

## **7<sup>th</sup> PRAGUE FORUM**

***Towards a Pan-European Platform on  
Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education  
1-2 October 2015, Charles University***

## **MAIN PURPOSE OF THE 2015 PRAGUE FORUM**

The 7th session of the Prague Forum will see the launching of the Pan-European Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED), a direct follow-up to the mandate given to the Council of Europe by European Ministers of Education at the Helsinki Ministerial Conference in April 2013.

Convinced by the necessity to increase the fight against corruption in education, a concern that touches all member States and all levels of education, the Ministers of Education asked the Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE) “to establish a pan-European platform of exchange of information and best practices on ethics and integrity in education with special attention to the fight against corruption and fraud in education and research with a view to furthering the ‘Helsinki agenda for quality education in Europe’<sup>1</sup>”.

## **BACKGROUND**

Initially launched in 1995 and hosted for the 7<sup>th</sup> time by the Czech Ministry of Education, Prague Fora have facilitated the meeting of representatives of member countries of the Council of Europe and States parties to the European Cultural Convention, international organisations and other experts.

It will bring together approximately 80 participants from the public education sector from the 50 countries of the European Cultural Convention. Observers will be invited as well as representatives of major intergovernmental organisations and NGOs. The Bureau of the CDPPE and the Czech delegation to the CDPPE will supervise its preparation. Several plenary sessions, key-note presentations and working groups will provide opportunities for all participants to share examples of good practice and offer networking opportunities.

## **OUTCOMES**

The Forum will focus on:

- the implications for action in national education contexts and for the Council of Europe programme arising from the implementation of policies based on ethics, transparency and integrity as well as the role and involvement of all relevant actors in the field of education (ethical behaviour, code of conduct...);
- proposing initiatives for capacity-building at institutional level, through peer learning and sharing of best practices;
- encouraging initiatives to support more specialised agencies in relation to anti-corruption;
- strengthening global action through the creation of partnership with relevant international bodies and memoranda of understanding with other organisations working on the same topics.

## **THEME AND SUB-THEMES OF THE FORUM**

The ETINED Platform intends to propose a new principles-based approach to ethics, transparency and integrity. Its mandate is based on the assumption that issues regarding quality education and corruption can only be effectively addressed if all relevant sections of society commit fully to fundamental positive ethical principles for public and professional life, rather than rely only on top-down mechanistic regulatory measures.

---

<sup>1</sup> Final Declaration adopted at the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, Helsinki, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

The Platform will therefore aim at:

- elaborating a framework instrument on ethical principles which would contribute to the development of a culture of democracy and participation based on transparency, fairness and equity;
- supporting the establishment of national and regional pilot projects on ethics, transparency and integrity in education;
- disseminating policy opinions and publications and sharing best practices;
- developing expertise to support interested countries and proposing capacity-building for all actors;

The Platform should also explore possible co-ordinated actions at international level beyond the Council of Europe framework, acknowledging and building on the findings and results of other organisations working in the field.

Three initial sub-themes have been identified by the CDPPE as major dimensions furthering this mandate and being in line with the core mission and new programme of activities of the Council of Europe in the education sector (2016-2017):

► Ethical behaviour of all actors in education

In developing an overall approach based on positive ethical principles (beliefs, norms, values...), the attention under this priority line is focused upon the different sets of actors, with specific guidance on the conduct and practices expected of them. The impact of professional codes of conduct will be assessed.

► Academic integrity and plagiarism

The protection, development and enhancement of academic integrity, with a particular focus on the issue of plagiarism, will be examined under this sub-theme. The particularities and potential risks linked to higher education, from the growing number of students to the competition for resources and prestige places which increases pressure on higher education institutions and staff, will be discussed.

► Recognition of qualifications

Taking account of previous experiences of the Council of Europe and the ENIC-NARIC networks, this issue will in particular touch upon the problems of accreditation and diploma mills.

## PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Thursday 1 October 2015

- a.m.            Opening session
- Setting the framework: an introduction to the work on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education done by the Council of Europe
- Cross views on perspectives and practices
- p.m.            Parallel working group sessions: Case-studies
- Ethical behaviour of all actors in education
  - Academic Integrity / Plagiarism
  - Recognition of qualifications

Friday 2 October 2015

- a.m.            Roundtable
- Input to the future work of the Platform: the answers from the parallel working group sessions
- Inspiration for the future
- Closing remarks

## PARTICIPATION AND REGISTRATION

All States parties to the European Cultural Convention are invited to send **one representative** to the Forum according to the following profiles:

- Officials developing and implementing educational policy reforms;
- Representatives of relevant national agencies;
- Representatives of higher education bodies, such as universities, with a solid experience relating to ethics, transparency and integrity in education, or representatives of the administration or university staff;
- Educational policy researchers;
- Representatives of educational associations with relevant expertise on ethics and anti-corruption.

**Authorities are kindly invited to send their nominations by 15 July at the latest to the CDPPE Secretariat at the following e-mail address: [dgll\\_cdppe@coe.int](mailto:dgll_cdppe@coe.int)**

Authorities are kindly asked to mention the functions of the delegates as well as their contact details. The Secretariat of the CDPPE will then get in touch directly with the nominated delegate.

Please note that participants should be able to work in English or French (simultaneous interpretation will be provided during the meeting).

## WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS ON THE THEME AND THE SUB THEMES

All States are invited to submit written contributions on the theme and sub-themes. These contributions can be of different types:

- Executive summary (1 to maximum 5 A4 pages or 600 to 3.500 words) about reforms being carried out by the State or having a direct link with the theme of the Forum detailing the main challenges and the responses made;
- A case study or example of good practice (1 to maximum 5 A4 pages or 600 to 3.500 words) on the evaluation of the results obtained following reforms made or pilot project conducted by the State, in relation with the sub-themes of the Forum.

Contributions should conclude with concrete proposals and implications for future action at European level for the theme and sub-themes of the Forum.

All written contributions, as well as the proposals for action made by the States, will be compiled in a working document that will serve to stimulate the discussions in plenary sessions and provide the main elements of the Final Communiqué of the Forum.

## TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

As in previous years, the travel expenses of **one participant per State** will be borne by the Council of Europe up to a maximum of **450 Euros**, as well as a lump sum of 35 Euros per day for local costs during the stay. Participants are kindly requested to arrange their journey by the most economical route and to make use, wherever possible, of any reduced fares that may be available. Any exceeding amount will have to be borne by the national authorities.

The accommodation expenses **of this participant** will be borne by the Czech authorities (two nights and two meals maximum).

States may nominate a second representative, whose travel and subsistence expenses **should be borne by their authorities**. However if the limit of 55 enrolled is reached, we reserve the right to refuse registration of a second member per delegation.