Draft working document

"The Transformation of Education"

~ European Round Table ~

" Glimpsing the milestones and further steps regarding the transformation of education in Romania and in the EU Danube Region"

Bucharest, 17 September 2025

Key Pillars

The rapid evolution of artificial intelligence (AI) and the growing importance of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria are fundamentally reshaping the requirements for education and workforce skills in the coming years. To meet these new demands, several key pillars have emerged from recent research, policy recommendations, and innovative educational practices.

1. Integration of AI and ESG Across Curricula

- Embed AI and ESG competencies into all levels of education, ensuring that every student—regardless of discipline—understands both the technological and sustainability dimensions of future work. This includes integrating AI concepts, ethical considerations, and sustainability goals (SDGs) into core curricula and offering specialized micro-credentials or certifications in AI for sustainability.
- Develop interdisciplinary programs that bridge technical, environmental, and social knowledge, preparing learners to address complex, real-world challenges.

2. Human-AI Collaboration and Critical Citizenship

- Foster a human-centric approach where AI augments, rather than replaces, human capabilities. Education should emphasize collaboration between humans and AI, critical thinking, creativity, and ethical decision-making.
- Promote critical citizenship by teaching students not only technical skills but also the social, ethical, and environmental responsibilities associated with AI. This includes understanding algorithmic bias, data privacy, and the societal impacts of automation.

3. Continuous and Inclusive Learning Ecosystems

- Establish lifelong learning pathways for both students and educators, including ongoing training on the latest AI tools, ESG standards, and responsible innovation practices.
- Ensure equitable access to AI-powered educational resources and infrastructure, bridging digital divides and addressing regional disparities in technology adoption.

4. Responsible and Ethical AI Education

- Anchor AI education in robust ethical frameworks grounded in ESG principles. This includes transparency, accountability, sustainability, and respect for human rights throughout the development and deployment of AI systems.
- Develop clear guidelines and policies for the responsible use of AI in education, informed by international standards (e.g., UNESCO, OECD) and national strategies.

5. Faculty and Institutional Transformation

- Provide mandatory training for educators and staff to ensure they are equipped to teach and model responsible AI and ESG practices23.
- Encourage institutions to move beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries, fostering collaboration, innovation, and solution-driven research that addresses pressing global challenges.

6. Policy, Governance, and Collaboration

- Align educational reforms with national and European policies on AI and digital education, leveraging initiatives such as Erasmus+ for research, training, and cross-border cooperation.
- Promote partnerships between universities, industry, and civil society to co-create relevant curricula, share best practices, and drive systemic change.