

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DGII/EDU/FNFE-OJ(2025)09  
Original: English  
Strasbourg, 7 October 2025

## Towards a European Space for Citizenship Education

*Sustaining democracy through quality citizenship education*

# CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

13-14 October 2025

**Bečići**, Montenegro  
Hotel Mediteran

The event is organised by the Council of Europe and co-funded by Germany and the Council of Europe

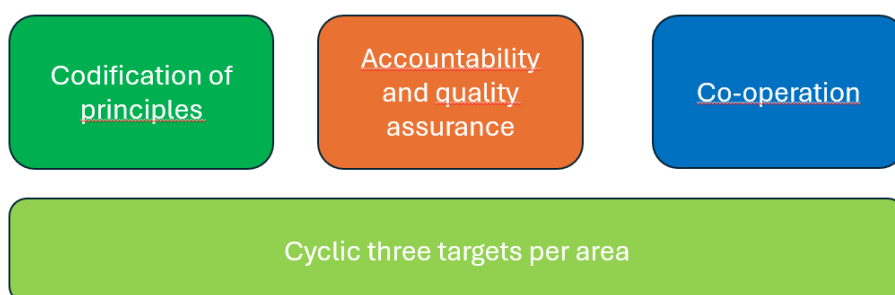
## Context

The [European Space for Citizenship Education](#) aims to strengthen the quality of education for democratic citizenship by building on the Council of Europe acquis in education and creating the hallmark of citizenship education in Europe. Initiated by the 46 ministers of education of the Council of Europe member states, the European Space is expected to be launched in early 2027, with the objective of addressing current and emerging challenges faced by European education systems and societies.

The European Space for Citizenship Education is more necessary than ever given that democracy is retreating, tensions are rising, and many young people are disaffected with democracy. [Competences for Democratic Culture](#), such as critical thinking and empathy, remain essential to prepare learners to live as active and informed citizens in democratic and cohesive societies.

Since 1997, solid foundations have been laid for the concept of education for democratic citizenship to be anchored in European education systems including the Council of Europe [Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education](#) and the [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Citizenship](#), but there are still challenges in the practice of citizenship education within and outside education systems. There is a clear need to consolidate the principles of quality citizenship education into one single framework to renew the democratic mission of education. To achieve this goal, the European Space for Citizenship Education is being built around three key areas:

### European Space for Citizenship Education Key Areas



Through a co-creation process, the European Space for Citizenship Education offers a unique opportunity to bring together a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that today's education is fit for purpose and that Europe's democratic future is built on a solid foundation of informed, engaged, and critically thinking citizens.

The European Space is bolstered by strong political support, which includes the Heads of State Summit Reykjavik Declaration calling for increased participation by young people in democratic life, and the new Council of Europe Pact for Democracy, in which a strong education system is considered an essential basis for democracy.

The European Space for Citizenship Education is co-created during a two-year process by a dedicated working group coupled with consultations among a wide group of actors, including ministries of education, parliamentarians, the Council of Europe Education Policy Advisors Network (EPAN), academics, educators, youth, parents and civil society.

The co-creation process of the European Space for Citizenship Education was launched at the ["Sustaining Democracy through Quality Citizenship Education"](#) conference in October 2024 in

Berlin. The conference involved high level participants, renowned academics, and civil society organisations and marked a crucial milestone in advancing European citizenship education and making the European Space for Citizenship Education a reality.

### Objectives and expected outcomes

The conference “Towards a European Space for Citizenship Education” is part of the series of stakeholder consultations and will mark another milestone in the development of the European Space by focusing on the key actors in the practice of education - teachers, students and school managers. The conference is included in the Council of Europe’s Roadmap towards a New Democratic Pact for Europe.

Teachers are at the forefront of efforts to prepare students and learners for life in democratic and diverse societies and will play a key role in putting into practice the principles of the European Space. Teachers’ input into the development of the European Space is therefore essential in ensuring the relevance and added value of the principles of the European Space to their teaching practice.

School managers’ role is equally important, primarily in supporting the integration of principles of the European Space in all aspects of school functioning – teaching and learning, governance, school culture, through a whole school approach.

Finally, as the ultimate beneficiaries of the quality citizenship education promoted within the European Space, learners’ voice and participation are essential in ensuring that the principles of the European Space reflect their perspectives and aspirations.

Other education actors will participate in the conference, including representatives of the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Education (CEDU) and the European Policy Advisors Network (EPAN), experts and civil society organisations.

The conference will help raise the visibility of the Council of Europe standards and materials in the area of education for democratic citizenship, as well as good practices.

### Logistical information

The Conference will take place on 13 – 14 October 2025 in Bečići, Montenegro at the Hotel Mediteran. The conference will be organised in person and the working language will be English.

The Council of Europe will cover the costs of participation, including travel, meals and accommodation, for all participants.

The conference is organised within the Council of Europe project “European Space for Citizenship Education” and partly funded by a voluntary contribution from Germany.

# PROGRAMME

Day one – Monday, 13 October 2025

General Rapporteur: Olena Styslavska-Doliwa			
09.00 – 09.30	<p>Welcome remarks</p> <p>Lejla Dervišagić, Head of the Council of Europe Programme Office in Podgorica</p> <p>Anđela Jakšić-Stojanović, Minister of Education, Science and Innovation of Montenegro</p> <p>Villano Qiriazzi, Head of the Education Department of the Council of Europe</p> <p>Peter Felten, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Montenegro</p>		
09.30 – 10.00	<p>Introduction to the European Space for Citizenship Education and to the conference</p> <p>Sarah Keating, Head of the Formal and Non-Formal Education Division, Education Department of the Council of Europe</p> <p>Salvador Sala, Head of the European Space for Citizenship Education Unit, Education Department of the Council of Europe</p>		
10.00 – 10.30	<i>Group Photograph and Coffee break</i>		
10.30 – 11.00	<p>Introduction to Workshop 1: Codification of principles for education for democratic citizenship</p> <p>Salvador Sala, Head of the European Space for Citizenship Education Unit, Education Department of the Council of Europe</p> <p>Gert Biesta, Council of Europe Expert</p>		
11.00 - 12.30	Workshop 1: Codification of principles for education for democratic citizenship		
	<p>Sub-group 1</p> <p>Room A <i>Moderators</i> Edda Sant Obiols &amp; Nino Revishvili</p> <p><i>Rapporteur</i> Catalina Ulrich Hygum</p>	<p>Sub-group 2</p> <p>Room B <i>Moderator</i> Gert Biesta</p> <p><i>Rapporteur</i> Valeria Damiani</p>	<p>Sub-group 3</p> <p>Room C <i>Moderator</i> Sofia Almeida Santos</p> <p><i>Rapporteur</i> Lena Gray</p>
12.30-14.00	<i>Lunch</i>		
14.00 – 14.30	<p>Introduction to workshop 2: Framework of Quality Assurance</p> <p>Salvador Sala, Head of the European Space for Citizenship Education Unit, Education Department of the Council of Europe</p> <p>Valeria Damiani, Council of Europe Expert</p>		

14.30-16.00	Workshop 2: Framework of Quality Assurance		
	Sub-group 1 Room A <i>Moderator</i> Catalina Ulrich Hygum  <i>Rapporteur</i> Edda Sant Obiols	Sub-group 2 Room B <i>Moderator</i> Valeria Damiani  <i>Rapporteur</i> Nino Revishvili	Sub-group 3 Room C <i>Moderator</i> Lena Gray  <i>Rapporteur</i> Sofia Almeida Santos
16.00 – 16.30	<i>Coffee break</i>		
16.30-17.30	Wrap up from the workshop discussions – report from workshops and discussion		
17.30	Close		

## Day 2 – Tuesday, 14 October 2025

9.00-10.45	The European Space for Citizenship Education and education practices
9.00-9.20	Presentation on teaching practices and learning democracy By Pontus Wallin
9.20-10.45	Panel discussion on the European Space for Citizenship Education by educators and students and how it can address current priorities, expectations and challenges  Moderated by Natia Natsvlshvili  (Panel participants to be confirmed)
10.45-11.15	<i>Coffee break</i>
11.15-11.45	Report from General Rapporteur and next steps
12.15	<i>Departure for Kotor – Lunch and guided tour</i>  <i>The bus will wait in front of the hotel</i>
18.00	<i>Return to the Hotel</i>