

Dear Colleagues,

It has been convincingly argued that over the last three decades we are experiencing the slow disintegration of post-war economic, political, social, gender, environmental and international settlements and the dawn of a new era marked by all-embracing transformation.

Education too is nowadays in a state of metamorphosis. The forces behind it are multiple and strong, yet the desirability and the feasibility of this transformation are disputed. Governments once again are looking for unfailing policies in other peoples' educational models and practices while listening sympathetically to the advice of international organizations.

Consequently, comparative education enjoys the renewed appreciation of policy makers and attracts the interest of the wider public. Yet, as in the past, they are all looking for panaceas, for infallible solutions to problems that they do not always fully understand.

We have all gathered here in Athens, for the 23rd CESE Conference, in the spirit of the academia, to dispute prevailing political and ideological orthodoxies, to provide critical insights to problems, to try to understand through comparative evidence the multiplicity and the complexity of late modernity in education and to make an attempt to interpret it.

On behalf of the Organizing Committee I welcome you all in Athens and I wish you a pleasant and an academically fruitful stay.

Professor Dimitris Mattheou,
President of the Organizing Committee