



Presidency of Latvia
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



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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

Resolutions

Resolution 2 on education in times of emergencies and crisis

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

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

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

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

11. BEING FULLY AWARE of the fact that:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

17. In particular, we, Ministers:

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

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

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

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

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