Presidency of Latvia
Council of Europe
MAY – NOVEMBER 2023

Présidence de la Lettonie
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Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education

"The Transformative Power of Education: Universal Values and Civic Renewal"

26th Session

Strasbourg, France

28-29 September 2023

Profile of the moderators and panel speakers of the Pre-Ministerial Session

Opening and closing remarks



Villano Qiriazi is the Head of the Council of Europe's Education Department and the Secretary of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education, which has met regularly since 1959 in one of the member States of the Council of Europe

He joined the Council of Europe in 1996 after an experience in teaching and journalism and has since managed a number of multilateral educational programmes in Education and Higher Education and Research. Since 2004, he has served as Secretary of the Steering Committee on Education and Head of the Education Policy Division, implementing new educational policies in the Council of Europe's 47 member states. Villano Qiriazi graduated from the University of Tirana in 1988 with a diploma in philology and French language and literature.

Panel 1 – Renewal of Civic Mission of Education: Boosting democratic participation of young learners



Matjaž Gruden is the Director of Democratic Participation at the Council of Europe, which includes Council of Europe activities and programmes in the area of education, including education for democratic citizenship, youth cooperation, culture and cultural heritage, landscape and biodiversity. The Directorate also includes the Platform for the protection of Journalists, the Eurimages film fund and the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe.

Matjaž Gruden previously served as Director of Policy Planning, Deputy Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General, political adviser and speechwriter for the Secretary General and President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Prior to his career at the Council of Europe, he was a diplomat at the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, posted in Brussels. He holds a law degree from the Law Faculty of the University of Ljubljana, as well as a post-graduate degree in EU law from the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium.



Barbara Santibanez is a researcher in education policy and human rights working at the European Institute of Education and Social Policy (France). She has specialised over the past ten years in citizenship and human rights education as a researcher and practitioner, with a special interest for the Western Balkans and the Global South.



Horia Onita serves as President of European Students' Union (ESU), working in the organisation on overarching political priorities, quality of education, learning and teaching policies and social dimension of higher education.

He represents ESU in positions such as co-chair of the Drafting Committee of 2024 Tirana Communique, co-chair of the Bologna Follow-Up group on Social Dimension, member of European Quality Assurance Register Board and attends Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) meetings on behalf of ESU.



Natia Natsvlishvili is a member of the Bureau of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) and of the Bureau of the Council of Europe's Education Policy Advisors Network (EPAN) for Georgia; Experienced in several Council of Europe projects on EDC/HRE and RFCDC; Editor, author, co-author of various resources for teachers' professional development; Representing the National Center for Teacher Professional Development and several universities of Georgia.

Panel 2- Education in times of emergencies and crisis: Resilient education systems and actors



Laura Treimane holds a Doctoral Degree in Applied Linguistics obtained at the University of Latvia in 2014 and has teaching experience both in higher education and adult education. Her professional activities in public service span over 20 years, notably in the field of higher education and research policy planning which includes leading national-level projects for higher education financing and institutional governance and involvement in other key reforms in the sector.

Since 2017 Laura Treimane works as Attaché of Education and Science at the Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Latvia to the OECD and UNESCO serving also in a liaison role to the Council of Europe's Education for Democracy Programme.



Raul Cârstocea is Assistant Professor in Twentieth-Century European History at Maynooth University, Ireland, and Vice-Chair of the Scientific Advisory Council of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE) at the Council of Europe. His research interests focus on antisemitism, nationalism, fascism, the Holocaust, and more broadly on state formation and nation-building processes in 19th and 20th century Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and their consequences for minority groups.

He is co-convener of the Study Group for Minority History and co-editor of the Modern History of Politics and Violence book series at Bloomsbury.



Marios Epaminondas has studied pedagogics, history and educational leadership.

He has worked as a teacher, teacher trainer and educational policy expert. He is currently working at the Office for European and International Affairs of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of Cyprus.



Daniele Del Bianco, is the Director of the Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia (ISIG).

As an International Expert for the Council of Europe, he is engaged in research and capacity building activities throughout the Council of Europe member States on the following topics: good governance, regional and local development, European integration/enlargement, participatory processes and border studies.

Panel 3- Education in times of emergencies and crisis: Resilient education systems and actors



Maija Innola is a Senior Ministerial Adviser at the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, Department of Higher Education and Science Policy. She is a member of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) and the Bologna Follow Up Group of the European Higher Education Area. She has served as a chair of the CDEDU from September 2021.



Frédéric Clavert is Assistant Professor in European Contemporary History at the University of Luxembourg. Initially trained in political sciences and international history, he has since turned his research and most of his teaching towards digital history and digital memory studies. For several of his projects, he uses methods partly based on machine learning and is now interested in the relationship between collective memory and artificial intelligence.



Barbara Wasson is a full Professor of Information Science at the Department of Information Science and Media Studies, University of Bergen, Norway, and Director of the Centre for the Science of Learning & Technology (SLATE), the national competence centre for learning analytics funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Education.

In addition to her work for the Council of Europe, she was a member of the Norwegian Government's expert commission on learning analytics, and she is leading a new project AI and Education: Layers of Trust, funded by the Trond Mohn Foundation.



Luca Lantero is the current Director General of CIMEA, the Italian Information Center on Academic Mobility and Equivalence. He is one of the main experts at Italian and international level on higher education, bogus diplomas and accreditation mills, foreign higher education systems, TNE institutions and accreditation, digitalization of processes and blockchain technology applied to recognition.
From 2018 and 2020 he was the Head of the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) Secretariat of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Since 2019, he is the President of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee, reelected for his second mandate. In addition to that, he is the current Head of the ASEM Education Secretariat. Among other activities he performs, in 2022 he was elected member of the Bureau of the Ethics, Transparency, and Integrity (ETINED) platform of the Council of Europe.



Professor **Phil Newton** works at Swansea University where his research programmes are on evidence-based approaches to Learning, Teaching and Assessment in Higher Education, with a particular recent focus on Academic Integrity and Misconduct.