

INFORMAL COUNTRY REPORTS

ESTONIA

National reporting on the progress achieved in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

Information on progress made and challenges encountered in implementing the three priority action areas since the seventh Steering Committee meeting in 2012.

The three priority areas are:

(a) To ensure that there is an education for sustainable development (ESD) school plan in every school by 2015;

Policies for promoting education for sustainable development at school level could be found in different documents: for example General Education System Development Plan 2014-2020, National Curriculums and other documents. The Estonian National Curriculum for Basic Schools (approved by the Government in January 2010) and National Curriculum for Gymnasiums (approved by the Government in January 2010) present a topic *the environment and sustainable development* as a cross-curriculum theme. The National Curriculum for basic schools (ISCED 1,2 levels) and the National Curriculum for upper secondary schools (ISCED 3,4 levels) includes a general part, subject syllabuses and topics that should be addressed in all subjects. These cross-curriculum topics should be addressed in all subjects and touch important fields of life that affect students' personal and social development. Cross-curricular topics are a means of integrating general and subject field competences, subjects and subject fields and are taken into account in developing the school environment.

The general parts of National Curriculums establish the basic principles and structure for the development of a **school curriculum**. All Estonian schools have to prepare the school curriculum on the basis of the National Curriculum. The general part of the school curriculum have to set forth also cross-curricular topics and principles for treating them, principles of integration and principles for planning school-wide and interschool projects.

Study of cross-curricular topic *the environment and sustainable development* will be realized above all through:

- 1) the structure of the learning environment – the content and aims of topic of *the environment and sustainable development* is taken into account in developing the school's mental, social and physical learning environment;
- 2) subject study – the topic of *the environment and sustainable development*, examples and methods are introduced into all subjects. Cross-subject, multiple-class and school projects are carried out jointly;
- 3) selection of optional subjects;
- 4) creative work – students may proceed from the of topic *of the environment and sustainable development* and compile a creative work independently or as a group project;
- 5) collaboration with the owner of the school, regional institutions and enterprises, other educational and cultural institutions and civic associations will be organized

extracurricular learning activities and taken part in county, pan-Estonian and international *environmental and sustainable development* projects.

All Estonian schools must develop a school curriculum and bring learning and educational activity and the school curriculum into conformity with National Curriculums by 1. September 2013.

(b) To promote the introduction of ESD into teacher education;

Ministry of Education and Research sets teachers` pre- and in-service education priorities connection with the implementation of new curricula (came into force in January 2010). European Union`s Structural Funds (ESF) assistance in the areas of labour market and education have used for improvement of teachers` pre- and in-service education. For the implementation of the *environmental and sustainable development* policy state budget resources as well European Social Fund money have been used. University-level pre-service trainings develop teachers' competences to apply the cross-curricular topic of *environmental and sustainable development* in every-day subject teaching.

Ministry of the Environment and Estonian Environmental Board is implementing “Environmental education development program” until the end of the 2015. Program is co-financed by European Union Social Fund. Public procurement call has been prepared in 2012, trainings will start in 2013.

The aim of the program is to develop and organise:

1. in-service training programs for those university-lecturers who educate future teachers on integration SD and EE issues into learning process as cross-curricula topic;
2. in-service training programs for school- and kindergarten teachers on integration SD and EE issues into the subject-teaching.

Also development of methodological materials and teacher-toolkits for integrating SD and EE issues into learning-process is planned.

(c) To reorient technical and vocational education and training in support of sustainable development and the transition to a green economy.

Teachers and lecturers from technical and vocational education are, among others, the target group of in-service training programs on integration SD and EE issues in to subject-teaching (Environmental education development program).

Development Plan of the **Ministry of Education and Research** “Wise and Active Nation 2014-2017” sets the educational objectives to support the implementation of the ESD principles in all educational institutions. One measure is, that there are a growing number of educational institutions in Estonia that follow the principles of sustainable development in everyday school life and the institutional activities.

Contact details:

Name: Imbi Henno

Organization: Estonian Ministry of Education and Research

Function: Chief expert of General Education Department

E-mail: imbi.henno@hm.ee

Name: Marit Suurväli

Organization: Estonian Ministry of the Environment

Function: Head of The Environmental Education Bureau

E-mail: Marit.Suurvali@envir.ee