

## At the Beginning stands Education: HLPF Side event on “Education for Sustainability” in New York



On the occasion of the 2018 session of the [High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development \(HLPF\)](#) – United Nations’ central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ICAE, in the framework of the [Education and Academia Stakeholder Group \(EASG\)](#)<sup>[1]</sup> organized a [side event](#) on **Education for Social, Economic and Environmental Sustainability**.

The event gathered over 70 civil society activists, teachers, academics and government authorities and officials to discuss the trends, gaps and main features of education in the context of the Sustainable Development Agenda. From different perspectives (civil society, governments and academia), the event provided a comprehensive analysis of barriers and challenges of education for sustainable development. Discussion focused on the inter-sectoral approaches needed to promote dialogue and coordination in the education sector, in tune with the recognition of the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights that are reflected across the 17 SDGs.

The speakers discussed challenges, practices and discourses, which threaten the realization of SDG 4, with the aim of developing inter-sectoral strategies and coordination among different actors in defence of education. **Vernor Muñoz** (Global Campaign for Education, GCE), [Powerpoint presentation](#), spoke about the right to an education framework, that should not be reduced to access and provisional resources as it is about the content of education. He said that “we all have the right to a good quality education, which means that the content should reach the aims of education as stated in the international human rights framework.”



**Katarina Popovic** (International Council for Adult Education, ICAE) challenged the audience with the question: “What happened to lifelong learning? SDG4 on Education is only about formal education and children.” She presented the thesis that we are not on track when it comes to the education goal 4 and that more needs to be done if we want that education fulfills the important task of contribution of contributing to the implementation of all SDGs.

[1] Major and Stakeholder groups are the main channel for civil society engagement in the UN sustainable development agenda. [The Education and Academia Stakeholder Group \(EASG\)](#) is open to all organisations working for the full realisation of the right to a quality education, the implementation of Agenda 2030, and of SDG 4 in particular. The [EASG](#) brings together human rights-based education and academia organisations and networks to engage with the monitoring and review of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Group is organised by the [Global Campaign for Education](#), [Education International](#), the [International Council for Adult Education](#) and the [European Students' Union](#). More under <http://www.educationacademia.org/>.



**Megan McHaney**, [Powerpoint Presentation](#), introduced the Bridge 47 – Building Global Citizenship project, co-created and implemented by 16 European and global civil society organizations; ICAE is one of our partners. Bridge 47 – Building Global Citizenship mobilizes global civil society to contribute to global justice and eradication of poverty through Global Citizenship Education (GCE). Global Citizenship Education underpins implementation of SDGs, because "it is a framework which, if we use it, can empower us to transform ourselves and our world. Without this transformation the vision of the SDGs will not be realized.", Megan believes.

The speakers and participants had the chance to discuss how education is able to contribute to breaking the cycles of poverty, inequality and exclusion and transform societies for holistic advancement.

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