

## **Presentation of Concurrent sessions**

### ***CS 1.1 - Paths to radicalization and drivers of violent extremism: understanding the phenomenon***

Violent extremism is a diverse and multifactorial phenomenon, which is not confined to any age, sex, group, or community. Likewise, there is no single profile, pathway, or speed with which an individual will join a violent extremist movement. Radicalization is indeed an incremental process towards the acceptance and the perpetration of violence relying on a variety of factors which combine uniquely in each individual. Experts in the field have identified “push” and “pull” drivers, at country or community level, within smaller identity groups and at individual level, with various degrees of significance as regards their influence on given individuals joining violent extremist groups. Capacity to identify and act upon those factors and breeding grounds of violent extremism, which differ greatly according to the political and social contexts, will determine future PVE orientations and responses, including the role that education can play in preventative work. This session will provide an update on on-going research in the field, in particular the efficiency of responses to certain identified factors of violent extremism and the assessment of policies already implemented in that regard; discuss how individuals “at risk” can be identified, prevented from descending into violence, and how people that have already been active in violent extremist groups can find a way towards reintegration in the mainstream society. The session will also discuss if and how education systems can provide support to youth most at risk, including in processes of “de-radicalisation”, deal with the risk of profiling and policing in educational contexts.

### ***CS 1.2 – Straight Talk: Building key competencies for the Prevention of Violent Extremism***

This session aims to put learners at the centre of PVE-E interventions. It will explore the skills, competencies and attitudes necessary to build the defences of peace in the minds of students in the context of the prevention of violent extremism. In particular participants will consider how building critical thinking and inquiry abilities can help learners to resist indoctrination and propaganda; how integrative inquiry can help them explore their own thought processes and encourage self-reflection; and how moral courage and other socio-emotional skills can be fostered to face the complex challenges of violent extremism in the age of globalization and hi-tech connectivity.

### ***CS 1.3 - The Role of the Teacher in Curtailing Violent Extremism***

Building resilience to extremism in young people and teachers alike is a major policy strand aimed at preventing VE. It requires teachers to not only understand their own biases but to equip themselves with the skills needed to teach the development of socio-emotional and key cognitive competencies which can help learners overcome their misconceptions and engage constructively in society. Teachers also have a role in ensuring that schools provide

an environment where students feel safe and where violence is not normalized as a solution to problems. The role of teachers in the prevention of VE is important and diverse and intensely debated. Therefore, a constructive way forward is to build on what works - notably in peaceful conflict resolution approaches and mediation skills.

This session will examine current practices where teachers play strategic roles in curtailing VE. Through the discussion, participants will be invited to share good practices that can be implemented in classrooms and in communities where teachers can be leaders, mentors and role models. Teacher policies and capacity development initiatives for teachers will also be discussed in the search for creative and cost-effective solutions that can help build the defences of peace in the minds of learners. *UNESCO's Teacher's Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism* (released in April 2016) will be briefly presented during this session.

### ***CS 2.1 - Global Citizenship Education to Prevent Violent Extremism***

With violent extremism becoming an increasingly significant global concern, education systems need to consider how they can contribute to building more just and peaceful societies. Global Citizenship Education (GCED) is considered to help deliver this promise by building learners' resilience to violent extremist narratives and empowering them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become active and responsible contributors to society. During the session, concrete examples of GCED-related activities and approaches, particularly in formal learning from around the world and its linkages with other types of learning, will be shared and discussed in order to indicate how GCED can effectively support efforts made to prevent violent extremism.

### ***CS 2.2 - Education and intercultural and interreligious dialogue***

In the face of violent extremism that may manipulate religion –its precepts, institutions and influence - to justify hatred, education is crucial to nurture respect for diversity, mutual understanding, and solidarity among all nations, religious groups, and individuals, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender and beliefs. This is in line with the *UNESCO Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms (1974)*<sup>1</sup>, and with the objectives of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022), for which UNESCO is lead agency.

This session will explore educational approaches to intercultural and interfaith dialogue which can help deconstruct misconceptions and strengthen individual and collective defences against violent extremism. Examining both formal and non-formal approaches to interfaith and intercultural education, participants will exchange experiences, challenges and lessons learned with a view to identifying effective future options.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.unesco.org/education/nfsunesco/pdf/Peace\\_e.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/education/nfsunesco/pdf/Peace_e.pdf)

### ***CS 2.3 - Addressing intolerance and extremism through universal values in the curriculum***

The role of the curriculum in countering intolerance and extremism has not been fully explored or optimally used. Curricula can contribute to all dimensions of building equitable, just, and tolerant societies, such as conflict prevention, social transformation, civic engagement, and economic progress; and it can convey values that help develop more just and inclusive societies.

The panel focuses on an initiative of the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE), which aims to identify values that are “universal” and that, if carefully integrated into curricula, could promote peace, dialogue and mutual understanding. It also explores different interpretations, tensions and assumptions that confront the notion of “universal values”.

The panel draws on the extensive personal and professional experiences of leading scholars in the field, and their substantial contributions to thinking and writing about inclusion, values, peace education and human rights in various contexts worldwide. Their dialogue, steered by the IBE, intends to stimulate ongoing debate about the crucial role and potential of the curriculum in the global dialogue on the prevention of violent extremism through education.

### ***CS 3.1 – Non-formal education approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism***

In a world increasingly interconnected, volatile and vulnerable, instilling tolerance, responsible citizenship, peaceful conflict resolution and respect for diversity and human rights in the minds of people is one of the keys to preventing violent extremism (PVE). Education, including in non-formal and informal settings, is increasingly seen as an unparalleled means to PVE. Non-formal education approaches in particular provide an important avenue to impart skills, values and attitudes that can help counter violence, extremism and terrorism for two reasons, among others: (i) many people who are vulnerable or prone to violent extremism are often found outside of the system (be it education, employment and society) and are more easy to reach with peace messages through non-formal and informal means; (ii) for those within systems (e.g. in school, employment), non-formal approaches such as extracurricular activities and family and community actions are important, complementary channels to use to continue nurturing requisite knowledge, competencies, values and attitudes. This session will encourage the sharing of examples of non-formal and informal approaches to PVE (experiences, challenges, lessons learned and future options) with linkages with related efforts in formal education and reflection on ways and means to further advance PVE.

### ***CS 3.2 - PVE-E in countries affected by armed conflict and violence in the region: Best practices in seizing the peace premium***

The session will focus on PVE-E in armed and conflict-affected areas and refugee settings. The impact of conflict on education and school-age children is well documented and researched. In times of crisis when education systems weaken their reconstruction does not consist solely

in rebuilding schools, hiring teachers and providing books. It is also about laying the foundations for peace and actively preventing future conflicts and radicalization. Providing quality education is one of the best conflict and violent prevention strategies available to any society. Focused measures are also needed to address the underlying social and emotional tensions which drive radicalization and violent extremism.

### ***CS 3.3 - Developing digital citizenship competencies for the Prevention of Violent Extremism***

The benefits of Information Communication Technology (ICT) are enormous, changing the way we learn, work, interact, and participate, overcoming limitations set by distance and time. However, these same technologies have created new social and ethical issues to contend with, from online scams and data theft to cyberbullying and online sex trafficking. The internet has likewise provided a wide-reaching and cost-efficient vehicle for violent content, hate speech, and radical and extremist activities around the world.

This session will discuss how the education sector can promote a healthy and balanced ICT environment that fosters digital citizenship among children and youth, thereby developing their competencies to not only critically examine online information and counter violent extremist activities but also to enjoy its numerous benefits and safely engage in the global community. A panel of experts will look into relevant policies and interventions.