United Nations

Economic and Social Council

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

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

Seventeenth meeting
Geneva, 30 and 31 May 2022
Item 2 (a) of the provisional agenda
**Implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education
for Sustainable Development: progress in implementing the Strategy**

Proposed topics for reporting on progress in the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2022 informal country reporting)[1]*

Note by the secretariat[2]**

Summary

By its terms of reference, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Steering Committee for Education for Sustainable Development is charged with monitoring progress in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (CEP/AC.13/2005/4/Rev.1, annex I, para. 4 (b)). The mandate of the Steering Committee as the principal decision-making body for the activities on the Strategy in the ECE region, responsible for giving guidance and strategic directions to the implementation of the Strategy and monitoring progress in its implementation, was extended until 2030 by ministers and heads of delegation at the High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries held on 8 June 2016 in Batumi, Georgia, in the framework of the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/2/Add.2, para 10).

In line with its renewed mandate, and according to the established practice, in addition to the mandatory national progress reporting carried out at the end of each implementation phase, countries are asked to submit informal reports to the Steering Committee on the progress achieved and the challenges encountered in implementing the Strategy. The secretariat will subsequently review all the reports submitted and prepare a presentation, which will identify the major themes and interesting developments with regard to the implementation of education for sustainable development in the ECE region.

To facilitate this process, the secretariat, together with the Chair of the Committee and in coordination with the Bureau, has prepared the present document — a brief questionnaire on progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Strategy since the last mandatory reporting exercise undertaken in 2018 and the informal reporting exercise undertaken in 2021. Countries are kindly requested to fill in the questionnaire and submit it to the secretariat before 13 May 2022.

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 seventeenth 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 sixteenth Steering Committee meeting (Geneva, 10 and 11 May 2021).

3.   In the below questionnaire, particular attention is paid to the main priority strands of the Strategy's new implementation framework (2021–2030) (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2022/3), focused on:

> (a)   quality education and ESD;
>
> (b)   whole institution approach and ESD;
>
> (c)   digital education, information and communications technology and ESD;
>
> (d)   entrepreneurship, employability, innovation and ESD; and youth and ESD.

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 **13 May 2022.**

5.   The secretariat will review the information submitted and deliver a brief synthesis presentation at the Steering Committee's seventeenth meeting. The presentation will be followed by an interactive discussion.

6.   Countries will be invited to complement the secretariat's presentation with interventions on outstanding activities and initiatives implemented since the sixteenth Steering Committee meeting (Geneva, 10 and 11 May 2021), in particular regarding 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 2022 informal country[3] reporting on the implementation of the priority action areas of the newly drafted framework for the future implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development from 2021 to 2030[4]

Advances made and challenges encountered since the sixteenth Steering Committee meeting in May 2021

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*

The status of ESD-integration into Germany´s education sectors is systematically assessed by the ESD-Monitoring at Institut Futur FU Berlin on the national level. The results are frequently summarized and communicated for policymakers, practice, academia, and the interested public. Through the mobilization of knowledge and its advisory role within the German multi-stakeholder implementation process, the monitoring team directly supports the UNESCO programme "ESD for 2030" and the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP). The national monitoring is funded by the federal Ministry of Research and Education. Apart from that the national ESD awards and the newly established national ESD price of the the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the German Commission for UNESCO as well as certification systems in a majority of federal states (e.g. NUN) are contributing to quality enhancement within ESD projects and local authorities. Nevertheless, educational policies on the national and subnational level do not integrate ESD in their respective quality systems.

· *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*

One influential quality framework for ESD - for practice not for professional development - is the Curriculum Framework: Education for Sustainable Development which was published

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by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany. Teachers' professional development is in Germany a federal competence of the Länder. The implementation of ESD is progressing, but still disparate.

· *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) (or whole school approach (WSA)) in every institution of formal, non-formal and informal education

1. Has there been any significant advancement made in your country in the field of governance, curriculum, leadership, teachers' professional development, teaching methods, collaborations, facilities and infrastructure for promoting application of WSA/WIA to ESD in formal education?

Yes ☐ No x

· *Please specify*

There are a several attempts to promote the application of WSAs/WIAs (e.g., ESD prices, labels, certifications, limited funding for initiatives in higher education, a decree on ESD in school development in one federal state) as well as statements of intent. There has been quite an increase of initiatives in that direction in the past three years, however significant structural advancements are only developing gradually. (e.g., far-reaching resolutions, large funding programs for WIAs). To attain further information on the status and developments of WIAs in Germany, the national Monitoring on ESD is currently collecting systematic data on the application of WIAs, questioning learners and educators in schools, higher education institutions, and vocational education and training (Holst, Grund & Brock, in prep.).

The results of this research could be presented at the next steering committee meeting in 2023.

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 challenges and has particular needs in its implementation of WSA/WIA in formal and non-formal education?

Yes x No ☐

· *Please specify*

In line with the international literature on WIAs (Holst, under review): Prioritisation within high-profile policies, availability of expertise and support for organisational reorganisation towards sustainability; sufficient (and long-term) funding, e.g. for redesign of buildings/campus, professional development, or facilitators for organisational change-processes

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

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· *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. Have there been any monitoring processes (for instance, self-assessments) in your country that support formal and non-formal institutions and organizations when assessing their progress regarding application of WSA/WIA to ESD?

Yes x No ☐   · *Please specify*

As part of the German Monitoring on ESD, there is an instrument under development that allows for an assessment of the application of WIAs by asking educators and learners (see above), which may be applied both in non-formal and formal institutions and organisations (Holst, Grund & Brock, in prep.).

· *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

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

Yes x No ☐   ● *Please specify how*

Covid 19 forced in particular many non-formal educational institutions to digitalise their formats and programs. Some of them used this situation to reach new groups of actors and develop new digital materials. Most of them could not be active in schools due to school closings during Covid or face existential challenges regarding the continuation of their work (Grund 2022, to be published).

● *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 programs in your country that support educational actors (teachers, mentors, inspectors etc) to integrate ICT and digital education in ESD?

Yes ☐ No x   ● *Please specify*

There is no particular program for supporting educational actors to integrate ICT and digital education in ESD, but in many programs the linkages are very welcome.

● *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 there any assistance on the national level for embedding ICT and digital education on ESD/SDGs?

Yes ☐x No   ● *Please specify*

In December 2021 the National Platform for ESD adopted a strategy paper on the linkages between digitalization and ESD. One major initiative resulting from this paper is the

development and introduction of a guideline with quality criteria for digital ESD materials and their application in educational practice for self-evaluation. *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*

IV.   Priority action area (d)

Enhancing entrepreneurship and employment within ESD

1.   Are there changes in curricula focused on developing (new) skills, aimed at increasing levels of entrepreneurship and the greening of economies (e.g. in TVET and higher education programs?)?

Yes x No ☐

- *Please specify*

The most important development in regard to developing new skills comes from TVET, where a board resolution from the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) for digitalization and sustainability was adopted in 2020. This board resolution will affect all new training regulations, integrating sustainability as a field of learning for all occupations.

In addition there are several programmes running at universities and higher education institutions that support green start-ups and greening of economies. *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 the national level that strengthen students/youth entrepreneurship competences related to ESD?

Yes ☐ No x

- *Please specify*

The Federal Ministry of Education is funding a youth participation process - the youpaN. This can be connected to civic education but lesser to entrepreneurship education.

However there exist many funding schemes to support social and green entrepreneurship funded by public or private institutions. Exemplary in 2019 the German Federal Environmental Foundation (Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt DBU) funded a major programme for Green-Start-ups also available to young entrepreneurs. Many of these programmes "do" ESD without explicitly acknowledging it.

In addition there is a vibrant scene of so called "school or pupil/student companies" which have a focus on fair, social and green entrepreneurship. At the federal states level several supporting mechanism exist to support and allow networking opportunities for these student companies. The coalition agreement of the current Federal Government lists student companies as one field of action in ESD and there are currently consultations in place how to address this further (e.g. a national conference for a stock-taking of initiatives in the field by public and civil society actors and how to best create synergies among them and strengthening student schools).

- *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 the national level which prepare students/youth for sustainable entrepreneurship and green jobs?

Yes x No ☐

- *Please specify*

See above; The ESD award scheme mentioned under 1.1. is an incentive also for young people but there is no particular focus on sustainable entrepreneurship/ green jobs.

- *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 the UNECE Strategy for ESD in your country?

Yes ☐ No x

- *Please specify how and what challenges occurred*

The UNECE strategy is implemented as part of the overall national ESD implementation process. There have been challenges reported both in the formal and non-formal sector. Particularly the non-formal sector reported financial strains worsened through the pandemic, some reported that activities had to be temporally stopped or even terminally closed down. In response to this the national ESD Forum for non-formal and informal education initiated a survey on the impacts of COVID-19.

- However the overall national implementation process and initiatives have not been affected beyond the overall impacts of the worldwide pandemic. *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 lessons learnt in your country from COVID-19, which, in 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*

We have experienced within the national ESD implementation process how youth showed swift leadership and initiated and coordinated the adaption of a resolution "*ESD*: A way out of the crisis" by the National Platform on ESD.

- *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*