

Hello to everyone joining us,  
Both here in Brussels and online,

I would like to welcome you at this year's Educaid conference.  
Once again, I am really happy with the theme that was chosen by the Educaid member organisations. For multiple reasons.

First of all, choosing 'Education & Decent work' as a theme is a choice to leave silos behind and to open the dialogue between 2 different sectors. Two different sectors that heavily rely on each other. Two different sectors that are pivotal to realise the full potential of young people.

Our 2 keynote speakers of today – from ADEA and ILO – reflect this choice. From the perspective of their specific sector, they will focus on how both sectors are interrelated, and how – together – we can generate a positive impact on the life of young people.

We need to make a difference.

And we need to make that difference now.

And that's the second reason why this year's theme is so fitting.

When looking at the demographics of a vast majority of countries like India, Nigeria, Pakistan and Bangladesh, it is clear that in the next years to come, there will be a massive influx of young people into the world of work.

If governments and other stakeholders will be able to ensure this transition to the world of work in a successful way, this will likely lead to sustainable growth.

If we fail, this will create another crisis. A profound crisis.

So, there is no choice. The sectors of education and work need to come together.

We need to bridge the gaps that still exist between both sectors.

Once more education has a pivotal role to play.

But we should ask ourselves: Is the education sector ready?

Are schools and TVET institutions preparing young people in the ways that will be needed?

Do young people acquire transferable, technical and digital skills to get a decent job?

Does education provide enough attention to entrepreneurial skills?

These are important questions that will be tackled during this conference.

Not only today, because each week in November Educaid is organising an online practical session that will focus on 1 specific topic related to 'Education & Decent Work'.

You are invited to all of these sessions.

To conclude I would like to add 2 words to the title of this year's conference.

Let's make it: 'Education and Decent Work *for all*'.

All too often the aspirations of young people are disregarded because of gender, or other personal characteristics.

If we are serious about realizing the full potential of all children, we cannot tolerate that. That's why I am happy to announce you that in a few months' time VVOB will, together with several partners, launch a new Open Resource on Gender Responsive Pedagogy for TVET. The Resource will provide examples of good practice of gender-responsive pedagogy (GRP) from around the world and demonstrate how TVET can promote gender equity and equality in practical terms.

For now, I wish you an interesting conference full of sharing and learning.