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# Where do we stand on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education

Findings of the 7th Consultation on the implementation of the 1974  
Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding,  
Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and  
Fundamental Freedoms

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## Overview of the findings

1. Nearly all countries reported that education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship education (GCED) are reflected in national education laws and policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment
2. ESD and GCED are considerably less likely to be reflected in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) or in adult education
3. Themes related to learning to live together are more often reflected in laws and policies than those related to learning to live sustainably.
4. Climate change education and sustainable consumption and production are less often reflected in curricula and teacher education respectively than other themes.
5. ESD and GCED are most likely to be reflected in primary and secondary education and least likely in pre-primary education.
6. In primary and secondary education, themes related to learning to live together are most often taught in social science, ethics and civics. Themes related to learning to live sustainably are most often taught in science, social science, geography and civics.
7. Countries report that training in ESD and GCED is available to teachers.
8. ESD and GCED are generally covered in teacher training and student assessments, though the testing of values, attitudes and behaviours is less common than of knowledge and skills.
9. Government support for research in ESD and GCED is limited.
10. Countries are taking some actions to promote international co-operation in ESD and GCED.

## I. Introduction

The Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was adopted in November 1974 at the 18th session of UNESCO's General Conference. Every four years, UNESCO Member States are invited to report on the progress they have made in the implementation of the Recommendation in all levels and types of education: pre-primary to tertiary, formal and non-formal. This document summarizes the results of the most recent consultation of Member States covering the reporting period 2017-2020. The reports countries submit are also the official source of information for the monitoring of progress towards the achievement of Sustainable

Development Goal Target 4.7 (Box 1) which concerns education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship education (GCED).

This report would not have been possible without the significant contributions from UNESCO Member States. We would like to acknowledge their support and thank them for their time and effort in responding to the seventh global consultation on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

### Box 1 Target 4.7

By 2030, ensure all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Source: *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1)

## II. Background

Adopted by UNESCO's General Conference of Member States in November 1974, the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms provides a normative framework for promoting values and principles of human rights in and through education, by stipulating guiding principles and offering a basis for exchanges of experiences and lessons learned between Member States.

Every four years UNESCO Member States are invited to report on the implementation of the Recommendation in their countries. The last such consultation, covering the period 2017-2020 took place from October 2020 to March 2021.

The 1974 Recommendation defines a set of guiding principles of education policy (Box 2).

## Box 2: Guiding principles of the 1974 Recommendation

**Education should be infused with the aims and purposes set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, the Constitution of UNESCO and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.**

"In order to enable every person to contribute actively to the fulfilment of [these] aims ... and promote international solidarity and co-operation, the following objectives should be regarded as major guiding principles of education policy:

- an international dimension and a global perspective in education at all levels and in all its forms;
- understanding and respect for all peoples, their cultures, civilizations, values and ways of life, including domestic ethnic cultures and cultures of other nations;
- awareness of the increasing global interdependence between peoples and nations;
- abilities to communicate with others;
- awareness not only of the rights but also the duties incumbent on individuals, social groups and nations towards each other;
- understanding of the necessity for international solidarity and co-operation;
- readiness on the part of the individual to participate in solving the problems of his community, his country and the world at large."

Source: Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the 1974 *Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*.

For the purposes of the most recent consultation on the implementation of the Recommendation, a set of eight global citizenship and sustainable development themes were identified on which Member States were asked to report.

These are:

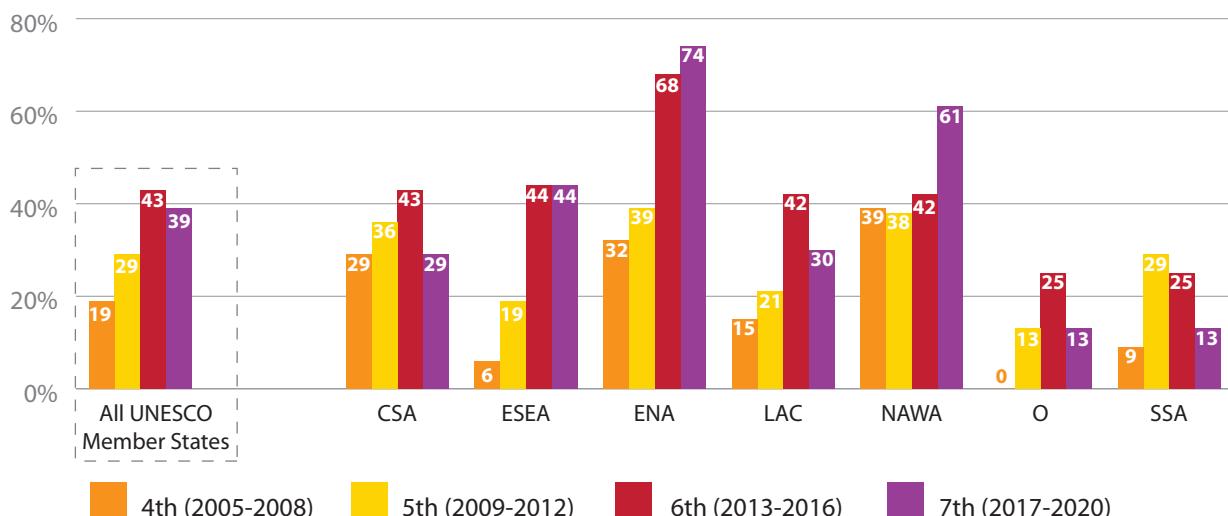
1. cultural diversity and tolerance (covering international or intercultural understanding, solidarity and co-operation; intercultural and interreligious dialogue; and local, national and/or global citizenship)
2. gender equality education (covering gender-based equal opportunities; gender equality and justice; and gender roles, identity and stereotypes)
3. human rights education (covering equality and non-discrimination based on race, colour, language, religion, disability, political or other opinion, national or social origin, birth or other status; human rights values, human dignity, justice, inclusion and participation; and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (as outlined in international conventions and declarations))
4. peace and non-violence (covering friendly relations among peoples and nations; challenging negative stereotypes, promoting peaceful solutions, learning to live together, including others and preventing violent extremism; and preventing all forms of violence including bullying, verbal abuse and gender-based violence)
5. climate change education (covering mitigation; adaptation; impact reduction; and early warning)
6. environmental sustainability (covering caring for the planet and protecting nature; environmental justice; and biodiversity and water)
7. human survival and well-being (covering environmental health as it pertains to human well-being and disaster risk reduction; health of the planet for future generations; and sustainable cities and communities)
8. sustainable consumption and production (covering responsible and sustainable lifestyles; green economy and green jobs; and sustainable energy)

### III. Overall responses

Seventy-five Member States (or 39 per cent) submitted reports during the seventh consultation, a slight drop from the previous round in 2016-2017 when 83 Member States (43 per cent) responded (Figure 1). Despite this,

response rates increased in Europe and Northern America from 68 to 74 per cent and in Northern Africa and Western Asia from 42 to 61 per cent.

**Figure 1**  
Response rates by consultation round and SDG region<sup>1</sup> (percentage of UNESCO Member States)



Note: CSA = Central and Southern Asia; ESEA = Eastern and South-Eastern Asia; ENA = Europe and Northern America; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; NAWA = Northern Africa and Western Asia; O = Oceania and SSA = sub-Saharan Africa.

Many countries were unable to respond in the most recent consultation, in part because of the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Those that did reply mostly provided detailed information on how they have implemented the 1974 Recommendation in the period 2017-2020. Sixteen countries or 21 per cent responded for the first time in 15 years. Around half of countries reported negative impacts on education in the period 2017-2020 as a result of global or national crises. The

effects of COVID-19 were particularly severe but other crises, including natural disasters, military actions, political instability and economic hardships also had serious consequences. A few countries described direct effects on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation itself. For example, several respondents reported increasing levels of intolerance, declining appreciation for diversity and gender equality, and the general undermining of the right to education.

### IV. Data analysis and limitations

It is important to note that the analyses presented here are all based on **self-reported information** from fewer than 40 per cent of UNESCO Member States. It is possible that many of those that have chosen to respond are more likely to have a commitment to the objectives of the 1974 Recommendation and to report favourably on

its implementation. The results overall are generally very positive though evidence from other sources (such as, for example, a recent global survey of teachers' readiness to integrate ESD and GCED in their teaching – Teachers have their say: Motivation, skills and opportunities to teach Education for Sustainable Development and Global

<sup>1</sup> This report uses the SDG regions (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups/>) as they are the regions used for the official monitoring of progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Citizenship<sup>2</sup>) suggests that progress may be more uneven. The results should therefore be treated with caution.

Furthermore, countries were encouraged to consult widely before submitting their reports, nearly all of which were completed by Ministries of Education. Sixty-four per cent of respondents reported consulting colleagues in government ministries before completing their reports but only 20 per cent reported having consulted ministries

other than education. Twenty per cent consulted national human rights institutions. Nearly 30 per cent consulted at least some education stakeholders such as teachers, students or parents and around 20 per cent consulted other civil society organizations. Overall, nearly 30 per cent of respondents reported consulting a wide range of organizations both within and beyond government but 20 per cent did not report any consultation at all.

## V. Findings

### FINDING 1

**Nearly all countries reported that education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship education (GCED) are reflected in national education laws and policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment**

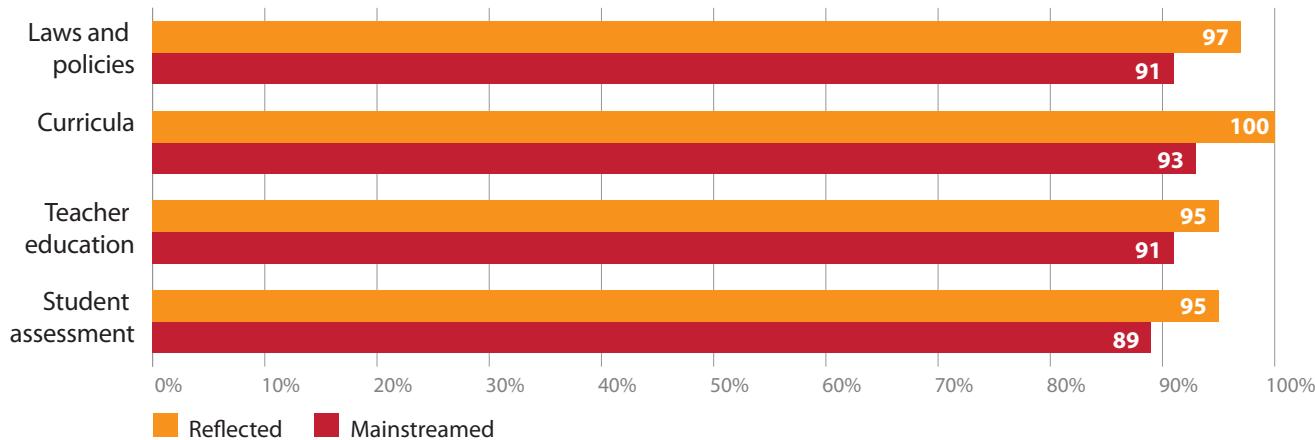
**"Each member state should formulate and apply national policies aimed at increasing the efficacy of education in all its forms and strengthening its contribution to international understanding and co-operation."**

Source: 1974 Recommendation. Paragraph 7.

At least 95 per cent of countries reported that ESD and/or GCED are reflected in their education systems. This was most frequently reported for curricula and least frequently for teacher education and student assessment (Figure 2). When asked if they are mentioned explicitly in relevant documents and are expected to be implemented by the relevant authorities, slightly fewer countries – between 89 and 93 per cent - responded positively.

**Figure 2**

Integration of ESD and GCED in national education systems in the period 2017-2020 (percentage of responding countries)



Note: ESD and GCED are **mainstreamed** if they are mentioned explicitly in relevant documents and are expected to be implemented by the relevant authorities. They are **reflected** if they are mentioned either explicitly or implicitly.

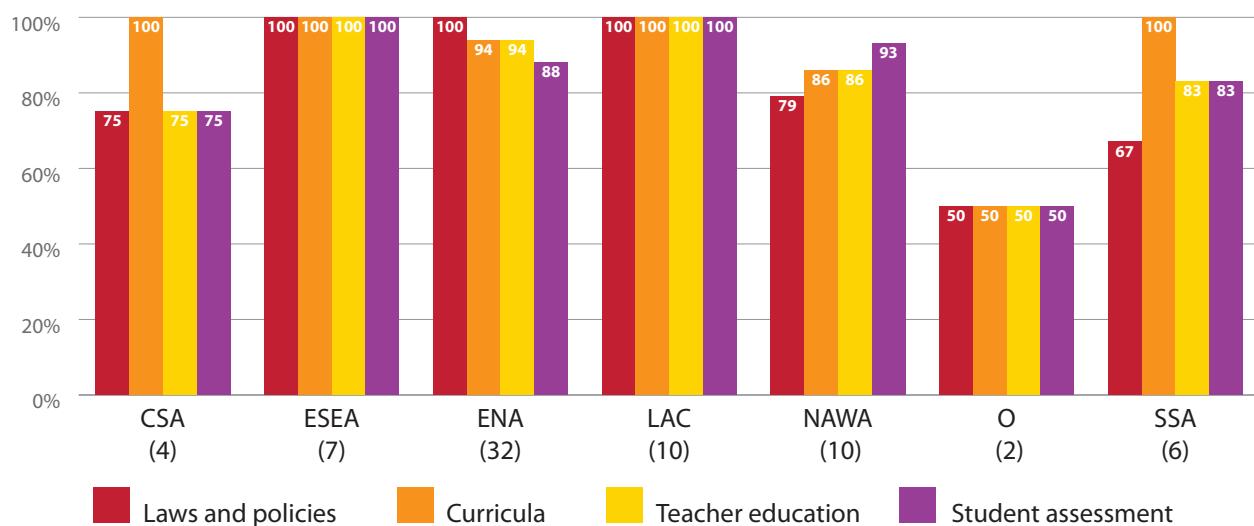
2 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379914>

There were some variations by region (Figure 3) but this sometimes reflected very small numbers of respondents in some regions (e.g., Oceania). The responding countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean all reported that ESD and GCED are

mainstreamed in laws and policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment. Europe and Northern America reported this to be the case for laws and policies only, while Central and Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa reported this for curricula.

**Figure 3**

Mainstreaming of ESD and GCED in national education systems by SDG regions in the period 2017-2020 (percentage of responding countries)



Note 1: CSA = Central and Southern Asia; ESEA = Eastern and South-Eastern Asia; ENA = Europe and Northern America; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; NAWA = Northern Africa and Western Asia; O = Oceania and SSA = sub-Saharan Africa.

Note 2: The numbers in brackets indicate the number of countries responding in each region.

## FINDING 2

ESD and GCED are considerably less likely to be reflected in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) or in adult education

*“ Every stage of specialized vocational training should include training to enable students to understand their role and the role of their professions in developing their society, furthering international co-operation, maintaining and developing peace ... ”*

Source: 1974 Recommendation. Paragraph 29.

*“ ... out of school education, including adult education, ... should be based on the following considerations: (a) as far as possible, a global approach should be applied ... which should comprise the appropriate moral, civic, cultural, scientific and technical elements of international education. ”*

Source: 1974 Recommendation. Paragraph 30.

Fifty-seven per cent of responding Member States reported that ESD and GCED are reflected in TVET. In many cases the curricula for TVET programmes, especially at the secondary level, cover the same core topics as in general education programmes. In addition, several countries reported recent or planned revisions of TVET curricula to specifically integrate the ESD and GCED themes. Curricula reforms have, in some cases, been accompanied by retraining programmes for TVET teachers which cover some of the ESD and GCED themes.

Only 51 per cent of responding Member States reported that ESD and GCED are reflected in adult education. In addition to 'second chance' programmes offered to adults, a number of countries reported the availability of programmes designed specifically for adults which integrate ESD and GCED. In some countries, national policies related to adult education aim to ensure the development of sustainability and citizenship skills.

## FINDING 3

**ESD and GCED themes related to learning to live together are more often reflected in laws and policies than those related to learning to live sustainably.**

Taking all levels of education together, countries reported that themes more closely related to learning to live together (cultural diversity and tolerance, gender equality, human rights and peace and non-violence) are reflected, on average, 93 per cent of the time in laws and legal frameworks and 97 per cent of the time in education policies. By contrast, themes more closely related to learning to live sustainably (climate change education,

environmental sustainability, human survival and well-being, and sustainable consumption and production) are less often reflected – on average 85 per cent of the time in laws and legal frameworks and 92 per cent of the time in education policies (Figure 4). Climate change education and sustainable consumption and production are the themes least often covered.

**Figure 4**

Reflection of ESD and GCED themes in laws and education policies (percentage of positive responses by level of education and theme).

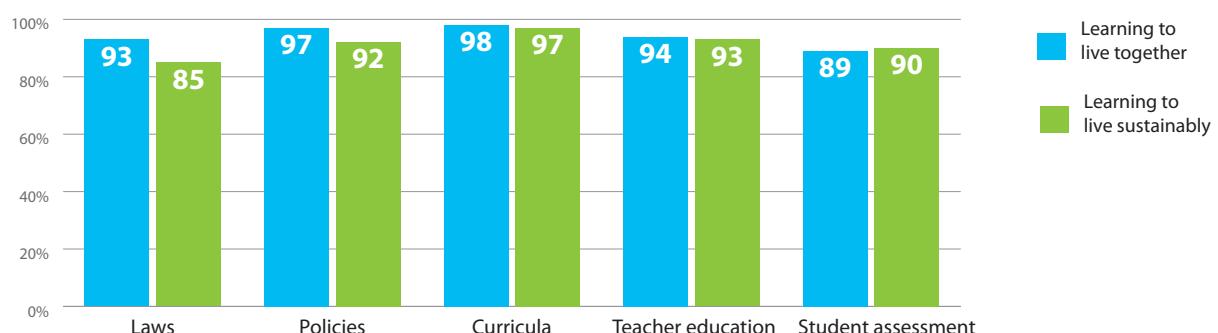


Fewer differences were observed in curricula, teacher education and student assessment (Figure 5). Overall, themes more closely related to learning to live together are least often reflected in student assessment (89 per cent of the time) than in laws, policies, curricula and

teacher education (between 93 and 98 per cent of the time). Themes more closely related to learning to live sustainably are least often reflected in laws (85 per cent of the time)

**Figure 5**

Reflection of ESD and GCED themes in national education systems (percentage of positive responses by level of education and theme).



## FINDING 4

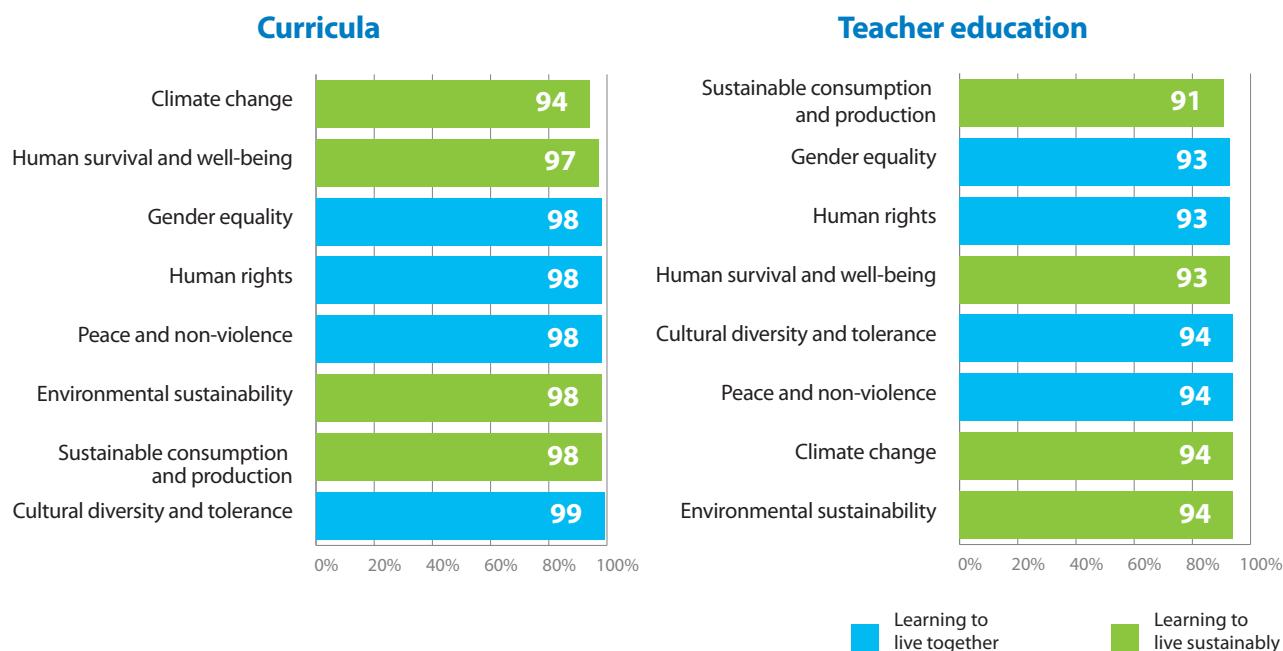
Climate change education and sustainable consumption and production are less often reflected in curricula and teacher education respectively than other ESD and GCED themes.

In addition to being the least often reflected themes in laws and policies, climate change education and sustainable consumption and production are less often covered in curricula and teacher education respectively (Figure 6). Climate change education is least often

reflected in curricula compared to other ESD and GCED themes (94 per cent versus 98 per cent on average) and sustainable consumption and production is less often covered in teacher education (91 per cent of the time compared with 93 per cent on average for other themes).

**Figure 6**

Reflection of ESD and GCED themes in curricula and teacher education (percentage of positive responses by level of education and theme).



## FINDING 5

ESD and GCED are most likely to be reflected in primary and secondary education and least likely in pre-primary education.

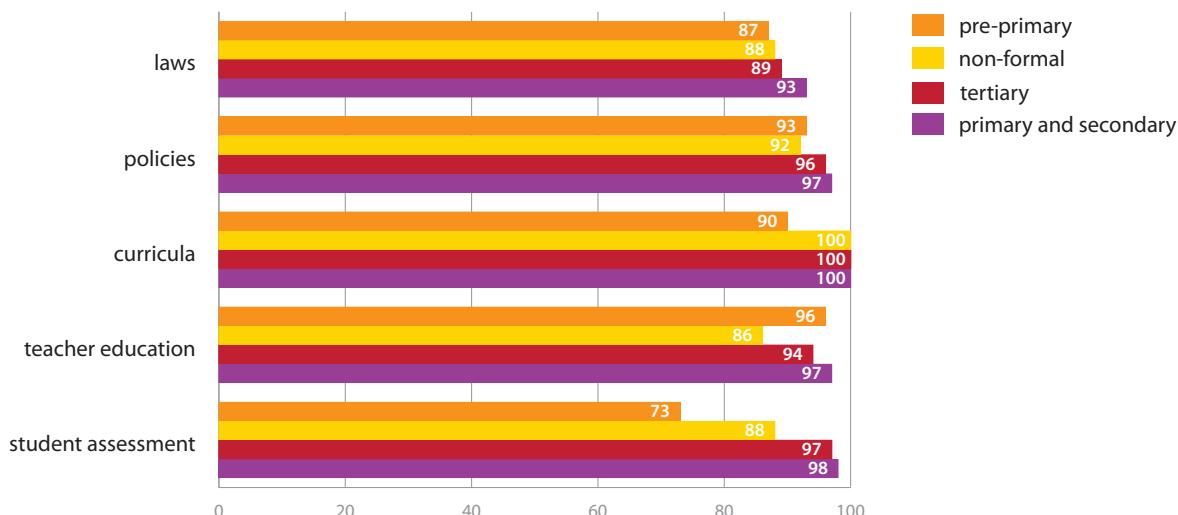
“ Member States should promote, at every stage of education, an active civic training... ”

Source: 1974 Recommendation. Paragraph 13.

ESD and GCED are reflected in primary and secondary education on average more often than other levels of education, ranging from 100 per cent in curricula to 93 per cent in national laws (Figure 7). ESD and GCED are least likely to be reflected in pre-primary education especially in student assessment (73 per cent) and national laws (87 per cent).

**Figure 7**

Reflection of ESD and GCED themes by level of education (percentage of positive responses by level of education and theme).



## FINDING 6

In primary and secondary education, ESD and GCED themes related to learning to live together are most often taught in social science, ethics and civics. Themes related to learning to live sustainably are most often taught in science, social science, geography and civics.

**"Member States should encourage educational authorities and educators to give education planned in accordance with this recommendation an interdisciplinary, problem-oriented content adapted to the complexity of the issues involved..."**

Source: 1974 Recommendation. Paragraph 20.

Countries reported that ESD and GCED themes are integrated across the entire primary and secondary curriculum (Figure 8). They are taught in almost all cases in social science and integrated studies. Topics related to learning to live together are also widely taught in ethics and civics. Cultural diversity and tolerance are in addition covered in arts and peace and non-violence in history. Themes related to living together sustainably are taught in almost all cases in science in addition to social science and integrated studies and also in geography and civics.

Mathematics is the least common subject in which any of these themes are addressed.

**Figure 8**

Reflection of ESD and GCED themes in primary and secondary subjects (percentage of positive responses by subject and theme).



- █ Learning to live together
- █ Learning to live sustainably

Note 1: Themes more closely related to learning to live together are: cultural diversity and tolerance, gender equality, human rights and peace and non-violence. Themes more closely related to learning to live sustainably are: climate change education, environmental sustainability, human survival and well-being and sustainable consumption and production.

## FINDING 7

Countries report training in ESD and GCED is available to teachers.

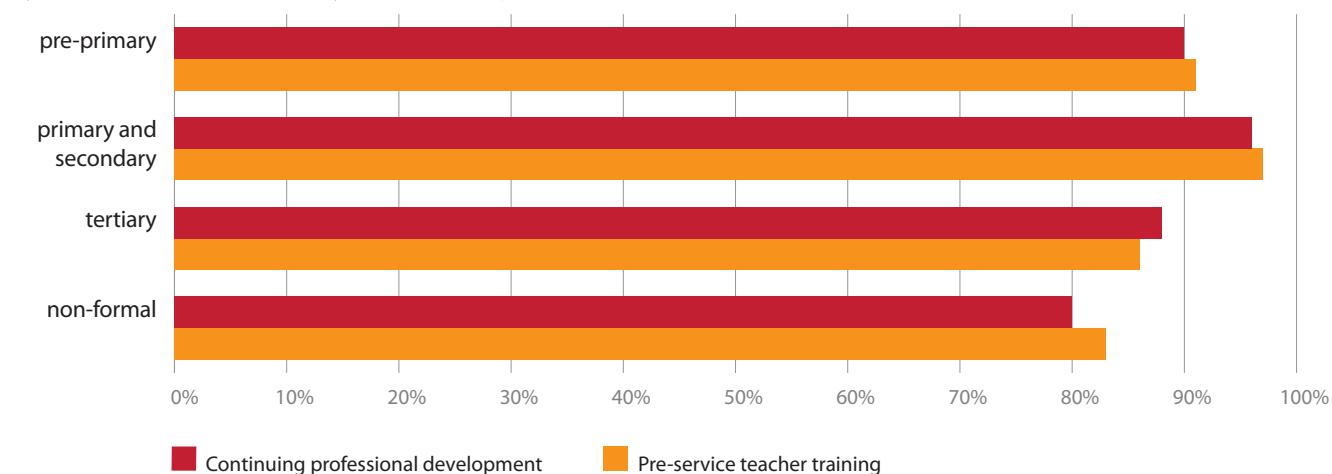
**" Member States should constantly improve the ways and means of preparing and certifying teachers and other educational personnel for their role in pursuing the objectives of this recommendation."**

Source: 1974 Recommendation. Paragraph 33.

According to country self-reports, both pre-service training and continuing professional development in ESD and GCED are available to teachers of all subjects, not just those subjects in which ESD and GCED are typically taught – in nearly 90 per cent in both cases. It is most widely available to teachers in primary and secondary education (96 per cent of cases) and least widely available in non-formal education (81 per cent of cases) (Figure 9).

**Figure 9**

Availability of teacher training in ESD and GCED themes by level of education (percentage of positive responses by level of education and type of training).



Countries report that the available training covers not just the teaching of knowledge but also skills, values, and attitudes and behaviours (all in 92-94 per cent of cases). Furthermore, teachers are taught to use whole-school and cross-curricular approaches (88 per cent of cases) as well

as integrated approaches (79 per cent) in which ESD and GCED are taught throughout the curriculum. Training in separate subject teaching of ESD and GCED is relatively uncommon (36 per cent).

## FINDING 8

ESD and GCED are generally covered in teacher training and student assessments though the testing of values, attitudes and behaviours is less common than of knowledge and skills.

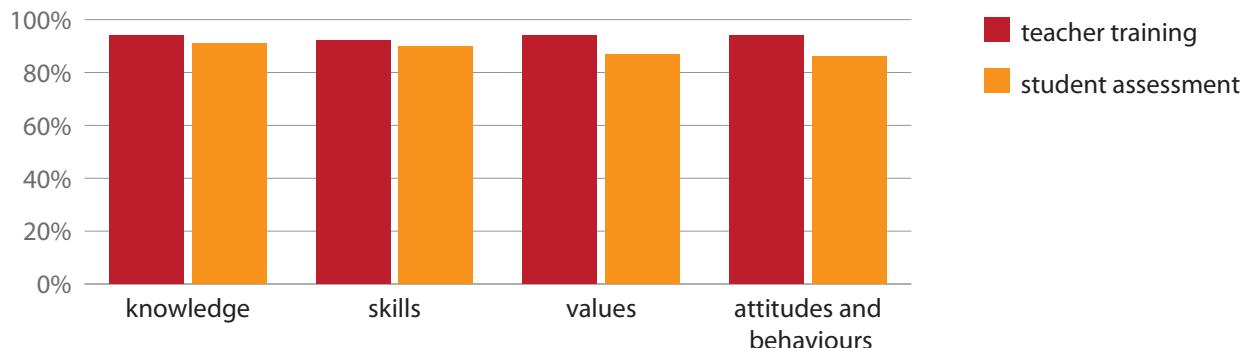
**" Member States should... (d) comprise experiments in the use of active methods of education and training in at least elementary techniques of evaluation, particularly those applicable to the social behaviour and attitudes of children, adolescents and adults;"**

Source: 1974 Recommendation. Paragraph 33 (d).

Countries report that teachers receive training to teach ESD and GCED in all aspects of learning: knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours. ESD and GCED are also generally covered in student assessments though the testing of values, attitudes and behaviours is less common than of knowledge and skills (Figure 10).

**Figure 10**

Coverage of ESD and GCED in teacher training and student assessment (percentage of positive responses by level of education and aspects of learning).



At the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education assessment of knowledge and skills is almost universal

(96-100 per cent). At the pre-primary level, assessment is less common – 79 per cent across all aspects of learning.

**FINDING 9**

Government support for research in ESD and GCED is limited.

**“ Member States should stimulate and support research on the foundations, guiding principles, means of implementation and effects of international education... ”**

Source: 1974 Recommendation. Paragraph 41.

Fewer than half of responding Member States (45 per cent) reported supporting research and similar activities to improve the implementation of ESD and GCED. Many reported research in the fields of global citizenship and sustainable development but did not always make the link to improving education in these areas.

**FINDING 10**

Countries are taking some actions to promote international co-operation in ESD and GCED.

**“ Member States should consider international co-operation a responsibility in developing international education. ... They should, for example, organize ... international meetings and study sessions on international education; strengthen their programmes for the reception of foreign students, research workers, teachers and educators... ; promote reciprocal visits by schoolchildren, and student and teacher exchanges ; ... ”**

Source: 1974 Recommendation. Paragraph 43.

Eighty-four per cent of responding Member States reported participating in activities intended to promote international co-operation in ESD and GCED. This most often concerns participation in international meetings (96 per cent of cases), membership of international networks (88 per cent of cases) and support for programmes hosting foreign students, teachers and researchers (86 per cent of cases).

## VI. Global SDG Indicator 4.7.1

The principles of the 1974 Recommendation represent an important tool for promoting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in particular, SDG Target 4.7 on the promotion of sustainable development and global citizenship through education. For this reason, the regular reporting by UNESCO Member States on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation is now the recognized source of information for calculating the global SDG indicator 4.7.1: *The extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment in primary and secondary education.* The same indicator is also used for the global monitoring of SDG Targets 12.8 on access to information on sustainable development and 13.3 on climate change education.

The indicator was first published in the UN's Global SDG Indicator database<sup>3</sup> in July 2021 following the completion of the seventh consultation on the 1974 Recommendation (Table 1). Data are currently available for 69 UNESCO Member States. The indicator is presented as an index between 0.000 and 1.000 separately for each of its four components: laws and policies, curricula, teacher education, and student assessment. The closer the value is to 1.000 the greater the level of mainstreaming of ESD and GCED in the component. ESD and GCED are 'mainstreamed' in a component if they or their themes are mentioned explicitly in relevant documents related to the given component and are expected to be implemented by the relevant authorities.

The results in Table 1 have been colour-coded to indicate greater (orange) or lesser (yellow) levels of mainstreaming in the respective components<sup>4</sup>. Only a few countries report high levels of mainstreaming of ESD and GCED in primary and secondary education across all components of the indicator: laws and policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment.

About 40 per cent of countries with data reported that ESD and GCED were fully mainstreamed (i.e., a score of 1.000) in primary and secondary education laws and policies and a similar proportion in student assessment. By contrast, only one country reported this for curricula and six for teacher education. These apparently wide variations in levels of mainstreaming between components should, however, be interpreted with caution as they also reflect countries' willingness to be more or less critical of the implementation of ESD and GCED in their education systems. There are also differences in the number and types of questions from which data have been drawn to compile the indicator which range between three questions for student assessment and five for curricula which make it more likely (fewer, simpler questions) or less likely (more, more complex questions) that component scores will be very high.

This is the first time these results are available, so it is not yet possible to determine progress over time. Nevertheless, they set a baseline against which future comparisons can be made. In the meantime, reporting countries may reflect on their overall results and consider in which areas further efforts may be required to fully mainstream ESD and GCED in their education systems, not just in primary and secondary education as reflected in the global indicator but across all levels and types of education.

<sup>3</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/unsdg>

<sup>4</sup> This is a very crude classification and is used simply to give a general impression of the relative levels of mainstreaming within a given component. Results in each component have been divided into three groups – approximately one-third of countries in each group. Countries with the same index values are classified in the same group even if this means that substantially more – or less – than one-third of countries are in a given group.

**Table 1**

Extent to which ESD and GCED are mainstreamed in national education policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment (index)

	Laws and policies	Curricula	Teacher education	Student assessment
<b>Central and Southern Asia</b>				
Afghanistan	..	0.612	..	..
Bangladesh	0.813	0.661	0.825	0.833
India	1.000	0.917	0.950	1.000
Kyrgyzstan	0.625	0.740	0.900	0.833
<b>Eastern and South-Eastern Asia</b>				
Cambodia	1.000	0.823	0.900	1.000
Malaysia	0.875	0.875	0.900	0.833
Mongolia	0.875	0.750	0.850	0.833
Myanmar	1.000	0.901	1.000	0.833
Republic of Korea	1.000	0.883	1.000	0.833
Thailand	0.844	..	0.950	1.000
<b>Europe and Northern America</b>				
Albania	0.719	..	0.675	0.833
Andorra	1.000	0.938	0.775	0.917
Austria	0.831	..	0.700	..
Belgium	0.950	0.875	0.800	1.000
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.583	..	..	0.500
Bulgaria	0.563	0.648	0.725	0.708
Canada	0.875	0.781	0.700	0.833
Czechia	0.844	0.471	0.550	..
Denmark	..	0.682	0.775	0.833
Estonia	0.875	0.833	0.950	0.833
Finland	0.875	0.813	0.850	..
France	1.000	0.991	1.000	1.000
Germany	1.000	0.904	0.950	0.917
Hungary	1.000	0.862	0.925	0.792
Ireland	0.875	0.813	0.850	0.833
Italy	0.875	0.875	0.800	0.833
Latvia	1.000	0.865	0.950	1.000
Lithuania	1.000	0.854	0.900	1.000
Malta	0.838	0.724	0.900	0.917
Monaco	0.875	0.792	0.850	0.667
Poland	1.000	0.802	0.900	1.000
Republic of Moldova	0.859	0.763	0.750	0.833
Romania	1.000	0.971	1.000	1.000
Russian Federation	1.000	..	0.900	..
San Marino	1.000	0.938	0.900	1.000
Slovakia	0.513	0.643	..	0.250
Slovenia	1.000	0.934	0.850	1.000

Key:

More mainstreamed

Less mainstreamed

.. = data not available

**Table 1 (continued)**

	Laws and policies	Curricula	Teacher education	Student assessment
<b>Europe and Northern America (continued)</b>				
Spain	1.000	0.909	0.950	1.000
Sweden	1.000	0.805	..	0.833
Ukraine	1.000	0.917	0.950	1.000
United Kingdom	0.413	0.586	..	0.833
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>				
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	..	..	0.775	0.750
Brazil	1.000	0.938	1.000	0.917
Colombia	1.000	0.880	0.850	1.000
Cuba	1.000	1.000	0.950	1.000
Dominican Republic	0.969	0.872	0.825	1.000
Mexico	0.750	..	0.800	1.000
Nicaragua	0.875	0.792	0.900	1.000
Peru	1.000	0.813	0.200	1.000
Saint Kitts and Nevis	0.575	0.612	0.800	0.833
<b>Northern Africa and Western Asia</b>				
Algeria	0.625	0.729	0.650	0.750
Armenia	0.875	0.701	0.850	0.833
Bahrain	1.000	0.943	1.000	1.000
Cyprus	1.000	0.924	0.950	0.667
Georgia	1.000	..	..	1.000
Jordan	0.875	0.750	0.950	1.000
Kuwait	0.625	0.875	0.800	0.833
Oman	0.813	0.729	0.850	0.833
Palestine	0.875	0.708	0.800	0.833
Qatar	..	..	..	0.667
Saudi Arabia	0.750	..	..	1.000
Syrian Arab Republic	..	0.771	0.900	1.000
Turkey	1.000	0.875	0.900	1.000
<b>Oceania</b>				
New Zealand	0.350	..	0.600	..
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>				
Burkina Faso	0.875	0.875	0.900	0.833
Burundi	0.619	0.625	0.625	0.625
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.875	0.797	0.900	0.833
Malawi	1.000	0.906	0.900	1.000
Mauritius	..	0.802	0.900	0.833

Key:

More mainstreamed      Less mainstreamed

.. = data not available

## VII. Conclusions

Overall, responses to the consultation on the 1974 Recommendation demonstrate a strong commitment on behalf of governments to the principles of the Recommendation, at least in the countries which submitted reports. Despite this, it is clear from some of the responses that levels of integration of ESD and GCED in education systems are considerably higher in some countries than others. However, evidence from some other UNESCO sources suggests progress may be more uneven. For example, recent analyses of the content of national curriculum frameworks and education sector plans suggests relatively low coverage of at least some themes such as environmental education and climate change. A recent global survey of teachers found that while training opportunities in ESD and GCED are available, they were not always sufficient to meet teachers' needs. Teachers are motivated to learn but despite this, one quarter of teachers responding to the survey reported that they did not feel confident to teach ESD and GCED topics (Box 3).

In addition, the fifth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education to be published in 2022 will include a review of citizenship education worldwide. This report will combine survey data, policy analysis and case studies to provide policymakers, researchers and practitioners an up-to-date picture of the status of adult learning and education, including citizenship education, in UNESCO Member States.

There are countries where ESD and GCED are reflected in a wide range of policies affecting all age ranges and types of education and in policies beyond education. Others are still at a relatively early stage of prioritizing these issues and may not yet have covered all themes or all levels or types of education. The mainstreaming of ESD and GCED is reported to be especially high in curricula, followed by teacher education but there is still some way to go in regard to laws, policies and student assessment.

### Box 3: Further reading

Recent UNESCO publications that include evidence regarding the implementation of ESD and GCED in education systems include:

#### **Learn for our planet:**

A global review of how environmental issues are integrated in education  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377362>

#### **Getting every school climate-ready:**

How countries are integrating climate change issues in education  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379591>

#### **Teachers have their say:**

Motivation, skills and opportunities to teach Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379914>

#### **Global Education Monitoring Report 2021/2:**

Non-state actors in education. Who chooses? Who loses?  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379875>

#### **Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms**

19 November 1974

[http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13088&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13088&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

Integration is reported as being more extensive in primary, secondary and tertiary education than in other levels and types of education. It appears to be especially low in technical and vocational education and training and in adult education. Topics related to learning to live together are more often covered than those related to learning to live sustainably. The topics least often reflected are climate change education and sustainable consumption and production.

The consultation also yielded the first ever results for the global indicator for the monitoring of SDG Target 4.7 on education for sustainable development and global citizenship. Data have been published for 69 of the 75 countries which submitted reports. They set a useful baseline against which future progress can be assessed. The remaining six countries either did not provide enough information to make it possible to calculate the indicator components or have not yet validated the results.

## NEXT STEPS

Following the completion of the seventh consultation on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation, the 41<sup>st</sup> session of UNESCO's General Conference decided in November 2021 that the time had come to review and revise the instrument in view of firmly embedding the role of education in fostering human rights and fundamental freedoms, global peace, international understanding and sustainable development<sup>5</sup>.

As underlined by UNESCO's Member States, the Recommendation was a landmark legal instrument when it was adopted in 1974. Ahead of its time in many ways, it has remained relevant for nearly half a century. Nevertheless, given the challenges education systems worldwide are facing and the complexity of contemporary threats to global peace and human survival, there is a need to undertake a thorough review of the instrument and incorporate changes that reflect our modern society both today and for the next several decades.

Over the next two years, 2022 and 2023, an extensive and inclusive series of global, regional and thematic consultations will take place with Member States, partner organizations, civil society, academia and other experts and education stakeholders to produce a revised Recommendation. It is envisaged that the revised Recommendation will be adopted in November 2023 by the 42<sup>nd</sup> Session of UNESCO's General Conference coinciding with the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – one of the building blocks of and initial inspiration for the Recommendation itself. More information about the revision can be found on the dedicated webpage <https://en.unesco.org/themes/gced/1974recommendation> which will be updated regularly during the course of the revision process.

<sup>5</sup> Para 7 of 41 C/51 ["Preliminary study related to the technical and legal aspects relating to the desirability of revising the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms"](#)



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## Where do we stand on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education

The Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was adopted by the 18th session of UNESCO's General Conference in November 1974. Every four years, Member States are invited to report on the measures they have taken to implement the Recommendation in all levels and types of education from pre-primary to tertiary, formal, non-formal and adult education. This document summarizes the results of the 7th consultation on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation, covering the period 2017-2020. It also contains, for the first time, data for the global indicator adopted by the UN Statistical Commission and the UN General Assembly for the monitoring of Target 4.7 of Sustainable Development Goal for Education.

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