

Joint Memorandum of Understanding
on
Central European Cooperation in Education and Training
(CECE)

The Ministry of Education, Science and Research of the Republic of Austria,
The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic,
The Ministry of Culture and Innovation of Hungary,
The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and
The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Slovenia,
(hereinafter referred to as "the Signatories"),

- Recognising the vital role of education, training and learning in responding to the contemporary challenges and coping with the uncertainties of the future while further building the foundations for inclusive, equitable and sustainable democratic societies,
- With the aim of cooperating in the building of a cohesive, inclusive and open European Education Area,
- With the intention of deepening and facilitating cooperative work as well as an exchange of views, good practices and expertise in the field of education, training and learning from an inclusive, multidisciplinary and lifelong learning perspective,
- In view of the importance of deepening the regional relations in the European Union,
- Based on the long-standing bi- and multilateral relations between the Republic of Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Slovenia,
- In recognition of the many common interests and complementary strengths which these countries share, and
- Building upon the Joint Memorandum of Understanding "Central European Cooperation in Education and Training" of 5 July 2013 between the Ministries of Education of the Republic of Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Slovenia.

HAVE REACHED THE FOLLOWING UNDERSTANDING:

Paragraph 1

The objective of the Joint Memorandum of Understanding is to continue and strengthen the existing framework of the Central European Cooperation in Education and Training (CECE) for close institutional partnership and cooperation in the field of education, training and learning between the Signatories in order to pursue the goals laid down in the introduction.

Paragraph 2

CECE will cooperate in matters of common interest on a policy, programme and project level, which are dealt with at the national level but also within the European Union and by European and other international organisations such as the OECD, UNESCO, the Council of Europe, etc.

Paragraph 3

With an emphasis on the regional aspect of CECE, the main scope of cooperation will be in connection with the objectives of the European Union in the field of education and training, in particular the implementation of the "Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)" and the United Nations "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

Paragraph 4

The primary purpose of the Joint Memorandum of Understanding is multilateral cooperation, including peer learning and networking. Networking will be encouraged for the pooling of expertise in the field of education and training in order to use synergies in research on education, training and learning undertaken in national as well as international contexts and to make full use of peer learning processes within the EU and other European and wider international frameworks.

Paragraph 5

The activities pursuant to this Joint Memorandum of Understanding will be coordinated by the Regional Conference of Directors General, which will decide on a concrete work plan and upon an informal chair on a rotational basis scheduled in a specific order (the Republic of Austria, Hungary, the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Slovenia) for twelve-months' working periods each. This Conference will be convened by the chair at least once every working period.

Paragraph 6

The respective chairing country will coordinate CECE on the level of directors-general and administrative officers ("CECE contact points"). The chair will promote the implementation of this Joint Memorandum of Understanding by elaborating annual work plans that set priority thematic areas and is responsible for the administrative support of the cooperation. Each chairing country will organise an event during its term dealing with a specific topic of the approved annual work plan in order to bring together the respective experts from all CECE members. The chair may, when considering it appropriate, invite other non-signatory countries to attend these meetings.

Paragraph 7

At regular intervals, the progress of cooperation within CECE will be discussed and evaluated. When considered appropriate, a meeting of the Ministers of CECE member states may be organised in order to generate high-level political commitment for certain issues.

Paragraph 8

The Signatories encourage their educational institutions, schools and VET institutions to initiate cooperation activities as well as their students, learners, teachers, trainers and administrative staff to engage and participate in exchange and mobility initiatives. In particular, the Signatories encourage cooperation within the framework of the ERASMUS+ program of the European Union (2021–2027).

Paragraph 9

With the aim of promoting cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkan region and other Danube Region countries as well as opening other regional cooperation initiatives, specific activities can be initiated regarding the transfer of and access to expertise when and where appropriate. The activities under the different regional frameworks will not be duplicated.

Paragraph 10

Each Signatory intends to bear its own costs of involvement in common activities, for example the travel and subsistence costs of its visitors or the costs of obtaining expertise. Other sources of funding may be sought to support common activities at the discretion of each Signatory and consistent with the policies, procedures, and requirements of the Signatories.

Paragraph 11

This Joint Memorandum of Understanding may be modified at any time by the mutual understanding of the Signatories in written form. Such modifications will take effect from the date of signature.

Paragraph 12

Any differences about the interpretation or application of this Joint Memorandum of Understanding will be resolved amicably by consultations between the Signatories.

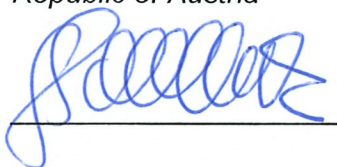
Paragraph 13

This Joint Memorandum of Understanding will not create any legal or financial rights or obligations and will be implemented in accordance with national and international law. It will not have any effect on the legislation of the Signatories. It will become effective on the date of signing by all Signatories. It will remain effective until 31 December 2027 and will be prolonged

for an additional five years' period unless all Signatories unanimously decide to discontinue this Joint Memorandum of Understanding. Any Signatory may cancel its participation in this Joint Memorandum of Understanding at any time by giving three months written notice to the other Signatories. In the event of cancellation or discontinuation, the Signatories will consult each other to determine how any outstanding matters will be dealt with, while remaining committed to further promoting cooperation between educational institutions in CECE countries.

Signed in five original copies in English.

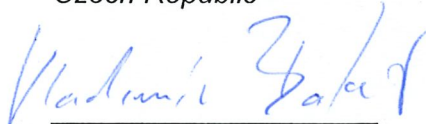
*For the Ministry of Education,
Science and Research of the
Republic of Austria*



Place: Brussels, Belgium

Date: 7th March 2023

*For the Ministry of Education,
Youth and Sports of the
Czech Republic*



Place: Brussels, Belgium

Date: 7th March 2023

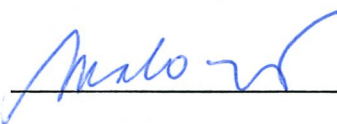
*For the Ministry of Culture
and Innovation of Hungary*



Place: Brussels, Belgium

Date: 7th March 2023

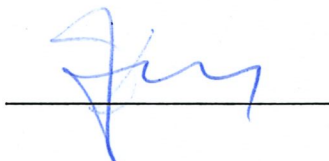
*For the Ministry of Education,
Science and Sport of the
Slovak Republic*



Place: Brussels, Belgium

Date: 7th March 2023

*For the Ministry of Education
of the Republic of Slovenia*



Place: Brussels, Belgium

Date: 7th March 2023