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## HESI highlights the role of higher education in building a better world for current and future generations

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**On 20 October 2020, the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) raises the flag of higher education as a driver for sustainable development and inclusive societies on the first day of the Global Education Meeting 2020.**

The extraordinary session of the [Global Education Meeting \(2020 GEM\)](https://en.unesco.org/news/education-post-covid-19-extraordinary-session-global-education-meeting-2020-gem) (<https://en.unesco.org/news/education-post-covid-19-extraordinary-session-global-education-meeting-2020-gem>) is convened in virtual format by UNESCO, in partnership with the Governments of Ghana, Norway and the United Kingdom.

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Bringing together high-level political leaders, policy-makers and key education stakeholders, the 2020 GEM provides a unique platform for discussion on protecting and reimagining education in the current world shaped by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 GEM also provides a strategic opportunity for Member States and the international community to maintain and scale up their commitment to education as the pivotal investment for recovery efforts.

Addressing the global education community, HESI partners emphasized that higher education plays a vital role in educating the current and next generation of leaders, driving the research agenda for both the public and private sectors, and playing a critical role in shaping the direction of national economies.

In face of the largest education disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the initiative are ready to join forces with other stakeholders to towards addressing the most pressing modern challenges and building back better: redesigning higher education in support of sustainable development, a green recovery, and regenerative pathways for education while also ensuring the quality of education, equity, and gender equality.

The high-level segment of the 2020 GEM will be held on 22 October 2020. Join the live stream of the meeting at the [live event page \(https://webcast.unesco.org/events/2020GEM/\)](https://webcast.unesco.org/events/2020GEM/).

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The [Higher Education and Sustainability Initiative \(HESI\) \(https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdinaction/hesi\)](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdinaction/hesi) is a partnership that convenes over thirty Higher Education Sustainability Networks and UN agency members. Created preceding the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 in 2012) HESI accounted for more than one-third of all the voluntary commitments that were launched at Rio+20 with commitments from over 300 universities from around the world. Through its strong association with the United Nations, HESI provides higher education institutions with a unique interface between higher education, science, and policymaking.

[Higher Education Sustainability Initiative \(HESI\) Statement to the Education post-COVID-19: Extraordinary session of the Global Education Meeting \(2020 GEM\) \(https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27016HESI Statement to the Extraordinary Session of the Global Education Meeting 1 1.pdf\)](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27016HESI%20Statement%20to%20the%20Extraordinary%20Session%20of%20the%20Global%20Education%20Meeting%20(2020%20GEM).pdf)

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