



## **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development**

17<sup>th</sup> meeting, 25 and 26 May 2023

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### **Information Paper No. 8**

#### **Draft activity plan for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform in the region for 2023<sup>1</sup>**

##### **Item 10 of the provisional agenda:**

Education for sustainable development and youth: update on the activities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform held since the previous meeting:

- (c) Draft plan of activities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform for 2023

*Prepared by the coordinator of UNECE ESD Youth Platform*

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<sup>1</sup> This information document was not formally edited

1. The coordinator of the UNECE ESD Youth Platform will present to the Steering Committee an activity plan for the Youth Platform in the region for 2023 for approval.
2. The text of the draft activity plan for the Youth Platform in the region for 2023 is provided below, also “framed” in the table attached in an Annex to this document.

## **Draft activity plan for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform in the region for 2023**

1. The activity or work plan is a tool and resource that will guide the Youth platform in its work with young people, the ESD community, and other stakeholders to implement the UNECE Strategy for ESD from 2021 to 2030 as well as its own strategy.
2. This document specifically covers activities that will take place or will commence in 2023. Each activity, where relevant, has a concept note in the Youth Platform's Google Drive<sup>2</sup>.

### **Legal status**

3. As referred to during the discussions at the previous Committee meetings (see paragraph 104, ECE/CEP/AC.13/2022/2<sup>3</sup>) there was a necessity to clarify the legal aspects for the formal registration of the Youth Platform. The solution could be to establish the status of Youth Platform by the decision of the Steering Committee as that of a Team of Specialists according to the "Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of Teams of Specialists within UNECE" (ECE/EX/2/Rev.1)<sup>4</sup> which stipulates that "*A team of specialists\*<sup>5</sup> is an expert body which is established through a procedure set by a UNECE Sectoral Committee and supervised either directly by the Sectoral Committee or by one of its Working Parties. Its main characteristics are as follows: (a) It addresses a specific area of activities under the broader theme covered by the parent body; (b) Its central function may be of an advisory or operational nature, or a combination of the two, depending on the tasks assigned by the parent body; (c) It normally has a two-year duration but can be extended after careful evaluation, by the parent body, of the work achieved and the need to perform additional tasks.*".

### **UNECE ESD Steering Committee meeting, 25-26 May 2023**

4. To enact the above status, the Steering Committee should consider and adopt relevant decision. The Committee must "determine the scope of issues and the achievements expected of the team of specialists, as well as to decide on the membership of the team"<sup>6</sup>. Then the proposed establishment of a team of specialists can be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.
5. "At its first meeting, the team of specialists adopts its work plan for the period for which it was established, clearly defining its objectives and activities and making a time schedule for their implementation. The activities can include: undertaking studies and

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<sup>2</sup> The Youth Platform uses a document repository powered by Google Drive where it stores all documents relevant to its work.

<sup>3</sup> [https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/ece.cep\\_.ac\\_.13.2022.2\\_e.pdf](https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/ece.cep_.ac_.13.2022.2_e.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://unece.org/DAM/commission/EXCOM/Key\\_documents/02-Rev1-GuidelinesTOS\\_ECE\\_EX\\_2-Rev1-E.pdf](https://unece.org/DAM/commission/EXCOM/Key_documents/02-Rev1-GuidelinesTOS_ECE_EX_2-Rev1-E.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> These teams of specialists can also be named "advisory groups", "ad hoc groups", "task forces" etc. (ECE/EX/2/Rev.1)

<sup>6</sup> ECE/EX/2/Rev.1

advisory missions; organising seminars and training workshops; drafting policy models and guidelines; collecting data; and providing information and training kits etc.<sup>7</sup>”

6. During the UNECE Steering Committee on ESD meeting in 2022, a proposal was voiced to host a 3-day meeting to enable side meetings, such as a meeting of the Youth Platform. Due to practical limitations of the UNECE offices in Geneva this was however not possible, therefore participation of youth delegates will most likely depend on the willingness of Steering Committee members to include them in their delegations with only limited participation of the broader Youth Platform membership.

### **Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health**

7. In July 2023 the Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health will take place in Hungary. The Youth Platform has been approached to be involved in this process as well by the WHO regional office and also UNEP. The youth platform coordinator is currently working together with the task force tasked with developing the meaningful youth participation at the conference based on previous experience at the EfE.

### **Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on ESD**

8. Following the 9th EfE Ministerial Conference hosted by Cyprus in 2022, the coordinator of the Youth Platform approached several stakeholders with the possibility to organize a Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on different processes and initiatives in the UNECE and globally on ESD. This multi-stakeholder event will probably be organized in the second half of 2023, bringing together a multitude of actors to highlight the different frameworks, initiatives and actions, as well as their similarities, differences and overlaps to encourage collaboration and greater (youth) participation.

### **Proposal Developments**

\*pending legal status clarity

9. The youth platform and its members, in its effort to organize activities and have greater impact, is looking forward to approaching several partners to organize events or apply for funding for activities related to ESD, these include but are not limited to:

- Reapplying for a Council of Europe Study session, or applying through one of its member organizations
- Approaching the Swedish Dialogue Institute for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to organize a youth exchange between Youth from both regions (MENA & Europe) related to ESD.

### **Publication 2024**

10. Following the successful publication launched in 2022, the Youth Platform is envisioning launching a new publication in 2024: You(th) empowered: From words to action.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

11. The document delves deeper on the findings of the publication titled ‘Engaging Young People in the Implementation of ESD in the UNECE Region: Good Practices in the Engagement of Youth in Education for Sustainable Development’. In September 2022, the UN General Assembly decided “to establish the United Nations Youth Office as a dedicated office for youth affairs in the Secretariat”. Similarly, The EU established a youth strategy 2019-2027. The Strategy is set to improve the situation of young people in Europe by creating more and equal opportunities for them in education and the labour market and by promoting their active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity.

12. This publication will explore the opportunities, challenges and limitations that young people have found to be meaningfully engaged in decision making processes and in the implementation of ESD in the UNECE Region. This publication will also be related to a request from the Youth Platform to the UNECE to map the existing Youth engagement mechanisms in its multitude of activities and working groups [UN youth delegates, youth representatives, etc.] an outcome from the Youth Dialogue as well.

### **Outreach and advocacy**

13. The platform continues to develop its outreach and advocacy activities, reaching out to other youth organizations and liaising with existing or new platforms to improve youth engagement through its activities. Some examples include the Youth Dialogue held in coordination with the UNECE in December 2022, side events in the framework of the 70th ECE meeting, etc. Within its foreseen activities, the platform will develop a specific advocacy strategy and plan to ensure that its engagement efforts with other stakeholders is effective.

### **Improving operational effectiveness**

14. An overall activity for 2023 will also include improving the operational effectiveness of the Youth Platform, this will include but is not limited to:

- Improving its online visibility, through for example the UNECE website in the second semester of 2023;
- Establishing clear guidelines for membership, leadership positions, participation, etc. (in part the coordinator role, with the current coordinator now based outside the region);
- Raising a possible paid youth position at the Secretariat (see point above);
- Fundraising efforts, including a grant writing workshop.

### **Past events**

#### **18th session of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition**

15. In December 2022 the current Youth Platform Coordinator was asked to help moderate the UNECE Youth Dialogue. Following this event, the Youth Platform was approached to inquire whether we could attend and support the 18th session of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition on Youth Engagement. An open call was launched within the network to inquire who could attend – especially given that participation would be self-funded., Finally, one of the member organizations of the Youth Platform, was

able to secure funding for one of its delegates to attend. This meeting took place from 20-21 March 2023.

## Outline of the draft workplan of the UNECE ESD Youth Platform<sup>8</sup> 2023

| <i>Activities</i>  | <i>Description</i>  | <i>Funding Resources</i>  | <i>Timeline</i>                                 |   | <i>Estimated cost</i>  |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|
|  |   |   | <i>for implementation</i>                       | <i>Partners for implementation</i>  |  |
| <b>Support the UNECE ESD Steering Committee with activities for the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development from 2021 to 2025</b> | As a core activity, the ESD Youth Platform supports and advises the UNECE ESD Steering Committee on the implementation of its activities and through its annual Steering Committee Meeting  | Currently exploring the possibility to establish a dedicated fund to enable larger youth participation in Steering Committee Meetings and activities                              | Q2-Q4<br><br>Key dates:<br>25 - 26 May 2023     | UNECE ESD Steering Committee  | 3,000 Euros  |
| <b>Participate in the Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health</b>   | In July the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health will take place, the Coordinator of the ESD Youth Platform currently sits in the Youth Task force which aims to enable greater youth participation at the conference   | Unknown if there will be funding available for youth participation at the Ministerial, currently being analyzed by the organizing committee                                       | Q2-Q3<br><br>Key Dates: 5-8 July                | WHO Regional Office for Europe, UNEP,                                     | No costs are foreseen for this activity, if budget is available for participation this is estimated at 500 EUR/PAX |
| <b>Organize a Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on ESD</b>   | Following the 9th Efe Ministerial Conference hosted in Cyprus in 2022, the coordinator of the Youth Platform approached several stakeholders with the possibility to organize a Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on different processes and initiatives in the UNECE and globally on ESD.  | None, either a hybrid meeting or fully online (Would only require a hosting platform)   | Q4  | UNECE ESD Steering Committee, GENE, EU, other UN Agencies                 | No costs are foreseen for this meeting   |
| <b>Conduct a youth engagement mapping focusing on the UNECE and compile findings in a Publication</b>  | In September 2022, the UN General Assembly decided “to establish the United Nations Youth Office as a dedicated office for youth affairs in the Secretariat”. Similarly, The EU established a youth strategy 2019-2027. The Strategy is set to improve the situation of young people in Europe by creating more and equal opportunities for them in education and the | Based on estimate costs for the publication a request will be made to members of the Steering Committee as well as the drafting of a separate budget proposal for external donors | Q3-Q4<br>preparation, publication for Late 2024 | UNECE ESD Steering Committee, UNECE, UN Youth Office, Youth Organizations | 15,000 EUR   |

<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of this document the term ‘UNECE ESD Youth Platform’ is still used awaiting the approval of the new TORs scheduled during the 18<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting.

|                                  |   |                              |      |   |                               |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------------------|------|---|-------------------------------|
|                                  | <p>labour market and by promoting their active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity. This publication will explore the opportunities, challenges and limitations that young people have found to be meaningfully engaged in decision making processes and in the implementation of ESD in the UNECE Region. The document delves deeper on the findings of the publication titled ‘Engaging Young People in the Implementation of ESD in the UNECE Region: Good Practices in the Engagement of Youth in Education for Sustainable Development’ launched in 2022.</p>                                     |                              |      |   |                               |
| <b>Develop project proposals</b> | <p>The youth platform and its members, in its effort to organize activities and have greater impact, is looking forward to approaching several partners to organize events or apply for funding for activities related to ESD, these include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reapplying for a CoE Study session, or applying through one of its member organizations</li> <li>- Approaching the Swedish Dialogue Institute for the Middle East and North Africa to organize a youth exchange between Youth from both regions (MENA &amp; Europe) related to ESD</li> </ul> | N/A                          | 2023 | External Donors                                 | Dependent on project          |
| <b>Outreach and advocacy</b>     | <p>The platform continues to develop its outreach and advocacy activities, reaching out to other youth organizations and liaising with existing or new platforms to improve youth engagement through its activities. Some examples include the Youth Dialogue held in coordination with the UNECE in December 2022, side events in the framework of the 70th ECE meeting, etc. Within its foreseen activities, the platform will develop a specific advocacy strategy and plan to ensure that its</p>   | None available at this stage | 2023 | ESD Steering Committee members, external donors | Dependent on partner projects |



engagement efforts with other stakeholders is effective. This broader activity is tied in with f.e. the Ministerial Meeting scheduled for July.

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