



ITU Office for Europe

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Geneva, 29 October 2021

To: - ITU and UNICEF Member States from Europe
- Permanent Missions to UN in Geneva
- Regional Offices of the United Nations and other international organizations
- Representatives of the European Union
- UN Resident Coordinators from Europe
- DCO Office for Europe and Central Asia
- Members of the UN Country Teams from Europe

Subject: Invitation to ITU-UNICEF Regional Briefing “Connectivity in Education: Status and recent developments in nine non-European Union countries”

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are pleased to invite you to attend the **ITU-UNICEF Regional Briefing: “Connectivity in Education: Status and recent developments in nine non-European Union countries”** on **10 November 2021, 10:00 – 11:45 CET**.

The Regional Briefing is jointly organized by the Regional Offices of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and will be held remotely. The collaboration between ITU and UNICEF has resulted in the joint report **“Connectivity in Education: Status and recent developments in nine non-European Union countries”** which we hope can serve as a regional public good.

The report provides an overview and aggregate perspective of the digitalization of education in 9 countries: **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine**.

The briefing will be the occasion to present the report *Connectivity in Education* which provides a status update of the drivers of digital skills development, e-governance of education system, and smart and flexible education delivery at school and at home. Based on this report, it will also provide a comprehensive overview of connectivity in education in each country, including broadband status and government strategies in both education and connectivity. The briefing will also address multi-stakeholder partnerships, financing mechanisms for investment, and COVID-19 related measures in ensuring continuity of learning through ICTs in each country. This presentation will be followed by a panel discussion and Q&A segment with all relevant stakeholders.

As connectivity in education is an important multidimensional issue that calls for a close partnership between diverse stakeholders, the regional briefing will serve as a unique platform to deliberate on the **next steps aimed at generating concrete impacts at the country level** by pinpointing key gaps and identifying what has already been done, stimulating the discussion on specified needs at the national level, and identify possible actions to be taken to fill those gaps.

In line with the regional framework of the UN Sustainable Development System, and **the UN Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Asia**, the Regional Briefing provides an example of multi-

agency cooperation strengthening the delivery of the UN system in terms of accuracy, reach and impact at the regional level.

You are invited to monitor the event website for updates on all details, including the agenda (Annex 1): <https://bit.ly/3pMrvAE>

Together with our colleagues, Ms. Sarah Delporte, Project Officer, ITU Office for Europe (tel.: +33789209034, e-mail: sarah.delporte@itu.int), as well as Mr. Parmosivea Soobrayan, Regional Education Adviser (e-mail: psoobrayan@unicef.org) and Ms. Sarah Fuller, Education Consultant, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (e-mail: sfuller@unicef.org), we remain at your disposal for any questions you might have on this briefing.

We hope that you will be able to attend and ensure a wide regional engagement to make this ITU-UNICEF initiative successful.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Ponder', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jaroslaw Ponder

Head
ITU Office for Europe

ANNEX 1

Draft Agenda

Wednesday | 10th November 2021

*[9:45 – 10:00]	Virtual Networking
[10:00– 10:20]	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gwi Yeop Son, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Development Coordination Office (DCO) Jaroslav Ponder, Head, ITU Office for Europe Afshan Khan, Regional Director, UNICEF Europe and Central Asia
[10:20 – 10:40]	Status of Connectivity in Education: Findings from the joint ITU-UNICEF report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah Delporte, Project Officer, ITU Office for Europe Sarah Fuller, Education Consultant, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe & Central Asia
[10:40 – 11:35]	Panel discussion - National and international perspectives towards strengthening connectivity in education <p><i>This open dialogue will address the following topics (i) the role of connectivity in the education system during the COVID crisis and beyond; (ii) the importance of partnerships across various actors and; (iii) national and international frameworks advancing connectivity in education.</i></p> <p><i>Following the panel discussion, the floor will be open for Q&A.</i></p>
[11:35 – 11:45]	Closing Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malin Ljunggren Elisson, Senior Adviser Education, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia Jaroslav Ponder, Head, ITU Office for Europe

* the time zone is expressed in CET (UTC+1)