



# Is Vaccination the Silver Bullet for School Opening?

Thursday, December 16, 2021

14.30-16.00 Brussels (8.30 -10 AM Washington DC time)

The COVID-19 crisis significantly impacts learning and will widen existing inequalities in education systems across the world. Last year, on average, students in Europe and Central Asia (ECA) lost 100 school days of learning, and these closures were different for countries while most of the high-income countries returned kids to schools quickly, some middle-income countries of ECA had longer periods of closures. As measured across ECA countries, the actual learning loss is significant and equates to an average of 0.13 standard deviations or about half a year of learning adjusted years of schooling. In all countries but one, the learning loss was unequal, affecting children disproportionately from lower socio-economic

## WORKSHOP GUIDE

backgrounds. Today, countries in the region want to stay fully open and are eager to support children with learning recovery, regain socio-emotional skills, and reduce anxieties.

**“No one is safe until everyone is safe” is the slogan of these days to end the Covid-19 pandemic.** Vaccinating teachers and students proved to be the most viable strategy for keeping schools open and avoiding frequent disruption of students’ learning, especially for those vulnerable. In Europe and Central Asia, the approach on lockdown and vaccinations varies to some extent, depending on the socio-economic status, capacity to roll out plans, or governmental media campaigns. A significant factor in ECA countries is vaccine hesitancy. Vaccination availability is higher than in other regions, and teachers are a top priority occupation. The widespread closure of schools and diverse experiences of remote teaching as the pandemic took hold has emphasized the importance of keeping students in the classroom as much as possible to avoid cumulating an incredible amount of learning loss. However, the brave teachers and vaccinated students are still exposed to the risks of mixing with potentially hundreds of households to teach and learn in often poorly-ventilated or overcrowded classrooms where maintaining social distancing is difficult, if not impossible.

**A prerequisite to creating this safe learning environment is a high percentage of teachers and students vaccinated against COVID-19.** This will prevent further learning losses. Less learning now means less productivity, income, and economic growth in the future.

## AGENDA

14:30 - 14:40

### OPENING REMARKS

**Fadia SAADAH**

Regional Director, Human Development,  
Europe and Central Asia

14:40 - 14:55

### VACCINATION & SCHOOL OPENING IN ECA

**Alina SAVA**

Education Specialist  
Europe and Central Asia

**Tigran SHMIS**

HD Program Leader/ Sr. Education Specialist  
Europe and Central Asia

14:55 - 15:30

### TEACHERS, STUDENTS, COMMUNITIES - PERSPECTIVES ON VACCINATION

**Mario KADASTIK**

Advisor to the Minister of Education and  
Research (Estonia)

**Dario STEFANO**

President of the European Affairs Commission  
in the Italian Senate (Italy)

**Gulbara ISHENAPYSOVA**

Director, Republican Center for  
Immunoprophylaxis (Kyrgyzstan)

**Martina DARMANIN**

President, European Students’ Union

**Martina Di RIDOLFO**

Programme Officer, European Trade Union  
Committee for Education

15:30 - 15:50

### Q & A SESSION

14:30 - 14:40

### CLOSING REMARKS

**Harry PATRINOS**

Education Practice Manager, Europe and Central  
Asia

**RUSSIAN TRANSLATION WILL BE PROVIDED FOR  
THE ENTIRE EVENT**

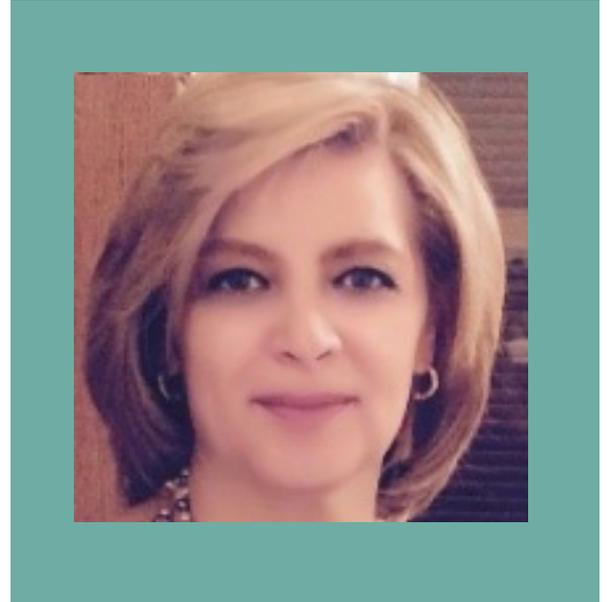
## OPENING REMARKS

**Dr. Fadia Saadah** is the Human Development Director for Europe and Central Asia Region. Before that she was a Practice Director, Global Practice for Health, Nutrition and Population at the World Bank.

She also held several senior and managerial postings at the World Bank including her most recent assignment as the Senior Regional Advisor for Europe and Central Asia Region.

Before that she was a manager at the Operational Policy and Country Services Vice Presidency where she spearheaded some of the World Bank's most significant modernization and reform efforts including the introduction and roll out of the Program-for-Results, the first new financing instrument the World Bank has introduced in over 30 years.

She led a comprehensive effort to modernize and reform the investment lending financing, and managed the development of the groundbreaking new Access to Information Policy.



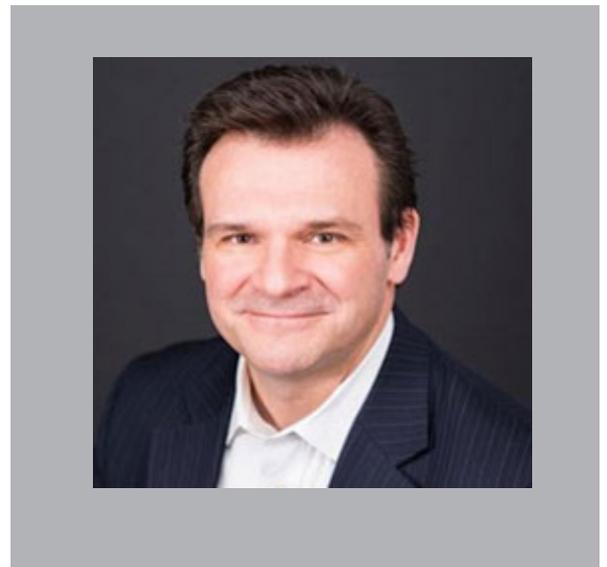
## CLOSING REMARKS

**Harry Anthony Patrinos** is the Practice Manager for the Europe and Central Asia region of the World Bank's education global practice.

He specializes in all areas of education, especially school-based management, demand-side financing and public-private partnerships. He managed education lending operations and analytical work programs in Argentina, Colombia and Mexico, as well as a regional research project on the socioeconomic status of Latin America's Indigenous Peoples, published as *Indigenous Peoples, Poverty and Human Development in Latin America* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). He is one of the main authors of the report, *Lifelong Learning in the Global Knowledge Economy* (World Bank, 2003).

Mr. Patrinos has many publications in the academic and policy literature, with more than 40 journal articles. He is co-author of the books: *Policy Analysis of Child Labor: A Comparative Study* (St. Martin's, 1999), *Decentralization of Education: Demand-Side Financing* (World Bank, 1997), and *Indigenous People and Poverty in Latin America: An Empirical Analysis with George Psacharopoulos* (World Bank/Ashgate, 1994). He has also worked in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North America. He previously worked as an economist at the Economic Council of Canada.

Mr. Patrinos received a doctorate from the University of Sussex.



## PRESENTERS/MODERATORS

**Alina Sava** is a Senior Education Specialist of the World Bank Bucharest office, with more than 20 years of experience in designing, implementing, and evaluating education policies and programs.

She joined the Education Global Practice team at the World Bank in 2013 after advising education reforms in Romania for more than 17 years. She has been involved in conceptualizing, designing, and implementing projects dealing with a wide range of education topics, inter alia: early warning mechanism to prevent ESL, improving access to education for vulnerable groups from rural areas, functional analysis of the VET system, higher education reform, education infrastructure.

She supported education-related projects in Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, or Uzbekistan. She is involved in tracking school reopening, collecting data related to the learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic, preparing policy notes. Alina is an advisor for the Global Program for Safer Schools.

She currently co-leads a Safer, Inclusive, and Sustainable Project and prepares a digital education project and a school grants scheme to prevent early school leaving in Romania.

Alina is a Ph.D. student in education sciences at Bucharest University. She holds a MA in Social Policies, an MBA from Tiffin University, and a BA in Economics.



**Tigran Shmis** is a Senior Education Specialist of the World Bank in Moscow office. He holds a specialist degree (2001) as a school teacher of computer sciences and economics. After graduating the University he completed the postgraduate study in educational ICTs and holds a PhD (candidate of sciences) degree (2004) from the Russian Academy of Education. Later he completed a MEd (2007) program of the Moscow branch of the University of Manchester on Management in Education and Educational Policy.

Tigran works under educational projects in Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Romania, Serbia and Peru. Among those projects are: the Yakutia Early Childhood Development (ECD) project, Russian Education Aid for Development (READ), Khanty-Mansyisk ECD infrastructure development technical assistance, Kyrgyz ECD project, Belarus Education Modernization Project and Serbia ECD project, technical Assistance on Safer Schools development project in Peru. He cooperated with UNESCO and OECD, as part of this cooperation Tigran joined and organized several conferences, workshops and reviews arranged in Russia and Kazakhstan on the topics of ECD and learning environments.

Areas of research and professional interests are ECD, innovative learning environments, and international assessment work.



## PANELISTS



**Mario Kadastik** is a senior researcher in particle physics and advisor to the Minister of Education and Research of Estonia. He has been involved with modeling the COVID pandemic propagation in Estonia and has been advising the government on hospitalization predictions and COVID response.

Since spring of this year Mario has been actively involved with development of strategies to keep the education system open throughout the pandemic and mitigating the risks to both children and teachers. He has been actively participating in decision making and planning of school testing and vaccination campaigns.



**Dario Stefàno** is a Senator of the Italian Republic, representative of the Apulia region and currently the President of the Senate's Commission of European Affairs. Mr Stefàno's previous work as a regional councillor and advisor has been crucial in the insertion of the Apulia region agro-industry and tourism in the global scene. He was coordinator of the Commission for Agricultural Policies within the State-Regions Conference, President of the Commission for Economic Development of the regional council and President of the Environment Commission of the General Confederation of Italian Industry (Confindustria) of Apulia.

Mr Stefàno is an economist by training and, in addition to his institutional duties, he carries out teaching and research roles at the University of Salento. He has authored scientific publications focused on issues of sustainable development, including the book co-authored<sup>1</sup> with Donatella Cinelli Colombini on the wine industry in Italy which was conceived with the objective of becoming a key resource for strengthening managerial skills among students of tourism.

Senator Stefàno has received numerous awards and recognitions for his contribution to the development of the local economy of his region and has been honoured by the Italian President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi with the high recognition of the title of Cavaliere Ordine al Merito of the Italian Republic.



**Gulbara Ishenapysova** has served as the Director of the Republican Center for Immunoprophylaxis at the Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development in the Kyrgyz Republic since 2017.

Ms. Ishenapysova has 22 years of experience in the healthcare system including serving as the Deputy Chief Medical Officer at Yssyk-Ata Rayon Disease Prevention Center and State Sanitary and Epidemiological Control coordinating the Center's operations in Chui Oblast.

Ms. Ishenapysova has been recognized for her work through numerous certificates including, most recently, the Certificate of Merit of the Kyrgyz Republic.



**Martina Darmanin** is currently serving as the President of the European Students' Union (ESU). Martina joined ESU in 2019, as Human Rights and Solidarity Coordinator. She has an academic background in the field of Health Sciences and holds a Master of Science degree from the University of Malta. Martina's journey in the student movement started on the institutional level within the Malta Health Students Association (MHSA) and progressed onto the national and international levels of student representation through Malta's Kunsill Studenti Universitarji (KSU).

Within the European Students' Union, her main focus is on the social dimension of higher education with an emphasis on policy development, advocacy, and project coordination on access to higher education, social mobility, and student participation in the governance of higher education.

On behalf of ESU, she currently also serves as the Vice President of the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLL) and Youth Representative on the Board of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). She is further tasked to overview the organisational development and capacity building of ESU including its human resources.

## PANELISTS



**Martina Di Ridolfo** is Program Officer for Occupational Health and Safety (OSH) & Digitalization at the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE). ETUCE is the European Federation of 127 education trade unions representing over 11 million teachers all over Europe. It advocates for the safeguarding of health and safety in education as a priority.

With an academic background in International Economics and Politics as well as Economics of Development, Martina is in charge of developing ETUCE policies on OSH issues which have an impact on the rights and working conditions of teachers and education personnel. She has been monitoring the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic through an education trade union lens. This has consisted of data collection, information sharing, and mutual support among ETUCE member organizations (more info on ETUCE COVID-19 Hub).

Martina is also responsible for implementing ETUCE OSH-related projects, such as the development of Online Risk Assessment tools for the education sector, addressing third-party violence in the workplace, and supporting ETUCE activities in networks and partner organizations (e.g., ENETOSH, ILO, EU-OSHA etc.).