

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

2023



Key activities, Programmes
and Highlights

FOREWORD

Villano QIRIAZI

—
HEAD OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
COUNCIL OF EUROPE



The year 2023 was a period of transformation for the Council of Europe's education sector, marked by the preparation of a new programme of activities for the years 2024 - 2027, aimed at supporting member states' efforts to strengthen democratic culture, enhance the social dimension and integrity of education, and harness the potential of digital technologies.

As societies continue to deal with global challenges and crises, the role of education in shaping resilient and informed citizens has never been more important.

This report reflects the collective achievements of the Council of Europe's Education Department over the past year. It underlines our commitment to promoting democratic values, supporting digital transformation and promoting quality education accessible to all, in line with the decisions of the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government and the adoption of the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy.

In 2023, a new long-term strategy for the Council of Europe's education sector, '#LEARNERS FIRST' 2024-2030, was also adopted at the 26th session of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education. The Intergovernmental Steering Committee for

Education (CDEDU) has begun to implement it, ensuring that education systems are well equipped to meet the challenges of tomorrow, with learners at the centre of these efforts.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the Member States, policy-makers, education experts, stakeholders involved in the work of the Steering Committee for Education and to all my colleagues in the Education Department who have contributed to achieving the objectives of our programme in five main areas: formal and non-formal education, higher and further education, history teaching, language policy and digital transformation. Their commitment to promoting democratic, inclusive and innovative educational environments has been crucial to the success of our programme.

I am confident that the actions and programmes described in this report and their results will continue to inspire and guide our collective efforts to shape the future of quality education in Europe.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Villano QIRIAZI', with a horizontal line underneath.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ACTIVITY REPORT 2023

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*All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

ACTIVITIES OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT BODIES

CDEDU

The Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) oversees the Council of Europe's programmes in the field of education and advises the Committee of Ministers on education issues.

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 taking into account the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture. **The CDEDU focuses on Council of Europe priority areas and cover all levels and strands of education.**

The CDEDU has 48 members (countries), 16 observer organisations and 1 observer country (Israel).

The CDEDU counts among its observers highly representative organisations. Their membership in terms of number of member organisations, the number of countries represented and the reputation and the standing of member organisations in their respective national education systems are of particular importance to the CDEDU.

MAIN TASKS



Develop Recommendations and Legal Instruments

Draw up recommendations to help states develop education policies aligning with organisational principles and standards.



Policy Advice

Provide advice to policymakers and education professionals in implementing education policies.



Promote Education Reforms

Promote reforms in education systems and policies to enhance democratic competences and develop the European Higher Education Area.



Promote Co-operation and Understanding

Facilitate cooperation and understanding between member states.



Exchange Ideas and Practices

Exchange ideas, information, and good practices among members on educational issues.



Reference Framework for Democratic Culture

Provide a framework to assess learners' achievements in citizenship, human rights, and intercultural dialogue.



Promote Quality Education

Promote quality education to foster safe learning environments, social inclusion, gender equality, and anti-discrimination.



Right to Education for All

Develop actions to ensure the right to education for all, especially for vulnerable groups.

CDEDU PLENARY SESSIONS

Education Strategy 2030 and Key Initiatives

In 2023, the Committee prepared the Resolution and a new Strategy for 2024-2030 "*#Learners first: Education for Today's and Tomorrow's Democratic Societies*". This strategy aims to increase the impact on national education systems and reinforce the central role of children and young people in the educational mission.

The Committee discussed several new initiatives, including the organisation of the European Year of Education for Digital Citizenship in 2025, the development of a legal instrument on education for democracy, the drafting of the Council of Europe Students' Charter, and the preparation of a resilience toolbox to ensure the right to education during emergencies and crises. Additionally, there was a focus on developing a standard-setting instrument on the teaching of artificial intelligence and a legal instrument on the application of artificial intelligence in education systems, aligning with the Council of Europe Summit priorities and the proposed Education Strategy.

Digital Citizenship and Artificial Intelligence

The Committee approved the proposal for the 2025 European Year of Digital Citizenship Education and tasked the Secretariat with exploring possibilities for cooperation and co-financing with partner institutions and national bodies through voluntary contributions, including the European Commission. The Terms of Reference for Digital Citizenship Education Promoters were also adopted.

The Committee expressed satisfaction with the progress of the intergovernmental project on Artificial Intelligence and Education. The Committee welcomed the priorities for the 2024-2027 programme of activities in this area and the developments regarding artificial intelligence's impact on education.

CDEDU decided to launch the review of implementation of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on developing and promoting digital citizenship education.

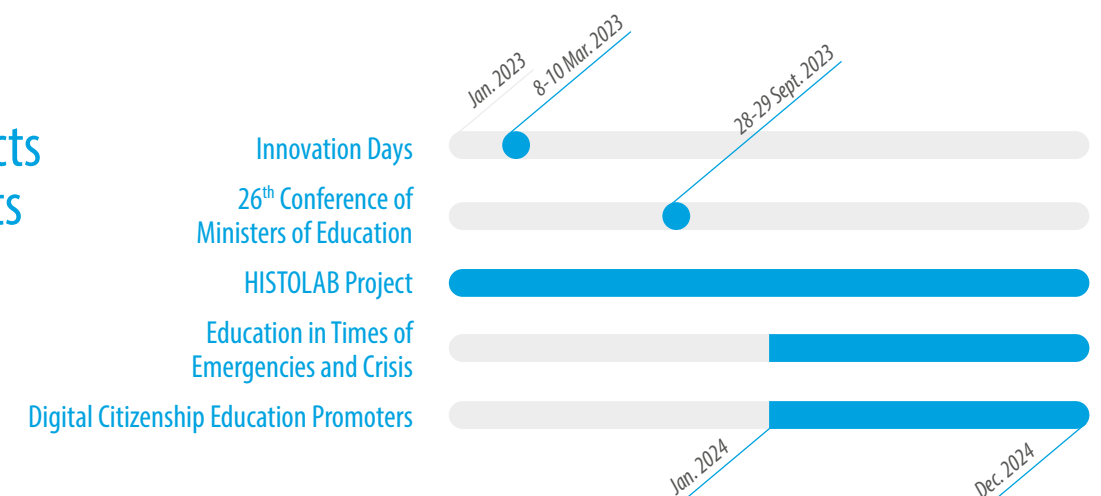
Language and Higher Education Programmes

The Committee welcomed the new Language Education programme for 2024-2027 and agreed to establish an Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Language Education Policy, including representatives from both the CEDU and the ECML Governing Board.

The Committee took note of the latest developments in the Council of Europe Higher Education programme. This included welcoming the declaration adopted at the extraordinary session of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee, which limits the participation of the Russian Federation and Belarus in its governing bodies. With the accession of Turkmenistan and Monaco in 2023, the Lisbon Recognition Convention now has 56 Contracting Parties. The Committee adopted the CDEDU Sub-Group on Higher Education Terms of Reference for 2024-2025.



Key Projects And Events



Main Themes and Initiatives



Members of the CDEDU Bureau 2023

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Department of Education Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
Reykjavik, Iceland

RAPPOREUR ON ROMA AND TRAVELLER ISSUES

Ms Krassimira TODOROVA
Chief Expert

Ministry of Education and Science
Bulgaria

Ethics, Transparency, and Resilience

The Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare a feasibility study on establishing a European Observatory on Education Fraud as a priority objective for implementing CM/Recommendation (2022) 18 on countering education fraud. The revised 2022-2025 Terms of Reference for the Council of Europe Platform on Ethics, Transparency, and Integrity in Education (ETINED) were adopted.

Regarding resilience in education, the Committee noted progress in the project «Education in Times of Emergencies and Crisis». The Secretariat was instructed to further develop a toolkit to support public authorities in managing education during crises, including piloting in member states, digitalisation, and creating an ETool. The Committee also took note of DEMRED, a joint project with the European Wergeland Centre.

History Education and International Cooperation

The Committee welcomed the new organisation of the Council of Europe History Education programme and noted the implementation of the intergovernmental Programme on History Education, as well as the «Remembrance of the Shoah and Prevention of Crimes against Humanity». The first thematic report was presented by OHTE Secretariat on «Pandemics and natural disasters as reflected in history teaching», highlighting the main activities of the HISTOLAB Project, including the results of the European Innovation Days in History Education held in March 2023 in Brussels.

The Committee also noted the latest developments related to cooperation with UNESCO regarding the implementation of the SDG4 Education Agenda. The CDEDU discussed the results of the Transforming Education Summit, and emphasised the importance of

education in providing children and young people with the necessary references to grow up with democratic values in culturally diverse societies and to take an active part in protecting Europe's cultural heritage.

Preparation of the 26th Session of the Council of Europe Ministers of Education

In preparation for the 26th session of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education, the CDEDU discussed five draft resolutions on the renewal of the civic mission of education, education in times of emergencies and crisis, harnessing the potential of artificial intelligence in and through education, the Education Strategy 2030, and the establishment of a European Year of Digital Citizenship Education in 2025 in all Council of Europe member states (DCEY2025). These resolutions were approved and sent for final adoption at the 26th session of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education.

The Committee examined the final version of the Education Strategy and approved it, along with the respective draft resolutions.

The extraordinary session of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee took place on 28 February 2023 in Paris. The meeting adopted a [declaration](#) on restricting the participation of the Russian Federation and Belarus.

The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region highlighted the essential role of higher education in promoting peace, understanding, and tolerance. In the context of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine, with Belarus's involvement, the Committee examined the significant impact on education for children and young people in Ukraine and neighboring countries.

Condemnations and Restrictions

The Committee strongly condemned Russia's aggression and expressed deep concern over the jeopardised right to education due to the destruction of educational institutions in Ukraine. The Committee

fully supported Ukraine and expressed solidarity with its people, higher education institutions, scholars, and students. Gratitude was extended to States Parties supporting Ukrainian refugees.

Representatives from Russia and Belarus were barred from election to any leadership roles or entrusted tasks within the Committee due to the aggression in Ukraine.

Future Steps

The Committee decided to consider further additional restrictions on Russia and Belarus's participation in the Lisbon Recognition Convention's activities.

2023-2025 WORKPLAN — TOP 3 PRIORITIES

1

Finalising the update of the ENIC-NARIC Charter

2

Updating the Revised Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education

3

Drafting a new text on 'digital solutions for recognition of qualifications', taking into account the existing 'Guidelines for national online information systems'



Together with UNESCO, the Council of Europe ensured the Secretariat of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC). The Lisbon Recognition Convention is one of the most ratified Conventions in the Council of Europe and it remains the only legally binding text in the European Higher Education Area.

KEY RESOLUTIONS

Council of Europe Resolution

CM/Res(2022)2 on Russia's membership cessation.

UN General Assembly Resolution

ES-11/1 on the aggression against Ukraine.

UNESCO Executive Board Decision

7 X/EX/Decision 2 on Ukraine's situation.

Council of Europe Statement

On the educational consequences of Russia's aggression.

BFUG Statement

On the suspension of Russia and Belarus from the EHEA.

The Governing Board is the Centre’s executive organ, composed of one representative from each member State. The Board defines and adopts the medium-term programme, monitors its implementation and the management of the Centre’s resources and forwards a report on the Centre’s activities to the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers.

MAIN DECISIONS

- The election of **4 new members** of the Bureau of the Governing Board for a term of two years.
- The adoption of the Centre’s 2024-27 “**Language education at the heart of democracy**” programme - based on the language education priorities identified by the ECML member states in a survey conducted in autumn 2022.
- The establishment of a ‘reserve fund’ for **financing translations into languages** (in addition to English and French), following the decision to further highlight the plurilingual nature of the ECML’s work.
- The invitation of **Ukrainian language** professionals to large-scale ECML programme activities at the cost of the Centre’s budget in 2023.
- The members of the Governing Board also welcomed **Spain’s return to the Centre as the 36th member state of the Enlarged Partial Agreement** in April, rejoining the Centre after an absence of some 10 years. This follows on from the accession of Belgium in 2022 and re-accession of Hungary in 2021.

Governing Board’s Bureau

CHAIR

Ms Claire Extramiana
France

VICE-CHAIRS

Mr. Matthias von Gehlen
Germany

Ms Pille Põiklik
Estonia

BUREAU MEMBERS

Mr. Panagiotis Passas
Greece

Ms Nataša Perić
Montenegro

Ms Wendoline Timmerman
Netherlands

Ms Bronka Straus
Slovenia

BUREAU OBSERVER

Ms Ursula Newby
Austria

The Governing Board is the Observatory’s decision-making body, composed of one representative from each member State. The Board defines and adopts the medium-term and annual programmes, monitors their implementation and the management of the Observatory’s resources. It meets at least once a year.

MAIN DECISIONS

- The election of the **new members of the Bureau** of the Observatory for a mandate of two years.
- The **renewal of the mandate for the 11 members of the Scientific Advisory Council** for a further two years, until 4 June 2025.
- The recommendation to the Committee of Ministers to confirm **the creation of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe**.
- A welcome to **the update on the preparation of the OHTE regular and thematic reports**, along with a proposal to **stimulate debates** around the findings of these reports in the OHTE member states.
- The appointment of the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media / Georg Eckert Institute for the preparation of the **2nd thematic report on Economic Crises in History Teaching**, to be published in 2024.
- The **approval of the 2022 report on the OHTE activities** and the mandate for the Secretariat to transmit it to the Committee of Ministers for their consideration.
- The **approval of the annual programme of activities for 2023**, including the budgetary allocation for 2023, and the directive for the Secretariat to implement the workplan accordingly and monitor the expenditure.
- A welcome to Ukraine as an observer member of the OHTE.

The Governing Board of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe held its 6th meeting on 9 February 2023 in Strasbourg and online.

Governing Board’s Bureau

CHAIR

Mr Alain Lamassoure
France

VICE-CHAIRS

Mr Dimitris P. Sotiropoulos
Greece

Ms Frances Moss
Ireland

BUREAU MEMBERS

Mr Suren Manukyan Armenia
Ms Luisa Ucha Portugal
Mr Vojko Kunaver Slovenia
Mr Semih Aktekin Türkiye

THEMATIC ACTIVITIES 2023

Formal and non- formal Education



In 2023, the Education Department launched a project to develop guidance on integrating the RFCDC with Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). A Working Group, composed of education experts from 20 member states and observer organisations of the Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU), was formed to contribute to this initiative. This collaborative effort aims to align democratic competences with sustainable development goals and is expected to continue throughout 2024 and 2025.

Member States participating in implementation of the RFCDC

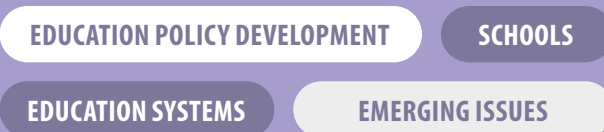


Member States participating in implementation of the RFCDC

EPAN Participation



Areas Reviewed



RFCDC Guidance Document on Vocational Education and Training

During the **11th session** of the Council of Europe **Education Policy Advisors' Network (EPAN)**, held in Strasbourg on 25-26 May 2023, 45 participants from 36 member states discussed the progress of implementing the RFCDC. A key initiative was the project aimed at **creating a guidance document for the implementation of the RFCDC in Vocational Education and Training (VET)**.

An Expert Group, comprising delegates from 15 member states and several organisations, was established in 2022 to lead this effort. The guidance document, enriched with 30 examples of good practice, was finalised in December 2023 and translated into French, with member states invited to translate it into their official languages.

Review of the Implementation of the RFCDC

The CDEDU Steering Committee on Education as part of its Programme of Activities on Education for Democracy 2022-2023 launched a review of the implementation of the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture. The main aim of this study was to understand the extent to which the RFCDC has been used in formal education systems of member States since 2016, including its influence on policies and practices.

The report offered an overview of the **conceptual definitions guiding the study and the research design used**. It analysed the main findings in the implementation of the RFCDC in the following areas:

- ↳ Education policy development;
- ↳ Education systems;
- ↳ Schools;
- ↳ Addressing current and emerging issues such as violence in schools, violent extremism and radicalisation; climate change; media and informational literacy; ethical implications of artificial intelligence (AI); and education in times of crisis;
- ↳ Main opportunities and challenges related to the integration of the RFCDC in education systems.

RFCDC KEY INITIATIVES

Defining the relevant guidance information

To support policy makers, curriculum developers, teachers, trainers, and learners to implement the RFCDC and to develop a culture of democracy.

Defining the scope of the VET areas

Involving the stakeholders

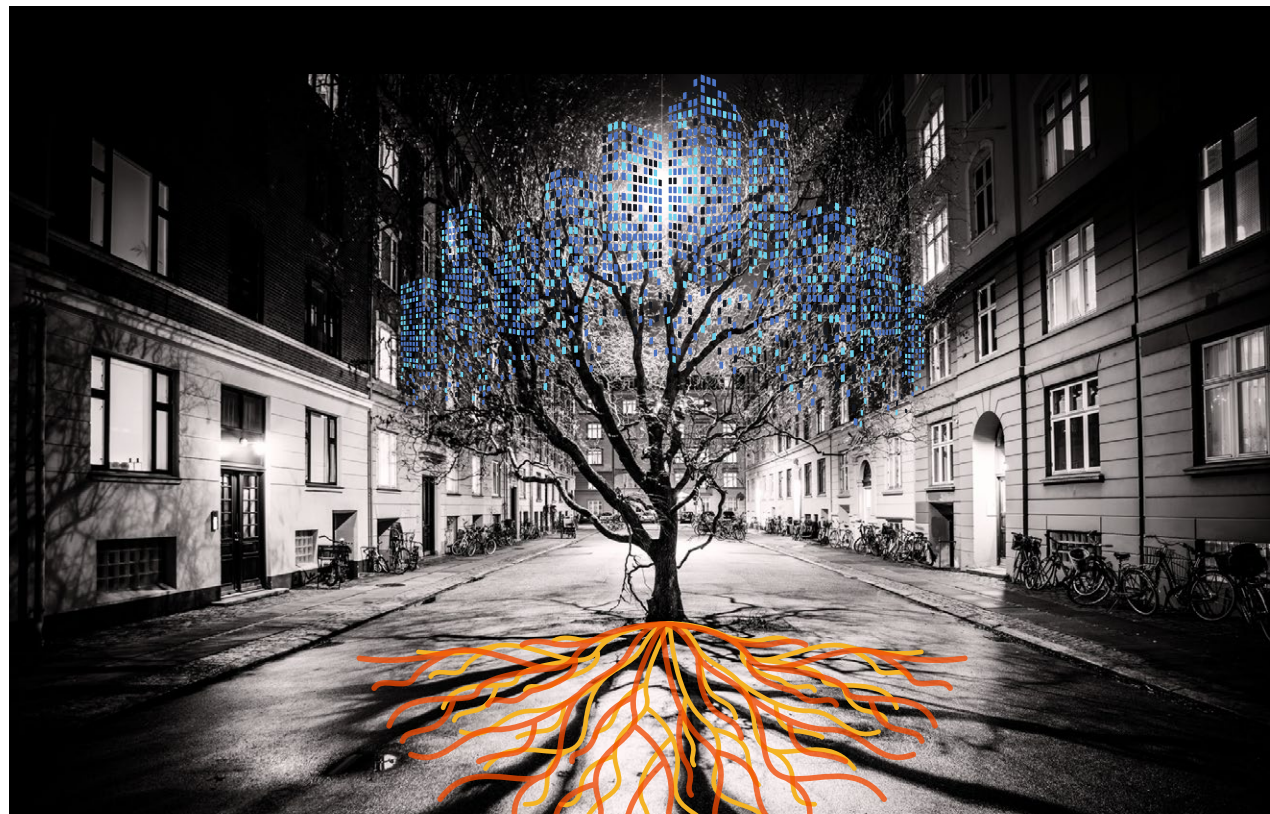
In participating in the process of writing of the guidance document on RFCDC and VET.

Writing the guidance document on RFCDC and VET

Translating the guidance document

In French and Member's State languages.

The report concluded presenting policy pointers for improvement with regards to the implementation of the RFCDC in key areas of action, and how to support further member States in undertaking this task. This work will be further carried out within the European Space for Citizenship Education.



Education in Times of Emergencies and Crisis

In response to the escalating challenges posed by emergencies and crises, a series of focus working groups meetings were organised under the auspices of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU).

Through collaborative efforts, the working group developed six fundamental principles to evaluate the resilience of education ecosystems from a multi-level governance perspective.

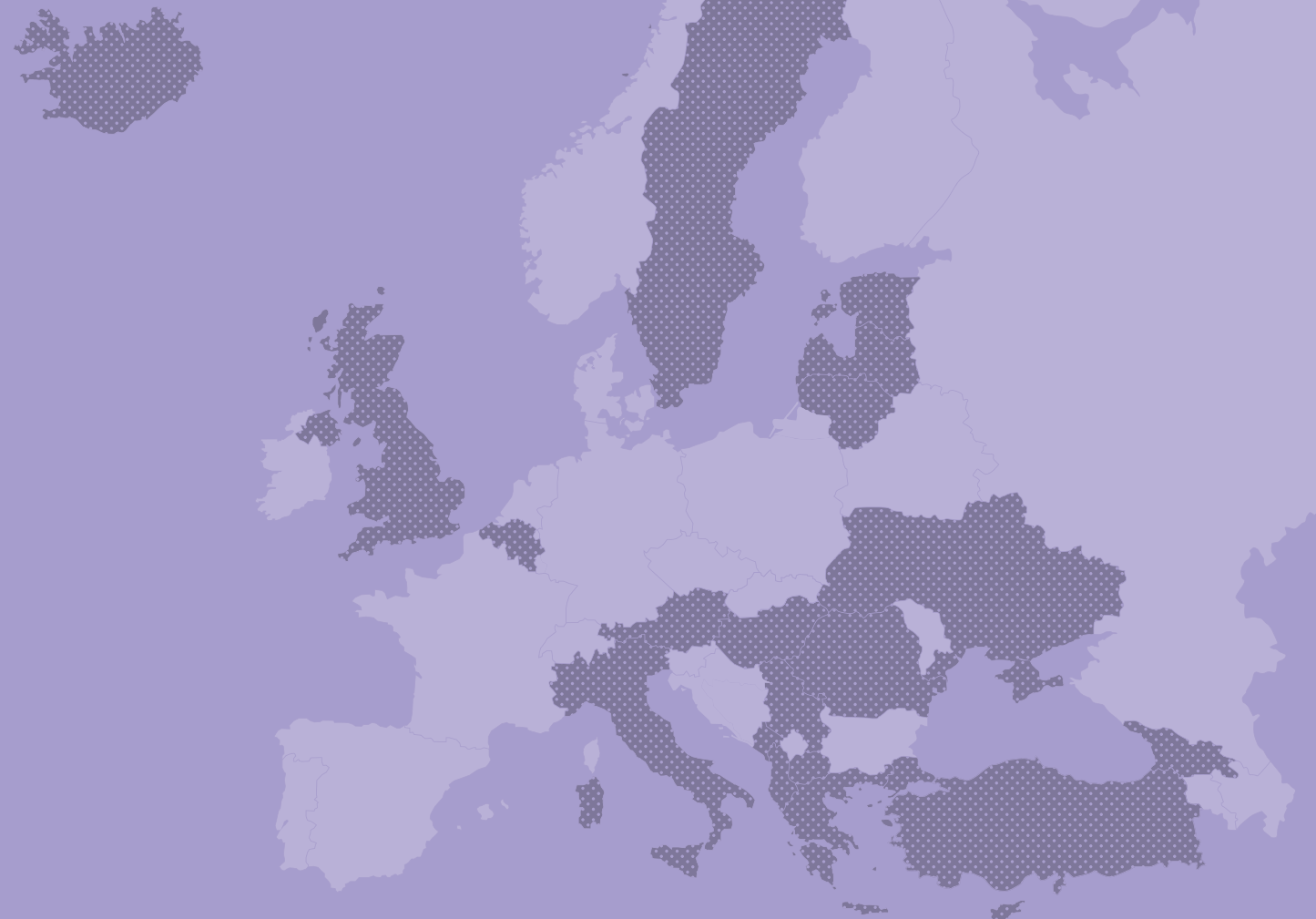
These principles serve as a guiding framework for member States to cultivate inclusive and equitable quality education, irrespective of the crisis at hand. Subsequently, a comprehensive toolkit «Education in times of emergencies and crisis toolkit - EDURES» was formulated to operationalise these principles.

The EDURES Toolkit promotes a holistic understanding of the role of education in community resilience and robustness.

On the one hand, it enables public authorities to assess the resilience of education systems under stress and to identify relevant actions to improve it. On the other hand, the competencies and assets of education systems should complement resilience-based contingency and strategic planning at the community level. At the 26th session of the Council of Europe's

Standing Conference of Ministers of Education, which took place in Strasbourg on 28-29 September 2023, the Ministers adopted the resolution "On education in times of emergencies and crisis", that reaffirmed the engagement of the Council of Europe and of member States on this issue. The toolkit that supports the implementation of this resolution was also presented with a view to its piloting in the selected member states in 2024 and 2025.

Member States participating in the EDURES development Focus Working Group



Member States participating in the EDURES development Focus Working Group

The 6 Fundamental Principles

STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE

ENSURING CONTINUITY

FOSTERING CO-OPERATION

EXPANDING THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY

INCREASING EFFICIENCY



Higher and Further Education

In 2023, the Council of Europe's Higher Education programme focused on several key initiatives to enhance the recognition of qualifications, promote democratic values, and ensure transparency and integrity in education.

ENIC-NARIC Networks

Since 1994, the Council of Europe has been actively involved in running the European Network of National Information Centres (ENIC) jointly with UNESCO. This network worked in conjunction with the National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) network, established in 1984 with the European Commission as Secretariat. **The ENIC-NARIC networks support the exchange of qualifications-recognition information, capacity-building activities, and consultative processes** on international normative instruments related to qualifications recognition.

In 2023, the focus of the ENIC and NARIC Networks activities was the organisation of the annual meeting in Stockholm. The meeting included plenary sessions and twelve parallel workshops on recognition issues. The Council of Europe contributed to three workshops on the revision of the ENIC-NARIC Charter, academic integrity, and capacity-building. Additionally, the Council launched a call to support ENIC centres not eligible for the NARIC call, resulting in nine applications and support for six projects from Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

For the efficient functioning of both the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the ENIC and NARIC Networks, continuous renewal was required, addressing new developments in higher education such as digitisation, automatic recognition, micro-credentials, and recognition of non-formal and informal education.

Implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

The Council of Europe continued its efforts to implement the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which included managing its Co-Secretariat and running the ENIC Network jointly with UNESCO. Key initiatives included promoting automatic recognition of qualifications, supporting the democratic mission of higher education, and contributing to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The programme also focused on the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees and a joint EU/Council of Europe project in Italy to support the recognition of refugees' qualifications.

Sub-Group on Higher Education

Through the adoption of its new terms of reference in October 2023, **the CDEDU Sub-Group on Higher Education was reinforced and its membership was enlarged from 13 to 24 members**, comprising representatives from Ministries in charge of higher education, as well as academic representatives and international NGOs. To ensure better coordination of work with the Bologna Process, the Vice-Chair of the EHEA was invited to join the Sub-Group.

The Sub-Group was chaired by Marie-Anne Persoons (Belgium), who was also the CDEDU Chair.

Automatic Recognition

In 2023, the Council of Europe set up an **Ad Hoc Working Group on automatic recognition of qualifications**. The group's main purpose was to advise the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Education on various possibilities and prepare an option paper for establishing a legal text on automatic recognition. The group held four meetings and organised consultations with key stakeholders, including students, higher education institutions, and public authorities. Insights were also gained from the Benelux Secretariat on the functioning of the Multilateral Treaty on Mutual Automatic Recognition of Higher Education qualifications.

MAIN TASKS



Exchange Views on Current Developments

This task involves sharing perspectives and insights on the latest advancements related to establishing the right to automatic recognition. The group leverages trial-and-error experiences across Europe to inform their discussions.



Advise the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Education

The group provides guidance to the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Education by exploring various possibilities and preparing an option paper. This paper aims to establish a legal text on automatic recognition of qualifications.

Recognition of Refugees' Qualifications

There were currently two initiatives implemented in this field:

European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR)

This Council of Europe initiative facilitated the recognition of refugees' qualifications even in the absence of full documentation. Supported by 22 countries and the UNHCR, the EQPR was endorsed by all countries in the European Higher Education Area through the **Rome Communiqué** in 2020. The EQPR helped integrate refugees into their new societies through employment and access to higher education.

The Joint European Union/Council of Europe project 'Supporting an efficient national mechanism of recognition of refugees' qualifications' in Italy

Italy became the first country in which the Council of Europe scaled up the use of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR) methodology through the joint European Union and Council of Europe project "Supporting an Efficient National Mechanism of Recognition of Refugees' Qualifications". This project was co-funded by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument and implemented by the Council of Europe in cooperation with the European Commission Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support.

The general objective of the project was **to support Italian authorities in their efforts to design and foster reforms for recognising refugees' qualifications** through the development of a national coordination mechanism within public sectors, in and beyond academia. Through tailored activities, this technical support contributed to improving the capacity of public administration bodies to process applications for recognising refugees' qualifications and **increased pathways for refugees in regulated professions**.



Democratic Mission of Higher Education

The proceedings of the Forum "Higher Education Leadership for Democracy, Sustainability, and Social Justice" held in Dublin in June 2022 were published in 2023. This work is linked to the fundamental values of the Council of Europe, respecting human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. The Council of Europe has developed a new project on this topic, entitled "Academic Freedom in Action," which will run from 2024 to 2027.

THE 3 MAIN STRANDS

1

Academic Freedom in Action

Mapping the level of protection of academic freedom in member states and formulating recommendations.

2

Democratisation of Science and the Local Mission of Higher Education

Increasing public access, participation, and understanding of scientific knowledge.

3

Digital/AI Challenges in Higher Education

Addressing academic freedom in the digital society and algorithmic discrimination.

Council of Europe Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED)

ETINED is a network of specialists appointed by member states of the Council of Europe and states parties to the European Cultural Convention. Since its launch in 2015, the **ETINED Platform** has been dedicated to promoting a culture of ethics and integrity within the education sector. The Platform has produced guidelines aimed at ensuring ethical practices in the teaching profession and has developed targeted recommendations on academic integrity based on assessments and exchanges with stakeholders in the field.

In July 2022, the Committee of Ministers adopted **Recommendation CM/Rec (2022) 18** on countering education fraud. Following this, the ETINED Platform identified three priority areas for further development.

1 RAISING AWARENESS

- Publication of research studies based on a baseline questionnaire submitted to ETINED delegates.
- Drafting a glossary on education fraud.
- Holding moderated online discussions with renowned speakers on emerging topics related to education fraud.

2 PREVENTION

- Developing strategies and measures to prevent instances of fraud within educational institutions.

3 MONITORING

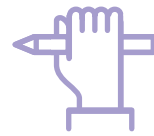
- Implementing systems and processes to monitor and detect education fraud.

ETINED MAIN TASKS



Share Information and Good Practices

Disseminate strategies on transparency and integrity in education, including case studies and research findings.



Develop Answers to Corruption Challenges

Create solutions to combat corruption in education by identifying risks and developing policies.



Create a Virtuous Cycle in Education

Foster a culture of ethical behavior among all education stakeholders to ensure integrity.



Develop Capacity-Building

Provide training and resources to enhance the skills of educators and administrators in promoting transparency.

The 7th ETINED Plenary session took place on 14 and 15 November 2023 in Paris. The main discussions during the Plenary focused on several critical initiatives:

➤ **Setting up an Observatory on Preventing and Countering Fraud in Education**

This new body will be dedicated to overseeing and addressing issues of education fraud.

➤ **Expanding the FraudS+ Project**

The “Student Awareness on Fraud in Education” project aims to increase the participation of Council of Europe member states in efforts to combat education fraud.

➤ **Approving a Glossary of Terms Related to Ethics and Integrity in Education**

A comprehensive glossary designed to standardise and clarify key terms associated with ethics and integrity in the education sector. The final version of the Glossary of Terms can be downloaded [here](#).

Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) and EHEA

The Council of Europe actively participated in the main Steering bodies of the Bologna Process. In 2023 the Council of Europe was also running the EHEA Network of National Qualifications Frameworks correspondents.

The Council of Europe as the consultative member of the EHEA, took part in the meetings of the **Bologna Follow Up Group and the Bologna Board**.

The Council of Europe’s role in the process has been primarily **to support the reforms and to promote the democratic and humanistic values of higher education**, as well as to support the accession of new countries to the Bologna Process.

In addition, the Council of Europe was involved in the following **Working groups in the 2021-2024 Work Programme**: Fundamental Values Working Group, Working Group on Roadmap for San-Marino’s accession to the EHEA, TPG-B on the Lisbon Recognition Convention, TPG-A on Qualifications Frameworks, Network of National Qualifications Frameworks Correspondents.

Language Policy and Practice

In 2023, the Council of Europe continued its dedicated efforts to enhance **language policy and practice** across its member states. Focusing on plurilingual and intercultural education, significant strides were made in the areas of supporting language learning through the **CEFR and its Companion Volume**, providing language support for migrants and refugees, and promoting the inclusion of Roma pupils.

Additionally, the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) marked a pivotal year with the completion of a four-year programme and the adoption of a new one, demonstrating the Council's commitment to fostering language education as a cornerstone of democratic societies.

LANGUAGE POLICY PROGRAMME KEY AREAS

CEFR/CEFR Companion Volume

Three online workshops were held, involving over 500 language professionals who shared their experiences and deepened their understanding of the action-oriented approach and digital tools for language learning. Additionally, a **Reflection Day** with over 40 participants from 22 countries resulted in a new policy document titled "A Guide for the Implementation of Action-Oriented Plurilingual and Intercultural Education."

Language Support for Migrants and Refugees:

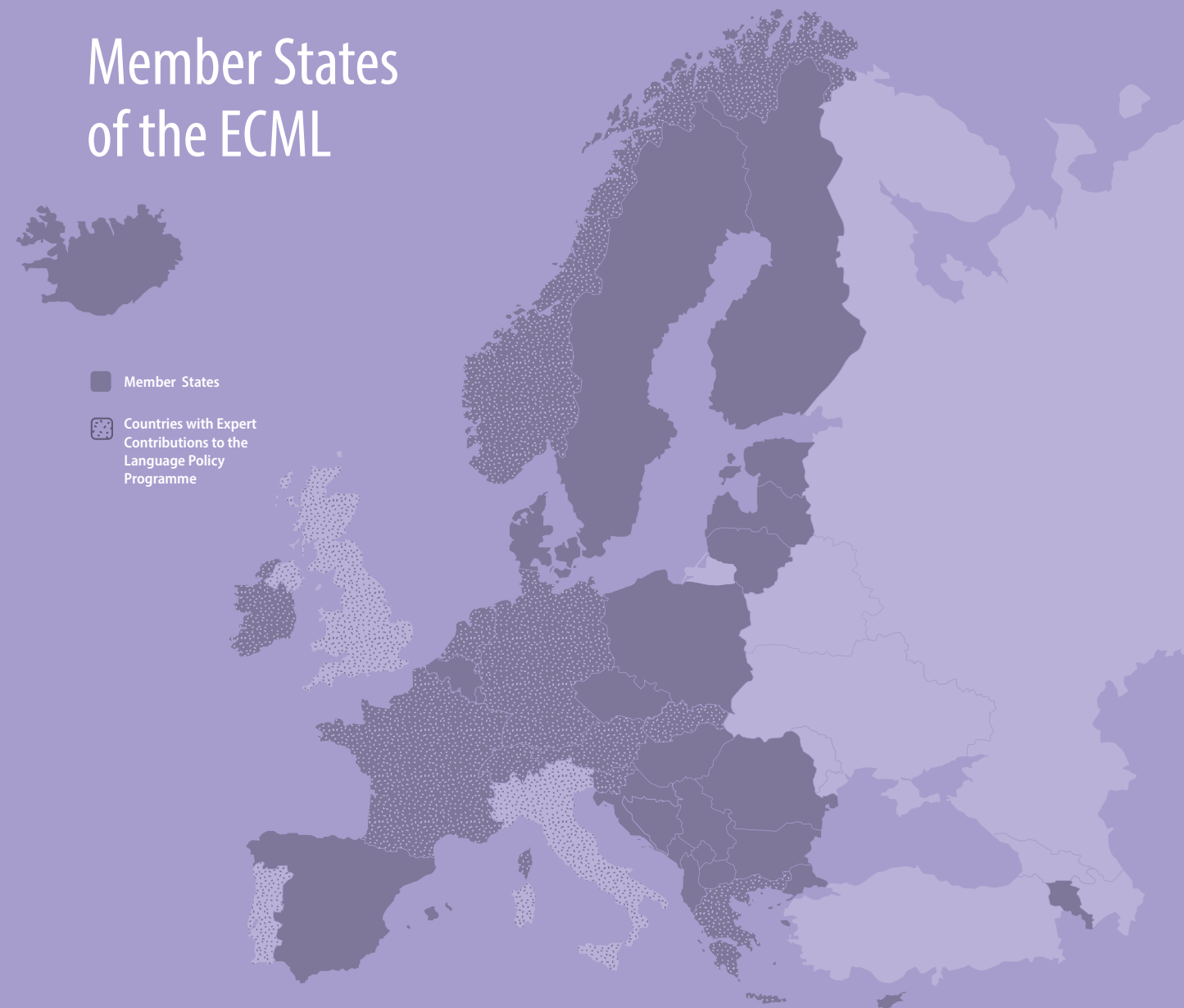
A refreshed **Toolkit** was developed, containing 80 tools, including new and adapted tools for younger learners. A **Guide** was also created for those organising training and support for teachers and volunteers.

Narratives and testimonials from learners and teachers, along with examples of spoken and written production, were collected to help assess literacy and second language learning for adult migrants as the **Literacy and Second Language Learning for the Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LASLIAM)**.

Inclusion of Roma Pupils

The second year of the **Romani-Plurilingual Policy Experimentation** involved 10 schools in Slovenia, Slovakia, and Greece. Regular exchanges among coordinators and project teams ensured the successful completion of action plans. Early reports indicated that including Romani in school activities significantly enhanced student motivation, engagement, and self-esteem.

Member States of the ECML



The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)

2023 marked the completion of the ECML's four-year programme "**Inspiring Innovation in Language Education**" and the adoption of the new programme "**Language Education at the Heart of Democracy**" for 2024-2027.

Approximately 2,000 language education professionals participated in 87 activities across 25 countries, including 46 national capacity-building activities (**ECML Training and Consultancy**) covering various aspects of language education. The **results** of all 9 multilateral projects from the 2020-23 programme were published, culminating in a large-scale **conference in**

Graz with around 130 participants.

The **Cooperation Agreement** with the European Commission entered its 11th year, highlighted by a **successful colloquium** on regional and minority languages and a **summer academy** for language teacher educators. The European Day of Languages saw over 2.2 million visitors to its website in September, with the 2023 motto "Say Yes to Languages" emphasising openness and cultural respect. In April 2023, Spain rejoined the ECML, bringing the total **membership** to 36 member states, the highest level ever.

edl.ecml.at

History Education



In 2023, the Council of Europe made significant progress in enhancing history education across its member states. The focus was on using digital tools, promoting remembrance and awareness, and fostering critical thinking through innovative projects and collaborations. This document outlines the key activities and achievements of the year, including forums, projects on Holocaust remembrance, the establishment of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe, and the HISTOLAB initiative.

Intergovernmental Programme on History Education

The second Forum on “**History Education in the Digital Age**” was held on 7-8 March 2023 in Brussels, following the 2022 Forum on “**Sites of Memories: Learning Spaces for Democracy**” in Belgrade. These forums provide a platform for stakeholders in history education to reflect and discuss key issues.

In the framework of the programme on “**remembrance of the Holocaust and prevention of crimes against humanity**,” the History Education Division represented the Council of Europe in the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) plenary meetings.

During the Croatian presidency of the IHRA, discussions included **joining the “Protect the Facts” campaign to counteract Holocaust denial and distortion.**

The “**Safeguard the Sites**” project emphasised the educational significance of various historical sites, in conjunction with the Faro Convention and the Cultural Routes. Important commemorative dates like 27 January (International Holocaust Remembrance Day) and 2 August (commemoration of the Roma Holocaust/genocide) were highlighted.

In 2023, the Education Department engaged in discussions on “**democratic memory**” at a conference organised by the Spanish authorities, exploring **the connection between “history and memory” and its implications for history education.**

A significant achievement was the development of the exhibition “**Teaching History, Grounding Democracy**,” which parallels the institutional history of the Council of Europe with major events of the 20th and 21st centuries.

This exhibition was inaugurated at the 26th Standing Conference of Ministers of Education of the Council of Europe on 28-29 September 2023 in Strasbourg and showcased at the World Forum for Democracy and the 3rd OHTe Annual Conference.

Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTe)

In 2023, the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTe) successfully concluded its three-year trial period. On 27 September 2023, **the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers confirmed the establishment of the OHTe** through [Resolution CM/Res\(2023\)6](#). The OHTe membership included 16 member and 2 observer states. A major milestone was the release of the first [General Report on the State of History Teaching in Europe](#), which employed various research tools, including surveys and focus groups, to provide comprehensive insights into history education across Europe. The online version of the report, along with its **15 key findings**, was discussed during the 3rd OHTe Annual Conference, and its official publication in English and French is expected in the first quarter of 2024.

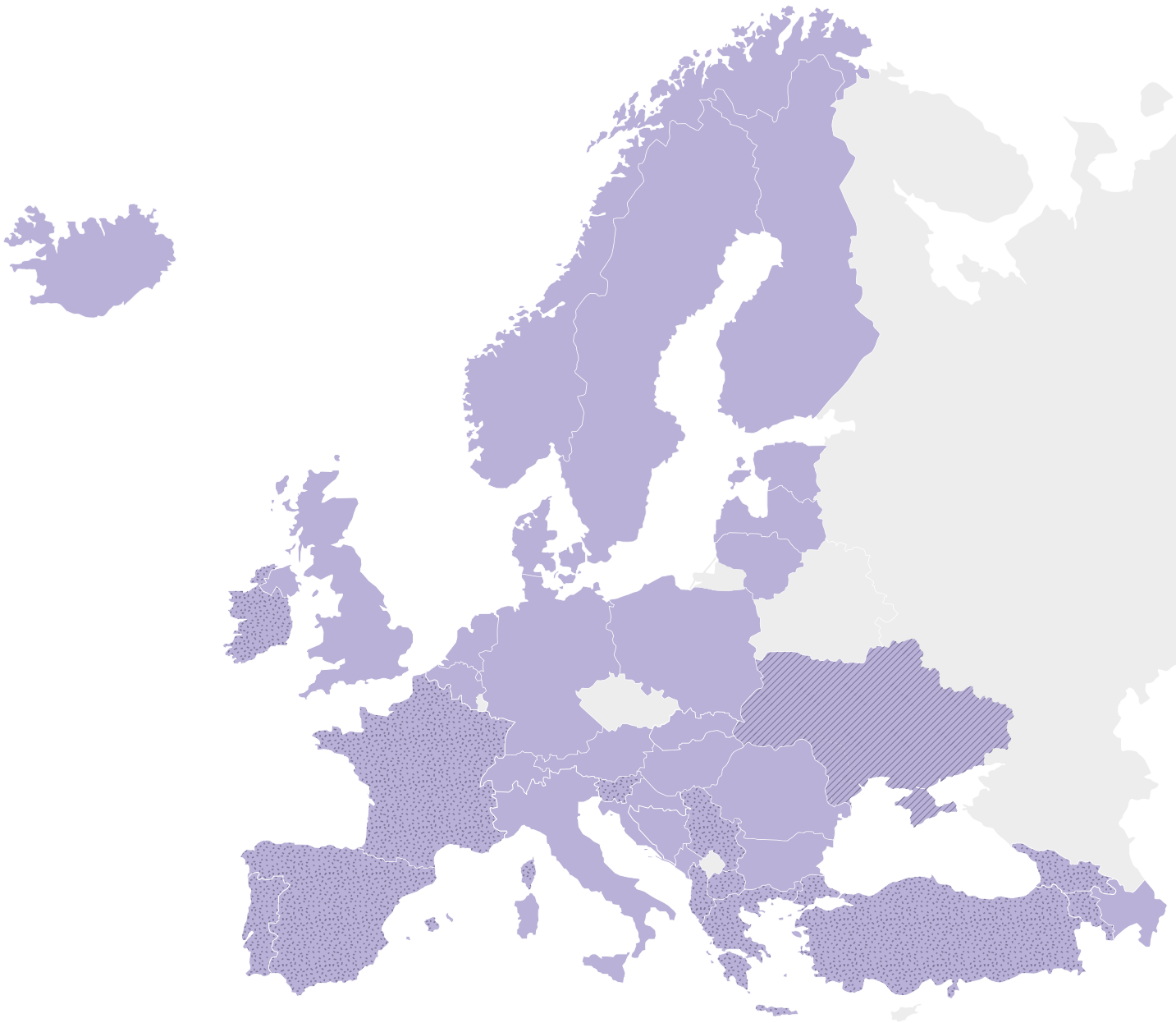
Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTe)

- Member States
- Observer States
- Annual Conference Participants
- Focus Groups Conducted

**27 SEPT.
2023**

**OHTe WAS
CONFIRMED**

Countries covered by the Intergovernmental Programme on History Education



Member States of the Intergovernmental Programme on History Education
 OSTE Member States
 OSTE Observer States

Launched in April 2022, HISTOLAB is a joint project between the EU and the Council of Europe. Its main objective is to provide a platform for history education that engages a broad range of stakeholders, enabling knowledge sharing and learning from national, regional, and European experiences through case studies and the exchange of innovative practices. In 2023, HISTOLAB successfully advanced in implementing its diverse activities.

▾ HISTOLAB Fellowship

The HISTOLAB Fellowship supports young researchers at the beginning of their academic careers with a focus on history education. In 2023, four fellowships were awarded for projects aimed at strengthening the European dimension through curriculum reform in Serbia, using museum theatre as a tool for virtual museum education, including people with (intellectual) disabilities in public history, and exploring the potential of emerging digital technologies for enhancing history education.

▾ Toolkit for History Classes

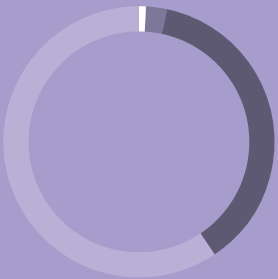
Developed in cooperation with the DICSO research group from the University of Murcia, Spain, the HISTOLAB Toolkit supports and promotes teaching multiperspectivity and helps students recognise manipulation of history. It includes 11 activities designed to increase students’ resilience against the distortion of historical narratives, debunk fake news and hate speech, and promote critical analysis skills.

▾ Tutorial Series

Launched in autumn 2023, the HISTOLAB Tutorial Series provides history education professionals—such as history teachers, academics, and teacher trainers—with approaches and resources for teaching complex topics. The series covers themes including incorporating gender perspectives into history teaching and teaching Roma history and culture.

▾ Digital Hub

The HISTOLAB Digital Hub, fully operational in 2023, centralises news, events, opportunities, and expertise in the field of history education. It features an interactive calendar, bulletin board, media library, newsletter, and HIST-CONNECT, a database for experts and organisations in history education research. By the end of 2023, the database contained 160 members, and the monthly newsletter had 254 subscribers.



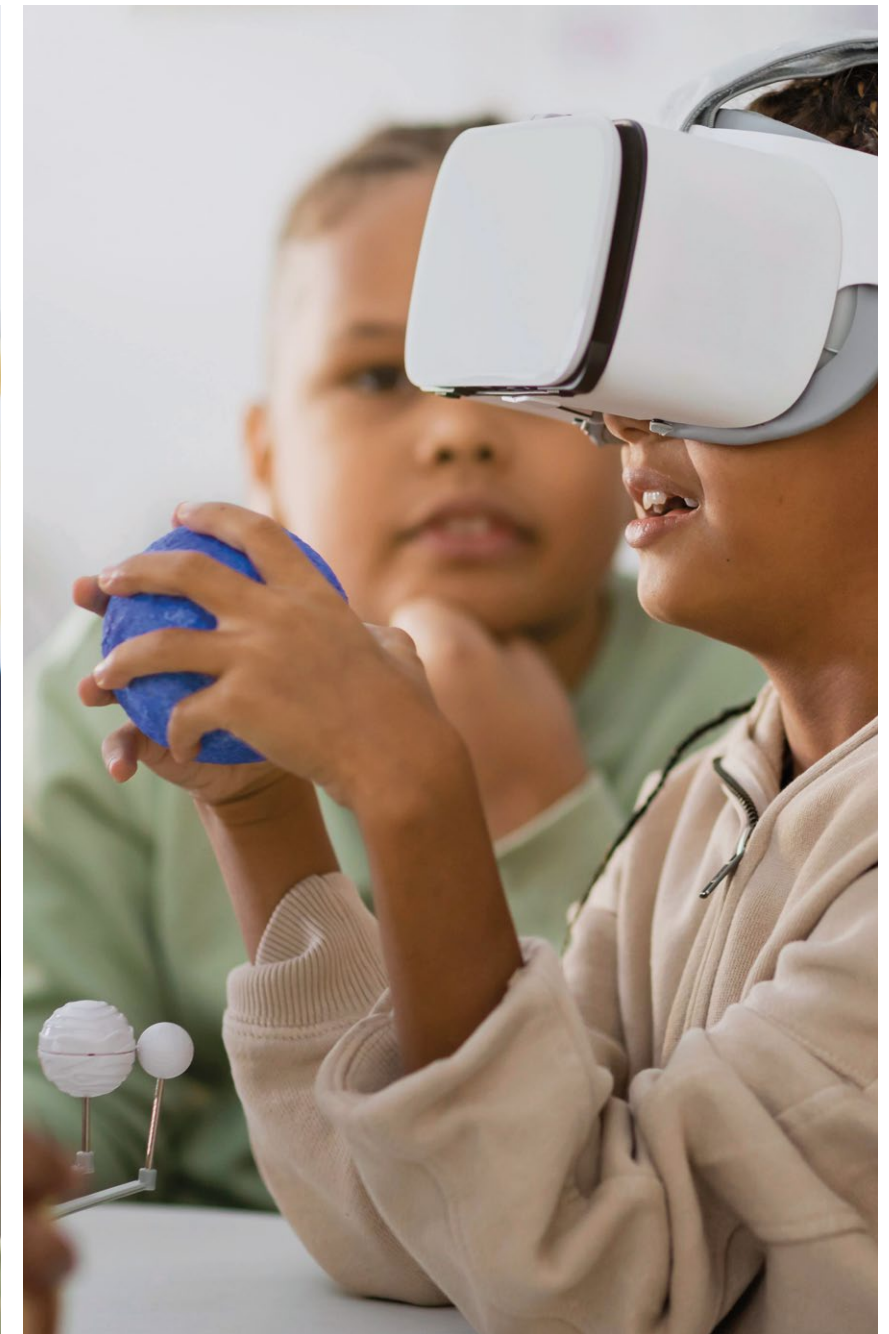
HISTOLAB KEY NUMBERS

- Research Fellowships Awarded
- Toolkit Activities
- Database Members
- Newsletter Subscribers

APR. 2022

HISTOLAB LAUNCH

A joint project between the EU and the Council of Europe



Digital Transformation of Education

In 2023, the digital transformation programme focused on furthering the Council of Europe's work on digital citizenship education and Artificial Intelligence and education. A Knowledge HUB that will host all resources developed by the Education Department and its respective sub-entities and projects in the field was conceptualised.

Digital Citizenship Education

In 2023, the Digital Citizenship Education (DCE) project continued its efforts to engage a wide range of stakeholders, including policymakers, educators, parents, learners, and the private sector. These initiatives were supported by the DCE Promoters, civil society organisations, and volunteers across Europe. The project aimed to promote DCE principles in learning environments, contribute to policy development, and foster teacher training and awareness-raising activities.

DCE ONLINE COURSES

The five new digital citizenship courses added to the European Wergeland Centre's Online Learning Platform.

DCE and Cyberbullying

This course addresses cyberbullying, emphasising the importance of digital citizenship.

DCE and Disinformation

This course focuses on building resilience to online disinformation, a threat to society and democracy.

Access and Inclusion

This course explores the impact of technology on equality and social inclusion.

Controversial issues online

This course examines how social media can polarise public debate.

DCE and Hate Speech online

This course provides an overview of online hate speech, addressing its impact on social inclusion, diversity, and human rights.

DCE Promoters' Network

The DCE Promoters' Network is dedicated to promoting DCE principles, contributing to policy development, and engaging in awareness-raising initiatives. The network also collaborates on the development of new policy instruments, guidelines, and resources for educators and stakeholders. In 2023, the network held its 6th meeting in Lisbon, hosted by the Portuguese Ministry of Education on 1-2 June. This meeting launched the next mandate of the network, valid until 31 May 2026, and introduced new members to the concept of DCE through workshops and discussions. Representatives from 21 Council of Europe member states attended the meeting.

Between July and December 2023, four online meetings were held to ensure ongoing engagement and participation of member state representatives. By December 2023, the network included 47 DCE promoters from 27 countries. These promoters participated in various activities, such as preparing news stories related to DCE activities, contributing to the preparatory study for the DCE Planner, and translating the Digi-Nauts episodes and accompanying materials into multiple languages.

Contextualising Competences for Democratic Culture in Digital Citizenship Education

A guidance document was developed to explain the relationship between the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) and Digital Citizenship Education (DCE). This document outlines how the competences for democratic culture, as defined in the RFCDC, underpin DCE in classroom settings. The guidance is directed at a broad audience, including education policymakers, curriculum developers, trainers, school leaders, teachers, and student teachers. It is applicable to both formal and informal education settings across primary, secondary, and higher education levels.

DCE Promoters' Network



Member States



DCE Promoters' Network

- 47 Total Promoters
- 27 Countries Represented

ATTENDEES AT LISBON MEETING
Representatives from 21 member states

MEETINGS HELD
IN 2023



1 IN-PERSON
4 ONLINE

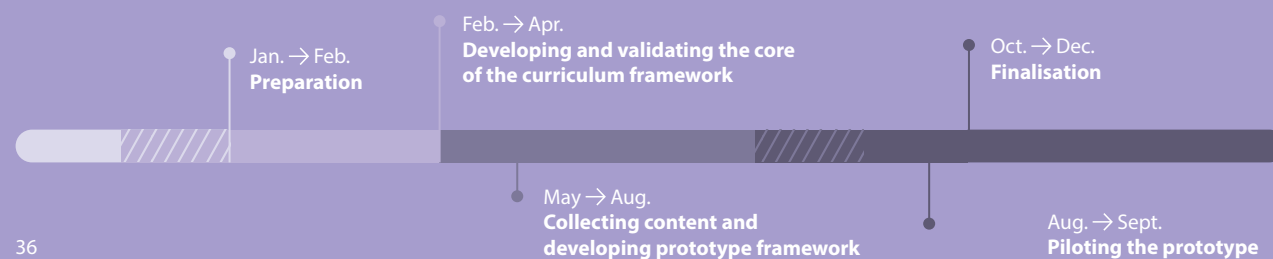
DCE Planner

Preparatory Study for DCE Planner

A preparatory study was conducted to investigate the feasibility of developing a common curriculum framework to integrate DCE into formal education systems across member states. The study highlights the distinctive features of the DCE project, its significance for the Council of Europe's mission in education, and the rationale for developing a curriculum framework. The proposed "DCE Planner" model is designed as a multi-purpose educational tool to help member states improve practices and embed DCE in their national curricula. The study included a three-step consultation process, involving an in-person workshop, a survey, and online focus group meetings, with participation from DCE promoters across multiple countries.

The DCE planner will be finalised before the launching of the the 2025 European Year of Digital Citizenship Education and expected to be implemented in participating member states.

Work Plan Strategy



Framework Usage and Flexibility



➤ **Develop cross-curricular programmes** – through access to a set of age-related graded learning outcomes and subject-related activities.



➤ **Plan teaching and learning experiences** – through access to high-quality digital citizenship education learning activities and discussion questions.



➤ **Organise whole-school and extra-curricular activities** – through access to a database of digital citizenship projects collected in different European countries.



➤ **Audit, evaluate and revise curricula** – through access to a simple overview of the ten digital domains and the areas of digital experiences with which they deal.



➤ **Plan and deliver teacher professional development** – through access to the Council of Europe DCE training pack, online training courses, and model lessons;



➤ **Raise awareness of the importance of digital citizenship education** – through access to information leaflets and publicity material produced by the Council of Europe and in member states.



Digi-Nauts Animation Series and Accompanying Resources

The **Digi-Nauts** is a video series developed by the Council of Europe to encourage young children, their parents, and educators to think about digital citizenship. Each video is accompanied by activities and exercises that reinforce key messages and support the development of digital citizenship competences. In 2023, the three episodes were subtitled into eight languages. The **Activity Book** and the **Educator's Guide** were linked to the episodes and translated into nine languages. A pilot project will be carried out in 2024 to assess the impact of the Digi-Nauts.

Collaboration with the Private Sector

Recognising the importance of collaboration with the private sector in supporting the digital learning environment, the Council of Europe developed **guidelines** in 2021 to support equitable partnerships between education institutions and the private sector. In 2023, a roundtable was organised in Brussels on 21 June to initiate collaboration with private organisations and explore ways to promote the DCE project. The **European Centre for Career Education (ECCEDU)**, **FeedbackFruits**, **Ready Education** and **Summatic** signed the Statement of Commitment in 2023, to support the Council of Europe's Guidelines and the principles of digital citizenship education. The roundtable also provided an opportunity to exchange examples of successful partnership models.

ROUNDTABLE GOALS

- Establishing Collaborative Dialogue
- Advancing Digital Citizenship Education
- Sharing Successful Partnership Models

DCE MAJOR EVENTS 2023

1-2 Jun.

The 6th meeting of the DCE Promoters' Network

21 Jun.

Roundtable in Brussels

To initiate collaboration and promote the DCE project with private sector organisations.

12 Sept.

EdTech Next Summit in Bielefeld

29 Sept.

Digital with Purpose Global Summit 2023

Promoting Child-Rights Based Cooperation in Lisbon

16 Nov.

Educ@tech Expo Fair in Paris

24 Nov.

The Milan Games Week Panel on Gaming and gender Towards sustainable gaming cultures

EDUTALKS@COUNCIL OF EUROPE

26 Apr. — [Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity](#)

30 May — [Stepping up student and staff mobility through better implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention](#)

8 Jun. — [Data Protection and the Right to Privacy in Education and in The Face of AI](#)

20 Jun. — [Migrancy, refugees and citizenship representations in video games](#)

17 Oct. — [Video Games and Sustainable Development Goals](#)

19 Oct. — [Teaching and Learning with and about AI](#)

14 Dec. — [The importance of evidence-based Practices in AI and education](#)

Video Game Culture and EduTalks

Under the video game culture initiative, several EduTalks were organised in 2023 to explore the role of video games in promoting ethical reflection, critical thinking, and sustainable development goals. Topics included [the representation of migrants and refugees in video games](#), the potential of video games to advance the 2030 Agenda for **Sustainable Development**, and the role of gender in gaming cultures. These EduTalks were followed by [factsheets](#) and [key highlights](#) to support ongoing discussions.

Additionally, EduTalks on artificial intelligence (AI) in education were held to facilitate discussions on the implications of AI in education. These talks covered topics such as data protection, privacy, evidence-based practices, and the potential applications of AI in teaching and learning. The discussions aimed to clarify the challenges and benefits of AI in education and to ensure that AI integration aligns with the Council of Europe's values of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.

Artificial Intelligence in Education

As part of the AI in Education project, a [survey](#) was conducted to gather data from member states on the connections between AI and education. The survey emphasised the need for member states to establish AI policies dedicated to education to ensure respect for the Council of Europe's fundamental values. A [preparatory study](#) for the development of a legal instrument on regulating AI in education was also conducted, highlighting the growing integration of AI technologies and the need for regulatory frameworks to safeguard human rights and democracy.

At the [26th session of the Council of Europe's Standing Conference of Ministers of Education](#) on 28-29 September 2023, the Ministers adopted a [resolution](#) supporting the development of a legal instrument to regulate AI in education. This resolution emphasises the importance of teaching and learning about AI in a way that promotes human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.



TOP 3 EDUTALKS ON AI IN EDUCATION

1 Data Protection and the Right to Privacy in Education and in the Face of AI

This EduTalk focused on the risks associated with AI technologies in education, particularly around data protection and privacy. Discussions explored the adequacy of current regulations, the risks of AI tools, and strategies to build trust among students, parents, and teachers.

2 The importance of evidence-based Practices in AI and education

This session emphasised the importance of evidence-based approaches to AI in education, discussing the effectiveness of AI tools, the current state of research, and the challenges in gathering meaningful data.

3 Teaching and Learning with and about AI

This EduTalk explored how AI can support teaching and learning, examining the benefits and challenges from both learner and teacher perspectives, with a strong focus on maintaining human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in educational settings.

COOPERATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES



Albania

The “Strengthening Democratic Citizenship Education in Albania” project, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), began its activities on 1 December 2019. The project aims to enhance democratic citizenship education in Albania by aligning with the Council of Europe’s values and vision. With a total budget of 2.259.700 €, the project has been extended to May 2026, ensuring the continued support of democratic education initiatives across the country.

Project Overview

The project was initially launched with a 48-month duration and a budget of 1.385.600 €. Following the signing of an addendum on 27 November 2023, the implementation period has been extended to May 2026, increasing the total budget to 2.259.700 €. The project supports the National Education Strategy 2021-2026, emphasising the promotion of a democratic culture through education.

Democratic School Governance

One of the key components of the project is the Democratic School Governance initiative, which has led to the creation of a network of 75 democratic and inclusive schools across 23 cities in Albania. To further enhance the sustainability of project outcomes, the first seven Democratic Culture Labs (DCLs) have been conceptualised in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Sports of Albania. These labs provide flexible learning environments that promote learner autonomy, with plans to expand the number of DCLs to 17 by 2024.

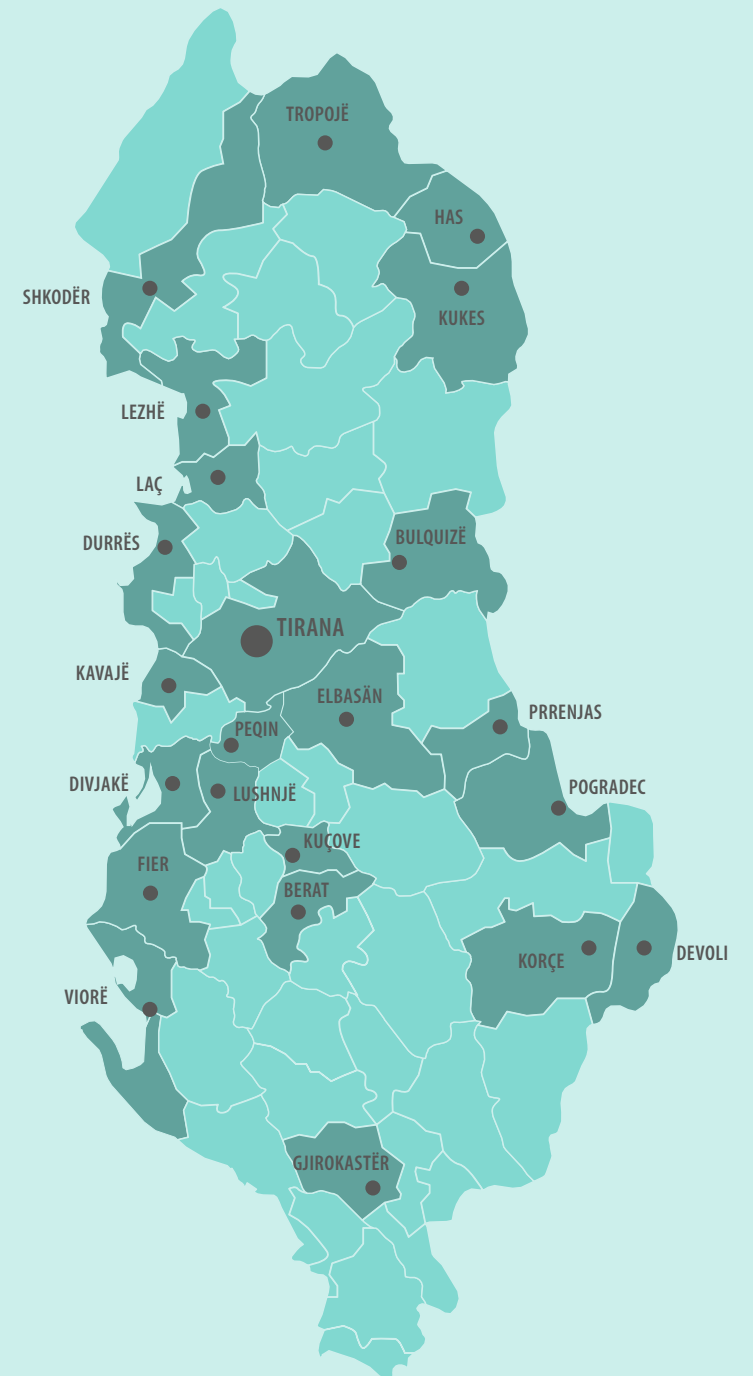
“Fake ≠ Fact” Initiative

The implementation of the Swedish Institute’s “Fake ≠ Fact” initiative has been another significant achievement of the project. The “Fake ≠ Fact” exhibition traveled to 11 cities across Albania, reaching approximately 12,000 students, education practitioners, and other members of the education community in secondary schools. This initiative aims to raise awareness about the dangers of misinformation and the importance of critical thinking.

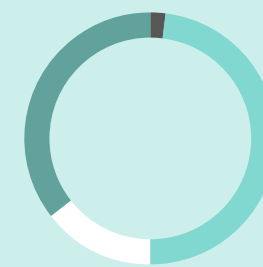
Teacher Professional Development

The project also focuses on the professional development of teachers through the expansion of the TeacherNet network, which now includes 400 active members. Teachers’ Peer Learning activities have continued to strengthen this network, and four training modules accredited by the Quality Assurance Agency for Pre-University Education (AQAPUE) are now available in Albanian on the Council of Europe HELP platform/LEMON courses. So far, 640 teachers have received training through the LEMON courses, further supporting the consolidation of democratic education practices in Albania.

Cities Involved in the DCE’s Project in Albania

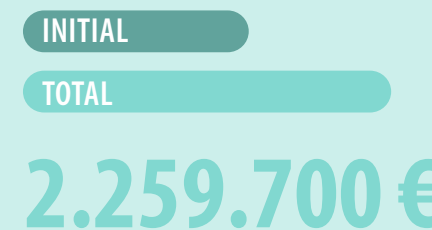


Democratic School Governance



- Democratic and Inclusive Schools Established
- Cities Covered
- Democratic Culture Labs (DCLs) in 2023
- Planned DCLs by 2024

Project Budget



Teacher Development





Bosnia and Herzegovina

The “Quality Education for All” project in Bosnia and Herzegovina is part of the joint European Union and Council of Europe programme “**Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey.**” Running from January 2023 to December 2026, the project aims to enhance the quality of education by fostering democratic culture within the formal education system and addressing discrimination in line with European standards. With a total budget of 750.000 €, the project plays a crucial role in promoting inclusive and democratic education across the country.

Project Overview

The “Quality Education for All” project is a significant initiative aimed at improving education quality by integrating democratic culture and combating discrimination. The project aligns with European standards and seeks to foster coordination among the relevant ministers of education and stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through collaboration with the EU, UN, and OSCE, the project contributes to the development of education action plans. On 20 December 2023, the Council of Ministers of BiH discussed the results of these activities and the implementation of the [Policy Recommendations with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education](#)¹. The commitment to incorporating the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) into the education systems of Bosnia and Herzegovina underscores the country’s dedication to effective inclusive education policies.

1 - On 2 September 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina's Council of Ministers adopted a Policy Recommendation for Inclusive Education, developed under the EU/ Council of Europe action “Quality education in multi-ethnic societies.”

Capacity Building for Teachers and School Staff

A key component of the project is increasing the capacity of teachers and other school staff to implement the objectives outlined in the Roadmap for Inclusive Education. A targeted initiative has trained a total of 244 teachers, school leaders, and other school staff from nine pilot schools. These individuals have been equipped with essential tools to promote democratic culture within their educational institutions through comprehensive, in-depth capacity building sessions designed to enhance their understanding of the RFCDC.

Student Involvement and Whole-School Approach

The project emphasises a whole-school approach by prioritising student involvement and amplifying student voices. In August 2023, 222 students participated in lectures and workshops during a Summer School, as well as in various activities organised by and for the wider school community. This approach ensures that students are actively engaged in the process of fostering democratic culture within their schools.

Georgia

The project “Democracy Starts in Schools – Engaging School Children in Decision-Making Processes in Schools and Communities” was implemented from March 2022 to December 2023, with the support of the Swiss Development Agency. The project, with 1.500.000 € of budget, aimed to enhance student participation in decision-making processes within schools and communities in Georgia, aligning with Council of Europe standards. This initiative played a crucial role in fostering democratic school governance and creating opportunities for student involvement at both school and community levels.

Project Overview

The project focused on creating and supporting measures that promote student participation in decision-making processes. These efforts were designed to align with Council of Europe standards and aimed to establish a culture of democracy within schools. The project piloted methodological guidelines on democratic school governance in 20 schools, developed and delivered a professional development program for school principals, organised two summer academies for students, supported joint projects between civil society organisations and schools, and established the Schools for Education for Democracy network.

Impact on Student Participation

One of the significant outcomes of the project was the substantial increase in student participation in both local community decision-making processes and collegial decision-making bodies within schools. Data collected during pre- and post-assessment visits to the pilot schools revealed a remarkable rise in engagement:

The results demonstrate the project’s effectiveness in embedding democratic governance practices within the educational environment and fostering a culture of active student involvement.

Collaboration with Government Partners

The project established strong partnerships with key government institutions, including the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Centre for Teacher Professional Development, and the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement. A critical outcome of this collaboration was the inclusion of two key project outputs—the methodological guidelines for schools and the professional development program for school directors—in the Action Plan for implementing Georgia’s Education Strategy 2030.

INCREASE IN STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Local Community Decision-Making



Collegial Decision-Making Bodies at Schools



Kosovo*

*All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

In the final year of the project, several important policy developments were achieved. The “Study on the Academic Achievements of Students with Hearing Impairments” and the “Framework Curriculum for the Functioning of Learning Centers” were key outputs. Additionally, the project facilitated a study visit to Germany and Luxembourg for 11 education policymakers and professionals. This visit fostered dynamic exchanges of experiences, discussions on models of inclusive education, and the sharing of ideas for future cooperation.

Policy-Level Achievements

In the final year of the project, several important policy developments were achieved. The “Study on the Academic Achievements of Students with Hearing Impairments” and the “Framework Curriculum for the Functioning of Learning Centers” were key outputs. Additionally, the project facilitated a study visit to Germany and Luxembourg for 11 education policymakers and professionals. This visit fostered dynamic exchanges of experiences, discussions on models of inclusive education, and the sharing of ideas for future cooperation.

Capacity Building and Grassroots Impact

The project significantly enhanced the capacities of education professionals and directly supported students in need. It trained over 430 education professionals in 25 pilot schools, 130 professionals in six regional resource centers for students with severe disabilities, and 55 tutors and mentors in learning centers. This support extended to students from Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, ensuring effective implementation of inclusive education practices. Additionally, 210 parents participated in awareness-raising workshops, and over 600 students from these communities at the upper secondary level benefited from a mentorship program.

CAPACITY BUILDING



- Education Professionals Trained in Pilot Schools
- Professionals Trained in Regional Resource Centers
- Tutors and Mentors Trained in Learning Centers

TOTAL BUDGET

2.223.000 €

Celebrating Diversity and Stakeholder Engagement

In 2023, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) took ownership of celebrating Diversity Month throughout April. This initiative included activities in municipalities and a roundtable hosted at MESTI. The project was widely acknowledged for its relevance, enjoying excellent cooperation with stakeholders at all levels, and receiving continuous support from the Government of Kosovo*.

Moldova

In 2023, the Council of Europe launched Phase II of the project “**Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova**,” funded by the Swiss Development Agency. This project, with a total budget of 1.100.000 €, is crucial in strengthening Moldova’s education system to prepare pupils to become engaged citizens aligned with common European values, particularly in the context of the country’s EU integration efforts.

Project Overview

The project addresses one of Moldova’s core challenges on its path to EU integration: developing the knowledge and competences necessary for pupils to become active, engaged citizens. The project is designed to meet the needs and aspirations of its main beneficiaries, including teachers and pupils, as well as key partners such as the Ministry of Education and Research and school inspectorates. A significant focus is placed on supporting the “Education for Society” subject, which aligns with the Council of Europe’s Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) principles and the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC). The project also aims to integrate these competences across the broader school curriculum and strengthen the capacity of educators to foster these skills throughout the pre-university education cycle.

Collaboration and Partnerships

The project has fostered strong links with other relevant initiatives in Moldova, particularly with UNFPA Moldova and the Zurich University of Teacher Training, enhancing its impact and reach.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS IN 2023

Teacher Training and Capacity Building

The project focused on training teachers and enhancing national in-service teacher training capacities. This included instruction on the new subject, modern teaching and learning methods, and the Council of Europe’s tools and standards, specifically EDC/HRE and RFCDC.

Curriculum Development

Efforts were made to develop the curriculum for the “Education for Society” subject, particularly for upper secondary technical education and vocational education and training (VET) cycles.

Methodological Guidance for Teachers

The project developed comprehensive methodological guidance for teachers to support the implementation of the new curriculum.

Monitoring and Implementation

Monitoring tools were applied to oversee the implementation of the “Education for Society” curriculum, alongside the training of education professionals in these areas.

Teaching Guidelines and Lesson Plans

Teaching guidelines and lesson plans were created to help educators deliver the new civic education subject effectively.



Montenegro

The “Quality Education for All” project in Montenegro, implemented within the joint European Union and Council of Europe programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey,” is set to run from 2023 until 2026. With a total budget of 850.000 €, the project’s primary goal is to promote non-discriminatory quality education for all learners in Montenegro by fostering inclusive, democratic, and ethical principles. The project also focuses on enhancing emergency response mechanisms at both pre-university and higher education levels.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

One of the key initiatives supported by the project is the pilot evaluation of higher education institutions (HEIs) against newly adopted academic integrity standards. This evaluation, conducted in collaboration with the Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the Ethics Committee, resulted in individual reports for each participating institution. These reports will form the basis for a comprehensive analysis of academic integrity across HEIs in Montenegro.

TOTAL BUDGET

850.000 €

KEY EVENTS

MAY. 2023
NATIONAL CONFERENCE

OCT. 2023
INCLUSIVE DAY



Promoting Inclusive and Digital Citizenship Education

In May 2023, a national conference highlighted the significance of digital citizenship education and inclusive education in fostering a culture of democracy, human rights, and social inclusion. The conference underscored the need to integrate these principles into the educational framework to better prepare learners for active citizenship.

The project also celebrated “Inclusive Day” on 11 October, continuing its tradition of raising awareness and promoting inclusive education. As part of the initiative, courses on social media literacy were launched for teachers, parents, and pupils. These courses focused on developing critical thinking skills as a defense against manipulation and propaganda.

Empowering Students with Disabilities and Promoting Equality

Workshops were organised for university professors to discuss strategies for empowering students with disabilities and promoting equality in higher education. Additionally, training sessions on inclusive education principles were held for teachers, school managers, and social workers, aimed at enhancing their ability to support diverse learners.

Building Resilience and Promoting Gender Equality

The project also included activities aimed at strengthening schools’ resilience to education emergencies, ensuring that educational institutions are better equipped to handle crises. A report on gender aspects within Montenegro’s education sector provided valuable insights and recommendations for promoting gender equality, further aligning with the project’s inclusive and ethical principles.

North Macedonia

The project “Quality Education for All” in North Macedonia aims to integrate democratic and human rights education into Macedonian schools, aligning with the national Education Strategy (2018–2025). Running from December 2022 to November 2025, the project is funded by Germany with a budget of 800.000 €. The initiative focuses on fostering inclusive, multicultural education while promoting democratic values and upholding human rights within the educational system.

Project Overview and Mapping Report

The project began with the development of a comprehensive Mapping Report that provided a detailed assessment of the implementation of the national Education Strategy. This report focuses on promoting inclusive and multicultural education, democratic values, and human rights, serving as a foundation for the project’s ongoing efforts to reform the education system in North Macedonia.

Professional Growth and Teacher Training

In 2023, the project prioritised both overarching reforms and the professional development of educators. A support program was implemented in 25 pilot schools, with 100 educators participating in specialised training sessions. These efforts are critical in creating an inclusive and democratic learning environment, ensuring that teachers are well-equipped to promote these values within their classrooms.

Addressing Roma Segregation and Court Judgment

The project also addressed a significant issue related to the discrimination of Roma pupils, following the European Court’s judgment in the case of *Elmazova and Others v. North Macedonia*. This judgment found that Roma pupils were segregated in two state-run primary schools, where Roma-only classes were predominant. In response, the Education Department organised a round table in cooperation with the Roma and Travelers Team and with attendance from the Department for the Execution of Judgments.

Although the project was designed before the judgment, it has adapted its activities to support the execution of the Court’s ruling at both the school and community levels. A former Judge at the European Court of Human Rights has been engaged to provide analysis and recommendations on implementing the judgment locally. The project’s activities will feed into and support the government’s response to the Court’s ruling, ensuring that the rights of Roma pupils are upheld.

Serbia

The “Quality Education for All” project in Serbia is part of the joint EU and Council of Europe programme “**Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey**,” running from 2023 to 2026, with a budget of 1.000.000 €. The project aims to enhance the quality of education by fostering democratic culture and inclusion within the formal education system.

Project Overview

A key focus is on supporting Serbian education policymakers in aligning practices with EU and Council of Europe standards. The project also promotes democratic culture and intercultural dialogue as essential elements of quality education and public awareness.

Development of National Guidelines and School Networks

The project developed National Guidelines for integrating RFCDC into 10 curricular subjects, covering all 477 descriptors, and distributed these guidelines to 1,800 schools across Serbia. Additionally, it established a network of 36 Mentor Schools, each mentoring 180 additional schools annually. The Ministry of Education also created a network of advisors for democratic culture in schools, appointing 20 advisors funded by the Ministry.

Integration of RFCDC in Education Policy and Practice

A significant achievement of the project has been the official inclusion of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) into various key education policies and practices in Serbia.

- Official Government Education Strategy 2030
- Rulebook on Community and Humanitarian Service in Education Institutions
- Culture of Remembrance Resources by the Ministry and Institute for Education Improvement
- Ministry’s Guidelines for the Organisation and Implementation of Educational and Upbringing Process in the 2023/24 School Year
- Entrepreneurship Subject
The only subject taught in all Vocational Education and Training (VET) schools in Serbia, which now incorporates RFCDC and related didactic materials into its curriculum.

PROJECT BUDGET

800.000 €

TEACHER TRAINING AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

PILOT SCHOOLS 25
EDUCATORS TRAINED 100

PROJECT BUDGET

1M €

KEY RESOLUTIONS

MINISTRY GUIDELINES
EDUCATION STRATEGY 2030
ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUBJECT
CULTURE OF REMEMBRANCE RESOURCES
RULEBOOK ON COMMUNITY/HUMANITARIAN SERVICE

MENTOR SCHOOLS

36



Türkiye

The Pilot Project on Digital Citizenship Education in Türkiye is part of the joint programme by the European Union and the Council of Europe, “**Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye**,” coordinated with the Ministry of National Education. Launched in 2023 and set to be completed by June 2025, this project builds upon the successes of the previous IPA project, “Strengthening Democratic Culture in Basic Education,” and focuses on enhancing digital citizenship education in lower-secondary schools across Türkiye.

Project Launch and Capacity Building

The project was officially launched on 17 October 2023, with high-level representation and participation of over 130 stakeholders. The launch was followed by a 2.5-day in-person capacity-building workshop for participants from the pilot schools. A total of 42 teachers and school administrators from 14 pilot schools in 7 provinces gained a deeper understanding of the Council of Europe’s Digital Citizenship Education (DCE) project, becoming familiar with key concepts and available resources.

Needs Assessment and Initial Findings

During the first year, the project completed the initial phase of its needs assessment. This involved reaching 480 participants through online surveys, 10 interviews, and 6 focus groups. The resulting draft report provided valuable insights into the perspectives of teachers and school administrators, identified priority areas, and analysed the existing lessons in basic education institutions. The report highlighted the extent to which DCE is already covered and pinpointed areas for further improvement. The first draft of this report has been shared with the beneficiary institution.

Development of Educational Resources

A group of international and national consultants began adapting the DCE online teacher trainings and developing a child-friendly version of the DCE handbook. A roadmap has been prepared to ensure child participation in the development of these resources. Sessions with students from the 14 pilot schools are planned to ensure that the opinions and needs of the students are fully integrated into the materials produced.

MAJOR EVENTS 2023

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|
| 28 Feb. ↳ Paris | The Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee | 28 + 29 Sept. ↳ Strasbourg | Standing Conference of Ministers of Education |
| 02 Mar. ↳ Pristina | High-level conference on inclusive education | 18 + 19 Oct. ↳ Graz | 32nd annual meeting of the ECML Governing Board |
| 7 + 8 Mar. ↳ Brussels | Second Forum on “History education in the digital age” | 07 Nov. ↳ Graz | ECML Colloquium: Regional and minority languages within a plurilingual context |
| 8 + 10 Mar. ↳ Brussels | Histolab Innovation Days in History Education | 13 + 14 Nov. ↳ Paris | Council of Europe ETINED Plenary: Addressing Education Fraud across member States |
| 3 Apr. ↳ Strasbourg | Meeting of the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Education | 21 Nov. ↳ Strasbourg | New Working Group on Education for Sustainable Development |
| 15 May ↳ Strasbourg | First thematic event on developing a culture of democracy in vocational education and training | 22 Nov. ↳ Strasbourg | Artificial Intelligence and Education Expert group |
| 25 + 26 May ↳ Strasbourg | CoE Education Policy Advisors’ Network | 30 Nov. 1 Dec. ↳ Strasbourg | OHTE 3rd Annual Conference <i>Teaching History, Teaching Peace?</i> |
| 1 + 2 Jun. ↳ Strasbourg | 6th Digital Citizenship Education Promoter’ Network meeting | 13 + 14 Dec. ↳ Graz | ECML Conference — Inspiring innovation in language education |
| 12 + 13 Jun. ↳ Stockholm | Annual joint meeting of the ENIC and NARIC networks | 15 Dec. ↳ Graz | Professional Network Forum (PNF) meets at the ECML |
| 22 + 23 Jun. ↳ Ohrid | Educating for democratic culture - from policy to practice | | |
| 6 Sept. ↳ Strasbourg | Education stakeholders discuss policies, practices and strategies to promote a culture of democracy in Vocational Education and Training | | |

28 Feb. ↘ Paris

The Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee

An extraordinary session of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee took place in Paris. The meeting adopted a declaration on restricting the participation of the Russian Federation and Belarus. The text of the declaration can be found on the Council of Europe website.

02 Mar. ↘ Pristina

High-level conference on inclusive education

A high-level conference on inclusive education took place on 2 March 2023, in Pristina. Prime Minister Albin Kurti delivered the keynote speech, joined by distinguished speakers including Minister of Education Arberie Nagavci, Head of the Council of Europe Education Department Villano Qiriaz, Johannes Stenbaek Madsen, Head of Cooperation at the European Union Office in Kosovo, and Tankut Soykan, Deputy Head of the Council of Europe office in Pristina. They reiterated their commitment to support the education system, aiming to enhance inclusion and improve the academic outcomes of children from the most vulnerable groups, spanning from pre-primary to upper secondary levels. The conference featured expert

presentations, focusing on the Council of Europe's endeavours in promoting high-quality inclusive education and discussions related to the Reference Framework for Competences for Democratic Culture and Digital Citizenship Education. Attended by over 100 participants, including representatives from the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation, municipalities, educators, school administrators, civil society organisations, embassies, and international organisations, the event served as a platform to exchange ideas and strengthen cooperation to ensure that inclusive and democratic education policies are translated into practices.

7 + 8 Mar. ↘ Brussels

2nd Forum on “History education in the digital age”

The forum was supported by the **Flemish Department of Education and Training** and the pedagogical coordination department «Démocratie ou Barbarie» from the **Ministry of the Walloon-Brussels Federation**.

Approximately **70 participants from 26 countries** convened to explore the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital age and artificial intelligence in history education.

A comprehensive report of the event was published in the first semester of 2024.

KEY RESOLUTIONS

Enduring Presence of Digitalisation and AI

Acknowledgment that digitalisation, the use of digital tools—including recreational ones—and AI are permanent aspects of modern life.

Essential Digital Navigation Skills

Emphasising the need to equip learners with the skills required to navigate the digital era effectively, particularly in managing the vast quantity of digital archives.

Integration into Teacher Training and Research

The importance of incorporating these topics into both pre-service and in-service teacher training. Research in these areas should be actively promoted, as demonstrated by the University of Luxembourg and the Stanford History Education Group.

Educational Use of Video Games

The potential of video games as educational tools in teaching history was discussed, along with concerns about digitalisation, historical distortion, and manipulation.

8 + 10 Mar. ↘ Brussels

Histolab Innovation Days in History Education

The first edition of the HISTOLAB European Innovation Days in History Education was held on 8–10 March 2023 in the European Economic and Social Committee and the House of European History in Brussels. More than thirty projects from both established history education associations and individual schools and teachers were featured over the course of the three days.

The goal for the first European Innovation Days in History Education was to bring together history educators, students, academics, and other practitioners to have debates on the innovative methods in teaching history today. The event concluded that innovation can manifest in numerous ways, from more inclusive topics and new learning materials to experimentation of combining historical topics with other school subjects.

At this occasion, the first HISTOLAB Award for Innovative School Projects in History Education, was presented to four schools, two from

Ukraine, and two respectively from Bulgaria and Croatia. The purpose of the Award is to hear opinions and ideas from students themselves on their own experiences learning history.

By receiving their award and presenting their projects at the Innovation Days, they were not only empowered to share their work, but also given the opportunity to speak publicly in a European Institution in front of an audience of over 100 people from across Europe and the world.

3 Apr. ↘ Strasbourg

Meeting of the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Education

The Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Education will meet to discuss key topics, including the 26th Standing Conference of Ministers of Education, the Draft Education Strategy, and the 2024-2027 Education Programme. Key initiatives include the 2025 European Year of

Digital Citizenship Education, a Legal Instrument on Education for Democracy, and a Council of Europe Students' Charter. The committee gathers delegations from member states and observers to shape and implement education policies.

15 May ↘ Strasbourg

First thematic event on developing a culture of democracy in vocational education and training

The Council of Europe is developing a guidance document on integrating democratic competences into Vocational Education and Training (VET), based on the RFCDC framework. In May 2023, a thematic event gathered stakeholders, including students, employers, and researchers, to discuss democratic culture in the workplace and challenges in VET.

Insights from the event will help shape the guidance document. The Expert Group on RFCDC and VET reviewed the draft document and planned next steps. A second thematic event is scheduled for September to gather further input from stakeholders.

25 + 26 May ↘ Strasbourg

CoE Education Policy Advisors' Network

The 11th session of the Council of Europe Education Policy Advisors' Network (EPAN) was held on May 25-26, 2023, in Strasbourg. Participants reviewed the progress of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) across member states and identified future priorities.

Villano Qiriazzi, Head of the Education Department, emphasised the importance of engaging young people in democratic life, in line with the Reykjavik Declaration. Sarah Keating, Head of the Division for Formal and Non-Formal Education, highlighted the need to strengthen connections between policy and practice.

Discussions focused on RFCDC's integration into areas like Vocational Education and Training

(VET), Digital Citizenship Education, and Education for Sustainable Development.

A new Bureau was elected to oversee the Network's work, and national updates were shared by delegates from Finland, Moldova, Ukraine, and the UK. Peer-learning workshops provided further insights into RFCDC implementation, which will inform the upcoming review of its progress across member states.

Participation of young persons in democratic life and decision-making processes, including through education about human rights and core democratic values, such as pluralism, inclusion, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability.

1 + 2 Jun. ↘ Strasbourg

6th Digital Citizenship Education Promoter' Network meeting

The DCE Promoters' Network held its 6th meeting in Lisbon on June 1-2, hosted by the Portuguese Ministry of Education. The meeting launched the next phase of work and introduced new members to Digital Citizenship Education (DCE). Workshops and discussions focused on DCE materials and the Network's role in promoting DCE principles in

learning environments, policy development, and teacher training. João Costa, Portugal's Minister of Education, emphasised the importance of citizenship education, now mandatory in schools. The event was attended by representatives from 21 Council of Europe member states.

12 + 13 Jun. ↘ Stockholm

Annual joint meeting of the ENIC and NARIC networks

The Annual joint meeting of the ENIC and NARIC networks opened in Stockholm, organised by the Swedish Council for Higher Education, European Commission, Council of Europe, and UNESCO. Villano Qiriazzi, Head of the Council of Europe's Education Department, emphasised values such as inclusion, transparency, and anti-discrimination in his opening remarks. Dr. Laura Stevens delivered a keynote on Biomimicry and Recognition.

The event includes a plenary and 12 workshops, with the Council of Europe participating in three focused on the ENIC/NARIC Charter, capacity building, and combating fraud in education.

TOP 3 WORKSHOPS

The ENIC/NARIC Charter
A framework for the Networks

Capacity building through participation in projects

For a quality education free from fraud and corruption

22 + 23 Jun. ↘ Ohrid

Educating for democratic culture - from policy to practice

Over 100 participants from North Macedonia and the Balkans gathered in Ohrid on June 22-23 for the launch of the "Quality Education for All" project, implemented by the Council of Europe and funded by Germany. The conference promoted democracy and human rights through education, featuring discussions on the Council of Europe's Reference Framework for Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC). Participants, including policymakers and educators, shared insights on implementing democratic values in schools. The event fostered collaboration across the region to strengthen democratic education and civic engagement among the younger generation.

6 Sept. ↘ Strasbourg

Education stakeholders discuss policies, practices and strategies to promote a culture of democracy in Vocational Education and Training

On 5 September, a second thematic event was held, in Strasbourg and online, on the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) and Vocational Education and Training (VET). While the first thematic event, held in May 2023, focused on the role of competences for democratic culture in the workplace, this time participants were invited to discuss topics such as learning and practicing CDC in VET, the preparedness and empowerment of teachers and in-company trainers to teach and develop learners' competences for democratic culture, and the institutional and national strategies of implementation of the RFCDC in the VET sector.

The aim of the thematic event was to gather contributions from various stakeholders, such as VET students and apprentices (representing JOB-MBO Netherlands and IBM's apprentices in the United Kingdom), VET teachers and school principals (from Austria, Germany, Greece, Serbia, Spain, United Kingdom), teacher trainers, in-company trainers and trade unions (from Armenia, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland), as well as national education authorities (the Finnish National Agency for Education, the Ministry of Education and

Research of the Republic of Moldova, the Ministry of Education, Science and Research of Austria).

The examples of strategies and practices presented and collected during the meeting from participants' insights will feed into the development of the Guidance document on the RFCDC and VET. This guidance document is intended to be used for further inspiration and reflection on the development of a democratic culture in VET and will include a large number of examples from a variety of different VET-contexts across the European continent.

The guidance document is being developed with the support of an ad hoc expert group, which held its fourth meeting on 6 September. The expert group is composed of delegates from the Council of Europe Member States (Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Malta, Norway, Romania and Spain) and observer organisations to the CDEDU (FEDE, Holy See, and Lifelong Learning Platform). The expert group examined the content of the draft guidance document and agreed on the next steps to finalise the document, which is expected to be published by mid-2024.



28 + 29 Sept. ↘ Strasbourg

Standing Conference of Ministers of Education

The 26th Session of the Council of Europe Ministers of Education highlighted education's role in building resilient, democratic societies.



Leaders at the conference stressed the vital role of education in fostering democratic societies amid technological and societal changes.

The ministers also adopted the “Learners First” 2030 Education Strategy to prepare students for future challenges and opportunities.

They reaffirmed the commitment to education as a promoter of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, especially in times of crisis. The resolutions urge member states to renew their focus on education’s civic mission, ensuring it remains resilient and inclusive.

The inclusion of topics like Artificial Intelligence in education reflects the need to balance technological progress with democratic values. The outcomes are captured in the Council of Europe Education Strategy 2030, which prioritizes learners and prepares them for future challenges and opportunities.





STANDING CONFERENCE KEY RESOLUTIONS

Education in times of Emergencies & Crisis

Addresses the challenges of ensuring quality education during emergencies, such as natural disasters, pandemics, and conflicts.

Renewal of the Civic Mission of Education

Highlights the role of education in promoting democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law, with a focus on involving young people in democratic processes.

Harnessing the Potential of AI in & through Education

Focuses on integrating AI into education while safeguarding human rights and democratic values.

Council of Europe Education Strategy 2030

Outlines the long-term vision for education, emphasising democratic citizenship, social responsibility, and digital transformation.

European Year of Digital Citizenship Education

Proposes dedicating 2025 to digital citizenship education, promoting digital literacy, and responsible technology use.

Highlights

Council of Europe Education Strategy 2030

The “Learners First – Education for today’s and tomorrow’s democratic societies” strategy envisions that all learners will fully exercise their rights as active citizens in European democratic societies. This long-term vision will be achieved through cooperation with member states, focusing on improving the quality and accessibility of education, enhancing the acquisition of knowledge and competences, and ensuring equal opportunities for all learners.

The strategy’s expected outcomes include the development of new legal and policy instruments, reference standards, and capacity-building tools, adaptable at the national level to address specific changes in existing laws and regulations.

TOP 3 PRIORITY PILLARS

- 1**

Renewing the Democratic & Civic Mission of Education
- 2**

Enhancing the Social Responsibility & Responsiveness of Education
- 3**

Advancing Education through Human Rights-Based Digital Transformation

THE 4 KEY DIMENSIONS

- CITIZEN LEARNER
- DIGITAL LEARNER
- INTERCULTURAL GLOBAL LEARNER
- LEARNER WELL-BEING

European Year of Digital Citizenship Education in 2025

The establishment of the European Year of Digital Citizenship Education in 2025 marks a significant step toward embracing digital transformation in education systems. This initiative aims to foster digital literacy and responsible digital citizenship, equipping learners with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate the digital world confidently and responsibly.

18 + 19 Oct. ↘ Graz

32nd annual meeting of the ECML Governing Board

The 32nd annual ECML Governing Board meeting, held in Graz and online on 18-19 October, marked Spain's return as the 36th member state and Ukraine's participation as Observer. The meeting bridged the current ECML programme with the upcoming 2024-2027 programme, focusing on language education's role in democracy. Participants previewed finalised project resources and discussed upcoming activities, including new projects, capacity-building initiatives, and webinars. The meeting underscored the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture, in line with the Council of Europe's 2024-2030 Education Strategy. New board members were also elected for 2024-2025.

07 Nov. ↘ Graz

ECML Colloquium: Regional and minority languages within a plurilingual context

On 7th November 2023, the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) organised a colloquium in cooperation with the European Commission, focusing on regional and minority languages (RMLs) within a plurilingual context. The event highlighted educational practices where RMLs are part of the curriculum or used as a language of schooling, showcasing examples that could be adapted to other

contexts. The colloquium addressed pedagogical aspects such as curricula, teacher education, and classroom practices, building on the 2022 Council of Europe Recommendation on plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture. Representatives from 38 ECML member states, the EU, and key networks participated.

13 + 14 Nov. ↘ Paris

Council of Europe ETINED Plenary: Addressing Education Fraud across member States

The annual ETINED Plenary, held in Paris on November 13-14, 2023, gathered representatives from States Parties to the European Cultural Convention, NGOs, and experts to address education fraud. The event featured discussions on student awareness, AI's impact on fraud, and strategies to counter fraud in education systems. Participants emphasised the need for transparency and integrity to protect education for future generations.

21 Nov. ↘ Strasbourg

New Working Group on Education for Sustainable Development

The first meeting of the Working Group on the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) took place on 21 November 2023 in Strasbourg. The meeting explored how the RFCDC, designed to equip young people with the skills to promote democracy and human

rights, can address the challenges of the planetary crisis, such as pollution and climate change. The Council of Europe initiated this project to develop guidance linking RFCDC with ESD, and the Working Group, consisting of experts from 19 member states and organisations, discussed the future scope and integration of these frameworks.

22 Nov. ↘ Strasbourg

Artificial Intelligence and Education Expert group

The Council of Europe's AI and Education expert group met in Strasbourg on November 21-22, 2023, to discuss AI regulation in education, a Policy Toolbox for AI in teaching and learning, and a review system for EdTech solutions. Participants from academia, international organisations, and the private sector focused on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law while exploring the need for AI regulation in education. Key issues included defining what should be regulated, stakeholder involvement, and effective implementation. The meeting concluded with the finalisation of the 2024 work plan and next steps.

30 Nov. 1 Dec. ↘ Strasbourg

OHTE 3rd Annual Conference “Teaching History, Teaching Peace?”

The 3rd OHTE Annual Conference “Teaching History, Teaching Peace?” was the key event of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe in 2023. This edition provided a unique opportunity to discuss the link between history teaching and the teaching of peace – particularly at a time when peace is under threat. The diverse array of speakers, both in terms of their profiles and institutions represented, made it possible to deconstruct the subject from a multitude of perspectives. The Conference also provided an opportunity to present and discuss the key findings of the first *OHTE General Report on the State of History Teaching in Europe*. With over 200 on-site participants across the two days, and around 400 participants

connected online, the Conference generated considerable interest.

The various sessions: 2 keynote talks; 3 panel discussions on the findings of the report; 1 panel with young people; and high-level opening and closing sessions, all highlighted the work of the Observatory and its contribution to the promotion of good practices in history education. The Annual Conference was also a great opportunity to strengthen relations with local authorities, such as the City of Strasbourg and the European Collectivity of Alsace, which organised respectively a reception for participants and a pre-conference study visit to the Memorials of Struthof and Schirmeck.

13 + 14 Dec. ↘ Graz

ECML Conference — Inspiring innovation in language education: changing contexts, evolving competences

The conference marked the conclusion of the ECML's four-year “Inspiring innovation in language education” programme, featuring 9 projects, a think tank, and 12 training initiatives supported by the European Commission. It gathered around 130 language education professionals, including policy makers and ECML stakeholders, to discuss

programme outcomes and future activities. The event included plenary sessions, speeches, a round table, and thematic workshops on key topics such as language teacher and learner competences, plurilingual and intercultural education, and languages of schooling, linking completed project resources to future initiatives.



15 Dec. ∨ Graz

Professional Network Forum (PNF) meets at the ECML

The 13th meeting of the ECML Professional Network Forum took place on 15 December, following the Centre's conference "Inspiring innovation in language education: changing contexts, evolving competences." It provided an opportunity to reflect on the results of the ECML's 2020-23 programme and its relevance for both the PNF and the language education profession.

Representatives from 13 international associations and organisations working in language education and assessment participated. The Forum has successfully promoted cooperation among member organisations through webinars, conferences, and studies.

Topics discussed included AI's impact, plurilingual policies, digital citizenship in language education, and Covid's ongoing effects on education. Building on the PNF initiative "The future of language education in the light of Covid: Lessons learned and ways forward" and its findings, representatives considered future actions to develop versatility and autonomy in language teaching, focusing on higher and adult education.


The PNF comprises 16 associations/ organisations, with outreach to thousands. Activities are regularly updated within the ECML International events calendar.



This report provides an overview of the main activities and achievements of the Council of Europe Education Department in 2023.

From promoting democratic culture and quality education to harnessing the potential of digital transformation and artificial intelligence, the report highlights the main achievements of intergovernmental cooperation and capacity building programmes in education and higher education.

Through a detailed overview of key initiatives, this publication reflects the Council of Europe's commitment to fostering inclusive, democratic and resilient education systems. It is both a record of progress and a vision of the future of education in an ever-changing global landscape.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

ENG