

# ESTONIA

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 thirteenth meeting of the ECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development, countries are requested to fill in the questionnaire below, reporting on progress made and challenges encountered in implementing the selected three priority action areas since the twelfth Steering Committee meeting (Geneva, 20-21 April 2017).
3. Additional sub-section in this questionnaire refers to the alignment of the national strategies for ESD with the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development, contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda in terms of achieving the SDG 4.7 on education and as an instrument to achieving all 17 SDGs.
4. Countries are kindly requested to submit this information in writing to the secretariat via e-mail (esd@unece.org) by **15 March 2018**.
5. The secretariat will review all the information submitted and deliver a synthesis presentation at the Steering Committee's thirteenth meeting. The presentation will be followed by an interactive discussion.
6. Recognizing the importance of celebrating champions of education for sustainable development, Steering Committee members are in particular invited to indicate if there are any outstanding initiatives on the implementation of the priority action areas in their countries that they wish to share and/or present. Countries might also wish to report on how the implementation of the national strategies for ESD contributes to the achievement of the Goal 4.7 and the 2030 Agenda at the national level, and also on mainstreaming gender aspect in the national ESD policies.

## **Questionnaire for 2018 informal country<sup>1</sup> reporting on the implementation of the three “vertical” priority action areas<sup>2</sup>**

### **Advances made and challenges encountered since the twelfth Steering Committee meeting in April 2017**

#### ***I. Priority action area (a)***

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*Encouraging whole-institution approaches by establishing education for sustainable development school plans, or embedding education for sustainable development in existing school plans, for every school by 2019*

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#### **1. Has the number of schools adopting a “whole-institution approach” to sustainable development or education for sustainable development (ESD) increased?**

Yes **X**

- *Please specify*
  - *Please indicate if you wish to make a presentation on this topic or if*
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<sup>1</sup> Countries with a federal structure are free to provide several inputs or questionnaires from different states or entities, if appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> See framework for the future implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/11), subparas. 20 (a)-(c). Available from <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/environment-for-europe/efe-conferences/batumi-conference/documents-and-materials.html>.

*there is an outstanding initiative in your country on this topic*

The ESD concept was incorporated in the Estonian National Curriculum for Basic Schools and Upper-Secondary Schools in 2002. Cross-curricular topic “environment and sustainable development” are a means of integrating general and subject field competences, subjects and subject fields and are taken into account in developing the school environment.

All Estonian schools have to prepare the school curriculum based on the National Curriculum. These school curricula must specify how to implement the sustainable development into everyday school life. The curriculum is flexible enough to cope with differences at the local level and in individual schools. At the school level ESD education may be implemented through the structure of the learning environment, subject study and collaboration with regional institutions and enterprises, other educational and cultural institutions and civic associations.

In Estonia we have ~500 general education schools and they implement different international and local EE and ESD projects. 30% of the Tallinn (capital of Estonia) educational institutions/ schools have joined with eco-schools project. We have nowadays 21 UNESCO Associated schools, 30 Baltic Sea Project schools, and 80 GLOBE schools in Estonia.

**2. Have any (additional) incentives and assistance measures (guidelines, award scheme, funding, training, technical support) been made available that support ESD school plans?**

Yes **X**

- *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*

The Foundation Environmental Investment Centre (EIS) is a financial institution, mediating state budget funds and provides grants for formal and non-formal environmental education and organisations. The EIC regulation was modified in 2017 to implement a new measure to support the programs of the environmental education centres and enable the schools to finance their ESD and eco-activities.

Eco-schools requirements stipulate that the school team and parents have to be involved. The ESD exists for all schools, because it is a cross-curricular topic of national curriculum. Study 'Analysis of the implementation of the subject "Environment and Sustainable Development" in the national curriculum in formal education'

**3. Are staff and students in schools with ESD plans more environmentally and ecologically aware than staff and students in schools without ESD plans?**

Yes **X**

- *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*

In 2016-2017 Ministry of Education and Research organized a procurement to order the survey: “The implementation of the National Curriculum cross-curricular topic “Environment and sustainable development””.

The study revealed that the school teachers who participated in EE and ESD in-service courses in 2015-2016 responded that they cover more frequently these topics in their

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subject teaching than the control group schools` teachers.

The teachers, who have taken part in the EE and ESD in-service trainings, use and implement significantly more the extra-curricular learning programs offered by out-of-school partners (environmental education centres). Teachers participating in the in-service training (66%) cooperate more with other institutions (environmental education centres, museums, etc.) than those who did not participate in the training.

**4. Are there any recently produced materials or resources that are accessible to a wider audience (e.g., online)?**

Yes **X**

- *Please specify and, if applicable, indicate the language and website address*

With the money of European Social Fund (period 2007-2013\_2015) funding Estonian have invested 3,2 million EUR in the EE and ESD. Ministry of the Environment has initiated an "Environmental education development program" which is co-funded by the European Social Fund. The implementation of this program started in 2011. One of the objectives of the program is to develop methodological materials, learning materials and -tools for teachers from formal and informal education.

The resources have spent for the development of the methodical materials, the in-service training courses curricula for teachers of the formal education system and non-formal environmental education specialists and organization of in-service trainings for general education and vocational education teachers, headmasters, educators, etc. At the end of the courses, the school teams developed a whole-school ESD project, which contributed the development of students` awareness about sustainable development, key competences, values and attitudes.

Several methodical materials for basic schools and upper-secondary schools` teachers were published in 2015: <https://www.keskkonnaharidus.ee/vorgustik/saastva-arengu-hariduse-koolitusmaterjalide-kogumikud/> (In Estonian).

Under the program was technically further developed the web portal "Environmental education" [www.keskkonnaharidus.ee](http://www.keskkonnaharidus.ee), which contains lot of educational programs and materials.

Nowadays the Foundation Environmental Investment Centre (EIS) provides every years grants for the EE and ESD materials.

The Education Department of the Environmental Board have produced a lot of EE and ESD tools and materials (<https://www.keskkonnaamet.ee/et/eesmargid-tegevused/keskkonnaharidus/trukised>) (in Estonia, Russian, English) and works with other centres offering environment-related education. Their educational activities are not solely aimed at children. In order to foster an interest in nature and environmentally friendly values in people they publish booklets, produce information boards for nature trails and put together exhibits for centres in protected areas.

**5. Have you implemented or are you planning to implement any assessments or evaluations that will measure the impact of the actions taken to date in this area?**

Yes **X**

- *Please specify*

In 2016-2017 the Ministry of Education and Research (MoER) organized a procurement to order the survey: "The implementation of the National Curriculum cross-curricular topic "Environment and sustainable development"". The Ministry of Environment ordered the survey: "The implementation of cross- curricular topics in non-formal Environmental Education" and the Foundation Environmental Investment Centre ordered the survey: "The Quality Requirements of Environmental Education Centres".

The study: "The implementation of the National Curriculum cross-curricular topic "Environment and sustainable development"" revealed, that there are coordinators for

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implementation of the cross-curricular topics in every tenth school in Estonia. Every third teacher sets goals for the teaching of cross-curricular topics.

The teachers were asked to name from their own perspective and from their school perspective three of the most important cross-curricular topics. The most important topic at their school level were named: the lifelong learning and career planning. At their personal level they emphasised the development of students' values and morality, attitudes to the environment and sustainable development, health and safety.

The hypothesis that the pupils who's teachers have been participated in the ESD training perceive more the importance of EE and ESD issues at school level as the pupils who's teachers did not participated in these trainings was not confirmed. According to the students responds, the most important topics in their schools are: Lifelong Learning and Career Planning, Health and Safety, and then the EE and ESD, and Values and Morals.

Approximately one tenth of the respondents have used the **assessment tool of the ESD** (<https://www.curriculum.ut.ee/et/labivad-teemad/keskkond>, in Estonian, compiled by the University of Tartu in 2015 with MoER budget) and one third of respondents planned to use that tool in future.

The results of the survey showed that the impact of the implementation of the competences acquired by teachers from the EE and ESD in-service trainings did not reach to the students in full measure. The pupils themselves did not respond that in their schools pay more attention to environmental and sustainability issues over the last years.

In the opinion of the half of the teachers participated in the EE and ESD in-service trainings, emphasised that the training in the form where the school staff takes part in in-service courses as a school team, is sufficient to change the whole schools' approaches and implement the activities in teaching the environment and sustainable development issues.

The teachers suggested that the whole school has to be involved in the training or that school leaders have be involved to make training more effective,.

The teachers (66%) participating in the EE and ESD in-service trainings, cooperate more with other institutions (environmental education centres, museums, etc.) than those who did not participate in the training. 70% of the teachers who attended the trainings indicated that they use creative work in the implementation of the cross-cutting theme "Environment and Sustainable Development". Only 42% of the teachers who did not attend the training noted this answer.

- *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*

Yes, we want

**6. Additional comments on implementing the UNECE Strategy for ESD in your country (please specify, if any):**

Cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Research (MoER) and the Ministry of Environment (MoE) at the ESD level have been taken place since 2000. In March 2017 ministers of the MoER and MoE signed a new memorandum of common actions in the field of EE and ESD. The aim of is also to develop a new action plan for the period 2019-2022.

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**II. Priority action area (b)**

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*Promoting the extension of education for sustainable development in teacher education and in the training of all educators*

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**1. Has there been any significant advancement made with regard introducing or extending ESD as a part of educators' initial training?**

Yes **X**

- *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*

The two main major Estonian universities have been prepared ESD in-service training programs in 2014-2015, have provided initial teachers' education programs, and organised these courses. Tallinn University has developed a separate structural unit that deals more deeply with sustainable development topics.

**2. Have there been any significant advances made with regard to introducing or extending ESD as a part of educators' in-service training?**

Yes **X**

- *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*

The Education Department of the Environmental Board has initiated the ESD in-service trainings for the teachers of the kindergartens in the regions.

NGO`s have provided systematic training to the Green Schools.

**3. Are beginning teachers who have been in teacher education that has introduced ESD more likely to teach from a sustainability perspective?**

Yes **X**

- *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.*

Initial teacher education is provided by Estonian universities and professional higher education institutions develop professional and didactical competency of teachers` of all levels to implement National Curriculum cross-curriculum topics including the topic of sustainable development.

**4. Are there any recently produced materials or resources that are accessible to a wider audience (e.g., online)?**

Yes **X**

- *Please specify and, if applicable, indicate the language and website address*

See chapter I.4

The web portal "Environmental education" [www.keskkonnaharidus.ee](http://www.keskkonnaharidus.ee), which describes a lot of educational programs and materials.

**5. Have you implemented or are you planning to implement any assessments or evaluations that will measure the impact of the actions taken to date in this area?**

Yes **X**

- *Please specify*

See chapter I.5

- *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*

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**6. Additional comments on implementing UNECE Strategy for ESD in your**

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**country (please specify, if any):**

See chapter I.6. The promoting the extension of education for sustainable development in teacher education and in the training of all educators is a priority of the memorandum of common actions in the field of EE and ESD signed in 2017 by the ministers of the MoER and MoE.

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**III. Priority action area (c)**

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**1. Has there been advancement towards a structural reorientation of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) towards ESD?**

Yes **X**

- 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

In 2016 Sagadi Nature School organised the ESD in-service training for teams of association of VET schools

**2. Have any incentives and assistance measures been made available that support the reorientation of TVET towards sustainable development?**

Yes **X**

- 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

The European Social Fund (ESF) money are used to support the development of vocational education through various programs and projects in Estonia. We have special measures and programmes, form of studies for developing VET that meets the needs of the labour market.

**3. Are students who have been in TVET oriented to sustainable development finding jobs related to sustainable development?**

Yes **X**

- 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

Many courses are related to heritage culture, nature tourism, rural tourism. Young people graduated these courses go for work to the environmental education centers and different institutions connected with green economy.

**4. Are there any recently produced materials or resources that are accessible to a wider audience (e.g., online)?**

Yes **X**

- Please specify and, if applicable, indicate the language and website address

See chapter I.4

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**5. Have you implemented or are you planning to implement any assessments**

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**or evaluations that will measure the impact of the actions taken to date in this area?**

No X

- 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

**6. Additional comments on implementing UNECE Strategy for ESD in your country (please specify, if any):**

See chapter I.6. The promoting the education for sustainable development and green-economy in VET schools is a priority of the memorandum of common actions in the field of EE and ESD signed in 2017 by the ministers of the MoER and MoE.

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**IV. Monitoring SDG 4 (Targets 4.7 and 4.a)**

*SDG 4: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"*

*Target 4.7: "By 2030, ensure that 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."*

*Target 4.a: "Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all"*

(Note: According the UNESCO methodology (see report "Historical efforts to implement the UNESCO 1974 Recommendation on Education in light of 3 SDGs Targets, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002472/247275E.pdf>), the agreed global indicator measures the extent to which (i) global citizenship and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment.)

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**1. Does your country have a stand- alone "sustainable development", "global understanding", "international understanding" policy/plan/law in place, all of them using "sustainable development" language?**

Yes X

- 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

- Estonian sustainable development principles have determined in the National Strategy on Sustainable Development "Sustainable Estonia 21". [https://riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/estonia\\_sds\\_2005.pdf](https://riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/estonia_sds_2005.pdf)

The strategy basics are derived from the Law on Sustainable Development adopted by the Riigikogu in 1995. This Act sets out regulations on sustainable use of natural environment and natural resources. The National Strategy on Sustainable Development "Sustainable Estonia 21" was completed under the coordination of the Ministry of the Environment in 2005. This constitutes as a strategy for developing the Estonian state and society until 2030. The aim of the strategy is to combine the requirements for success arising from global competition with the preservation of the sustainable development principles and Estonia's traditional values.

The Government of the Republic of Estonia have established the [Commission for](#)

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**Sustainable Development** in 1996. The main task of the Commission for Sustainable Development is to monitor the implementation of the Estonia's Strategy on Sustainable Development and publish appropriate reports, including making relevant proposals to the Government of the Republic to ensure the national long-term sustainable development.

- The Estonian Research and Development and Innovation Strategy „Knowledge-based Estonia 2014-2020“ [http://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/estonian\\_rdi\\_strategy\\_2014-2020\\_en.doc](http://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/estonian_rdi_strategy_2014-2020_en.doc) (approved by the Parliament 2014). Strategy focuses on sustainable development of the society by means of research and development, and innovation. It contributes to achievement of the goals of Estonia's long-term development strategy “Sustainable Estonia 21” as well as the Lisbon Strategy (the strategy for growth and jobs).

**The Estonian review on implementation of the Agenda 2030** gives information on the progress and status of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Estonia**. It describes the main measures and plans for implementation of 17 Sustainable Development Goals by government and non-government organizations. [https://riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/SA\\_eesti/2016\\_06\\_30\\_review\\_on\\_the\\_implementation\\_of\\_2030\\_agenda\\_in\\_estonia\\_final\\_english.pdf](https://riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/SA_eesti/2016_06_30_review_on_the_implementation_of_2030_agenda_in_estonia_final_english.pdf)

**2. Is ESD reflected in your country's current education policy/ies and frameworks?**

Yes **X**

- *Please specify to what extent*
- *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*

Estonian “Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020” [http://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/estonian\\_lifelong\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/estonian_lifelong_strategy.pdf) (created by the MoER and approved by the Parliament 2014). The strategy guides the most important developments in the area of education, including sustainability.

In 2017, the Minister of Education and Research (MoER) and the Minister of the Environment (MoE) signed a Joint Action Memorandum, the aim of which is to shape through the education responsible citizens who value the environment and ESD. The development of an action plan for the EE and ESD Minister of Education and Environment started in February 2018 and will be signed by minister in October 2018.

**3. Is ESD reflected in your country's current school curricula?**

Yes **X**

- *Please specify to what extent*
- *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*

The ESD was incorporated in the Estonian National Curriculum for Basic Schools and Upper-Secondary Schools in 2002. The cross-curricular topic “Environment and sustainable development” is presented in the Estonian National Curriculum for Basic Schools and Estonian National Curriculum for Gymnasiums as a common topic to all subjects to our basic and secondary education. Primary, lower and upper-secondary education institutions should develop school curriculum on the point of ESD, integrate the principles of sustainable development in educational policy, everyday practices and lesson plans. In a school context, this requires the active participation of school leaders, teachers, pupils, the school board, parents, and the local community.

At the school level the EE and the ESD education may be implemented through the

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structure of the learning environment, subject study and collaboration with regional institutions and enterprises, other educational and cultural institutions and civic associations.

Estonia has a fairly dense network of nature and EE centres. The centres offer extra-curricular activities for students and non-formal education opportunities and self-development activities for adults. Total number of students is 147 849 in Estonia in schoolyear 2017/2018. We have 130 nature or EE centres in Estonia. This means that one centre per ~1000 pupils. 39 of centres are state own, 40 municipal and ~ 50 NGOs.

In the financial period from 2007–2013/2015 the measure: “Development of the infrastructure of environmental education” with 22.3 million euros by the European Regional Development Fund was used in the EE and ESD . Five modern buildings for environmental education centres were constructed and 18 were renovated under the measure “Development of the infrastructure of environmental education”. 29 Twenty-nine centres were provided with new equipment and exhibitions.

**4. Is ESD reflected in the curriculum of pre-service and/or in-service teacher training?**

Yes **X**

- *Please specify to what extent*

See chapter II.1; II.2 and II.3

**5. Which of the following dimensions of learning is your country planning to reinforce in student assessment/examinations in the next five years, in relation to ESD? (please tick all that apply)**

(a) Knowledge

Yes **X**

- *Please specify*

This OECD Learning Framework 2030 offers a vision and some underpinning principles for the future of education systems. Societies are changing rapidly. A first challenge is environmental and a second challenge is economic. Estonia have initiated the process of redesigning curriculum to prepare young people more effectively for the future in the beginning of 2018. We are planning to reduce curriculum overload and shift the focus from ‘more learning’ to ‘deeper learning’, to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable young people to contribute to and benefit from an inclusive and sustainable future. Ongoing work is undertaken in the context of the OECD Future of Education and Skills: Education 2030. Our priority is teaching, Learning and Assessing Creative and Critical Thinking Skills

The teachers use the **assessment tool of the ESD** (<https://www.curriculum.ut.ee/et/labivad-teemad/keskkond>, in Estonian, compiled by the University of Tartu in 2015 with MoER budget)

(b) Skills and competencies

Yes **X**

- *Please specify*

The same as in the previous paragraph

(c) Values and attitudes

Yes **X**

- *Please specify*
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The same as in the first paragraph

(d) Behaviours

Yes **X**

• *Please specify*

The same as in the first paragraph

(e) None

No **X**

• *Please specify*

(f) No information available

No **X**

• *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*

**6. Are the other core elements of the Target 4.7 part of education in your country?**

– Sustainable lifestyles

Yes **X**

– Human rights

Yes **X**

– Gender equality

– Yes **X**

– Promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence

Yes **X**

– Global citizenship

Yes **X**

– Appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

Yes **X**

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*

Estonian Statistics Office has conducted an initial overview of 231 global sustainable development indicators and approximately 14% of the indicators are measurable right now. The renewal of sustainable development indicators was started in 2016. The aim is to include indicators that help to measure achievements in the fields of SDG-s.

The priorities of Estonian development cooperation are:

1) supporting the quality of education,

2) supporting the development of health care,

3) guaranteeing peace and stability,

4) supporting the development of democracy, introduction of good governance practices and guaranteeing human rights,

5) promoting economic development,

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6) fostering environmentally friendly development,

7) raising awareness in the Estonian public, particularly younger generations, concerning development cooperation and humanitarian aid, as well as global development problems.

Among the OECD countries Estonia has the best opportunities for getting an education (considering the social and economic context). Estonia has a high-quality educational system and the proportion of students in general education is high. The indicators of Estonian students in secondary education rank as some of the highest in Europe and are in constant development (*OECD School resources of Estonia review*). In Estonia education (including higher education) is equally accessible to men and women.

The goal of the Government of Estonia is to create learning opportunities for all Estonian people, based on their needs and capacities, throughout their lifetimes in order to guarantee them possibilities for dignified personal fulfilment in society, at work and in family life. It is also important to guarantee internationally competitive education. For this purpose, an important priority is competent and motivated teachers and school leaders.

**7. Additional comments on implementing SDG Goal 4.7 in your country (please specify, if any):**

**Estonia implements SDG Goal 4.7** Target is ensure all learners acquire 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

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**8. Is Target 4.a (see above) part of education policy in your country?**

Yes **X**

- *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*

[See the previous paragraph](#)

**9. Is climate change education/environmental awareness mandatory at any level of education in your country?**

Yes **X**

- *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*

[See the paragraph above](#)

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