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## **Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education**

### **“The Transformative Power of Education: Universal Values and Civic Renewal”**

**26<sup>th</sup> Session**

Strasbourg, France

28-29 September 2023

**Resolutions**

## **Resolution 1 on the renewal of the civic mission of education**

We, Ministers responsible for Education, meeting in Strasbourg, France, for the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference on 28-29 September 2023:

1. HAVING REGARD to the results of the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held in Reykjavík (Iceland), on 16-17 May 2023 that agreed to strengthen the Council of Europe and its work in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
2. CONSIDERING that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding respect for human rights, democracy and rule of law and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress;
3. COMMITTED to upholding the Reykjavík Principles for Democracy and to promoting, as a matter of priority the participation of young people in democratic life and decision-making processes, notably through educational initiatives on human rights and fundamental democratic values such as pluralism, inclusion, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability;
4. CONCERNED with the observations by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe in her latest reports on the state of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe , warning of the attempts of populism and authoritarian nationalism to undermine democratic institutions and values, and calling upon member States to strengthen education that fosters a culture of democracy, values human dignity, and encourages an active participation and responsibility of citizens in democratic, inclusive and sustainable societies;
5. ACKNOWLEDGING the report of the High-level Reflection Group that was set up by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe<sup>1</sup>, as well as the last annual reports of the Secretary General<sup>2</sup>, which state that European societies are “experiencing democratic backsliding, the questioning of the principle of the rule of law, challenges to our common human rights protection system and many other challenges”.
6. WELCOMING the High-level Reflection Group’s specific recommendation to develop a new legal instrument on education for democracy, based on the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), in order to strengthen a culture of democracy in member States and give further impetus to its implementation;
7. CONVINCED that the Council of Europe has, since its origins, considered education, including the very right of access to quality education for all, in a broader human rights perspective, as a driving force for intercultural understanding and dialogue or in the fight against prejudices, valuing diversity, equity and inclusion at all levels of education and mutual respect, as well as a culture of democracy;
8. CONCERNED about the social challenges that democratic societies in Europe are facing including increasing fragility, uncertainty, intolerance, terrorism, as well as the environmental and climate crisis and the importance of education for sustainable development and how all this impacts on access and provision of inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels.
9. RECALLING the *Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on ensuring quality education (CM/Rec(2012)13)* and the need to ensure a quality education system for *all* learners;
10. DRAWING ATTENTION to the identification, by the Council of Europe Secretary General, of Education for Democratic Citizenship and empowering and strengthening the role of children

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<sup>1</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/report-of-the-high-level-reflection-group-of-the-council-of-europe-/1680a85cf1>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/secretary-general/reports>

and young people in decision making, in an adaptative way to their age, as one of the 12 key priorities of the Organisation for the period 2021-2024;

11. CONSIDERING the UN SDGs, notably, SDG4, focusing on education and aiming to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, with the ambitions to contribute to the achievement of this objective by supporting member States targeting in policy and actions' development in this field;
12. TAKING DUE ACCOUNT of the policy orientations of the 2022 United Nations Transforming Education Summit and being willing to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Education Agenda;
13. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the Council of Europe's Education Strategy (2024-2030) and with the aim of implementing its long-term strategic objectives relating to the role of education in developing a culture of democracy, promoting human rights and the rule of law and upholding the right to education to ensuring access to and completion of quality education on all levels at all times;
14. BUILDING ON THE ACQUIS of the Council of Europe since its origins but, especially, in the last years, with the development of several tools and initiatives devoted to promoting a culture of democracy, and in particular the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (Recommendation CM/ Rec(2010)7), in which member States affirmed "the aim of providing every person within their territory with the opportunity of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education", the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC)\_adopted at the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, in April 2016, and most recently Recommendations CM/Rec(2022)1 on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture and CM/Rec(2022)18 on countering education fraud;
15. CONSIDERING that, within the architecture of international organisations and European institutions, the Council of Europe has a crucial role to play in assisting its member States to renew the democratic and civic mission of education, we Ministers responsible for Education:
  - a. Welcome the work of the Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) to promote a culture of democracy in education, across all subjects and levels, from early childhood to higher and further education;
  - b. Encourage further implementation of the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education and the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) to address challenges that society, the education community and schools are facing;
  - c. Take note of the Council of Europe's proposal to work towards the establishment of a European Space of Citizenship Education.
16. In particular, we INVITE the Committee of Ministers to instruct the CDEDU to:
  - a. Initiate preparatory work to codify the principles of a European Space of Citizenship Education with a view to developing a framework convention under the auspices of the Council of Europe;
  - b. Commence a feasibility study on the creation of a "Fund for the European Space of Citizenship Education", aimed at promoting education for democracy in schools, higher education institutions and communities in the 46 Member States;
  - c. Consider broadening the use of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture to all curriculum areas and all levels of education including

Vocational Education and Training (VET) by taking into account national circumstances and needs;

- d. Strengthen the relation between the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) and education for sustainable development;
- e. Develop policies and guidelines showing more explicitly the relation between the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) and the right to quality education, including a new toolkit on the right to quality inclusive education for all learners, in particular vulnerable groups, including minors, people with disabilities and special needs, migrants and refugees;
- f. Foster mutually beneficial co-operation and partnerships between higher education institutions, schools and communities to strengthen a culture of democracy and civic and community engagement in education;
- g. Strengthen ties between the Education Programme and the Council of Europe Conventions and ECHR Court judgments, including in co-operation programmes.

17. We, Ministers, AFFIRM that the above priorities will be supported by member States at all levels of education through:

- a. policies, curricula, teacher education, awareness raising and the encouragement of all types of educational institutions to adopt a whole institution approach in order to embed a culture of democracy;
- b. integrated approaches to the promotion of a culture of democracy at national level by ensuring that the commitments, actions, recommendations and agendas of intergovernmental organisations and institutions such as the Council of Europe, the European Union and United Nations agencies are complementary and reinforce each other.

## Resolution 2 on education in times of emergencies and crisis

We, Ministers responsible for Education, meeting in Strasbourg, France, for the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference on 28-29 September 2023:

1. HAVING REGARD to the results of the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held in Reykjavík (Iceland), on 16-17 May 2023 that agreed to strengthen the Council of Europe and its work in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
2. HAVING REGARD to the Declaration on the situation of the children of Ukraine adopted at the Summit and stressing the need to ensure the protection of all the rights of the children of Ukraine, including the right to education;
3. REITIRATING the strongest condemnation of the military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and remaining fully committed to continue to support Ukraine and its population suffering from this unprecedented and unjustified aggression;
4. ACKNOWLEDGING the global concern and action of international organisations on these matters, recognise the impact of emergencies and crisis on all the spectrum of educational actors and more specifically disadvantaged groups of learners, including, girls and women, learners with disability and special needs, learners living in remote areas, refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced learners and families, and people experiencing discrimination based on different grounds;
5. RECOGNISING the critical importance of preserving and protecting the fundamental human rights and freedoms as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights in times of emergencies and crisis;
6. CONSIDERING the UN SDGs, notably, SDG4, focusing on education and aiming to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, with the ambitions to contribute to the achievement of this objective by supporting member States targeting in policy and actions' development in this field;
7. TAKING DUE NOTE of the Vision Statement of the UN Secretary General at the 2022 UN Transforming Education Summit, including the Youth Declaration on transforming Education, and willing to make their contribution towards the implementation of the Common Agenda thereto;<sup>1</sup>
8. RECALLING the commitment of member States and partners on the occasion of the 2022 Transforming Education Summit convened by the UN Secretary General to launch a specific initiative "Education in Crisis Situations: A Commitment to Action" and the willingness of member States to working together to transform education systems, so they are able to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from crises, while enabling all crisis-affected children and youth, including refugees and stateless populations, to continuously, equitably and safely access inclusive, quality, safe learning opportunities;
9. REALISING that the emergencies and crises faced by our societies are complex, heterogenous and in constant evolution and that the consequences of such events are severe and produce grave impact on education **systems that**, at the same time, **play** an important role in preventing and recovering from a crisis;
10. TAKING ACCOUNT of the lessons learnt resulting particularly from the Covid-19 pandemic, refugee crisis and the consequences of the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine, which highlighted the need for preparedness in ensuring the effectiveness and continuity of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/transforming-education-summit/sg-vision-statement>  
<https://www.un.org/en/transforming-education-summit/youth-declaration>

educational systems, while protecting and promoting provision of inclusive, equitable quality education in times of pandemic, but also of natural and man-made disaster, as well as through the ongoing environmental and climate crisis;

11. BEING FULLY AWARE of the fact that:

- a. resilience, flexibility, capacity, and co-ordination are instrumental to good democratic governance and to ensure that key services, such as inclusive quality education, continue to be delivered regardless the type of emergency and crisis;
- b. putting in place resilience strategies for education systems that are an integral part of the strategic vision of a community is key, including in terms of priority setting, resource allocation and efficient crisis response inter-institutional co-ordination mechanisms.

12. AIMING at ensuring the effectiveness and continuity of educational systems, while protecting and promoting the right to quality education including in times of emergencies and crisis and considering that the response to emergency and crisis must ensure compliance with the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and rule of law;

13. DETERMINED to implement the objectives of the Council of Europe's Education Strategy (2024-2030) relating to the role of education in developing a culture of democracy, human rights and the rule of law and ensuring access to quality education at all times;

14. BUILDING ON THE ACQUIS of the Council of Europe since its origins but, especially, in the last years, with the development of several tools and initiatives devoted to providing quality education in times of emergencies and crisis, such as the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees, the guidelines and classroom resources developed to help education authorities provide language support for refugees from Ukraine, and the "Education in times of crisis" section of the Council of Europe website;

15. CONSIDERING the legitimate role the Council of Europe can play to work towards the strengthening of the education systems and their preparedness in times of emergencies and crisis including within the context of the implementation of a new education strategy as well as the implementation of the RFCDC in the member States;

16. BUILDING ON the conclusions of discussions at the Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) and representatives of member States in various focus group levels:

- a. WELCOME the work of the CDEDU and its thematic focus group on education in times of emergencies and crisis, and in particular the co-development of resilience principles of education in times of emergencies and crisis, representing the overarching goals of educational systems and communities for policy and actions at all levels of governance, and promoting inclusiveness and provision of quality education at all times and regardless the type of crisis;
- b. RECOGNISE the importance of the following resilience principles of education in times of emergencies and crisis aimed at building resilient educational ecosystems, namely: 1) strengthening governance; 2) ensuring continuity; 3) expanding the role of education; 4) increasing accessibility; 5) fostering co-operation and 6) increasing efficiency;
- c. SUPPORT further development, piloting and implementation of a Council of Europe's Toolbox on the Resilience for Education, stemming from the above principles, its digitalisation and putting at the disposal of the member States.

17. In particular, we, Ministers:

- a. RECOGNISE that the provision of inclusive and equitable quality education in times of emergencies and crisis is a challenge that needs to be addressed, with a multilevel good

governance perspective, focusing in particular on preparedness for crisis and emergency management.

18. INVITE the Committee of Ministers to mandate the CDEDU:

- a. to continue its work on putting in place of a methodology for implementation of the resilience principles of education in times of emergencies and crisis and of a Council of Europe's Toolbox on the Resilience for Education;
- b. to initiate, on the basis of current work, the development of a Recommendation on the Principles of Resilience for Education in times of emergencies and crisis.

19. SUGGEST that, at national level, the governments and educational authorities of the member States ensure participation of all relevant stakeholders in the development and implementation of Resilience Principles for Education for the continued provision of inclusive and equitable quality education in times of emergencies and crisis.

### **Resolution 3 on harnessing the potential of Artificial Intelligence in and through education**

We, Ministers responsible for Education, meeting in Strasbourg, France, for the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference on 28-29 September 2023:

#### 1. HAVING REGARD TO:

- a. the results of the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held in Reykjavik (Iceland) on 16 and 17 May 2023, which agreed to strengthen the Council of Europe and its action in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law by developing, among other things, tools to meet new challenges in the field of technology and the environment;
- b. the obligations and commitments undertaken in conformity with the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ETS No. 5) and its Protocols, the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18), the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS No. 108), other relevant international and European conventions;
- c. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on developing and promoting digital citizenship education, Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on ensuring quality education and Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the public responsibility for higher education and research;
- d. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment and Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)8 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on big data for culture, literacy and democracy;
- e. Guidelines on Children's data protection in an education setting (2021);
- f. Guidelines to support equitable partnerships of education institutions and the private sector (2021).

#### 2. CONSIDERING:

- a. the ongoing work of the Council of Europe's Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI) regarding the development of a Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law;
- b. the Council of Europe's report "Artificial Intelligence and Education – A critical view through the lens of human rights, democracy and the rule of law" (2022), more specifically the provisional needs analysis;
- c. the UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, adopted in November 2021 at the 41<sup>st</sup> General Conference;
- d. the UNESCO's Recommendation on Open Educational Resources, adopted in November 2019 at the 40<sup>th</sup> General Conference;
- e. the priorities of the European Commission's Digital Education Action Plan 2021 – 2027, in particular the actions to support technology use and the development of digital competences in education;
- f. the European Commission's proposal for an Artificial Intelligence Act, for which the European Parliament adopted its negotiating position on 16 June 2023;



- g. the Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market for Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act);
  - h. the objectives of the European Union's Digital Decade 2030 and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) adopted by the European Commission on June 30, 2023;
  - i. the OECD Council Recommendation on Artificial Intelligence (AI) (2019), which builds on the principles of human-centred values and fairness and stipulates that stakeholders in Artificial Intelligence should respect the rule of law, human rights and democratic values throughout the lifecycle of the AI system.
3. ACKNOWLEDGE the rapid development and complexity of Artificial Intelligence systems and data analytics and their profound impact on education and on the rights of people in education, in particular vulnerable groups, including minors, people with disabilities and special needs, migrants and refugees;
  4. RECOGNISE the need for promotion and for regulation guaranteeing the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the use of Artificial Intelligence systems and data analytics in educational contexts;
  5. RECOGNISE also the opportunities brought by emerging digital technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence systems, in daily life, including education and learning, for sustaining and advancing thriving democratic societies [e.g. promoting active democratic participation and boosting dynamism, creativity and innovation, in economic and social terms];
- 5bis. TAKE INTO ACCOUNT the potential effects and risks of the use of Artificial Intelligence systems for behaviour, child development, and the capacity of educators and learners to act, as well as the individual and collective socio-economic repercussions for the future of work outside the context of education;
6. RECOGNISE the need for curricula and study programmes to address both the technological dimension of Artificial Intelligence systems and their impact on daily life;
  7. DRAW ATTENTION to the importance of ensuring that:
    - a. the use of Artificial Intelligence systems and data analytics in education settings protects human rights, supports democracy and promotes the rule of law, and
    - b. everyone understands to an appropriate level how AI works and what potential impact it has on our lives;
  8. REAFFIRM the commitment of member States to ensure that every person has access to equitable and inclusive education and enjoys the right to education as enshrined in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ETS No. 5) and its Protocols, and that this right shall be fully respected, protected and fulfilled, as Artificial Intelligence systems and data analytics continue to develop;
  9. UNDERLINE the potential added value and contribution of a sectoral instrument setting out for education the principles and undertakings for the implementation of the draft Council Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law;

10. WELCOME the proposal for developing a (i) legal instrument\* to regulate the use of Artificial Intelligence systems in education to promote and to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law applying the provisions of the future Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law of the Council of Europe to the sector of education;
11. WELCOME the proposal for developing (ii) a Committee of Ministers recommendation to ensure that teaching and learning about AI incorporates the impact of AI on human rights, democracy and the rule of law and prioritises the active participation and agency of teachers and learners;
12. INVITE the Committee of Ministers to instruct the Steering Committee for Education to prepare the aforementioned documents;
13. INVITE the Council of Europe member States, the European Commission and other key international actors to collaborate closely to contribute to the implementation of this resolution.

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\* A preparatory study is underway to identify the specific needs of the education sector for a regulatory framework **and to explore the type of instrument most appropriate for this endeavour.**

#### **Resolution 4**

#### **on the Council of Europe Education Strategy 2030 “Learners first – Education for today’s and tomorrow’s democratic societies”**

We, Ministers responsible for Education, meeting in Strasbourg, France, for the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference on 28-29 September 2023:

1. HAVING REGARD to the results of the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held in Reykjavik on 16 and 17 May 2023, which agreed to strengthen the Council of Europe and its action in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
2. HAVING REGARD to the European Cultural Convention (ETS 018) and the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the recognition of qualifications in the European region (Lisbon Recognition Convention) (ETS 165);
3. COMMITTED to upholding the Reykjavík Principles for Democracy and to promoting, as a matter of priority the participation of young people in democratic life and decision-making processes, notably through educational initiatives on human rights and fundamental democratic values such as pluralism, inclusion, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability;
4. RECALLING the need to preserve and enhance the Council of Europe’s main acquis in the field of education and higher education, as set out through the standards of the following legal instruments and tools:
  - a. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2001) 15 on history teaching in twenty-first century Europe;
  - b. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)6 on the public responsibility for higher education and research;
  - c. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 on the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education;
  - d. Recommendation CM/Rec(2011) 6 on intercultural dialogue and the image of the other in history teaching;
  - e. Recommendation CM/Rec (2011) 4 on education for global interdependence and solidarity
  - f. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 on ensuring quality education;
  - g. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)10 on developing and promoting digital citizenship education;
  - h. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)9 on fostering a culture of ethics in the teaching profession;
  - i. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)1 on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture;
  - j. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)5 on passing the remembrance of the Holocaust and preventing crimes against humanity;
  - k. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2022) 18 on countering education fraud;
  - l. the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture;
  - m. the Common European Framework of Reference for languages.
5. BEARING IN MIND the Council of Europe Youth Sector strategy 2030; the Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027), the Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma and

Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025), the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023), and the Council of Europe work in the field of internet governance and Artificial Intelligence;

6. ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of achieving coherence and synergy with the work of all relevant international stakeholders in the education field, in particular with the European Union, the United Nations and the OECD;
7. RECOGNISING the role of the Council of Europe as a regional organisation in the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Education and in the implementation of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, and its contribution at European level to the achievement of this goal by assisting member States in targeting the development of policies and actions in this field;
8. RECALLING that the sustainability of any democratic society relies on the creativity, dynamism, awareness of challenges, social commitment, competences and meaningful participation of its young people;
9. RESOLVE that the Council of Europe's education sector should aim to enable learners throughout Europe to actively uphold, defend, promote and benefit from the Council of Europe's core values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, in particular through initiatives in the member States that:
  - a. Place a strong emphasis on the creation of curricula and study programmes that support learners' needs, focus on building learners' self-confidence and developing the competences needed to live in democratic and pluralistic societies;
  - b. Raise awareness of and support the upholding of learners' rights;
  - c. Aim at improving the status and provision of professional development opportunities for education professionals in Europe;
  - d. Provide learning environments within the educational institutions, in person and online, that enable learners to practice exercising their rights and responsibilities in a flexible, open, and secure way;
  - e. Promote the democratic participation of all learners and members of the educational community in the governance of educational systems and institutions.
10. RESOLVE that the following should be regarded as the thematic priorities of the Council of Europe education sector strategy "*Learners first – Education for today's and tomorrow's democratic societies*" and should inform its work until 2030.

**I. Renewing the democratic and civic mission of education, with special emphasis on:**

- a. Placing democracy and democratic citizenship at the heart of education at all levels by promoting the development of competences that foster democratic culture and intercultural understanding in all subject areas, as well as outside the formal educational curriculum and through a holistic institutional approach;
- b. Promoting and protecting fundamental democratic values across the European Higher Education Area, by fostering active citizenship and competences for democratic culture in all study programmes and where academic freedom is protected;
- c. Raising awareness of and support the upholding of learners' rights especially in relation to matters of a right to student-centred **learning and teaching**, privacy, data protection and freedom of expression, including by promoting a Council of Europe Student Rights' Charter;

- d. Enhancing educators' competences to promote participation, equality, equity and inclusion, plurilingualism, interculturalism, and sustainable development, and to enhance trust between sciences and society,,,,,,,,;
- e. Building synergies between formal education and non-formal and informal learning activities to promote the development of a culture of democracy and human rights in schools and higher education institutions but also in community education centres and within families.

**II. Enhancing education's social responsibility and responsiveness, with special emphasis on:**

- a. Promoting the social responsibility and responsiveness of education to social, linguistic, cultural diversity and climate change while working to enhance inclusion and equity for all learners at all levels of education systems, from early childhood to higher and further education;
- b. Ensuring gender equality and opportunities for equitable access to all levels of education and in the transition from one level to another for all learners, including vulnerable groups, migrants and refugees;
- c. Supporting initial and in-service training of teachers to focus on developing the competences of education professionals to support inclusive teaching and learning;
- d. Building a culture of trust in education institutions by promoting democratic culture, ethics, transparency, integrity and enhancing the accountability of all actors in education;
- e. Promoting the social dimension in the internationalisation of schools and higher education by ensuring equal access for all to the learning opportunities offered by national and international mobility programmes for learning and training, and by actively addressing obstacles to mobility for vulnerable, disadvantaged, or underrepresented groups of learners.

**III. Advancing education through a human rights-based digital transformation:**

- a. Strengthening digital citizenship education as a lifelong process to prepare learners for full participation in today's and tomorrow's digital democratic societies;
- b. Ensuring that the introduction and teaching of Artificial Intelligence and other emerging digital technologies in education and higher education takes place within legal frameworks that prioritise and facilitate the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law and support learners' agency, well-being and cognitive, social and emotional development;
- c. Ensuring equitable access to existing and emerging digital technologies (platforms, devices, tools, and resources) for all learners without discrimination, including access in schools, libraries, and public institutions and the balanced use of age-appropriate technologies in these settings;
- d. Providing learning environments (online, offline, hybrid) that encourage and enable learners to participate and exercise their rights and responsibilities in a flexible and open manner, with an inclusive, safe and secure climate without fear of retribution;
- e. Fostering continuous professional development opportunities that will enable education professionals to anticipate, keep pace with and enhance their capacity/ability to make best educational use of Artificial Intelligence and other emerging digital technologies;

- f. Making full use of the potential offered by the application of digital solutions as a means of ensuring the accessibility and integrity of data relating to students, qualifications, and scholarships while monitoring / tracking new technological developments that would threaten their ethical use;
  - g. Encouraging partnerships between the education, public, private and civil sectors that are in line with relevant national, European and international standards to harness the know-how, innovation and power to uphold the right of all learners to inclusive and equitable quality education at all stages of the digital transformation.
11. We, Ministers, RESOLVE that the above priorities:
- 1. should be underpinned by the following principles, through which the Council of Europe engages with young people: equal opportunities, **active** participation, transparency and collaboration, mutual respect and trust, inclusiveness, anti-discrimination, sustained commitment;
  - 2. and should be implemented through:
    - a. intergovernmental co-operation within the framework of the programme of activities of the Steering Committee for Education, its subordinate bodies, specialised networks and relevant intergovernmental bodies of the Council of Europe;
    - b. regional and bilateral **aid and support** initiatives and measures to education policy development in member States;
    - c. **co-operation** between the intergovernmental programmes and the Partial Agreements: the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) and the Observatory on History teaching in Europe (OHTE), with a view to ensuring complementarity and harnessing results relevant for the intergovernmental language and history programmes;
    - d. ensuring better use of the existing and development, where appropriate, of new national implementation action plans and partnerships that would foster co-operation between policy makers, practitioners, researchers and stakeholders' representatives, as well as peer learning activities and exchanges of best practices in the field of education and higher education including the European Higher Education Area;
    - e. review, periodic evaluation and comparative studies through public funding to identify gaps and common concerns and priorities to enable the development of evidence-based policies at European level;
    - f. targeted co-operation with the European Union, UNESCO, OECD, civil society organisations, other public and private stakeholders involved in areas which are relevant to the Council of Europe education sector.
12. We INVITE the Committee of Ministers to put into action and periodically assess the Education Strategy 2030 "Learners first – Education for today's and tomorrow's democratic societies" through successive programmes and budgets of the Council of Europe up to 2030.

## **Resolution 5**

### **on the establishment of a European Year of Digital Citizenship Education in 2025 in all Council of Europe member States (DCEY2025)**

We Ministers responsible for Education, meeting in Strasbourg, France, for the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference on 28-29 September 2023,

#### 1. HAVING REGARD to:

- a. to the results of the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held in Reykjavik on 16 and 17 May 2023, which agreed to strengthen the Council of Europe and its action in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law by adopting a declaration on the situation of children in Ukraine, democratic principles, recommitting to the European Convention on Human Rights and developing tools to meet new challenges in the field of technology and the environment;
- b. the Council of Europe Digital Agenda 2022-2025;
- c. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment;
- d. the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on developing and promoting digital citizenship education that invites member States to support the establishment of a European Year of Digital Citizenship Education;
- e. the Ministerial Declaration "Citizenship education in the digital era" adopted at the Meeting of Ministers of Education on 26 November 2019 in Paris;
- f. the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture;
- g. the Guidelines to support equitable partnerships of education institutions and the private sector as part of the digital transformation of education developed by the Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) in 2021.

#### 2. CONSIDERING that:

- a. the complexity and rapid development of the digital environment and emerging technologies and have profound impact on societies and economies, as well as on education and the lives of all citizens and their human rights such as freedom of expression, anti-discrimination and participation;
- b. the digital environment provides an unprecedented means for people to express themselves, to assemble and participate, and opens new opportunities to increase access to education for vulnerable groups including minors, people with disabilities and special needs, and migrants and refugees and improve access, equity, equality and inclusion in education;
- c. digital citizenship education and digital literacy can contribute to combatting gender-based stereotypes and their effects on the online and offline world, and may thus contribute, inter alia to encouraging girls and women to choose science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields and ensure that all citizens benefit fully from the digital revolution;
- d. the priorities of the European Commission's Digital Education Action Plan, in particular the actions to support technology use and the development of digital competences in education;
- e. the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, and in particular SDG 4 which aims at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all in a responsible, balanced approach.

3. MINDFUL of the ten digital domains of citizenship and digital literacy promoted by the Council of Europe – conceptually divided into three clusters; “Being online”, “Well-being online” and “Rights online” – that underpin the overall concept of digital citizenship and can be used as a framework for placing the competences for democratic culture into the digital environment;
4. ACKNOWLEDGE the Council of Europe’s work on digital citizenship education and the policy instruments, guidelines, educational and awareness-raising resources that were developed within that framework;
5. TAKE NOTE of the Council of Europe’s report “Digital citizenship education from a parent’s perspective and its recommendations”;
6. REAFFIRM the importance of setting digital citizenship education as a priority for policy makers in the field of education and higher education;
7. RECOGNISING the need:
  - a. to raise awareness of the importance of digital citizenship education and literacy in enabling citizens to live together in an inclusive, democratic society;
  - b. to deepen public understanding, especially of professionals in education and policy makers, parents and carers, of what Digital Citizenship Education is for young Europeans and why it matters to them;
  - c. to increase understanding of the importance of competences for a democratic culture including the digital culture (as developed in the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture), and ways that they can be developed at home, in school and in community (offline and online);
  - d. to bring to the notice of the widest possible public the advantages of being a digital citizen with sufficient knowledge and critical understanding of the digital environment to exploit the opportunities and overcome its challenges;
  - e. to collect and disseminate information about the skills, methods (especially innovative methods) and tools involved in the teaching and learning of digital citizenship education, including those developed within other international initiatives;
  - f. to link the work of the Council of Europe in this field with that of other organisations, in particular UNESCO and the EU, on digital education, digital learning and digital literacy;
  - g. to contribute at the level of the European region to the UN agenda on SDG4 and the global initiatives launched by the 2022 UN Transforming Education Summit concerning the digital transformation of education.
8. WELCOME the proposal to establish a European year on digital citizenship education;
9. RESOLVE that the year 2025 to be declared as 2025 European Year of Digital Citizenship Education;
10. INVITE governments of member States to:
  - a. promote the 2025 European Year of Digital Citizenship Education at the national and international level and create targeted campaigns on a national scale, with support and guidance from the Council of Europe and other major institutions;



- b. provide the necessary means and resources including funding through voluntary contributions to support the preparations for and implementation of the 2025 European Year of Digital Citizenship Education;
  - c. involve all relevant stakeholders including education professionals and learners in the design, implementation and evaluation of digital citizenship education activities throughout the year, including through the provision of appropriate resources and training;
  - d. pursue and encourage co-operation at the national level in designing and implementing strategies, initiatives, projects and events to promote and develop digital citizenship education and the use of digital technologies in education;
  - e. share on an ongoing basis sense-making practices, pedagogical innovations and educational resources to support digital citizenship education throughout 2025 and beyond.
11. INVITE the Committee of Ministers to mandate the Steering Committee for Education for the organisation and the evaluation of the 2025 European Year of Digital Citizenship Education through a specific voluntary contributions-based programme on digital citizenship education;
12. INVITE the Council of Europe member States, the European Commission and other key international actors to collaborate closely to contribute to the implementation of the 2025 European Year of Digital Citizenship Education.