



United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development

16th meeting, 10 and 11 May 2021

Information Paper 1

Proposed topics for reporting on progress in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda:
Implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education
for Sustainable Development: Progress in implementing the Strategy

Prepared by the Secretariat

Note for your attention: This questionnaire is not a formal reporting, but an intermediate informal reporting exercise to report on the current situation in your country at the beginning of the period 2021-2030, particularly regarding new policy developments with regard to progress on SDGs and impact of COVID-19.

Some questions follow the updated format for reporting which is currently in progress of finalising and the four strands of work which were discussed during the recent meetings of the ECE Steering Committee on ESD. A formal format for reporting will be finalised as soon as the new concept note for strategic planning 2021-2030 is approved and the questionnaire/format for reporting is brought further in line with the UNESCO scheme for reporting.

1. National reporting on the progress achieved in the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development offers a valuable opportunity for countries to learn from each other and to share newly produced resources and materials within and beyond the ECE region.
2. In preparation for the sixteenth meeting of the ECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development, countries are requested to fill in the questionnaire below, informing on progress made and challenges encountered in working on priority action areas after the fourth mandatory reporting cycle carried out in 2018 and since the fourteenth Steering Committee meeting (Geneva, 2 and 3 May 2019).
4. Countries are kindly requested to submit this information in writing to the secretariat via e-mail (nona.iliukhina@un.org and esd@unece.org) by **20 April 2021**.
5. The secretariat will review the information submitted and deliver a brief synthesis presentation at the Steering Committee's sixteenth meeting. The presentation will be followed by an interactive discussion.
6. In the below questionnaire, particular attention is to be paid to: (a) the priority action areas of the proposed newly drafted concept note for the post-2019 implementation framework (quality education and ESD; whole institution approach and ESD; digital education, information and communications technology and ESD; entrepreneurship, employability, innovation and ESD); (b) the impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on ESD implementation.
7. Countries will be invited to complement the secretariat's presentation with interventions on outstanding activities and initiatives implemented since the fourteenth Steering Committee meeting (Geneva, 2 and 3 May 2019), in particular with regard to how the implementation of national strategies for ESD contributes to the new developments and challenges for ESD in the region. Given the limited time available, countries will only have up to three minutes each for interventions from the floor.

Questionnaire for 2021 informal country¹ reporting on the implementation of the priority action areas of the newly drafted concept note for the post-2019 implementation framework²

Advances made and challenges encountered since the fourteenth Steering Committee meeting in May 2019

I. Priority action area (a)

Encouraging countries to embed ESD into quality standards, frameworks and resources associated with formal quality assessments and institutional reviews

1. Are there currently any national or subnational quality assessment/enhancement systems that address ESD in your country?

Yes X No

- *Please specify*

Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic is preparing changes in state educational curricula for pupils on primary and secondary schools with importance on ESD, digital literacy and innovative ways of quality assessment.

New strategies are prepared where ESD is a part of them for example *Human resources development strategy* within the Sector-driven innovation project.

There is a tool of Peer Review introduced into the national system – an instrument supporting quality assurance esp. in VET system in Slovakia and also a dedicated webpage in national language: <https://okvalite.sk/> , where the report for 2020 is published as well.

There are professional standards that define the set of professional competencies needed to place a teacher in the appropriate category and subcategory, career level or career position. Professional standards in connection with the level of education for individual categories, subcategories, career levels and career positions are issued and published by the Ministry on its website.

- *Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic*

2. Do quality frameworks exist in your country, for integrating ESD/SDGs in teachers' professional development?

Yes X No

- *Please specify*

There are professional standards that define the set of professional competencies needed to place a teacher in the appropriate category and subcategory, career level or career position. Professional standards in connection with the level of education for individual categories, subcategories, career levels

¹ Countries with a federal structure are free to provide several inputs or questionnaires from different states or entities, if appropriate.

² The latest draft (to be updated for the upcoming 16th meeting) is available from http://staging2.unece.org.net4all.ch/fileadmin/DAM/env/esd/15th_Meeting_SC/Doc/Informal_documents/Information_Paper_No._7_-_Draft_concept_note_post-2019_implementation.pdf

and career positions are issued and published by the Ministry on its website.

The part of the preparing changes in state educational curricula in Slovakia is preparation and development of teachers for new content and forms of teaching (change of university teacher training and strengthening of professional development of teachers).

- *Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic*

II. Priority action area (b)

Promoting the whole institution approach (WIA) in every institution of formal, non-formal and informal education

1. Has there been any significant advancement made in your country for promoting WIA in formal education?

Yes X No

- *Please specify*

Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic is preparing a new National Strategy for Global Education in cooperation with all stakeholders, which will include formal, non-formal and lifelong learning. It should be submitted to the government for discussion in April 2022.

- *Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic*

2. Has there been any incentives in your country for integrating WIA in formal, non-formal and in-formal education?

Yes X No

- *Please specify*

There is an educational portal **VIKI digitálny obsah** which contains environmental topics and under patronage UNESCO there is a possibility of **EKOKVÍZ**. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic is preparing each year development calls for primary and secondary schools in the topics: environment (Enviroprojekt), financial literacy and entrepreneurship and this year, global education and thus also education and upbringing for sustainability.

Support for actors in the field of education in order to apply a school-wide approach in practice, which includes involvement in the development of a democratic and inclusive school environment for all stakeholders:

- Trainings for multipliers / trainers in the field of education for human rights and democratic citizenship (2020 preparatory phase and start of implementation phase)
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- Slovak Academy “Democratic and Inclusive School Environment for All” (year 2020 preparatory phase, year 2021 beginning of the implementation phase)

More information: https://www.statpedu.sk/files/sk/o-organizacii/projekty/spolu-romami-dosiaheme-viac-ii/letak_skolenie_skolitelov.pdf

During the COVID-19 pandemic, due to security measures, universities were repeatedly forced to switch to the distance method of education. In general, this has led to an increase in the digitalisation of education, the expansion of the platforms used and the increase in the digital skills of teachers.

• *Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic*

3. Has there been any initiatives in your country for integrating WIA in non-formal and in-formal education?

Yes X No

• *Please specify*

Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic is preparing a new National Strategy for Global Education in cooperation with all stakeholders, which will include formal, non-formal and lifelong learning. It should be submitted to the government for discussion in April 2022.

When looking into the accredited programmes of institutions for lifelong learning, although it is not necessary to submit the quality certification, ISO is used very often to prove the quality of the whole institution.

Socratic Institute program found by a national environmental education NGO Živica has been pioneering WIA since 2012 in non – formal education through their, program focused on social leadership, including ESD and global education topics. This one – year program has around 20 university students yearly.

Yes, global educational program Roots and Shoots Slovakia which is based on community service – learning.

Environmental Education Centre Dropie (Slovak Environment Agency) cooperates with local municipalities, communities and stakeholders.

• *Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic*

III. Priority action area (c)

Supporting ESD within ICT and digital education

1. Did COVID-19 importantly change ICT and digital education used for teaching and learning on ESD in your country?

Yes X No

Please specify

In the near future, national projects will be launched to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the secondary school education process, including improving access to education, and to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the secondary school education process, including improving access to education. The aim of all these efforts is to improve the quality and efficiency of education, also with regard to the use of digital technologies.

Part of the reforms and these projects is also the completion of the necessary digital infrastructure.

During pandemic especially the theoretical part of the study programme has been delivered online thanks to digital technology available for teaching and learning.

Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic

2. In your country, do there exist any programs that support educational actors (teachers, mentors, inspectors etc) to integrate ICT and digital education in ESD?

Yes X No

Please specify

This is taken into account in the above-mentioned projects and curricular reform.

Training actors (teachers and other pedagogical and professional staff) are required to take part in advanced training, the aim of which is to maintain or renew the professional competencies needed to perform work or to acquire new knowledge and skills in a specific area of work, including ICT. At the same time, they have the opportunity to participate in innovative education, the aim of which is to deepen, expand and innovate the professional competencies necessary for the performance of work activities or the application of the latest knowledge or experience from practice in education. Last but not least, they have the opportunity to take part in specialized training, the aim of which is to acquire the professional competencies needed to carry out specialized activities, including the activity of a school coordinator in education, who coordinates informatization and training through ICT.

Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic

3. Is any assistance provided on national level for embedding ICT and digital education on ESD/SDGs?

Yes X No

Please specify

This is taken into account in the above-mentioned projects and curricular reform.

Schools and school facilities, pedagogical and professional staff are provided with comprehensive support during interrupted classes due to the pandemic situation, as well as after the return of pupils to schools. The support is aimed at maintaining the quality of the educational process, promoting access to education

for all pupils, effective response to the challenges related to the crisis and post-crisis situation associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. Among other things, resources aimed at supporting the goals of sustainable development are published on the Learning at a Distance portal.

More information: <https://www.ucimenadialku.sk/>

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IV. Priority action area (d)

Enhancing entrepreneurship and employment within ESD

1. Do you have in your country ESD programs that support students/youth entrepreneurship?

Yes X No

Please specify

Yes, each study program on secondary vocational school has to contain topics of ESD, education to environment, financial literacy and entrepreneurship, but there are many special study programs which graduates are ready for establish their own business where is teaching entrepreneurship separately as a unique study program or study programs with connection to trade, services, hotels, marketing, law, engineering, food industry and agriculture.

We have in Slovakia subject *civic education* on primary and secondary schools which supports global education and ESD. Teachers training at universities is specially for that subject.

In lifelong learning perspective there are specific preparation courses and exams held to have a licence achieved in certain crafts.

Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic

2. Are there any mechanisms on national level that strengthen students/youth entrepreneurship competences related to ESD?

Yes X No

Please specify

According Law on VET the secondary vocational school have to do suggestion, monitoring and evaluation of study programmes in cooperation with stakeholders (professional organisation, chambers, self-government regions, and so.), the same is true according new accreditation standards at the universities.

An amendment to the VET Act is currently underway, which will allow additional powers, duties and responsibilities to employers.

The content of the programmes are always updated in line with the newest requirements related to ESD in all lifelong learning programmes and accredited courses

Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic

3. Are there any incentives for ESD on national level which prepare students/youth for the sustainable entrepreneurship and green jobs?

Yes X No

Please specify

Within Human resources development strategy for Sector-driven innovation project will be a part concerning consequences of climatic changes and need to prepare human resources for new topics and need of new experts, so need of new working positions, places.

The content of the programmes are always updated in line with the newest requirements related to sustainable entrepreneurship and green jobs in all lifelong learning programmes and accredited courses.

Young reports for the Environment <https://mladireporter.sk>

Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic

V. COVID-19 and ESD

1. Has COVID-19 impacted the implementation of UNECE Strategy for ESD in your country?

Yes X No

Please specify – Open market with textbooks.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic changed the current centralized policy of textbook selection and opening the market for textbooks for the 2020/2021 school year with effect from June 2020. The Slovak Republic, was one of the last 4 European countries, had had not an open market with textbooks. An open market with textbooks is one of the most important elements for improving the quality of education in Slovakia. Primary schools were allowed to purchase textbooks of their choice and needs with the provision of appropriate funding for individual schools. Textbooks are not purchased centrally, but schools select textbooks from the lists on the basis of the paper. The contribution to the textbooks is purposefully bound, t. j. the school may purchase only state-approved or state-recommended textbooks, textbooks and workbooks for a contribution to textbooks in order to maintain control over the fact that textbooks that are not content or professionally unsuitable enter schools. During 2021, the ministry continued to open the textbook market to secondary schools. Market opening concerns all types of schools, including schools for pupils with special educational needs and schools for pupils with the language of instruction of national minorities. The open market for textbooks promotes a competitive environment in the creation and

publication of new textbooks and creates new educational methods in the educational process in schools.

Many of the lifelong learning programmes were hold on due to pandemic health regulations.

Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic

2. Does your country face specific challenges for integrating ESD on the national level during COVID-19?

Yes No Please specify

Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic

3. What are the lessons learnt in your country from COVID-19, which, to your opinion, would strengthen the role of ESD in the national context as a vehicle for empowering youth and citizens to be more resilient in future emergencies?

Yes X No Please specify

Lifelong learning programmes were re-designed related to their content for the mode of delivery in online space.

Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic
