

UNESCO Strategy for TVET (2022 – 2029): Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training for Successful and Just Transitions

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

(18 August 2022)

25-26 October 2022

Main plenaries 9:30 to 12:30 CEST

(TBC) Side events 14:00 to 16:00 CEST (TBC)

BACKGROUND

TVET in a world of interlocking transitions

In a world undergoing multiple transitions, **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**¹ has a critical role to play in the recovery and reshaping of education systems and labour markets worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic severely exacerbated existing inequalities, as schools, training centres, and workplaces experienced closures around the world, disproportionately affecting young people and vulnerable communities. The global economy is undergoing an **unequal economic recovery**, following the severe recession in 2020, with less developed economies facing deeper long-term impacts on their learning, training, and unemployment rates.

Even prior to the pandemic, the number of young people not in employment, education, or training (NEETs) was remarkably high, totalling 267 million² - equivalent to 31% of young women and 14% of young men in 2019. The number of young people in employment fell by 39 million in 2020, or 8.7% – compared with 3.7% for adults³ – and over 17% of young workers stopped working during the pandemic.⁴ **Demographic transitions** further necessitate adaptability and the need for lifelong skills development and acquiring new competences. While many countries have rapidly *ageing populations* in which shrinking working age cohorts must be prepared to support larger numbers of elderly people, others are experiencing *youth bulges*, which call for a continued expansion of education, training, and job creation.

The labour market has simultaneously been undergoing rapid **technological change**, driven by the expansion of artificial intelligence (AI) and automation – often termed the ‘fourth industrial revolution’ – which will both destroy and create jobs on a massive scale. In 2020 alone, USD 16.7 billion was spent on business process automation, and 1.25 billion workers – equivalent to 38% of the global workforce – are employed in sectors facing severe decline in output and high risk of workforce displacement.⁵ The transformation towards digitalization and emergence of the ‘gig economy’ is inevitably challenging formal employment and associated worker benefits, leading to a rise in **informality**. The

¹ The scope of “TVET” is defined in the “UNESCO Recommendation concerning TVET” (2015): “TVET, as part of lifelong learning, can take place at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels and includes work-based learning and continuing training and professional development which may lead to qualifications. TVET also includes a wide range of skills development opportunities attuned to national and local contexts. Learning to learn, the development of literacy and numeracy skills, transversal skills and citizenship skills are integral components of TVET.”

² ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work,” May 2020.

³ ILO, “COVID-19 and the world of work,” 2021.

⁴ Decent Jobs for Youth, “Youth and COVID-19,” August 2020.

⁵ ILO, “COVID-19 and the world of work,” April 2020.

informal economy remains pervasive, representing 61% of total employment (including agriculture) in the world, 68% in Asia and the Pacific and in the Arab States, and up to 86% in sub-Saharan Africa.⁶

Societal issues are generating pervasive global demands for the reduction of poverty and inequality, with political instability and climate change leading to large-scale migrations. CO₂ concentration in the atmosphere increased by nearly 50% compared with pre-industrial times⁷ and according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), limiting global temperature increase to 1.5°C as expected by the Paris Agreement will require CO₂ emissions to decline by about 45% by 2030 and to reach net zero by 2050.⁸ The reality of the climate crisis is generating an increased demand for workers with new technical and generic skills needed in greener jobs and sectors. This has led to growing calls for a radical transformation of the world economy to achieve **green and sustainable development** by 2030. Skills development and support will be needed for all, including for those who are formally employed, in the informal economy self-employed, and workers in non-standard forms of employment.

With new skills constantly emerging and uncertainty becoming the norm – a phenomenon reinforced by the COVID-19 pandemic – the crisis also serves as an opportunity to change course and take action. UNESCO's new Strategy for TVET for the period 2022-2029 has been developed in part by taking into consideration the path to recovery, resilience building and reimagining of education and training, in the hopes of accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The launch of a new UNESCO Strategy for TVET (2022-2029)

The new [UNESCO Strategy for TVET 2022-2029: Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training for Successful and Just Transitions](#) was officially approved during the 214th session of the UNESCO Executive Board in April 2022 (214 [EX/Decision 7](#)). Building upon the achievements under the [Strategy for TVET 2016-2021](#), this new strategic vision for TVET for the period 2022-2029 takes into consideration the present and future priorities of individuals, economies, and societies. Its title, “*Transforming TVET for successful and just transitions*”, further captures UNESCO's expectation that TVET is critical for promoting a path to recovery and resilience building in the post COVID-19 pandemic era, and for accelerating progress towards Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 8 and other related SDGs over the next eight years.

The new Strategy seeks to instil a renewed ambition for TVET in Member States in a way that responds to their needs and ever-changing labour markets, economies, and societies. As such, it was developed in alignment with UNESCO's [2021 Futures of Education report](#), calling for a new social contract to repair injustices, solve the skills deficits affecting labour market insertion, and further learning and career progression for both youth and adults. Following extensive consultations, including with UNESCO Institutes, the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for TVET, UNEVOC Network members, and the Inter-Agency Group on TVET (IAG-TVET), as well as through an [international conference](#) held in December 2021, the new Strategy focuses on three strategic priority areas:

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ University of California San Diego, The Keeling curve, <https://keelingcurve.ucsd.edu/>

⁸ IPCC, Global Warming of 1.5°C, available at <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

- 1) **Develop skills for all individuals to learn, work and live:** To support flexible lifelong learning pathways, the key focus is on inclusion and targeted measures and technical assistance to mitigate the impact of technology and climate change on gender equality, marginalized communities, and those dependent on informal economies and subsistence agriculture.
- 2) **Develop skills for inclusive and sustainable economies:** To supporting job growth, private sector participation and effective skills anticipation, the key focus is on the transition towards a digital and green economy, STEM and 21st century skills, innovation, and strong governance and investment.
- 3) **Develop skills for inclusive and peaceful societies:** To supporting rights-based education for sustainable development, the key focus is on global and participatory citizenship education, and TVET for social integration and cohesion.

The Strategy also adopts a range of modalities for cross-cutting interventions along the following three levers:

- A) **National, regional and global policy learning interventions**, such as performing comparative analyses of TVET policies, monitoring the emergence of regional TVET agendas, and cooperating on and expanding of regional policy dialogue platforms.
- B) **Data collection, research and analysis**, through support to Member States in collecting and analysing data on TVET programmes and their outcomes.
- C) **Networks and partnerships**, including the Global Education Coalition, the UNEVOC Network, the Inter-Agency Group on TVET (IAG-TVET), and the International Teacher Task Force for Education 2030.

OBJECTIVES

The launch event of the TVET Strategy 2022-2029 will take place over the span of two days, with each day serving a unique purpose.

DAY ONE - Political Strategy Segment:

- Raise awareness among Member States and the international community of the new UNESCO Strategy for TVET and its significance for reimagining education and skills for work and life;
- Mobilize political ambition and renew Member States' commitments for TVET;
- Highlight support to Member States' efforts in building a common vision for transforming labour markets, economies, and societies;
- Discuss the importance, challenges, and opportunities for lifelong learning.

DAY TWO - Technical and Operational Segment:

- Present UNESCO's ongoing and forthcoming TVET flagship initiatives, projects, and activities at HQ and in field offices, and their outcomes;
- Discuss the alignment of TVET initiatives with Member States' policies and partnerships;
- Consider the integration of intersectional issues, such as greening, minorities, gender equality, etc., and cross-cutting interventions (data, normative instruments, partnerships);
- Identify concrete actions and areas of collaboration and potential partners to support the development and implementation of the Strategy in boosting support for new skills.

FORMAT

The launch of the UNESCO Strategy for TVET (2022-2029) will take place in a **HYBRID format** on **25 and 26 October 2022 from 9:30 to 12:30 CEST** both in person and on an online streaming platform accessible to all. There will be approximately 100 participants in attendance at the United Nations Campus in Bonn, Germany.

For those who are interested in **online participation**, please register your interest to join the two-day hybrid conference through filling out this [online form](#). You will receive more details through your registered contact e-mail address. Contact info.tvet@unesco.org for any questions about the conference.

Interpretation will be provided in the following languages: English and French.

AUDIENCE

The participants will include high-level officials, policymakers, TVET stakeholders and practitioners, TVET teachers, trainers and learners, and development partners (multilateral, regional and local organisations, donors, NGOs, private sector, CSOs, and youth networks), among others.
