

# UNESCO'S ROLE IN POST-WAR EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION AND DECOLONIZATION ON THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNESCO'S FOUNDING

AN INTERNATIONAL WEBINAR SERIES MARKING UNESCO'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY IS BEING ORGANIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AT ROMA TRE UNIVERSITY, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE CSEI - CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, THE UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA.

THE SERIES WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 26, APRIL 14, AND APRIL 16, 2025, AT 4:00 PM ROME TIME (CET).



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

EMAIL: [UNESCO80.ANNIVERSARY@GMAIL.COM](mailto:UNESCO80.ANNIVERSARY@GMAIL.COM)

**UNESCO's Role in Post-War Educational Transformation and Decolonization.  
On the 80th Anniversary of UNESCO's Founding**

**Organized and introduced by:**

Marialuisa Lucia Sergio, Roma Tre University

Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo, University of Coimbra

Damiano Matasci, University of Geneva

**This international webinar series, marking UNESCO's 80th anniversary, aims at showcasing groundbreaking historical research at the nexus of educational and cultural transformations. Each session will feature two parallel panels, inviting participants to actively engage in critical dialogues concerning the multifaceted legacies of decolonization and the complex challenges posed by globalization, with a keen focus on fostering innovative approaches to knowledge production and cultural exchange.**

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**Email: [unesco80.anniversary@gmail.com](mailto:unesco80.anniversary@gmail.com)**

**March 26, 2025  
4:00 PM Rome time (CET)  
Panel 1**

*Beyond the Empire? UNESCO, Education, and the Contested Terrain of African Decolonization*

Chair: Hugo Gonçalves Dores, University of Coimbra

Discussant: Caterina Scaveldi, Hutton Honors College of Indiana University Bloomington

Speakers:

Pedro Gonçalves & Érica Pontes, University of Coimbra

*Reforming Empire? UNESCO and the Challenges of (De)Colonial Education in Portuguese Territories (1960s–1980s)*

Silvia Benini, Department of Arts, Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna

*Reforming Post-Colonial Education: The Influence of UNESCO Principles in the School Systems of Senegal and Zambia*

Anja Marine Rakotonirina, Department of Political Science, University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

*UNESCO and the Malagasy Independence: A Transnational Construction of the Role of History?*

Domenico F.A. Elia, Department of Humanistic Research and Innovation, University of Bari "Aldo Moro"

*The UNESCO Guidelines and School System of Somalia in the 1950s*

**join link: [bit.ly/panelunesco1](https://bit.ly/panelunesco1)**

**March 26, 2025  
4:00 PM Rome time (CET)  
Panel 2**

*Whose Knowledge for Development? UNESCO, Technical Education, and the Remaking of Pedagogies in Postcolonial Asia and Africa*

Chair: Federica Guazzini, University for Foreigners of Perugia

Discussant: Michele Mioni, Centre d'histoire sociale des mondes contemporains (CHS), University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Speakers:

Chiara Maria Pulvirenti, Sapienza University of Rome

*UNESCO's Arid Zone Program (1950–1964) and Colonial Legacies*

Yarong Chen, School of International Organizations, Beijing Foreign Studies University and Institute of Global and Area Studies, Capital Normal University.

*Amidst the Politics of Development Regime: UNESCO Technical Aid to Taiwan, 1950–1971*

Lourens van Haften, University of Groningen

*UNESCO, Higher Education and Anticolonial World-Making: The Case of Early-Postcolonial India*

Bidisha Dhar, Department of History, Tripura University

*World Crafts Council: Defining Pedagogies 1960s–1980s*

**join link: [bit.ly/panelunesco2](https://bit.ly/panelunesco2)**

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**April 16, 2025  
4:00 PM Rome time (CET)  
Panel 3**

*Bridging Divides? UNESCO's Influence on Education and Culture in Cold War Eastern Europe*

Chair: Antonio D'Alessandri, Roma Tre University

Discussant: Mikuláš Pešta, Charles University, Prague - Research Center for the History of Transformations (RECET), Vienna

Speakers:

Kyrill Kunakhovich, University of Virginia

*"Sometimes It's Hard to Find a Common Language": UNESCO Summer Camps in Communist Poland, 1958-1989*

Maja Lorbek, University of Applied Arts, Vienna  
*Experimental Schools and UNESCO Technical Assistance Program in Socialist Yugoslavia (1952-1958)*

Andrei-Dumitru Olteanu, Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University

*UNESCO's Role in Propaganda Diplomacy: Romanian Cultural and Educational Policies (1980-1989)*

Gian Lorenzo Zichi, University of Cagliari

*UNESCO and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE): Education and Security in a Multilateral Perspective during the Cold War.*

**join link: [bit.ly/panelunesco3](https://bit.ly/panelunesco3)**

**April 16, 2025  
4:00 PM Rome time (CET)  
Panel 4**

*UNESCO: Universal Aspirations, Diverse Realities? Exploring Education, Social Justice, and Gender Equality in a Global Context*

Chair: Elena Zizioli, Roma Tre University

Discussant: Veronica Riccardi, Roma Tre University

Speakers:

Anna Ascenzi & Elena Girotti, Department of Education, Cultural Heritage, and Tourism, University of Macerata

*Multilingual Education, World citizenship, Fundamental Education and Literacy: UNESCO and the Relationship with the Emerging European Community (1948-1963)*

Serena Sani, University of Molise

*UNESCO and the Fight Against Educational Inequalities in Postcolonial Societies: From Fundamental Education to Intercultural Education*

Flavia De Lucia Lumeno, Università degli Studi "Nicolò Cusano"

*From Peace to Tolerance: Marisetta Paronetto Valier's Perspective on UNESCO's Transformations*

Agnes Desmazieres, Centre d'études en sciences sociales du religieux, EHESS, Paris

*Education as a Women's Right: Feminist NGOs and the UNESCO*

**join link: [bit.ly/panelunesco4](https://bit.ly/panelunesco4)**



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**May 14, 2025  
4:00 PM Rome time (CET)  
Panel 5**

*Reimagining Heritage and Decolonial Cooperation: What Role Do Transnational Networks Play in Shaping Post-Colonial Cultural Identities?*

Chair: Juliet Thondhlana, UNESCO Chair in International Education and Development, University of Nottingham

Discussant: Elisa Prosperetti, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Speakers:

Maëlle Gélin, Sciences Po Centre for History, Paris

*Building up a Transnational and Decolonial Program With(out) States? Africa, UNESCO, and the Society of African Culture (1956-late 1970s)*

Sarah Dwider, Department of Art History, Northwestern University

*Displaced Forms: Pharaonic Imagery and New Cultural Imaginaries in Modern Egyptian Art*

Lou Jacquemet, Département d'Histoire Générale, Université de Genève & Institut für Kunstwissenschaft, Technische Universität Berlin

*The "Mobile Museum for Africa" Experiment: Improvising Informal Education Spaces in Newly Independent States.*

**join link: [bit.ly/panelunesco5](https://bit.ly/panelunesco5)**

**May 14, 2025  
4:00 PM Rome time (CET)  
Panel 6**

*South-South Cooperation: Global Perspectives on Development and Transnational Cooperation from Latin America to Africa*

Chair: Ellen Veia Rosnes, VID Specialized University, Stavanger

Discussant: Lavinia Bianchi, Roma Tre University

Speakers:

Elisabetta Bini, University of Naples Federico II  
*Establishing a School for Community Development: The Centro de Cooperación Regional para la Educación de Adultos en América Latina (CREFAL) during the 1950s*

Francesca Frisone, Department of Political and Legal Sciences, University of Messina

*Transnational Experiences of Community Development Between Italy and Latin America: The Pilot Project for Abruzzo and the Role of UNESCO (1957-1962)*

Carlotta Mozzone, Roma Tre University

*The Inclusive Approach of IASSW: a Bridge Between Local Knowledge and Global Standards for Social Work Education in line with UNESCO*

**join link: [bit.ly/panelunesco6](https://bit.ly/panelunesco6)**