

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

“Empowering Educators for a Democratic Europe in the Digital Age”

Podgorica, Montenegro, 3–4 December 2026

INFORMATION NOTE No. 1

Invitation – Composition of delegations – Nomination list – Online registration – Deadlines

KEY DATES AT A GLANCE

10 September 2026	Communication of the composition of delegations (Step 1) — late submissions accepted until Friday 2 October 2026
14 September 2026	Opening of individual online registration (Step 2)
16 October 2026	Requests for letters of invitation for visa purposes
3 November 2026	Closing of online registration, including requests for the floor
20 November 2026	Confirmation of accreditation by the Secretariat
25 November 2026	Last changes to the composition of delegations
2 December 2026	CDEDU plenary session; opening of badge collection (14:00–19:00)
Thursday 3 – Friday 4 December 2026	Pre-Ministerial High-Level Exchange (3 December, morning) and 27th Session

I. PURPOSE OF THIS NOTE

1. This Information Note is the first in a series of notes addressed to delegations in preparation for the 27th Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education. It sets out the arrangements for the invitation to the Conference, the composition of national delegations and of the delegations of international organisations and observers, the communication of nomination lists to the Secretariat, the online registration of participants, and the applicable deadlines.
2. Subsequent notes will cover practical and logistical arrangements (Information Note No. 2: travel, accommodation, venue access, badges, security) and the conduct of proceedings (Information Note No. 3: programme, list of speakers, interpretation, documents and adoption of the Ministerial Resolution).
3. The 27th Session is organised by the Education Department of the Council of Europe in co-operation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation of Montenegro, which will hold the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe from 10 November 2026. The Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) is the body responsible for the preparation of the Conference. The Conference will open in the afternoon of Thursday 3 December 2026, following the Pre-Ministerial High-Level

Exchange held that morning, and will **close at midday on Friday 4 December 2026** with the adoption of the Ministerial Resolution. The CDEDU will hold a plenary session in the afternoon of Wednesday 2 December 2026.

II. INVITATION

4. Letters of invitation have been addressed by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, jointly with the Minister of Education, Science and Innovation of Montenegro, to the Ministers responsible for education and higher education of the 46 member States of the Council of Europe and of the Holy See and Kazakhstan, as States Parties to the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18). Where responsibility for education is shared between several ministries, or between different levels of government, the invitation has been addressed to each of the competent Ministers. A copy of each letter has been transmitted to the Permanent Representation concerned in Strasbourg or, for States without a Permanent Representation, through the appropriate diplomatic channel.
5. Invitations have also been extended to the bodies and institutions of the Council of Europe, to the European Union, to the observer States and intergovernmental organisations, and to the organisations admitted as observers to the CDEDU listed in Section IV below.
6. The invitation e-mail contains the link to the online form entitled “Composition of delegations” (Step 1, Section V). Any authority which has not received its invitation, or which requires a further copy, is invited to contact the Secretariat without delay (Section VIII).
7. Ministers are warmly invited to attend the Conference in person. The 27th Session will take stock, at mid-term, of the implementation of the Council of Europe Education Strategy 2024–2030 “Learners First”, adopt a Ministerial Resolution setting out priorities and commitments for 2027–2030, and launch three Council of Europe initiatives: the European Space for Citizenship Education, the White Paper on the Futures of Teachers and the Teaching Profession, and work towards a European framework for the protection of academic freedom. Participation at ministerial level gives full political weight to these outcomes.
8. Participation in the Pre-Ministerial High-Level Exchange with education stakeholders on the morning of 3 December 2026 is by invitation only and follows a separate procedure. Nominations by the organisations concerned closed on 15 July 2026; the Council of Europe addresses letters of invitation directly to the individuals nominated, who register through a dedicated channel. Members of national delegations are welcome to attend the Exchange and should indicate their intention to do so when registering online.

III. COMPOSITION OF NATIONAL DELEGATIONS

Size of delegations

9. In order to ensure a focused ministerial debate and within the capacity of the plenary room, delegations may comprise up to the following number of participants:

Category	Maximum number of participants
Council of Europe member States, the Holy See and Kazakhstan	3, including the Minister/Head of Delegation and the CDEDU delegate(s) or focal point(s)
Federal States, and States with separate ministries for education and for higher education	4, including the Minister(s)/Head of Delegation and the CDEDU delegate(s) or focal point(s)
Observer States and international organisations participating as observers	2

Head of Delegation

10. Each national delegation should be headed by the Minister responsible for education. Where the Minister is unable to attend, the delegation may be headed by a State Secretary, or Deputy Minister duly designated by the national authorities". The rank of the Head of Delegation must be indicated precisely when the composition of the delegation is communicated, as it determines protocol precedence and the order of the list of speakers: in line with established practice, delegations headed by Ministers are given priority on the list of speakers for each session.
11. Where a State is represented by more than one Minister, the national authorities are requested to designate a single Head of Delegation, who will express the position of the State at the time of the adoption of the Ministerial Resolution. The other Minister(s) will be accredited as members of the delegation and may take the floor in the thematic sessions, subject to the time available.
12. Where the participation of the Minister cannot yet be confirmed when the composition of the delegation is communicated, delegations are invited to indicate "Minister – participation to be confirmed" and to confirm the level of representation to the Secretariat by Friday 13 November 2026 at the latest.

Other members of the delegation

13. Delegations are invited to include their CDEDU delegate or focal point, so as to ensure continuity between the preparatory work on the draft Ministerial Resolution and its adoption. Member States are further encouraged to include officials responsible for the fields covered by the three sub-themes of the Conference — the teaching profession, digital transformation in education and higher education — and to take gender balance into account in the composition of their delegations.

Persons not forming part of the delegation

14. The following persons do not form part of the official delegation and are not counted within the numbers set out above, but must nevertheless register individually online (Step 2): persons accompanying a participant (such as partners of Heads of Delegation),

security officers, and protocol or embassy staff providing logistical support. They will receive a badge giving access to the public areas of the venue; they will not have access to the plenary room. Additional delegation officials beyond the numbers set out above may exceptionally be accredited, subject to the capacity of the venue and prior agreement of the Secretariat, with access to a listening room.

IV. INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS, COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES AND OBSERVERS

Participants

15. In addition to the national delegations, the following are invited to take part in the Conference as participants: the Committee of Ministers; the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly; the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities; the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB); the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre); the European Union; and Education International and its European region, the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE), as strategic partners of the Council of Europe under the New Democratic Pact for Europe. The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) and the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE) are also invited. Each may be represented by up to two participants.

Observers

16. The following are invited to take part in the Conference as observers: Canada, Japan, Mexico and the United States of America, as observer States of the Council of Europe; the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and the organisations admitted as observers to the CDEDU in accordance with the rules governing the Committee's relations with non-governmental organisations. Each may be represented by up to two participants.

Participation in the proceedings

17. Representatives of participating bodies and organisations, and of observers, may take the floor at the invitation of the Chair, after the national delegations and subject to the time available. The adoption of the Ministerial Resolution is reserved to the delegations of the member States of the Council of Europe, the Holy See and Kazakhstan.
18. Participating bodies and organisations and observers communicate the composition of their delegation and register their representatives through the same two-step procedure as national delegations (Sections V and VI).

V. NOMINATION LISTS: COMMUNICATION OF THE COMPOSITION OF DELEGATIONS (STEP 1)

19. Upon receipt of the invitation, each national delegation and each participating body, organisation or observer is requested to communicate the composition of its delegation to the Secretariat through the online form "Composition of delegations", the link to which is provided in the invitation e-mail. The deadline for this step was set at 10 September 2026. Delegations which have not yet done so are kindly requested to communicate the composition of their delegation without delay, and at the latest by Friday 2 October 2026.

20. The following information is required for each member of the delegation: surname and first name(s), exactly as they appear in the travel document; title and function; ministry or institution; e-mail address; role within the delegation (Head of Delegation, Minister, CDEDU delegate or focal point, other member); and preferred working language for correspondence (English or French). Each delegation is also requested to designate a contact person, who will be the single point of contact with the Secretariat on all matters concerning the delegation.
21. The composition of the delegation should be communicated by, or with the endorsement of, the competent ministry, with a copy to the Permanent Representation concerned. The composition thus communicated constitutes the official nomination list of the delegation: only persons listed on it will be accredited as members of the delegation.
22. The Secretariat will acknowledge receipt, verify the composition against the numbers set out in Section III and confirm it by e-mail to the contact person. Each confirmed member of the delegation will then receive the link to the individual online registration form (Step 2).
23. Changes to the composition of a delegation, including substitutions, may be communicated by the contact person to the Secretariat by e-mail until Wednesday 25 November 2026. Any new member must then complete the individual online registration. Changes communicated after that date, or on site, cannot be guaranteed, as they remain subject to the security procedures of the host authorities.

VI. ONLINE REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS (STEP 2)

24. Individual online registration is open from **Monday 14 September to Tuesday 3 November 2026**. Each confirmed member of a delegation must register individually. Persons accompanying a participant, security officers and members of the press and media must also register individually, through the relevant category of the online form. Participants in the Pre-Ministerial High-Level Exchange register through the dedicated channel referred to in paragraph 8.
25. The online registration form requests, in particular:
 - identification details, as they appear in the travel document;
 - function, institution and contact details;
 - dates and times of arrival and departure, and flight details, to facilitate the welcome of Ministers by the host authorities;
 - participation in the Pre-Ministerial High-Level Exchange and in the official and informal dinners of 3 December 2026, together with any dietary requirements;
 - any accessibility or other specific needs;
 - where applicable, a request for a letter of invitation for visa purposes;
 - for Heads of Delegation, the request for the floor.

Requests for the floor

26. Heads of Delegation are requested to complete the “Request for the floor” section of the registration form, indicating the session(s) in which they wish to speak and their order of

priority. The Secretariat will establish the list of speakers for each session on this basis, giving priority to delegations headed by Ministers. Speaking time will be limited, depending on the number of requests. Further details will be provided in Information Note No. 3.

Acknowledgement and accreditation

27. An automatic acknowledgement is sent upon submission of the registration form; it does not constitute accreditation. The Secretariat will confirm accreditation to each participant by e-mail by Friday 20 November 2026. Participants are requested to keep this confirmation and to present it, together with a valid passport or national identity card, when collecting their badge.

Visas

28. Participants who require a visa to enter Montenegro are invited to request a letter of invitation through the registration form as early as possible and no later than Friday 16 October 2026, bearing in mind that visa procedures may take four to six weeks. Montenegro is not part of the Schengen Area, and a Schengen visa does not, as such, confer the right of entry. Participants encountering difficulties are invited to inform the Secretariat without delay.

Protection of personal data

29. Personal data collected through the composition and registration forms will be processed solely for the purposes of the organisation, accreditation and security of the Conference, in accordance with the rules of the Council of Europe on the protection of personal data. They will be shared with the host authorities only to the extent necessary for security and protocol purposes. The name, function and institution of participants will appear in the list of participants of the Conference; participants who object to this should inform the Secretariat when registering.

VII. SUMMARY OF DEADLINES

Date	Action	Channel
15 July 2026 (closed)	Nominations by organisations for the Pre-Ministerial High-Level Exchange	Dedicated channel
10 September 2026 — late submissions until 2 October 2026	Communication of the composition of delegations (Step 1)	Online form “Composition of delegations”
14 September 2026	Opening of individual online registration (Step 2)	Online registration form
16 October 2026	Requests for letters of invitation for visa purposes	Online registration form
3 November 2026	Closing of online registration, including requests for the floor	Online registration form
13 November 2026	Confirmation of the level of representation, where the participation of the Minister was pending	E-mail to the Secretariat
20 November 2026	Confirmation of accreditation by the Secretariat	E-mail to participants
25 November 2026	Last changes to the composition of delegations	E-mail to the Secretariat
2 December 2026	Opening of badge collection (14:00–19:00, main lobby)	On site

30. Deadlines relating to accommodation, venue access for official vehicles, bilateral meetings and the use of languages other than those covered by interpretation will be set out in Information Note No. 2.

VIII. SECRETARIAT OF THE CONFERENCE

31. All correspondence concerning the invitation, the composition of delegations and registration should be addressed to the Secretariat at **DGII.CEDU@coe.int**, with a copy, where appropriate, to the Permanent Representation concerned.

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