracy and citizens' trust. The Director reaffirmed the cross-cutting and essential role of education, whether the entry point is artificial intelligence, disinformation, or social rights, and expressed high expectation for the Committee's continued work in this field.

3. The CDEDU warmly welcomed the progress made towards defining and codifying the principles for education for democratic citizenship to be included as one of the three pillars of the European Space for Citizenship Education and instructed the Secretariat to continue this work and report back to the Committee at the next Plenary session.

4. The CDEDU endorsed the concept note for a Draft Committee of Ministers Recommendation on developing a culture of democracy in vocational education and training, recognising the challenge of integrating a culture of democracy in the world of work and in taking into consideration the complexity and diversity of the vocational education and training systems in Europe. The Committee approved the timeline and the submission deadline of February 2026 for the first outline of the draft Recommendation.

5. The CDEDU welcomed the new initiative on early childhood education and care and appreciated the development of an age-appropriate document on Education for Democratic Citizenship to ensure the inclusion of Early Childhood Education and Care in the European Space for Citizenship Education.

6. The CDEDU approved the proposal to draft a legally binding instrument on the Conditions of Transparency and Quality Assurance for Automatic Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in Europe, based on the results of the feasibility study, the CDEDU discussions in three plenary sessions (2023, 2024, 2025), the work of the Subgroup on Higher Education, the consultations with relevant stakeholders including the European Students' Union (ESU) and a preliminary core content developed by a dedicated working group. The CDEDU emphasised that the new Convention will promote the right to qualifications holders for automatic recognition and will lay down the essential foundations of transparency, trust and quality upon which mutual automatic recognition can be built. The initiative reinforces the joint UNESCO/Council of Europe Lisbon Recognition Convention (ETS 165).

The CDEDU approved the terms of reference of a Drafting Committee that will be in charge of the drafting process of the legal instrument

The CDEDU noted that the following countries expressed their explicit support and willingness to join the drafting Committee: Armenia, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, North Macedonia (in writing), Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia and the observer organisation Federation for Education in Europe (FEDE). Germany expressed its willingness to join the drafting Committee while pointing out some conditions and concerns. Several countries expressed their support, without putting their candidature for the drafting Committee – Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Switzerland. At the same time some delegations, while not opposing the initiative, associated themselves with various conditions and concerns, which could be handled in the process of drafting (Austria, Croatia, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Spain and the European Commission). Iceland, joined by Norway, Sweden and the European University Association (EUA) expressed their significant concerns.

The CDEDU decided to submit a proposal and the draft terms of reference of a Drafting Committee to the Committee of Ministers at a forthcoming meeting, seeking authorisation to start the formal process of drafting.

7. The CDEDU welcomed the report on the survey on the use of the European Passport for Refugees Qualifications (EQPR), and its recommendations.

8. The CDEDU approved the extension of the "Revised 2022-2025 Terms of Reference for ETINED" for the period 2026-2027, taking into consideration the revisions proposed by several delegations on reinforcing the transparency component in the mandate.

9. The CDEDU took note of the information document on the implementation of the project on the Democratic mission of higher education and was informed that the General report of the Global Forum will be distributed to the CDEDU in the coming weeks. It also took note that the second Academic Freedom in Action Conference will take place on 25-26 November 2025, in Strasbourg.

10. The CDEDU welcomed the work on the development of the Council of Europe Student Rights Charter and approved the indicative timeline for further work on this important document, highlighting the importance of reflecting the responsibilities clearly, not only of the member States, educational authorities and institutions but also of the students. The co-creation process, together with the ESU and the students, was welcomed as well.

11. The CDEDU welcomed the update on the outputs of the Language Policy Programme, noting in particular the online launch of the Self-Assessment Tool (lower secondary) for policy makers to support the implementation of CM/Rec(2022)1 and the publication of the updated Romani Policy Guidelines following the successful completion of the Romani Plurilingual Policy Experimentation initiative

12. The CDEDU endorsed the provisional content of the revised policy guidelines on Romani language and welcomed the invitation to provide comments for the full package of the policy guidelines, pedagogical guidelines and the report on the results of the RPPE, which will be submitted to the plenary session in March 2026.

13. The CDEDU welcomed the draft preliminary text of the draft Recommendation on History Education in the Digital Age.

14. The CDEDU took note of the progress and main developments within the Intergovernmental Programmes on History Education and the Remembrance of the Holocaust and Prevention of Crimes Against Humanity, in particular the key results of the 4th Annual Forum for History Education entitled “Reaffirming the role of history education in the XXI century: Where learners meet history” and of the progress made in preparing the final publication from the series of Forums.
15. The CDEDU took note of the first draft of the Recommendation on AI Literacy and welcomed the inclusive and participatory approach taken in the preparation of the draft, including stakeholders’ consultations and experts’ contributions and instructed its Bureau to follow up closely with the text development process.
16. The CDEDU took note that the proposal for the establishment of the Committee of Experts on Artificial Intelligence and Education (EDU-IA) is subject to the final adoption of its terms of reference by the Committee of Ministers in November 2025 and that a Call for nomination of experts for EDU-IA will be launched following the final adoption of the EDU-IA by the Committee of Ministers.
17. The CDEDU took note of the progress on the implementation of activities at national and European level concerning the European Year of Digital Citizenship Education 2025 and reiterated its invitation to the member States to submit their actions for the calendar of events for the Year, share their best practices with other member States, and to communicate the outcomes of their actions to the Secretariat.
18. The CDEDU took note of the working document on the Council of Europe Road Map for Strengthening Digital Citizenship Education 2027-2031, reaffirmed its support and invited delegations to join the DCE Promoters Network.
19. The CDEDU welcomed the inclusive and participatory approach taken in the development of the DCE Planner and decided to pilot the Beta version of the DCE Planner – A Curriculum Framework for Digital Citizenship Education.
20. The CDEDU welcomed the launch of the project to develop jointly with the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) the Gender Equality in Education scorecard as a follow up of the implementation of the Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation on Gender Mainstreaming in Education (CM/Rec(2007)13), and as per the terms of reference assigned by the Committee of Ministers and decided to set up a joint working group to lead the project and to task the CDEDU’s Gender Equality Rapporteur with chairing the joint working group.
21. The CDEDU took note of information provided by the Vice-Chair of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveler Issues (ADI-ROM) Mr Paraschiv and welcomed fostering further co-operation.
22. The CDEDU took note of the information provided on the drafting of the Committee of Ministers’ Draft Recommendation on Peace education by, with and for young people and thanked the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) the Advisory Council on Youth for involving CDEDU in the drafting work.
23. The CDEDU took note of information provided by the UNESCO Representative on the Flagship Programme on Education for Peace and welcomed strengthening co-operation on this topic between the Council of Europe and UNESCO.
24. The CDEDU took note of information on the decisions taken at the SDG 4 High Level Steering Committee Leaders meeting, which took place in Santiago de Chile on 28 August 2025 and welcomed the Santiago Consensus adopted on 29 August 2025 at the World Summit on Teachers.
25. The CDEDU elected Ms Isabella Brunelli (Switzerland) and Ms Rose Anne Cuschieri (Malta) as members of the CDEDU Bureau, for the period 2025-Autumn 2026.
26. The CDEDU designated Mr Arno Schrooyen (European Students’ Union (ESU)) as an NGO representative for the period 2025-Autumn 2026

Other observations

27. The CDEDU decided to hold its next plenary meeting from 18 (afternoon) to 20 (morning) March 2026, in Strasbourg.

Appendix I – Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the draft agenda
3. Political context – update on events since the previous Plenary session
4. 27th Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education
5. Renewal of the Civic Mission of Education
 - 5.1 Codification of principles of the European Space for Citizenship Education
 - 5.2 Framework of quality assurance of the European Space for Citizenship Education
 - 5.3 Education for Democratic Citizenship in Early Childhood Education for the European Space for Citizenship Education
 - 5.4 Towards a Committee of Ministers Recommendation on developing a culture of democracy in Vocational Education and Training
6. Higher Education
 - 6.1 Implementation of the Lisbon recognition convention
 - 6.2 Towards a legal instrument on automatic recognition
 - 6.3 European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR): insights from the survey among recipients.
 - 6.4 Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED)
 - 6.5 Democratic mission of higher education
 - 6.6 Council of Europe Student Rights Charter
7. Language Policy
 - 7.1 Language Education Policy Profile – Self-assessment Tool (lower-secondary) and the Policy Toolbox – sample entries
 - 7.2 Revised policy guidelines on Romani language
 - 7.3 European Centre of Modern Languages (ECML) – Motivation Manifesto full text
 - 7.4 European Centre of Modern Languages (ECML) – Motivation Manifesto Flyer
8. History Education
 - 8.1 Draft recommendation on history education in the digital age
 - 8.2. Intergovernmental programme on history education and Remembrance of the Holocaust and Prevention of Crimes against Humanity – latest developments
 - 8.3. Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE) – Highlights of the 2025 programme of activities
9. Digital Transformation in education
 - 9.1 Digital Citizenship Education (DCE)
 - 9.2 Artificial Intelligence and Education
10. Gender Equality in Education Scorecard
11. Transversal co-operation
12. CDEDU Bureau Elections
13. Any other business
14. Adoption of the list of decisions
15. Date and place of the next CDEDU plenary Session

Appendix II

27th Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education

Date: to be confirmed by the Montenegrin authorities

Place: Montenegro

Theme: “Empowering Educators for a Democratic and Digital Europe”

The 27th Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education will serve both as a mid-term evaluation of progress achieved and adjust course for 2027–2030—and a European forum to chart clear commitments for the years beyond 2030.

The ministers will deliberate on the role of educators (teachers, school and university leaders, civil society) in renewing democracy and shaping human-centred digital innovation.

A transversal discussion will also address Europe’s contribution to the post-2030 follow-up of the SDG4 agenda, ensuring alignment between national reforms, Council of Europe standards and global education goals.

The Conference is expected to steer the Strategy’s second phase and endorse key deliverables, including:

- the European Space for Citizenship Education;
- the White Paper on the Teaching Profession in the Digital Age.

Throughout, learners and the wider education community remain at the centre, with enhanced support for teachers as a core driver of democratic, inclusive and digitally responsible education systems.

Responsible body: Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU).

Participants :

- Council of Europe member States;
- Holy See, Kazakhstan;
- Committee of Ministers;
- Parliamentary Assembly;
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe;
- Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB);
- European Union.

Observers:

- United States of America;
- Canada;
- Japan;
- Mexico;
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);
- NGOs admitted by the CDEDU in accordance with the rules governing that committee’s relations with NGOs.