

DRAFT AGENDA

REGIONAL MINISTERIAL
EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Including all children
in quality learning

10-13 DECEMBER 2013
ISTANBUL, TURKEY



Day 1: 10 December 2013

Masters of ceremony: Ms. Esra Omeroglu and Ms. Sandie Blanchet, UNICEF Representative in Romania

1. The Call for Action:

Seeking political commitment for equity in education



The first component of the Regional Ministerial Education Conference will help set an agenda for quality basic education in the region through the agreement of country delegations to collaborate on the Call for Action to include all children in quality learning. It will focus on strengthening political commitments toward effective reforms for improving equity in education access and in learning. It will foster greater dialogue and horizontal cooperation in the region and beyond, between sectors and between countries.

07.45–08.30

REGISTRATION (Participants may also register in their hotels the evening of 9 December)

08.30–10.00

SESSION 1: WELCOMING SESSION – OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

Key note addresses

- Ms. Yoka Brandt, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF
- Ms. Anna Susarenco, Youth Representative, Moldova
- Mr. Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO
- H.E. Mr. Nabi Avci, Minister of National Education, Turkey

10.00–10.15

COFFEE BREAK

10.15–11.15

SESSION 2: CALL FOR ACTION – INCLUDING ALL CHILDREN IN QUALITY LEARNING

The 2015 deadline for the MDGs is fast approaching. This is a pivotal moment for collective action. The achievements of the past decade, in the region and beyond, have shown what it takes to succeed: political will at the highest levels, sound policies, and resources to scale up proven methods. However to achieve a breakthrough, an unprecedented mobilization of all traditional and new partners will be needed. The Call for Action document that will be presented in Session 2 urges governments throughout Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia to come together to collaborate to bring about Education Equity Now.

Chairperson: *Mr. Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO*

Situation of education equity in the region: Setting the stage for the Call for Action

Ms. Marie-Pierre Poirier, UNICEF Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

Presentation of Call for Action

H.E. Mr. Nabi Avci, Minister of National Education, Turkey

Presentation of the Youth Statement on Education

Ms. Ana Maria Duminica, Youth Representative, Romania

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson

11.15–13.00

LUNCH

13.00–15.15

SESSION 3: EVERY CHILD IN SCHOOL – PROMOTING EQUITY IN EDUCATION ACCESS AND COMPLETION

Policy insight debate – Each and every child in the region has the right to quality education. Yet 2.5 million children in the region remain out of school. Many more drop out before completing the compulsory school cycle, enrol late or attend so infrequently that they achieve little within the classroom. The children that are left out of basic education in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia are those that are already marginalized from society by wider patterns of social disadvantage and discrimination, as well as by poor quality education and non-inclusive policies and practices. Poverty combined with inequities relating to gender, disability, language and ethnicity, place of residence and child labour leave children unable to access education or excluded from school learning processes. Session 3 will invite exchange on the following key questions: (1) What are the policy options that ensure equitable access to education for every child? (2) What groups of children require explicit attention in policies and how can these children's needs be reflected in national laws and policies? (3) What programmes have proven successful in reducing the exclusion of marginalized children from school?

Chairperson: Ms. Yoka Brandt, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF

3.1 Panel Discussion: Global concern for out of school children – Toward inclusive education and equity for the most marginalized children

Human rights-based approach to achieving equity in education

Ms. Rita Izsák, Independent Expert on Minority Issues (video statement)

Including every child in school

Ms. Diane Richler, Joseph P Kennedy, Jr. International Fellow

The Global Out of School Children Initiative

Mr. Albert Motivans, Head of Education Statistics, UNESCO Institute of Statistics

Discussants:

- Ms. Mukkades Nalbant, Deputy Minister of Education, Bulgaria
- Ms. Lia Gigauri, Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Georgia
- Ms. Vesna Vučurović, Deputy Minister of Education, Montenegro
- H.E. Mr. Remus Pricopie, Minister of Education, Romania
- Ms. Tojiniso Fayzalievna Mahmadova, Deputy Minister of Education, Tajikistan

Questions and comments from Plenary

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson



15.15–15.45

COFFEE BREAK

15.45–17.15

SESSION 3 (CONT'D): EVERY CHILD IN SCHOOL – PROMOTING EQUITY IN EDUCATION ACCESS AND COMPLETION

Chairperson: Ms. Josephine Bourne, Associate Director, Education, UNICEF

3.2 Panel Discussion: Adolescents, equity and upper secondary education

Ending Early School Leaving

- Mr. João Delgado, Head of Unit for School Education Policy, Comenius Programme, European Commission, DG Education and Culture
- Mr. Fred Voncken, Director Early School Leaving, Ministry of Education, The Netherlands

Discussants:

- Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov, Deputy Minister of Education, Azerbaijan

- Mr. Salih Çelik, Deputy Under-Secretary, Ministry of National Education, Turkey

Questions and comments from the plenary

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson

Day 2: 11 December 2013

Master of Ceremony: Mr. Mark Hereward, UNICEF Representative in Azerbaijan

08.30–10.15

SESSION 4: EVERY CHILD SUPPORTED BY EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS – THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL NATURE OF EDUCATION

Policy insight debate – Good governance is the foundation of equitable education systems. To advance equity in school access and learning outcomes, governance and financing mechanisms must be efficient, effective, decentralized, provide a child-friendly learning environment and explicitly supportive of marginalized children's needs. In Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the past twenty years have been a time of transition for many governance systems, with decentralization, public finance reform and changes in structures taking place widely. Many challenges remain in establishing strong equity-enhancing governance system. Session 4 will invite a debate around the following key questions: (1) What are the key results achieved in reforming education finance and governance systems in the region? (2) What are the priority challenges for improving governance systems, and particularly coordination across sectors? (3) What governance reforms have proven most effective in creating child-friendly learning environments for children?

Chairperson: Ms. Monika Linn, Chief, Development Policies and Cross-Sectoral Coordination Unit, UN Economic Commission for Europe

Panel Discussion: Promoting collaborative governance systems and child-friendly learning environments to enhance equity in education and improve labour market outcomes

Education financing and governance for equity

Mr. Alberto Rodriguez, Director of Education, Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, World Bank

Discussants:

- Mr. Robert Stepanyan, Head of Department of Monitoring and Development Programmes, Ministry of Education, Armenia
- Mr. Vassily Budkevich, Deputy Minister of Education, Belarus
- Ms. Sabina Glasovac, Assistant Minister and Head, Directorate for Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Education, Croatia
- Mr. Yessengazy Imangaliyev, Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Kazakhstan
- Ms. Rie Vejs-Kjeldgaard, Regional Director a.i., International Labour Organization

Questions and comments from the plenary

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson



10.15–10.45

COFFEE BREAK

10.45–12.30

SESSION 5: EVERY CHILD LEARNING – ACHIEVING EQUITY IN LEARNING OUTCOMES

Policy insight debate – Education is ultimately judged by the learning outcomes that students take away from school. Learning outcomes determine the skills, competencies, values and knowledge that young people will carry into the labour market, society and their future families. In Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, many students – more than half in some countries, according to PISA 2009 – leave school without the basic skills and knowledge needed to engage productively in their countries' workforce and society. Students from disadvantaged social groups achieve learning levels far below their wealthier peers, creating large equity gaps in schooling outcomes and thus labour market access. Session 5 will invite debate around the following key questions: (1) What are the key challenges in improving equity in learning outcomes for the most marginalized children? (2) How is evidence on learning outcomes best gathered and monitored? (3) What policy approaches that have proven effective in the region for improving learning levels among the most marginalized groups? and (4) How can those reforms be integrated into the broader education laws and policies?

Chairperson: Mr. Alberto Rodriguez, Director of Education, Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, World Bank

Panel Discussion: The Learning Imperative

Linking Education Participation and Learning

Ms. Carol Bellamy, Former Chairperson of the Global Partnership for Education

The Learning Imperative

Ms. Josephine Bourne, Associate Director, Education, UNICEF

Monitoring teacher quality

Ms. Kristen Weatherby, OECD, Senior Analyst, Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) Programme

Discussants:

- Ms. Nora Malaj, Deputy Minister of Education, Albania
- H.E. Mr. Spiro Ristovski, Minister of Education, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Mr. Geldymammed Geldymammedov, Deputy Minister of Education, Turkmenistan
- Mr. Bakhtiyor Daniyarov, Deputy Minister of Public Education, Uzbekistan

Questions and comments from the plenary

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson



12.30–14.00

LUNCH, INCLUDING PRESENTATION BY YOUTH PARTICIPANTS SUPPORTED BY UNICEF

14.00–15.45

SESSION 6: EVERY CHILD LEARNING EARLY AND ENROLLING ON TIME – IMPROVING EQUITY AND QUALITY IN EARLY LEARNING SERVICES

Policy insight debate – Early childhood education is the most powerful equalizer of inequities in school access and learning outcomes. It is a right for all children and a global commitment spelled out in the Education for All goals. Yet across Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, access to early childhood education programmes remains severely limited. The absence of early education services coupled with the lack of clear starting age policies means that many children, often the most marginalized, enrol late in primary school – sometimes not until age 8. Thus marginalized children begin school already one to two academic years behind their peers from wealthier families, making it extremely difficult for them to catch up before the end of basic education. Session 6 will incite discussion on the following key questions: (1) What results have been achieved in expanding access to early childhood education services? (2) What legislative and policy approaches have been most effective in expanding access to early childhood education services and in improving the quality of those services? (3) What are the effective policy practices for ensuring on-time enrolment in primary school? (4) How can countries ensure

that the most marginalized children access quality early learning services and enrol on time?

Chairperson: Ms. Diane Richler, Joseph P Kennedy, Jr. International Fellow

Panel Discussion: Early education and school readiness – Expanding access and improving quality

Quality early education services: A key strategy for equity in education

- Ms. Caroline Arnold, Director of Education, Aga Khan Foundation
- Ms. Sarah Klaus, Director, Early Childhood Programme, Open Society Foundations

The Starting Age Imperative

Mr. Keith Lewin, Professor of International Education and Development and Director of the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE), University of Sussex

Discussants:

- H.E. Mr. Sredoje Novic, Minister of Civil Affairs, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- H.E. Mr. Kanat Sadykov, Minister of Education, Kyrgyzstan
- H.E. Ms. Maia Sandu, Minister of Education, Moldova

Questions and comments from plenary

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson



15.45–16.15

COFFEE BREAK

16.15–17.15

SESSION 7: THE WAY FORWARD AND THE POST-2015 AGENDA

Education is a crucial component in the discussions around the post-2015 development agenda. It is important as a goal and it is important as a strategy for achieving all development goals. In this session, speakers will make the link between the Call for Action and the ongoing discussions around the post-2015 development agenda. These discussions will provide a vision for the way forward for the Call for Action.

Chairperson: Ms. Carol Bellamy, Former Chairperson of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

Linking to discussions on the Post-2015 Agenda

- Mr. Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO [written statement]
- Ms. Monika Linn, Chief, Development Policies and Cross-Sectoral Coordination Unit UN Economic Commission for Europe
- Ms. Yoka Brandt, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF
- H.E. Mr. Nabi Avci, Minister of National Education, Turkey

18.00

PRESS CONFERENCE

18.00

DEPARTURE FOR GALA DINNER

19.30–21.30

GALA DINNER HOSTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY

Day 3: 12 December 2013

Master of Ceremony: Mr. Benjamin Perks, UNICEF Representative in Montenegro

2. Strategies for equity:

Working together to implement the Call for Action

The second component of the Conference will provide a forum for knowledge sharing, learning and exchange of good practices between countries and partners on the strategies for achieving the goals of the Call for Action. Discussions will focus on an exchange of successful practices for reducing inequities in education access and learning between countries and partners.

09.00–13.00

SESSION 8: STRATEGIES FOR INCLUDING EVERY CHILD IN SCHOOL – REDUCING DISCRIMINATION, IMPROVING DATA AND CLOSING SYSTEM GAPS

Governments in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia have made much progress in past decades in advancing universal education. However, still a region in transition, Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia continues to struggle with policy environments that generate inefficiencies in management that translate into obstacles preventing children from learning and flourishing in schools. This session aims to create an exchange between countries and between countries and experts about strategies that have proven effective in tackling those inefficiencies and removing the barriers keeping children out of school. It focuses particularly on ending discrimination, closing data and policy gaps and developing policies to prevent early school leaving.

09.00–10.30

Session 8.1: Reducing Discrimination Against Marginalized Children

Chairpersons: Ms. Sarah Klaus, Director, Early Childhood Programme, Open Society Foundations

Key Note Address – Strategies for ending inequities in education participation and learning

Mr. Keith Lewin, Professor of International Education and Development and Director of the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE), University of Sussex

The Right to Inclusive Education: UNICEF's Position

Mr. Gopal Mitra, Programme Specialist, Disability Section, UNICEF NYHQ

'It's About Ability': Changing perspectives on disability in Montenegro

Ms. Vesna Vučurović, Deputy Minister of Education, Montenegro

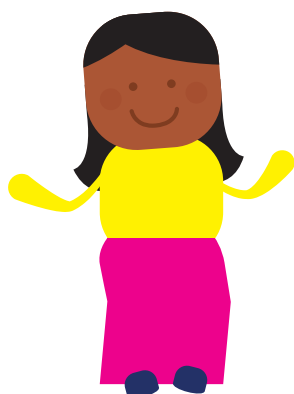
Tackling discrimination against Roma children – Good practices from the region

Ms. Anasztazia Nagy, Country Officer for Roma Education Fund in Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia

Sharing experience from Romania – Reducing the exclusion of Roma communities

Ms. Liliana Preoteasa, General Director, General Directorate for Education and Lifelong Learning, Ministry of Education, Romania

Discussion



10.30–11.00

COFFEE BREAK

11.00–12.00

Session 8.2: Closing data gaps on out of school children

Chairpersons: Ms. Sarah Klaus, Director, Early Childhood Programme, Open Society Foundations

Improving data on out of school children in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Mr. Albert Motivans, Head of Education Statistics, UNESCO Institute of Statistics; and Ms. Erin Tanner, Education Specialist, UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

Improving data on children from Roma communities – MICS in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ms. Sanja Kabil, Education Officer, UNICEF, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Improving data on children with disabilities

Mr. Daniel Mont, Principal Research Associate, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College London

Discussion

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson

12.00–13.00

Session 8.3: Upper secondary education – Preventing dropouts and promoting relevant skills and employability

Chairperson: Mr. Albert Motivans, Head of Education Statistics, UNESCO Institute of Statistics

School to Work Transition: Promoting skills for the 21st Century

Ms. Margarete Sachs-Israel, Programme Specialist, EFA Global Partnerships Team, UNESCO

Monitoring Early School Leavers in the Netherlands

Mr. Fred Voncken, Director Early School Leaving, Ministry of Education, Netherlands

Collecting data on OOSC of Upper Secondary School Age

Mr. Salih Çelik, Deputy Under-Secretary, Ministry of National Education, Turkey

Discussion

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson



13.00–14.00

LUNCH

14.00–15.15

SESSION 9: STRATEGIES TO FOSTER GOOD GOVERNANCE – ENHANCING EDUCATION FINANCING AND COORDINATION ACROSS SECTORS

Financing and coordination mechanisms are key strategies for reducing inequities in education. In Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, monitoring and evaluation systems need strengthening and communities and young people need to be more involved in school and local governance mechanisms. Administrative, budgeting and financing processes often create obstacles for the most marginalized children and coordination across sectors needs strengthening. This session aims to create an exchange between countries and between countries and experts about strategies that have proven effective in strengthening these key administrative systems.

Chairperson: Mr. Jan van Ravens, Yale University, Child Study Center

Panel Discussion: Enhancing education financing and improving cross-sectoral collaboration to promote equity

Key Note Address – Education financing for equity

Mr. Jan Herczynski, Senior Research and Advisor to the Polish Ministry of National Education, Institute of Education Research, Warsaw.

Trends in education financing reform – impact on equity

Mr. Philippe Testot-Ferry, Regional Education Advisor, UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

Education financing in Moldova

Ms. Svetlana Bortoi, Head of education, culture and science financial division, Ministry of Finance, Moldova

Multidimensional monitoring of child well-being: lessons and suggestions

Mr. István György Tóth, Director, Tárki Social Research Institute, Budapest, Hungary

Linking social protection to education inclusion

Mr. Robert Stepanyan, Head of Department of Monitoring & Development Programmes, Ministry of Education, Armenia

Discussion

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson

15.15–15.45

COFFEE BREAK

15.45–17.30

SESSION 10: STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING QUALITY EARLY LEARNING FOR EVERY CHILD

There is a serious shortage of pre-primary school services and facilities in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The services that do exist are largely based in urban settings and are private in nature, making them inaccessible to the poorest, most marginalized children that would benefit most. Additionally, the quality of preschool services is of concern in the region, as little information is available on the effectiveness of teaching-learning processes in pre-primary school services, which often are unregulated by the state. This session will invite national and international technical experts in early childhood education to share their experience and successes in expanding access to early education services and in improving quality.

15.45–16.45

Session 10.1: Expanding access to early education services

Chairperson: Ms. Liana Ghent, Executive Director, International Step by Step Association

Investing in early education for equity

Mr. Jan van Ravens, Yale University, Child Study Center

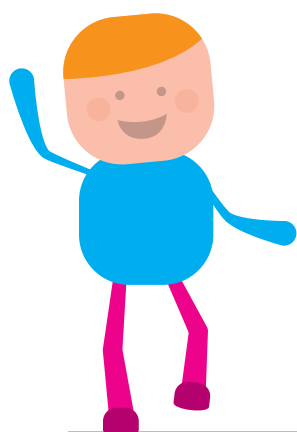
Sharing experience from Tajikistan – Expanding access to early education with the half-day model

Mr. Abdujabor Aliev, Head, Department of Preschool & General Secondary Education, Ministry of Education, Tajikistan

Sharing experience from Turkey – Improving access to early education

Ms. Funda Kocabyik, Director General of Basic Education, Ministry of National Education, Turkey

Discussion



16.45–17.30

Session 10.2: Improving and monitoring the quality of early education services

Chairperson: Ms. Liana Ghent

Young child well-being and quality early education

Ms. Deepa Grover, Regional ECD Advisor, UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

Improving quality of early childhood education programmes

H.E. Mr. Dime Spasov, Minister of Labour and Social Policy, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Q&A – The link between quality early learning, on-time enrolment and learning in primary school

Ms. Caroline Arnold, Director of Education, Aga Khan Foundation; and Mr. Keith Lewin, Professor of International Education and Development and Director of the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE), University of Sussex

Discussion

Summary remarks and conclusion by Chairperson



Day 4: 13 December 2013

Master of Ceremony: Mr. Robert Fuderich, UNICEF Representative in Uzbekistan

09.00–12.15

SESSION 11: STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT EVERY CHILD TO LEARN

Education is ultimately judged by the learning outcomes that students take away from school. Learning outcomes determine the skills, competencies, values and knowledge that young people will carry into the labour market, society and their future families. In Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, as elsewhere in the world, many students leave school without the basic skills and knowledge needed to engage productively in their countries' workforce and society. This serious inefficiency results from a lack of quality standards, from a lack of monitoring of learning outcomes and from poor quality teaching-learning processes that detract from the very purpose of education. This session aims to create an exchange between countries and between countries and experts about strategies that have proven successful for improving learning outcomes, with particular focus on the most marginalized children. It focuses particularly on making teaching-learning processes more inclusive and of better quality through standards, monitoring of learning and investment in teachers.

09.00–10.15

Session 11.1: Monitoring and improving learning outcomes

Chairperson: Ms. Kate Lapham, Senior Program Manager, Education Support Program, Open Society Foundations

Key note address – Monitoring learning outcomes through PISA

Mr. Andreas Schleicher, Deputy Director for Education and Skills, OECD [video presentation]

Analysis of learning outcomes according to PISA 2009

Mr. Philippe Testot-Ferry, Regional Education Advisor, UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

The role of national assessments

Mr. Aaron Benavot, Professor, School of Education, State University of New York

Improving learning outcomes: the experience of Croatia

Ms. Michelle Bras Roth, Head of the PISA Centre, National Centre for External Evaluation of Education, Croatia

Discussion

15.15–15.45

COFFEE BREAK

10.30–11.30

Session 11.2: Reforming teacher recruitment and qualifications systems

Chairperson: Ms. Kate Lapham, Senior Program Manager, Education Support Program, Open Society Foundations

Teacher quality in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Ms. Gita Steiner-Khamsi, Professor, Teachers College, Columbia University

Active learning and standards of quality basic education

Mr. Emin Amrullayev, Head of Education Quality Section, Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan

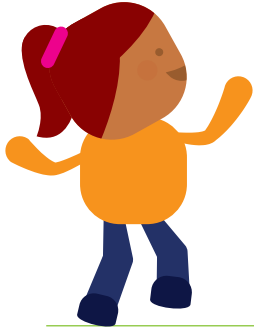
Improving teacher quality in Uzbekistan

Mr. Fayzulla Akhmedov, Head of Main Department for Organization of the Activities of Educational Institutions, Ministry of Public Education, Uzbekistan

Education standards for the 21st Century

Ms. Liana Ghent, Executive Director, International Step by Step Association

Discussion



11.30–12.30

Session 11.3: Making education staff and services more inclusive for learners

Chairperson: Ms. Gita Steiner-Khamsi, Professor, Teachers College, Columbia University

Key Note Address – Closing policy gaps: policy strategies to support inclusive education for children with disabilities

Ms. Kate Lapham, Senior Program Manager, Education Support Program, Open Society Foundations

Video

It's About Ability Campaign, Montenegro

Inclusive schools for inclusive education and care for children with disabilities – the Bulgarian experience

Ms. Mukkades Nalbant, Deputy Minister of Education, Bulgaria

Ending school segregation

Ms. Galina Bulat, Inclusive Education Project Manager, Lumos

Inclusive schools for inclusive learning

Ms. Natasha Graham, International Disability Expert, Partnership for Child Development

Inclusive learning for children with disabilities

Ms. Denise Roza, Executive Director, Perspektiva

Discussion

12.30–13.00

SESSION 12: CLOSING REMARKS

- Ms. Marie-Pierre Poirier, UNICEF Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
- Mr. Yusuf Ziya Yediyildiz, Director General of European Union and Foreign Relations, Ministry of National Education, Turkey
- **“Video presentation - Education Equity Now!”**

13.00–14.00

LUNCH



EDUCATION EQUITY NOW!



Find out more at:

www.education-equity.org