

REGIONAL FORUM

ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

29 – 30 MARCH 2023 | HYBRID EVENT | GENEVA & ONLINE



SIDE EVENT CONCEPT NOTE

Event title

Unleashing the power of youth through Education: Sustainable solutions for a Better Future.

Background and Rationale

2023 marks an important milestone for the 2030 Agenda, representing the halfway mark for its implementation, and to continue building the momentum to recover from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and accelerate the Decade of Action and Sustainable Solutions for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels. It is also the [European Year of Skills](#).

In addition of being the halfway mark, 2023 was meant to be the year to organize the 'Summit of the Future: Multilateral Solutions for a Better Tomorrow' in order to better respond to humanity's most serious and pressing challenges – ranging from coronavirus to war, climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, human rights – challenges that can only be solved by working together to make life better for everyone, rebuilding trust, to protect the planet, and to think for the long term, to deliver more for young people and succeeding generations. These are elements captured in the UN Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda report and his vision on the future of global cooperation.

The specific focus on meaningful, diverse, and effective youth engagement both within and outside the UN is crucial for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and the transition to climate-neutral society and economy both an urgent challenge and an opportunity to build a better future for all. Engaging young people in decisions that affect them is not just a matter of right, it is a matter of principle

Young people play a major role in articulating the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and to respond to current and future challenges. As leading innovators and knowledge creators, young people have proven time and again how crucial they are to social change notably through [youth-led research](#) and [action](#). During COP27, [Youth representatives and Ministers of environment and education came together](#) to address [young people's needs and demands on climate change education](#), and the [Greening Education Partnership](#) was launched as a concrete global mechanism for mainstreaming climate change education.

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As part of the UN Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda, the Transforming Education Summit set the tone for the necessary skills, training, and lifelong learning. Almost all the serious and most pressing global challenges listed in the UN75 declaration A/RES/75/1 can be tackled by investing in education. We must elevate education to the top of the global political agenda and to mobilize action, ambition, solidarity, and solutions to bring about profound changes in the world.

Session objectives and expected outcomes

This side event will build on the outcomes of key global and regional commitments made since the RFSD2022 and how they can be used to strengthen and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the active participation of young people and the education for sustainable development network. These include, the UN Transforming Education Summit, the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, the Third High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries, the European Year of Youth 2022, and Climate Change Conference (COP 27) and UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) Youth summits.

This event can serve as a platform to connect the different organizations and networks working in the areas of education and youth development, and further strengthen the engagement of youth from the European region to support the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the power of education for sustainable development.

Organizers

Lead organizers: UNEP, UNECE, UNESCO and Geneva Environment Network

Contributors: [UNECE ESD Youth Platform](#)

Agenda and Structure

Draft agenda

Tuesday, 28 March 2023, 10:00 – 12:00

10h00 - 10h05	Welcome (moderator)
10h05 - 10h15 [10 min]	Introductory remarks by the co-organizers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNESCO, UNEP and UNECE
10h15 - 10h35 [20 min]	Engagement of youth in SD policies (lessons from community/organizational involvement) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. António Marques Pinto, Association of Young Doctors of Portugal [seeing invisible impact of climate change and pollution on children and youth daily]• Ms. Jessica Gill, UN Youth Delegate for Ireland 2022/23 [Amplifying the needs, priorities and voices of youth in the implementation of the 20230 agenda].

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simon Herteleer, Coordinator of the UNECE ESD Youth Platform.
10h35 - 10h55 [20 min]	Commitments to accelerate 2030 agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Daniel Dubas, Delegate of the Federal Council for the 2030 Agenda, Switzerland, [Halfway to 2030 – Where does Europe stand and how does it move forward with youth and education]?• Ms. Diana D. Rizzolio, Coordinator, Geneva Environment Network, [promoting education and youth involvement through environmental negotiations and meetings]• Mr. Nathan Metenier, UN SG's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change [are young people being heard]?
10h55 - 11h15 [20 min]	Promising collaborative actions to advance the interest of young people <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Emily Morris, The Brookings Institution, Center for Universal Education, Purpose of education - solution [the silver bullet] to all issues?• Ms. Samia Kassid, The Rights of Children and Youth, World Future Council• Michaela Krömer, Attorney-at-Law, [Defending the rights of young people against climate crisis]
11h15 - 11h40 [25 min]	Good practices of youth engagement through education <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Luise Heidenreich, Co-Head Education and Learning, Climate-KIC [How to empower the next generation of climate innovators and entrepreneurs]?• Ms. Deirdre Hodson, European Commission [Learning for environmental sustainability and readiness for the green transition].• Ms. Aravella Zachariou, Chair of the UNECE Steering Committee for ESD [empowering youth through ESD framework 2020-2030]• Ms. Bahar Özay, Coordinator, Sustainable Development Solutions Network Turkey (SDSN)
11h35 - 11h55 [15 min]	Question and Answers session
11h55 - 12h00 [5 min]	Wrap up of the session and concluding remark.

Sign-up / Registration Link

<https://ungeneva.webex.com/weblink/register/ef447812d5bc63ef6f471d287271f3a73>