'Education for Sustainability'

The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland

Report of Interim Review

and

Action Plan for Q4 2018-Q4 2020

Contents

Foreword

The Department's *'Education for Sustainability' The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland 2014 2020* is one of the key strategies underpinning the *Action Plan for Education* 2016-2019. Since the publication of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, the Government in recognising the need to share in the international responsibility to address the increasingly global challenges we face, launched *The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018-2030*, a whole-of-Government initiative to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. This is informed by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Many complementary themes can be identified between the Government's National Implementation Plan for SDGs and the Education for Sustainable Development Action Plan Q4 2018-Q4 2020 in, for instance, areas such as awareness raising and sustainability in action.

This Report of the interim review reflects consultation with stakeholders. The Report provides evidence of the considerable progress that has been achieved in raising awareness about and embedding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) principles and practices at all levels in our education system. A key learning from the review process is the importance of all stakeholders actively and collaboratively contributing to the realisation of the Recommendations set out in the National Strategy on ESD. This is particularly apparent in the area of curriculum development at different levels: take for instance the *Aistear-Síolta Initiative*, the recently launched *First 5*, the introduction of Politics and Society in the curriculum at senior cycle in post-primary schools and the embedding of ESD principles in initial teacher education and further education programmes.

Building on progress to date, Education for Sustainable Education Action Plan Q4 2018-Q4 2020 sets out clear actions for all stakeholders to support the implementation for the National Strategy in the next phase. Building links with the community, enhancing ESD leadership in schools and in the community more generally and the further promotion of the active participation by young people, our global citizens of the future, will be a particular strength in working towards a more sustainable future for all.

I am proud of what has been achieved to date and acknowledge the contributions of all our partners in this worthwhile initiative that impacts on us, our children and future generations. I believe that we can achieve the actions set out in the Action Plan to 2020 by working together in innovative ways and achieve positive change.

Joe McHugh T.D.
Minister for Education and Skills
November 2018

Introduction

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) launched 'Education for Sustainability', *the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development* in Ireland, 2014-2020 in July 2014. This strategy was primarily influenced by the national strategy on sustainable development, *Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland* (hereafter referred to as *Our Sustainable Future*), published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in 2012. 'Education for Sustainability' aims to ensure that education contributes to sustainable development by equipping learners with the relevant knowledge (the 'what'), the key dispositions and skills (the 'how') and the values (the 'why') that will motivate and empower them throughout their lives to become informed active citizens who take action for a more sustainable future. The full strategy is available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/National-Strategy-on-Education-for-Sustainable-Development-in-Ireland-2014-2020.pdf .

'Our Sustainable Future' also identified three key policy areas that Education for Sustainable Education (ESD)[1] should focus on:
- environmental issues (climate change; disaster risk reduction; biodiversity; environmental protection; natural resource management; urban decay; water security),
- socio-economic issues (economic growth; poverty; food prices; child labour; social exclusion; justice; debt-security; human rights; health; gender equity; cultural diversity; production and consumption patterns; corporate responsibility; population growth; migration) and
- 'political' issues (citizenship; peace; ethics; human rights; democracy and governance)

These areas were informed by international guidance and practice too, including policy documents from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) *Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development* (UNECE, 2005, 2009), the EU Council conclusions on Education for Sustainable Development 2010, and UNESCO's *Education for Sustainable Development – The Global Action Programme after 2014*.

'Education for Sustainability' identified eight priority action areas which are considered to be key leverage points to advance the ESD agenda in Ireland:
- Leadership and coordination
- Data collection and baseline measurement
- Curriculum at pre-school, primary and post primary
- Professional development
- Further Education and Training
- Higher Education and Research
- Promoting participation by young people
- Sustainability in action.

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[1] A list of abbreviations is available in Appendix 1

In 2014, the DES established an Advisory Group to inform the implementation of each of the recommendations identified the Strategy. This report on the Review sets out the progress to date and the key actors involved. Arising from the extensive consultation that was conducted as part of the review process, an Action Plan for implementation from Q4 2018- Q4 2020 has been developed.

Structure of the report

Section 1 of the report provides a brief overview of the review process.

Section 2 presents an update on each of the recommendations in each of the eight action areas identified in the ESD Strategy.

Section 3 sets out stakeholders' feedback which informed future actions as set out in the ESD Action Plan for Q4 2018- Q4 2020.

Section 4 presents the ESD Action Plan for Q4 2018- Q4 2020.

SECTION 1: The Review of *Education for Sustainability*

As set out in *The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland 2014-2020*, the DES led a review of *Education for Sustainability* in 2017. The review had a three-fold purpose:

- to identify what progress has happened under *Education for Sustainability* and what challenges have been encountered;
- to identify how *Education for Sustainability* can be enhanced further up to 2020, and
- to lay the groundwork for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), across the education system, by 2030.

Methodology

The review process involved
- interviews and meetings with many of the named agencies and DES sections with responsibility for recommendations in one or more of the eight priority action areas
- meetings of the Advisory Group
- a focus on review of 'Education for Sustainability' at the 2017 National Forum; and
- online invitations to Forum attendees, Advisory Group members and to the general public to contribute to the process.

The review process also took account of key national and international developments in approaches to ESD since 2014. *Education for Sustainability* must remain flexible and open to continually being informed by international developments in areas such as environmental concerns, human rights, equality and citizenship. For instance, the work of the Council of Europe on developing its *Competences for Democratic Culture – Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies* (2016) and European Union projects will be important tools in progressing related recommendations. The international development which has had greatest impact in defining current and future directions for Education for Sustainable Development are the 2015 United Nations SDGs. The need to ensure considerable linkage with and the promotion of the United Nations SDGs were a key driver during the review process and informing actions for 2018-2020. The DES welcomes the ESD Strategy being identified as a key policy document informing the development and work of the National Implementation Plan for the SDGs, coordinated by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE).

SECTION 2 Priority Actions – Update on progress

This section of the report presents progress to date on each of the recommendations in each of the Priority Action areas identified in the Strategy. It also situates developments and challenges in broader ESD national and international context, as relevant.

Priority Action 1. Leadership and coordination

Recommendation	Responsible	Progress
1. An Education for Sustainable Development Advisory Group should be established by the Department of Education and Skills in 2014.	DES	- An Advisory Group consisting of representatives of approximately 14 bodies was established in 2015. - Since 2015, the Advisory Group has met in plenary format approximately twice a year: the most recent meeting of the Advisory Group was held on 17th September 2018. - The Advisory Group has advised on organising national fora and contributed significantly to the mid-term review of the implementation of Education for Sustainability. - Three annual fora have been organised, the most recent being in November 2017. The 2016 Forum placed a strong emphasis on gaining the views of children and young people on ESD, and on linking to the SDGs in the coming years. This was built on in November 2017, where t forum was addressed by the Minister for Education and Skills.
2. The D/Education and Skills should be formally represented on key structures representing Development Education in Ireland, under the aegis of the D/Foreign Affairs and Trade, including the World Wise Global Schools Programme which aims to coordinate Development Education activities at post primary level, and on	DES / DFAT	- The DES is represented on key Development Education (DE) structures including World Wise Global Schools (WWGS), Irish Aid grants committee, External Reference Group for Development Education Strategy. - The DES has also met with and/or supported the work of GENE, GLOBE, ECO-UNESCO, SEAI, Ubuntu Network, IDEA and Green Foundation Ireland as opportunities have arisen. - While it is not feasible for the DES to engage with every possible organisation, agency and non-governmental organisation working in what is a very disparate set of fields, the DES has maintained a genuine and practical commitment to the work of those involved in DE. - During the period 2014-2017, Irish Aid contributed over €11m towards the delivery of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programmes and projects in Ireland, including those related to ESD. This funding was provided through the strategic partnerships established by Irish Aid in key areas and also through the annual grant scheme. - WWGS trained 880 post-primary teachers in 2016-2017 and 806 in 2017-2018. 300 post-primary schools received in-school support from WWGS from 2016-2018.

the Irish Aid grants committee. Opportunities for advancing Education for Sustainable Development should seek to build synergies with Development Education where this is appropriate.		
3. The Department of Education and Skills will provide a specific ESD portal on its website, or on the website of one of its agencies, in 2014. This portal should: comprise a platform for coordinating and sharing ideas and resources on ESD; and contain information about the work of the Advisory Group on ESD (recommendation 1).	DES	• Funding of €20,000 for this action was secured through the *Ireland 2016* educational programme. Following discussion, it was decided to use the available funding to promote ESD through Scoilnet. • A hub for ESD resources on Scoilnet has been developed and currently has over 250 resources related to ESD. This can be found at: https://www.scoilnet.ie/esd/. • The resources are across levels and subjects, including a Directory of NGOs and agencies providing resources, a guide to Politics and Society and a range of ideas and resources for use in primary and post-primary contexts. The hub has also been given a significant visual branding, using the 17 SDGs as its banner, and currently featuring the key presentations from the 2017 Forum on ESD. The Professional Development Service for Teachers (Technology in Education) has been key in progressing this recommendation.

Priority Action 2. Data collection and baseline measurement

Recommendation	Responsible	Current position
4. The Department of Education and Skills should incorporate a specific section on sustainable development in the questionnaire that will issue to primary and post primary schools for the 2015 Lifeskills survey. The results of the 2015 survey, which will be published by the Department of Education and Skills, should help to inform future policy making in this area.	DES	• 2015 was the first year that ESD questions were included in the Lifeskills questionnaire. The full report is found at: *https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/.../Lifeskills%20Survey%202015.pdf*. Among key findings of the report, published in 2017, are: **Primary:** - 89% of primary school leaders indicated that their pupils were supported to develop the relevant knowledge and skills - 71% of respondents indicated that teachers were adequately prepared to support pupils in developing the knowledge, skills and dispositions to make sustainable choices - 54% of schools reflect ESD in their school plan - 85% of schools stated that they monitor their energy efficiency - 99% encourage their pupils and teachers to reduce energy usage - 98% said they are actively seeking to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. The main obstacle identified was the lack of time. It encompassed a feeling that the curriculum was already overloaded. **Post Primary:** - 52% of schools reported that they were familiar with the *National Strategy on ESD, 2014-2020* - 76% of schools reported that their students are given the relevant knowledge, skills and dispositions required to make sustainable choices - 55% of schools reported that their teachers are adequately prepared to support students in the development of the knowledge and skills required to make sustainable choices - The most common way for ESD to be taught was felt to be through specific curriculum areas such as Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE). This was followed by project activities or awards schemes. While 45% of schools stated that they reflect sustainable development in their school plan, performance is stronger in different initiatives around the school:

		- 88% of schools reported that energy usage is monitored in their school - 96% stated that students and teachers are encouraged to reduce energy usage - 90% reported that their school works to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill - 86% stated that they encourage students and teachers to avoid wasting water; and - 80% of schools reported that they monitor their water usage. The main challenges reported by schools to the promotion of sustainable development are time pressures, lack of funding or budgetary pressures and a heavy curriculum.

Priority Action 3. Curriculum at pre-school, primary and post primary

5. The Department of Education and Skills should continue to work with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to ensure that Aistear and Síolta, which have the potential to contribute to ESD in the pre-school sector, are mainstreamed into all early years settings.	DES / DCYA	- The National *Síolta – Aistear* Initiative (NSAI) was established in 2016 to support the ongoing coordinated rollout of *Síolta*, and Aistear Frameworks and the *Aistear Síolta* Practice Guide. ESD principles are embedded in Síiolta and Aistear. It is funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and is being developed in collaboration with the DES. The NSAI is overseen by a steering committee from the DCYA, DES and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). To date 67 individuals have been trained by the Early Years Education Policy Unit (EYEPU) as *Síolta Aistear* Mentors. - A revision of the *Síolta* resources was completed in May 2017 and most mentors began implementing *Síolta* from September 2017. DES and the NCCA undertook a review of the *Aistear* continuing professional development (CPD) content which incorporated recommendations from the evaluation of the pilot Aistear CPD carried out in 2017. The revised content was completed in April 2018. Consultation with the Early Years sector, to inform future planning for the NSAI model, was completed in June 2018. Findings of the review and the new model for delivery was published in August 2018. - The NSAI is aided by the provision of a second free preschool year in 2016, a particularly important step towards the full embedding of *Aistear* and *Síolta*. In 2018 the DES continues to provide ongoing supports to the DCYA's Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) to empower service providers in delivering an inclusive pre-school experience, ensuring that every child can fully participate in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programmes. The DES informs the development and review of AIM content and resources in line with the *Síolta* and *Aistear* frameworks.

6. The NCCA to audit, from a sustainable development perspective, the primary and post primary curricula by 2017. The audit should identify opportunities for building on existing practice and identify potential linkages between different subject areas. The results of the audit be published by DES	DES / NCCA	• The NCCA conducted an audit in 2017 as part of its Plan of Work in the second half of that year. The NCCA has advised that as 'Education for Sustainability' has a specific end-date (2020) and might experience a change of name at some point, it will not be referenced in existing or new curricular documents, but all specifications will take clear account of how ESD fits into the different subject areas. The NCCA presented on the draft findings of the Audit at the ESD Forum on 15th November 2017. • The audit looked across early childhood, primary, post primary and Special Education Needs curricula. It also identified key ways in which the curriculum supports the SDGs. More details are supplied under Recommendation 8 below, and the full audit is available at the link: https://www.ncca.ie/en/resources/education-for-sustainable-development-a-study-of-the-opportunities-and-linkages-in-the-primary-and-post-primary-curriculum
7. The DES and NCCA should ensure that ESD principles are integrated into all relevant primary and post primary curriculum areas as the curriculum is reviewed, where this is appropriate. This includes the primary school curriculum, the new specifications for the Junior Cycle Student Award, and the senior cycle curriculum	DES / NCCA	The following is a synopsis of key aspects emerging from the NCCA audit of the primary and post-primary curricula. **Early-Childhood – Primary** • The New Primary Language Curriculum (Junior Infants-2nd Class) is a significant development, as language is the tool that allows other learning to be accessed. As such it is foundational to children's entire learning experience. Therefore, in the early years of the primary school the strong emphasis on oral language development is crucial in providing children with the opportunity to learn about the world in which they live and how they can make a positive contribution to it. • The NCCA has begun a process in which the entire primary school curriculum is undergoing comprehensive review and redevelopment. January to June 2017 saw an extensive consultation on two sets of proposals related to the future redevelopment of the Primary School Curriculum. This was the first time, in almost twenty years, that those working in primary education had an opportunity to consider the structure of the curriculum, what it should comprise and how time should be allocated within it. The NCCA will engage in further review, research and engagement with concepts of education such as citizenship education, values educations and ESD. The Final Report is available here: https://www.ncca.ie/media/3242/primary-developments_consultaion-on-curriculum-structure-and-time_final-report.pdf

- As part of the primary school curriculum review the NCCA is exploring how teaching and learning related to Education about Religions and Beliefs (ERB) and Ethics can be integrated into a redeveloped curriculum. This work will scope out how ethical learning, questions of rights, justice and equality; and learning about the diversities in our communities will be incorporated in a future curriculum. In the meantime, the NCCA is working with a network of schools to gather related examples of practice and to share these online.

Junior Cycle (subject specifications)
To date, specific course content on sustainable development is integrated into several subjects:
- A number of learning outcomes for each of the strands in Science refer directly to sustainability.
- Sustainability is a core theme of the cross-cutting element "Exploring Business" in the new Business Studies specification. This means that sustainability is embedded across the three strands of Personal Finance, Enterprise and Our Economy.
- Sustainable development is a core theme in Geography. One of the three cross-cutting elements is entitled Sustainability. Students will experience the learning outcomes through the lens of considering sustainable approaches towards meeting the current and future needs of society and the environment
- Sustainable and responsible living is a cross cutting theme across the three strands of the Home Economics specification. It address issues of sustainability, waste management, energy efficiency.
- Music allows students to consider the aesthetic value of human achievement and creativity and enhances students' awareness of diversity and difference in the world.
- English allows students opportunities to engage, through creative expression and through engagement with literature and texts, with responses to the natural world, to change in the world and how they see it, thereby facilitating meaningful reflection on aspects of ESD.
- The History specification emphasises the importance of enabling students to appreciate the impact of human actions in shaping the world they live in, including the impact of social, economic and environmental forces. History facilitates students to develop their appreciation of diversity and difference.
- One of the five cross-cutting elements in Visual Art, visual culture and appreciation, enables students to think critically about the world through looking, responding and creating, gaining a deeper appreciation of human achievement.
- In Modern Foreign Languages and Gaeilge specifications, the element socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness gives students access to new cultural dimensions and encourages them to

reflect on their own culture. The elements of this strand develop students' knowledge of the countries and cultures related to the target languages.

- Currently, the T4 technology subjects are being developed, as are Religious Education, Classical Studies and Jewish Studies. In each case, principles of ESD are considered as part of the development process as appropriate to the subject contexts.
- Mathematics (under review) enables students to be integrated problem solvers and think critically.

Junior Cycle Short courses

- The new CSPE short course has three strands one of which is Global Citizenship and includes Sustainability, Local and Global Development and Effecting Global Change.
- In addition, the NCCA has published Wellbeing guidelines. Wellbeing includes social, emotional, physical, spiritual, intellectual and environmental aspects. Learning in Wellbeing focuses on the students' journey across all aspects of wellbeing. The six indicators of wellbeing are [students being]: aware, responsible, connected, resilient, respected and active and these relate to the ESD principles.

Senior Cycle

As new specifications are being developed, ESD content and/or principles are being integrated.

- In Agricultural Science, sustainability and the environment is one of the crosscutting themes in the four strands of the specification: scientific practices, soils, grass and other crops, and animals. By linking and integrating the learning across the four strands, the interdependence of the scientific, economic and social dimensions of Agricultural Science is reinforced. By considering the impact of human activity and the importance of responsible management in relation to soils (Section 2.3), crops (Section3.3) and animals (Section 4.3), learners develop awareness of the need for sustainable development and use of natural resources at local, national and global levels.
- In the Economics specification, economic social and environmental sustainability is one of three units in the core strand "what is economics about?" Sustainable Development content is embedded in this unit and examined further through subsequent strands through the lens of economic growth and development, its impacts on people and the environment, inequality and how economic development should safeguard future generations.
- Leaving Certificate Physical Education emphasises the importance of physical activity as part of a fulfilling and healthy lifestyle.

		• In Computer Science, students engage with skills and concepts to better understand phenomena in the world around them and also explore the ethical implications of computer science and the impact of computer technology on the world. • The review of senior cycle education more generally is being planned and will help identify opportunities to embed ESD content and principles throughout senior cycle education. This has been done to date, particularly in relevant subjects like Politics and Society (See Recommendation 10 below).
8. The Department of Education and Skills should work with the Department of the Taoiseach to support the expansion of the Blue Star programme at primary level and to explore the potential for introducing a similar programme at post primary level.	DES / Dept of Taoiseach	The DES continues to support promotion of Blue Star by distributing invitations to all schools to participate. • During the 2017/2018 academic year (Year 7 of its operation), the Blue Star Programme had 283 schools registered with every county represented. This included 85 repeat schools and 198 first time schools, with approximately 110 VIP visits occurring. Over 1,000 schools registered and some 90,000 pupils participated in years 1-7 • In the first three years of the Programme there were 238 registrations in total, and 521 registrations in the next three years of the Programme; an increase of 283 schools. • For Year 8 of the Programme (2018-2019) 238 schools registered (running total 1,279 schools) and, once again, every county was represented. • The Blue Star Programme was implemented by European Movement Ireland for Year 6 and 7 on behalf of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Office of the Minister of State for European Affairs.
9. The NCCA to support schools, NGOs, and other stakeholders who wish to develop Junior Cycle short courses or Transition Units on issues relevant to ESD; and promote awareness of existing materials that have already been developed.	NCCA	• Support is available for those wishing to develop both short courses and Transition Units in the area of sustainable development. Materials are available for short courses at: www.ncca.ie/juniorcycle/shortcourses. These include guidelines and sample courses. • NCCA met with IDEA/CEN as a group and briefed them on the process. • There is some limited evidence of development of short courses, including one on Ethical Education (Educate Together) which includes the topic of the SDGs amongst a wide range of other topics. • Support materials are also available for developing Transition Units via ncca.ie at this link. Sample Transitions Units are available in areas such as 'global development issues', 'debating development' 'how the world works', 'setting up a green school' and 'environmental studies'.

10. 'Politics and Society' should be introduced as a new Leaving Certificate subject when the NCCA has provided advice to the Minister for Education and Skills on a number of technical issues.	DES / NCCA	• Leaving Certificate Politics and Society was introduced to schools from September 2016 on a phased basis. 41 schools introduced the subject in the first phase. ESD is a core part of this curriculum specification, especially in Topics 7 and 8 which focus on Globalization and Sustainability. • 867 students sat the Leaving Certificate in Politics and Society in June 2018. • Since September 2018 the subject has been available to all schools. • Circular 59/2017 announced the nationwide availability of the subject and of training for interested teachers, for Phase Two, commencing in autumn 2018. Subject teachers have now established their own teacher professional network/association, the Politics and Society Teachers Association of Ireland.

Priority Action 4. Professional development

11. The D/Education and Skills to consider the extent to which the teaching of ESD is comprehended within existing early childhood care and education programmes in any future review of qualifications that is undertaken in this area.	DES	• A working group was established in June 2017 by the Early Years Education Policy Unit (EYEPU) to lead the development of professional award criteria and guidelines to inform the development and review of ordinary and honours level degrees (Level 7 and Level 8) programmes in Early Childhood Education and Care in Ireland • Draft criteria and guidelines for undergraduate professional awards in Early Childhood Education and Care were developed by an expert group in 2017 (chaired by DES) and an extensive consultation process took place in 2018. A report of the consultation was published in June 2018 and the Criteria and Guidelines are now finalised.
12. The Department of Education and Skills should ascertain the extent to which the teaching of Education for Sustainable Development is comprehended within existing criteria for accreditation of ITE programmes.	DES / Teaching Council	The Teaching Council *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers* includes a mandatory element on citizenship, creativity, inclusion and diversity: • Learning Outcome 3.1: Subject Knowledge and Curriculum Process and Content on 'cross cutting links and themes including citizenship, creativity, inclusion and diversity, personal, social and health education… and how these are related to life experiences… • Learning Outcome 3.1: Knowledge of Education and the Education system on 'the nature and purposes of education and the social and policy contexts in which the aims of education are defined and implemented' • Learning Outcome 3.2: Analytical, critical thinking, problem solving, reflection and self-evaluation There are many areas where teacher education providers are already actively engaged with the incorporation of ESD and/or the principles underpinning ESD. • In the initial teacher education (ITE) area, the principles of ESD are incorporated in many aspects of teacher training. The work of the DICE and Ubuntu Networks, supported by Irish Aid, has been very important in building a visible place for ESD in this space. • A number of ITEprogrammes include *Alternative Education Placements* and some of these involve overseas placements, some of which have DE as a key focus. Inclusion is one of the strategic national priorities

		identified by the Council in its *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education* its *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers* and in *Cosán*. • The Teaching Council is engaged in an Impact Consultation Exercise with stakeholders for Initial Teacher Education. ESD has featured in this process thus far, and will be considered in the subsequent review and accreditation of Teacher Education Programmes. ESD also features in other areas of the Teaching Council's work: • The *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers* (2012) states teachers shall 'promote equality' and 'in their professional practice, teachers demonstrate respect for spiritual and cultural values, diversity, social justice, freedom, democracy and the environment' Through this code, the Council recognises the civic and social value of education and the profound contribution that the teaching profession has made to the social, cultural and economic development of Ireland over many decades. It recognises the key role of teacher educators in ensuring the quality of teaching. It states that education, the teaching profession and the process of teacher education merit the active attention and support of State and the community. Regarding the DES's professional development support services, there are already examples of CPD designed and/or delivered in a way that contributes to the implementation of the ESD Strategy. This can be seen in: • the support provided for the implementation of new or revised curricula where ESD is a key feature (e.g. Politics and Society) • CPD that consciously seeks to include elements of ESD in its design and delivery (e.g. the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) STE(A)M elective CPD for science whose vision was informed by the publication Science Education for Responsible Global Citizenship (EU Commission 2015) • the design and delivery of CPD that promotes key principles of ESD, such as active learning.
13. The Education Centre Network should, in 2015, undertake a survey of current ESD related Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for	DES / Education Centres	The Association of Education Centres in Ireland is now promoting SEAI's monitoring and reporting workshops and hosting them, and is conscious of the need to track ESD course provision overall. Each summer a programme of DES approved summer courses is offered to teachers in Education Centres. • In 2017, a total of 274 courses was offered and there were 5,032 participants. • Courses with an ESD component/potential totalled 18, as follows Biodiversity in Schools; Creating an outdoor Garden; Educational Trails in Social Environmental and Science Education (SESE) in Dun Laoghaire; Healthy Eating /Healthy Lifestyle Choices (x 3); History Geography & Science in our Local Environment; Learn Through the Landscape-Connection Curriculum with the Outdoors; New Eyes to See Flora & Fauna (x2); Roots, Shoots,

teachers that is delivered through Education Centres. The Network should also use the opportunity to survey teachers about their training needs in relation to ESD. The results of these surveys will be used to inform future CPD provision for teachers in relation to ESD.		Trowels and Boots; Sharing: Nature, Heritage, Food Gardens and Sustainable Skills with Children; Studying Irish Habitats to Develop Skills in Literacy and Numeracy; Teaching in the Organic bio-diverse school garden; Teaching nature in our Local Place; Teaching Outside the Classroom: Primary Education in Nature; The Living Classroom learning through Organic gardening (x2). • A nationwide survey on ESD was carried out (to 29/01/18) as a collaboration between Association of Teachers/Education Centres in Ireland (ATECI), ASTI and TUI. The following are key findings, and are an important measure of the need for more cohesive awareness raising across the system: *Principals & Deputy Principals: (response = 138)* - Are you familiar with the DES strategy on ESD? 21.21% YES; 78.79% NO; (No of responses = 99) - If familiar with ESD Strategy, does your school make efforts to implement it? 8.7 % YES; 74.64% NO; (No of responses = 115) *Teachers: (response = 621)* - Are you familiar with the DES strategy on ESD? 7.93% YES; 92.07% NO; (No of responses = 517). -If familiar with ESD Strategy, does your school make efforts to implement it? 11.43% Yes; 67.63% NO; (No of responses = 420)
14. The D/ Education and Skills to provide a means for teachers to exchange views on best practice in relation to ESD in the classroom. This may be facilitated through the proposed ESD portal (cf Recommendation 2)	DES	• Work was carried out on developing a forum on Scoilnet for Politics and Society which had restricted access to only those teachers teaching the subject. However, teachers were preferring to communicate in a What's App group that they set up themselves. This has caused Scoilnet to re-think its approach. • A number of other networking opportunities are being provided and built on, including the work of teacher professional networks and bodies such as Global Citizenship School, ECO-UNESCO, WWGS, IDEA, Ubuntu Network and others.

Priority Action 5. Further Education and Training

15. The D/Education and Skills to continue to implement its commitments in *Our Sustainable Future* and other strategies that relate to the full spectrum of adult learners involved in full and part-time programmes in the Further Education and Training sector.	DES	The SOLAS Report on Sustainable Development in Further Education and Training (FET) makes recommendations on provision in the FET sector which will contribute towards implementing the DES commitments and targets in the document entitled *Our Sustainable Future.* The listed DES commitments and targets include: -*20% Targets for Climate; Energy; Renewables* (Annex 1 - Our Sustainable Future) -*Ensure Education and Training Provision is aligned with the Skills Requirements of the Green Economy* (Annex 2 Our Sustainable Future) -*Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development* (Annex 2 Our Sustainable Future). The SOLAS report makes specific recommendations on new lines of provision which will ensure -alignment with the skills needs of the Green Economy -improved geographical spread of provision -improved teaching staff capability within the sector -flexible delivery modes to suit the needs of a broader range of learners which include both full and part-time learners including those in employment.
16. The Further Education and Training sector should continue to respond to the identified needs of the green economy as identified through fora such as the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs.	DES / SOLAS / ETBs	• The FET Sector continues to provide a wide range of courses for the Green economy for learners. These include up skilling programmes in energy efficiency and renewable energy systems such as solar hot water systems, biomass heating, large scale wind turbine maintenance, passive house construction. • These courses will continue to be offered through ETB Further Education and Training (FET) colleges and training centres. • The need for sustainable energy knowledge and skills are a feature of a number of current apprenticeship programmes. The ongoing review of pre 2016 apprenticeships allows developments in energy efficiency and renewable energy systems required by relevant sectors to be incorporated into relevant apprenticeship programmes. • The Education and Training Boards (ETBs) continue to provide a number of courses on renewable energy or sustainable construction technologies. ETB Ballyfermot Training Centre offers courses in Air Tightness in Sustainable Construction, Air Tightness Testing & Measurement, Domestic Biomass Heating Installation, Energy in Buildings, Sustainable Water Use and Harvesting and Domestic Solar Hot Water Systems Installation.

17. In order to establish a baseline of ESD provision, SOLAS should be asked to report to the Department of Education and Skills in 2015 on the extent of current sustainable development related provision in the Further Education and Training sector. The report should contain recommendations on how to build on existing provision. The report should be considered by the ESD Advisory Group with a view to setting targets for the future and monitoring progress towards their achievement.	DES / SOLAS	• The Education for Sustainable Development in FET Report (March 2015) was developed in response to the DES request to SOLAS to report on the extent of current sustainable development related provision in the FET sector and to make recommendation on how to build on existing provision. The Report provides a definition of ESD in FET. It focused on the environmental aspect of ESD and it drew on extensive Irish and EU policy and research literature and was compiled with the active involvement and assistance of educators and trainers on ESD programmes in the FET sector.
		
		• The Report established the nature and extent of ESD in the FET sector in 2014/15. It also referred to other provision offered through private providers and third level. It also provided information and illustrated the range of facilities that were available for ESD education and training within ETBs. Seven FE colleges (located in Cork, Galway, Cavan and Dublin), two Dublin ETB training centres and two Momentum providers were visited as part of the research for this report.
		
		• The recommendations contained in this Report were targeted at contributing to the advancement of Ireland's commitment to reduce its energy targets by 20% by the year 2020. More specifically, it focused on developing a construction workforce ready for the challenge of achieving near zero carbon buildings.
		
		• The Report's key recommendations related to capacity building and improvements to provision.
		
		• ETBI reports (March 2018) that there are currently in excess of 360 full-time and part-time FET courses in progress and available to learners that address the green economy across all ETBs and FET provision including:
		  • CAD with Architectural Design for Green Building
		  • Horticulture with Eco-Tourism
		  • Ecology & Environmental Management
		  • Ecology – Conservation & Sustainable Development
		  • Construction Technology with Renewable Energy Systems.

Priority Action 6. Higher Education and Research

18. The HEA to be asked to report to D/Education and Skills by 2016 on the extent of current sustainable development related provision in third level institutions. The report should be considered by the ESD Advisory Group to set targets for the future and monitor progress.	DES / HEA	• The Higher Education Authority (HEA) has identified over 90 courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level (2016/2017 academic year) that consider sustainable development. • In addition to the identified courses there are many courses with compulsory and elective modules that consider sustainable development. • In 2015 (19/10/2015) on QualifaX: Ireland's National Learners' Database a search identified University courses with sustainable in the title: 20 courses and Institute of Technology courses with *sustainable* in the title: 29 • In 2017 (09/08/2017) on QualifaX: Ireland's National Learners' Database a search identical to the 2015 search identified 24 University courses with sustainable in the title and 27 in the case of Institute of Technology courses. • Recommendation 19 will further the introduction of sustainable development principles into academic courses.
19. Higher Education Institutions should seek to introduce more undergraduate and post-graduate programmes that are relevant to sustainable development. They should also explore the potential for introducing	DES / HEA / 3rd level instit ution s	There have been initial discussions between DES and HEA on this recommendation. • Sustainable development initiatives are implemented from areas as diverse as raw material sourcing through sustainable design to waste reduction. • Training is also provided in developing countries. Sustainable development collaborative research is undertaken. Following the presentation it is intended that President's will be clearer on the practicalities of embedding ESD in academic courses.

principles of sustainable development into existing disciplines.		
20. The Higher Education Authority should be asked to report to the Department of Education and Skills on the research that is currently underway, or has been conducted in the past three years, in relation to sustainable development, and the results of this research should be made publicly available. This process could be supported by a forum to disseminate research findings	DES / HEA	• Details of publically funded research projects are available on www.rian.ie. • In addition to the *Rian* website, the Irish Research Council funds researchers at various stages of their careers in Priority Research Areas and under Horizon 2020 http://research.ie/awardees/. There are over 55 research projects listed when searching the database using the key word 'sustainable'. If other ESD-typical terms such as equality, human rights, etc. are searched for, the number of courses increases incrementally. The Irish Research Council manages the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) COFUND Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme entitled CAROLINE – 'Collaborative Research Fellowships for a Responsive and Innovative Europe' has attracted experienced researchers from various disciplines to conduct research relevant to the themes of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for shared economic prosperity, social development, and environmental protection. CAROLINE funded researchers under Call 1. http://research.ie/assets/uploads/2017/05/CAROLINE_call1 forweb_withabstract.pdf .
21 The D/Education and Skills should work with the Higher Education Authority to ensure that sustainable	DES / HEA	• Ireland has won a total of €475 million in competitive EU funding from the Horizon 2020 programme from 2014 to August 2017. • Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) accounted for some €254 million of the total. • The 14 Irish Research Priority Areas have gone through a refresh exercise led by DEBI and the sustainable development agenda has been an underpinning theme in the six proposed new priority theme areas: ICT;

development is one of the priority areas reflected in future calls for research programmes that are funded by the Department.		Manufacturing & Materials; Health and Wellbeing; Food; Energy Climate Action & Sustainability; and Services & Business Processes. • Irish researchers in HEIs will continue to submit proposals under these themes and the H2020 Work Programme for 2018-2020. • The H2020 2018-2020 Work Programme focuses efforts on fewer topics with bigger budgets, directly supporting the Commission's political priorities. Four Focus Areas represent a combined EU budget of €7 billion: The main priority area concerning SD is focus area (i) Building a low-carbon, climate resilient future. • One SDG is being very strongly mainstreamed into Irish Research and this is the Gender Equality Goal. In a major national initiative supported by the [Higher Education Authority](#), the Athena SWAN Charter was launched in Ireland in early 2015. By signing up to the Charter, each HEI is committing to advancing women's careers in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM). • The HEA's annual Strategic Dialogue process with the institutions takes account of gender equality. In November 2017, the Minister for Higher Education also announced a Task Force on addressing gender equality across the system.

22. Third level institutions should continue to seek collaborations with industry and other stakeholders through strategic clusters and centres of excellence for sustainable development. Any opportunities for international cooperation between academic institutions at EU level or beyond	DES / HEA / 3rd level instit ution s	• Researchers supported under CAROLINE (Recommendation 20 above) will gain inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary exposure. A key feature of the programme is collaboration between the academic sector, non-governmental organizations and international organizations. The scope of potential organizations for inter-sectoral collaboration in terms of their mission is intended to be broad, and will speak to one or more of the goals under Agenda 2030.
		• The report of the Expert Group Review of the Funding Model for Higher Education Institutes was published on 15th January 2018. A number of the recommendations which have been approved for implementation by the Minister for Education & Skills and Cabinet include the promotion of ESD initiatives. The new funding model will enable the Higher Education Sector to:
		  - embed lifelong learning at the heart of Irish higher education provision
		  - recognise and respond to the demographic challenges and changing patterns of student demand
		  - make access and innovation central to all institutional missions, including a new Innovation fund
		  - ensure that funding can be channelled effectively to support research and skills development
		  - reward institutions for delivering outcomes and impact.
		
		• In 2017 the DES provided €2.1m to promote Strategies for ESD in the Higher Education (HE) Sector.

should also be promoted.		• In line with the National Strategy for Sustainable Development the DES is liaising with the HE Sector and HEA to develop and recognise strategies, courses and educate students in the promotion of sustainable development. This is a once off funding allocation was distributed equally across all 24 institutes to promote and reward initiatives in ESD. • The Capital Appraisal Section at the DES Higher Education Section is considering and planning for educational initiatives proposed in the National Development Plan 2018-2027.

23. The Department of Education and Skills should continue to implement its commitments in relation to research and development that are contained in *Our Sustainable Future.*	DES	The Irish Research Council (IRC) contributing to the sustainability agenda:
		
		(i) Employer and enterprise facing programmes. Between 2012 and 2016, 25 energy related projects including Masters, PhD and Post Docs were funded. Projects funded in 2016 include: Reconciling Irish agricultural and environmental targets through the use of novel fertiliser formulations: impact on yield and nitrous oxide emissions (Teagasc/ BASF plc); Monitoring and Modelling Electric Fields and Currents in the Earth's Surface for Space Weather Applications (TCD / Met Éireann); High-rate anaerobic digestion as a core technology for sustainable treatment of municipal and low-strength industrial wastewaters.
		
		(ii) *Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme 2016:*
		The IRC Postgraduate Scholarship Programme offers scholarships for suitably qualified individuals to pursue a research master's or PhD, in any discipline, at eligible higher education institutions in Ireland. In addition, a number of targeted scholarships are offered in collaboration with its strategic funding partners.
		In 2015, the Irish Research Council partnered with the Environmental Protection Agency to fund five scholarships which commenced on 1 October 2016. These scholarships were linked to the pillars of the Environmental Protection Agency's Research Programme (2014-2020). Under the pillar of 'Sustainability: Health & Wellbeing', proposals were invited in the following areas:
		  - Evaluation and assessment of our natural capital
		  - Managing, protecting & restoring our natural capital
		  - Governance and behavioural changes.
		
		The IRC is a member of the Research Coordination Groups run by the EPA for Water and Sustainability. A range of scholarships relating to sustainability were also funded solely by the Irish Research Council under the 2016 programme, examples of which include:
		  - The application of Copernicus satellite-borne remote sensors to monitor coastal erosion and ecosystems in Ireland
		  - Structural health monitoring of offshore renewable energy devices

- Structure-activity relationships in porous metal oxide nanoparticles for environmental remediation
- Microbial processes mediating priming effects and the coupling of carbon and nitrogen cycling in soil
- Nano-sensors for food and environmental contaminant analysis.

(iii) Government of Ireland post-doctorate Fellow scheme
A range of projects related to promoting sustainability are funded under this scheme e.g. in 2016:
- The 'CloudForest' Project: Investigating future plant responses to changes in atmospheric [CO2] and hurricane intensity
- Futu-rye: Identification of key traits associated with increased yield and resilience in grasses under future climatic conditions.
- Evading decontamination strategies; Genetic mechanisms underpinning environmental persistence of food-borne pathogen Listeria monocytogenes and the effects of sub- effective decontamination treatments on bacterial evolution, virulence and pathogenicity.
- Novel Materials for Visible-Light Driven Redox-mediator- free Direct Z-scheme Solar Water Splitting
- Closing the knowledge gap on Irish kelp forest ecology

(iv) IRC New Foundations
The IRC 'New Foundations' scheme supports eligible researchers who intend to pursue research, networking and/or dissemination activities within and across the diversity of disciplines.

A project previously funded with its impact now coming to fruition was by Niamh Moore-Cherry, University College Dublin (2013/13), Greening as spatial politics: Interrogating temporary urbanism in a changing neoliberal environment. A key outcome of this project has been the decision by UCD to introduce an MSc in Urban Environment. The first intake of 6 students was in September 2016.

Projects that focused on sustainability that were awarded in 2016, commencing in January 2017 include:
- Mathematical Modelling of Nanoscale and Energy Technologies
- Peatlands in the 21st Century: trans-disciplinary perspectives on heritage, sustainability and 'wise use' of resources
- Combining Microscopy and Spectroscopy Techniques – Synergistic Approach to Designing Nanoclusters
- Developing a Cross-Border Research Network for Radon Research in Ireland.

The Council has been awarded funding by the European Commission under the Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions to co-fund a research fellowship scheme with international, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary

| | | mobility elements. The aims of the fellowships are to support suitable highly qualified experienced researchers in any discipline to conduct research relevant to the overarching theme of global sustainable development as set out under the United Nations SDG 2030 Agenda for shared economic prosperity, social development, and environmental protection while engaging in international collaboration with suitable NGOs or International Organisations (IOs). The scheme provides for two calls, each of them can fund up to 25 fellows. Nineteen fellowship were awarded under the first call. Research proposals are targeting a broad spectrum of SDGs. The Irish Research Council was also a member of the Energy Research Strategy Group (ERSG) established by the Department of Community Energy and Natural Resources. |

Priority Action 7. Promoting participation by young people

24The D/Education and Skills should implement where possible the actions and commitments relevant to its remit under the National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making (2014-2020)	DES	• A participation strategy was published in June 2015. In accordance with its commitments, DES engages in consultation with young people across a range of areas, from the Digital Strategy to STEM to ESD.
25The D/Education and Skills to encourage more primary schools in particular to establish student councils. It should also review the effectiveness of the existing student council model with a view to improving the involvement of primary and post primary students in the operation of their school. The expertise of the D/ Children and Youth Affairs in consulting young people may be utilised in review	DES / DCYA	• Section 27 of the Education Act, 1998 provides that students of post-primary schools may establish a student council and that the board of management shall encourage the establishment by students of a student council and shall facilitate and give all reasonable assistance to students who wish to establish a student council and to student councils when they have been established. The Act also provides that a board of management of a post-primary school shall draw up rules for the establishment of a student council, including the election of members and the dissolution of a council, in accordance with guidelines issued by the Minister for Education and Skills. Guidelines are available on the establishment and operation of student councils on the DES website http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Student-Councils/Student-Councils.html. • There are a number of opportunities for DES to engage with DCYA in relation to the general theme of including the voice of children and young people in education. Some examples include DCYA engagement with the Inspectorate for the ongoing dissemination of the "So, how was school today?" report and DES commitments under the National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making (2015-2020).
26The D/Education and Skills and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment should ensure that the voice of students is taken into account when new curricula	DES/ NCCA	**Primary** • As part of its work in developing curriculum NCCA is committed to providing children with the opportunity to have their voices heard on matters that are important to them. In the consultation on ERB and Ethics and the consultation on Structure and Time in the primary curriculum NCCA listened to children's perspectives on what they considered to be enjoyable and important in their education.

and specifications are being developed, in particular in relation to the future revision of the Primary School Curriculum and the Junior Cycle Student Awards.		**Post-primary** • NCCA worked with a research team in Trinity College on the learner voice. The work has informed curriculum development in the junior cycle subject specifications to date. Student voice has also been part of the developments at senior cycle. Currently, a research report has been compiled by Paula Flynn, TCD, on assessing the involvement young people in development of specifications. It has a dual focus: to look at a sustainable model for including the student voice in curriculum development; and to ascertain the impact of the engagement on the students and the culture of schools involved. • NCCA is also involved in the Erasmus project. Ireland is one of 5 countries participating and the focus is Student Voice: Bridge to Learning. NCCA is currently in year 2 of a three-year project in partnership with JCT and the ETBs – Cork and Cavan/Monaghan. The conference of the Inspectorate, February 2018, received a substantial briefing on this project from NCCA personnel.
27. The Department of Education and Skills should introduce a *Parents' and Learners' Charter* as soon as possible.	DES	• In December 2016, the Minister for Education and Skills published the General Scheme of an Education (Parent and Student Charter) Bill 2016, which once enacted would require every school to consult with parents and students, and publish and operate a Parent and Student Charter, thus would improve information and complaint procedures for parents and students. • In November 2017 the Committee published a report on their pre-legislative scrutiny of the General Scheme. In January 2018, the Government approved the formal drafting of the Bill.
28The D/Education and Skills to promote inclusion of children and young people's voices more in the development of new policies and programmes that affect them. It should draw on the expertise of the D/ Children and Youth Affairs in this respect.	DES / DCYA	• DES consults with children and young people on ESD and also seeks the views of Irish Second-level Students' Union (ISSU) on key policy developments e.g. Literacy and Numeracy Strategy review, ESD Fora (including invites in 2016&17), student involvement in Creative Ireland etc. • The DES Inspectorate held its conference in February 2018, with the theme of Engaging with Learners: improving our practice. The event included a keynote address by Professor Laura Lundy, a world expert on giving due weight to the views and opinions of learners, and detailed inputs from DCYA, NCCA, the Ombudsman for Children's Office and from members of *Comhairle na nÓg*. The conference placed a significant emphasis on the educational and rights-based rationale for an increased role for the voice of young people in matters that affect them.
29The D/Education and Skills (supported by the D/Children	DCYA	• A consultation with children and young people was held in October 2016 and the report is at http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Education-for-Sustainable-

and Youth Affairs) should consult children and young people directly on the issue of ESD. This consultation process will take place before 2017. It will be used as an evidence base to inform the development of future policy in this area.		Development/Report-on-a-Consultation-with-Children-and-Young-People-on-Education-for-Sustainable-Development.pdf. The pupils and students identified key recommendations on how to make the world a fairer and better place in three areas: (1) for friends at home and abroad, (2) for human rights and (3) for the environment. • Recommendations by the pupils and students on learning to make the world a fairer and better place for friends at home and abroad included - a desire to learn about the different perspectives on contemporary issues in other countries - the importance of learning more about law in other countries and what we can learn and take from them, cultures (what customs other countries have and how they live as well as about how religion and culture are two different things and the way they influence society and the way people think) and rights in different countries - included a desire to learn more about our rights and policies that we could use in our lives when older.
30The D/Children and Youth Affairs to conduct a survey of programmes that relate to ESD and Development Education given the extent to which ESD and DE are interlinked in the Youth sector, and report the results to the proposed ESD Advisory Group in 2015. The report should include recommendations for strengthening the role of young people as change agents for sustainable development.	DCYA	• The National Youth Strategy has been in place since 2015. The national policy context informing this Strategy includes the National Strategy on ESD. In relation to National Outcome 5, Connected, Respected and Contributing to Their World, one priority identified ensuring sustainable communities. It seeks to establish a baseline of education for sustainable and development education programmes that are currently available in the youth sector, and promote the conservation and protection of the environment through practical environmental projects for young people. • WWGS suggested that the work being carried out by the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) is worth examining in this context. Young people recently had the opportunity to feed into the UN Youth Delegates' Irish Government report on the SDGs and Ireland, which was presented at the UN in New York in July. https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SDGsYouthSurvey
31The D/Children and Youth Affairs should reflect the importance of Education for	DCYA	The *National Youth Strategy* was launched in October 2015. The *National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development* is identified as a key policy input. Actions under the Youth Strategy include: - establishing a baseline of ESD and DE programmes that are currently available in the youth sector

Sustainable Development in the new Youth Strategy that is currently being developed, as well as in the Early Years Strategy due to be published by that Department under the overall National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 'Better Outcomes: Brighter Futures'.		- promoting the conservation and protection of the environment through practical environmental projects for young people - creating a forum of interests to support, through cross-sectoral collaboration, the implementation in the youth sector of the SDGs (2015), the *National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development* (2014) and the Irish Aid *Development Education Strategy.* • The early years strategy *First 5: A Whole-of- Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028* was launched in November 2018.

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Priority Action 8. Sustainability in action

32The D/Education and Skills should work with An Taisce, the National Transport Authority (in relation to the travel aspect), and the D/Environment, Community and Local Government to support the extension of the 'Green Schools' programme into all schools. The possibility of extending the green pre-schools pilot project on a phased basis to early years settings that are funded by the D/Children and Youth Affairs should also be explored. The D/Education and Skills to examine the possibility of extending the green pre-schools pilot into the 40 'Early Start'	DES / DTTS DECLG	There are three elements to update this recommendation: • The Green-Schools programme continued to develop during the period under review. The number of schools participating in the programme increased (c.3,950) and the number of school accredited with the Green Flag also increased (c.3,330). The thematic areas of the programme have also developed with the roll out of the Global Citizenship cycle of the programme particularly the introduction of the Marine Environment theme, which is supported by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government. Also the programme has been supported by the D/Communications, Climate Action & Environment via the Climate Action Programme. • Green-Schools Travel continues to work with National Transport Authority (NTA) to encourage sustainable travel for the school trip. The NTA and Green Schools is developing a new memorandum of understanding (MOU) and work programme from 2018 onwards. It is envisaged that this work programme will run until at least 2021. • To date there has been no commencement on the pre-schools element with DES/DCYA however, the possibility to develop and deliver this aspect of the programme as outlined in the recommendation is still extant. • The Green Campus programme continued to develop during the period with further 3rd level sites participating and being awarded the Green Flag. The Green-Campus programme has also developed successfully into the healthcare sector via the 3rd level teaching hospitals.

pre-school units that it funds directly. The extension of the 'Green campus' programme to all further and higher education institutions on a phased basis should also be explored.		
33The D/Education and Skills should explore the potential for supporting other programmes within the education sector that complement and reinforce the whole institution approach of the green-schools programme	DES	In the response from Green Schools the view was expressed that while this recommendation 'is in itself laudable, it should be viewed in the context of the Green-Schools programme receiving applicable support in the first instance and furthermore there being appropriate agreements between the Green-Schools and any complementary programmes.'
34. Higher Education institutions should continue to form closer links with schools, the Youth sector, and communities in relation to sustainable development in order to exchange	3rd. Level institutions	• The HE System performance Framework 2018 - 2020 was launched on 15th January 2018. It includes the following metrics that each HEI will have to report on: - Environmental sustainability policies and practices - Number of green flags awarded. • The following link gives a huge number of case studies of HEI engagement in citizenship projects, sustainability etc.: http://www.campusengage.ie/case-studies.

ideas and best practice and in particular to facilitate wider access to the specialist expertise and knowledge on sustainability that is available in third level institutions. The learning from this collaboration could be made available on a national basis.		
35. The Department of Education and Skills should continue to strive to improve the sustainability of new and existing educational infrastructure.	DES/ DoHPCLG	The publication of the National Planning Framework is an emerging cross-cutting mechanism for ESD recommendations 35 - 44 inclusive. • A significant step has been completed (November 2017) in the transition from the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS) to the National Planning Framework: Ireland 2040 Our Plan. • The D/Housing Planning and Local Government published the National Planning Framework (NPF) under Project Ireland 2040, the overarching policy and planning framework for the social, economic and cultural development of our country • The NPF is the top of the planning hierarchy of State Plans. All sub-national plans are derived from it. • The NPF proposes a vision of a centralised society of communities serviced locally for all aspects of their lives that will reduce travel related and built environment energy/carbon demand thereby delivering sustainable communities. • National Policy Objective 54: the planning system is responsive to our national environmental challenges and ensures that development occurs within environmental limits having regard to the requirements of all relevant environmental legislation and promotes the sustainable management of our natural capital. • The planning system has influence across a wide range of sectors and interacts with many common issues related to effective environmental management including water services, climate mitigation and adaptation and land use change.

	DES/
	Planning
	Authoritie
	s
		• The NPF will contribute to the improved sustainability performance of educational infrastructure through:
		   - resource efficiency and transition to a low carbon economy
		   - protecting, conserving and enhancing our natural capital
		   - creating a clean environment for a healthy society.
		
		Statutory and Development Plans:
		
		• All statutory plans (Regional Plans; County/City Development Plans [DP]; Strategic Development Zones [SDZ]; Local Area Plans [LAP]) are derived from the national plan, the NPF. They embody and incorporate the environmental and sustainability goals of the national plan across all sectors, including education.
		• The statutory plans incorporate sustainable land management and resource efficiency principles and standards for all developments. It is through the role of the DES as a statutory consultee that educational infrastructure will continue to improve its sustainability performance in terms of location and position within the community it services in terms of embodied energy, energy in use, and transport energy.
		• The intended synchronisation of all statutory plans under the NPF will ensure the best chance of achieving a coordinated and targeted development of the nation's built environment and infrastructure.
		
		Public Capital Investment 2018 -2027:
		
		The NPF is to be under-written and funded through a series of capital development plans during its lifetime. The first of these is the Public Capital Investment Programme 2018-2027. These capital programmes are intended to be the public sector implementation vehicles for the NPF, allocating specific funding to projects based on adherence to the NPF objectives.
		
		School Buildings Generally:
		
		• The DES continues to be at the forefront of design with respect to sustainable energy efficiency in school buildings. The DES Technical Guidance Documents (TGDs) sets the benchmark for sustainable design in school buildings with a clear focus on energy efficiency which is supported by a strong energy research programme with forty eight research projects at various stages.
		• Regarding our works ongoing within the Research and Demonstration Programme in relation to Near Zero Energy Building Projects, St Catherine's Aughrim is completed and occupied, the Downs Mullingar, is at final tender document stage and this school will reflect the new Part L requirements in full as noted below. All schools built in accordance with the DES TGDs are capable of achieving as a minimum an A3 Building Energy Rating (BER).

	DPER/DES /All State Agencies on a sectoral basis	• In accordance with D/Housing Planning and Local Government direction, public sector interim specification for Near Zero Energy Buildings continue to be used by all design teams appointed/commencing design from 1 January 2017 where the schools will be occupied after 31 December 2018. • Part L (Conservation of Fuel and Energy for Buildings other than Dwellings) 2017 was published by D/HPLG on 20 December 2017 which supersedes the interim specification. The DES published an implementation technical guidance document TGD 033 on 1st February 2018 to support this new building regulation as it applies to Schools. **2017 Schools Energy Efficiency Pilot:** • The DES and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) have been working to implement an energy efficient retrofit pilot in schools across Ireland. This included a 2017 Schools Energy Efficiency Pilot. • The pilot programme focussed on medium to deep retrofit measures to improve the energy efficiency of ten schools. The schools selected presented a variety of challenges; different building ages, archetypes, and retrofit requirements, to help create an accurate model for energy efficient retrofits of schools across Ireland. • The programme also included working with the schools, both students and teachers, to provide curriculum material around the energy retrofit, unlocking the educational benefit of these works. • The Pilot successfully delivered medium and deep retrofit measures to ten schools across Ireland. Measures undertaken range from insulation, window and door replacement, boiler replacement, heating system replacement, low energy lighting, and renewables. The Pilot demonstrated the types of measures that are typically required across the school building portfolio, and the cost and payback of these measures. The Pilot will also provide knowledge and learning to help develop a wider schools energy retrofit programme. **Facts and Figures:** - 10 schools with a total of a €4m budget - €90k annual savings, long pay back which is normal with schools. 1.3GWh Total Primary Energy Requirement Saving - More than 250 tonnes of CO_2 offset The longer-term outcome of the pilot will be to develop opportunities for further schools to undertake energy efficiency upgrades based on a range of typical retrofit options, which have been tried and tested during the 2017 pilot. **Additional studies underway:** Measurement & Verification Plan on selected schools:

		- This will provide energy measuring, monitoring and verification of savings over the next year to a selected number of the above schools to assess the suitability, impact and saving achieved.
		Development of a Best Practice Menu Tool:
		The aim of the Best Practice Menu Tool (the 'tool') is to assist schools with assessing which 'typical' energy efficiency measures would be most appropriate for their school.
		It will provide them with a menu of options, listing those which are likely to be relevant, in order of priority, and those which may be unsuitable. This will be primarily based on research works previously undertaken, the type of construction of the building, and the existing mechanical and electrical systems and condition of same.
		Due to persistent problems with *inter alia* new extensions to schools along national roads, the development of large schools in peripheral and problematic locations, and the design of new schools to attract private vehicular traffic, the NTA, TII and RSA collaborated together to draft a policy document for DTTAS in 2017, for the attention of DES. This action also follows on from the inability of either NTA or TII to reach agreement with DES in relation to policy on transport planning and traffic management requirements associated with school developments. It is the intention of these agencies to finalise this policy early in 2018, with a view to referring to it in the planning process for any future school building applications.
36. The Department of Education and Skills should continue to work with the SEAI to promote the 'energy in education' programme in an effort to improve energy efficiency in schools.	DES / SEAI	• **The Energy in Education** programme, a partnership with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), offers Energy Management training workshops and an Advice, Mentoring and Assessment Service to schools. As part of this programme the on-line portal *www.energyineducation.ie* offers best practice advice and case studies. To date there are nearly 600 schools engaging at various levels with the programme. A network of stakeholders in the education sector including National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education, the Church of Ireland General Synod Board of Education (RI), Catholic Primary School Management Association, Educate Together, the Joint Managerial Body and the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools are consulted on programme development and delivery and also assist with communication to member schools. Schools that engage with the Energy in Education Programme can access robust, practical advice and are realising savings through low and no cost measures.
37. The Department of Education and Skills should continue to use	DES	• Since the 1st of January 2011 all public sector bodies, including educational institutions, are required to report annually to SEAI on their energy usage, and their actions taken to reduce consumption. The data collated by the SEAI provide an opportunity to monitor the energy efficiency of the education sector.

the data collated from educational institutions on their energy usage to monitor performance in this area and should inform the development of future measures to strengthen energy efficiency.		- In addition, the DES monitors its own energy research projects for a period of time to evaluate the performance and operation of the design and technology under review. These data sources continue to be used to complement the efforts of the DES to strengthen the sustainability of educational infrastructure. - SEAI's Energy in Education programme provides supports to schools to assist with energy management in the school. It is an optional programme in which schools are encouraged to engage in. SEAI provides training, technical audits and online supports (videos, factsheets and guides) at www.energyineducation.ie The IPPN are one of the stakeholders who engage with and assist in promoting the Energy in Education programme. Since 2012, 532 schools have been trained under the Energy in Education programme (this does not include courses in 2018). - Monitoring and Reporting for schools – this is a statutory requirement for all schools (primary and post-primary, except ETB schools) and the responsibility lies with the Board of Management as they are the incorporated body of each school. They appoint a person to undertake this reporting, usually the principal, school secretary or Green Schools co-ordinator. SEAI provide a number of supports to schools to assist with their monitoring and reporting: workshops which are held in all 21 Education Centres, helpdesk (phone and email), online guide, videos and FAQs. This table shows the number of calls and emails for monitoring and reporting for all public sector bodies, not just schools. | Activity Year	Inbound Calls	Emails	Outbound Calls	Total
2015	955	1,295	185	**2,435**
2016	2,378	1,878	2,634	**6,890**
2017	2,075	1,787	2,888	**6,750** | In terms of attendance at monitoring and reporting training workshops, in 2016: 452 schools; in 2017: 346 schools. Between 2016 and 2017, there were also 7,132 hits to the monitoring and reporting section of the SEAI website, with over 1,000 in the first ten weeks of 2018.

38. The Department of Education and Skills should work with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland and the Office of Public Works to reduce its energy use by 33% by 2020 (from a 2009 benchmark). As a first step, technical assessments should be undertaken in 2015. The results of these assessments should inform the development of a number of projects to further reduce, monitor and manage energy usage in the Department's offices.	DES / SEAI / OPW	• DES has an energy management and reduction programme in place to reduce consumption by 33% in 2020. A 24.3% reduction has been achieved, based on 2016 data, which is better than the projected reductions required. • A detailed energy audit was undertaken in our campuses on Dublin, Athlone and Tullamore, and action has been taken on the recommended opportunities identified. • The DES made significant investment in 2017 in upgrading the lighting systems in our Dublin and Tullamore offices and the impact of these more energy efficient systems will be seen in 2018 and later years. • The DES have an SEAI Partnership Support Manager who assists with monitoring and reporting and managing energy use. The DES also appointed an Energy Performance Officer in 2017.
39. The Department of Education and Skills should ensure that sustainable development is reflected in its next Statement of Strategy, and that annual energy usage	DES / DES agencies / schools	• The ESD Strategy is referenced in the Action Plan for Education 2016-2019. CAP has key role in reviewing the existing ESD Strategy, and in organising the annual Forum, while Social Inclusion Unit (SIU) has sub-actions relating to ensuring that the education sector embraces the SDGs during 2018. • CAP and SIU representatives have met with DCCAE to clarify role of education in SDG implementation planning, for Goal 4 and other goals where practicable. See comment in 35. The principal change sought by the NTA, Road Safety Authority (RSA), and TII is to assess new developments on the basis of the "whole life" costs, including **the cost of travel**. Direct school capital costs for DES could be minimised by building in a cheap peripheral location, but **the whole-life travel costs** (in terms of time, fuel, congestion, stress etc.) associated with getting to and from the school could be immense to the travelling public, and to agencies

is reported in future annual reports. Sustainable development should also be reflected in future mission statements of the agencies under the aegis of the Department, including all further and higher education institutions. From 2016, each primary and post primary school should reflect sustainable development in its school plan and review compliance with those commitments as part of the normal school self-evaluative process. Inspection reports should, where appropriate, comment on the actions taken by schools to promote sustainable development principles.		such as the NTA who is asked to provide supporting transport investment (footpaths, cycle tracks, bus facilities, bus services, traffic lights, road layout changes etc). • In relation to possible monitoring of school compliance issues, a briefing to outline the principles underpinning the ESD Strategy was provided to all inspectors – Early Years, primary and post-primary – in September 2017. • The Inspectorate evaluates the quality of educational provision in schools and Early Years settings, including curriculum content and pedagogy. In its ongoing revision of curricula, the NCCA is embedding ESD principles. In addition, the DES is currently promoting the use of the quality framework *Looking at Our School (*LAOS*) 2016* and School Self-Evaluation as a process for managing change and effecting improvement at school level. In time, the principles of ESD will be embedded in national curricula and aligned to the domains and standards in LAOS *2016*. In due course, evaluation processes by the Inspectorate will take account of these developments.

40The D/Education and Skills should undertake a survey of its employees in 2014 to identify the number who travel to work by sustainable means of transport. Following the results of this survey, the Department should encourage sustainable travel among its employees with a view to increasing the proportion of travelling to work by sustainable means by at least an additional 10% by 2020.	DES	- This survey was carried out by the Curriculum and Assessment Section of the DES in 2016. Findings from three main staff centres (Dublin, Athlone and Tullamore) show high reliance on car usage, challenges around safety, time and convenience for many staff in terms of changing patterns of travel e.g. cycling to work, although there have been good uptake levels of the Cycle to Work scheme.
41The D/Education and Skills, in conjunction with Bus Éireann, should continue to promote the increased energy efficiency of the school transport fleet.	DES/ Bus Éireann	No progress was reported on this Recommendation

42The D/Education and Skills, An Taisce and the National Transport Authority should aim to increase the number of children and young people who travel to school by sustainable means by 20% by 2020.	DES /DTTS / An Taisce / NTA	This work is already extant since 2015. See example report below to elucidate programme scale and outcomes. https://greenschoolsireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Green-Schools-Annual-Report-2015.SML-FILE.pdf • Key data in the 2015 report includes: - from the baseline of 2013, 20% more children were travelling to school by sustainable means by 2015 - of the 43.3% of students who were driven to school, 15.7% of these car share - the proportion of students walking to school increased by 9% between October 2013 and May 2015 - cycling to school levels increased by 100% over the same two year period - 262 schools were awarded the Green Flag for Travel in May 2015 - 209 schools were invited to participate in the Travel theme in September 2015 bringing to approximately 450 the total number of schools working on the theme in the calendar year 2015. The NTA is fully supportive of travel plans and behavioural change programme for schools (see Greater Dublin Transport Strategy) and will continue the Green Schools Travel programme nationwide. However, there is an urgent requirement for engagement of NTA with DES on the overall issue of school travel, and the options available to DES to collaborate more closely and concretely with NTA and others to achieve this goal.
43. Each school and educational institution should have a travel plan to encourage students to take more sustainable alternatives to the car.	All educational institutions	A significant amount of the data-analysis work on the 2015 Life Skills Survey was carried out by CAP during 2016, with an important finding being that 63% of schools reported using the Safe to School programme. This was an increase of 18 percentage points on the 2012 findings, and an increase of 38% on the 2009 statistics. At post-primary level, the vast majority of schools that responded (93%) reported teaching road safety, compared to 84% in 2012 and 82% in 2009. 55% of post-primary schools reported using the Streetwise programme compared to 27% in 2012. There was also an increase in the number of schools reporting using Your Road to Safety, the RSA Transition Tear programme, up from 44% in 2012 to 78% in 2015.
44. The Department of Education and Skills, in conjunction with the National Transport Authority and the Department of the Environment and Local	DES / NTA / DECLG	No progress reported on this action

Government to produce guidance on integrated planning and guidance for new school developments by end 2014.		

SECTION 3: Looking towards 2020

The *National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland 2014-2020* set out ambitious goals for Ireland to achieve from an education perspective in response to urgent economic, social and environmental problems. Section 2 of this report sets out the progress made towards achieving those goals. Our starting position was to take a participatory approach with an Advisory Group comprising a broad range of stakeholders overseeing and advising on implementation of the strategy and tasking various stakeholders to deliver on the actions.   It is clear that good solid progress has been made in each of the priority areas.

As part of the consultation process, interested bodies and individuals were invited to provide observations on *Education for Sustainability* successes or aspects that need to be amended or strengthened, and to inform and support the next phase of implementation. This section presents an overview of the key recommendations arising from the consultation process, which the Advisory Group considered and its response to same. Section 4 presents the actions which the Group agreed should be progressed in the *Education for Sustainability* Action Plan Q4 2018 – Q42020.

Overview of and response to key recommendations

Awareness
The need to generate a greater level of **awareness** of ESD among all partners and citizens was identified in a number of submissions. The submissions suggested that further action in this respect should be a priority for action in the next phase with greater communications in schools to ensure more teachers and students are involved in and have a better understanding of ESD principles and what needs to be achieved as outlined in the Strategy. Others felt that the role of non-formal education outside the school needed to be strengthened such as in youth sectors, community sectors and NGOs to give practical support in promotion of and in teaching and learning of ESD. Evidence from ATECI surveys suggests that there is limited or very limited awareness outside of citizenship and environmental education bodies that there is a *National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development*.

It is evident from the progress made that many organisations are working hard to embed ESD in the curriculum, in teacher education, in continuing professional development, in further education, etc. Nonetheless the lack of system-wide awareness of the strategy must be rectified and further action must be taken to communicate, raise awareness of and embed ESD. The Advisory Group proposes to undertake a number of actions which should help raise awareness of ESD at all education levels as well as outside formal education settings. These actions include establishing a sub-group on 'awareness raising', publishing minutes of the Advisory Group's meetings and updates on its work on Scoilnet as well as by direct linkage with the SDGs which will have increasing national and international prominence from now on.

Expansion of Advisory group

A number of submissions called for membership of the **Advisory Group to be expanded** to include, in addition to student representative bodies above, teacher unions and support services. Some submissions also sought that **sub-committees** under the ESD Advisory group be established to lead on particular initiatives and to further the implementation of the ESD strategy.

The Advisory Group, while noting that the Group is already large, agreed that expanding membership could help to raise awareness amongst teachers and students and achieve greater buy-in. It would also facilitate the establishment of sub-groups to progress key areas of *Education for Sustainability* and of SDGs.

Align ESD with SDGs

The need to **align the Strategy with the United Nations SDGs** was highlighted: Goal 4 and within that 4.7 in particular. This is being progressed through the DES roles in the National Implementation Plan, and the SDGs being included under Action 109 of the DES *Action Plan for Education.* A significant campaign to raise awareness of the SDGs is already underway through the INTO and Global Citizenship Schools, and can be enhanced through closer alignment with the work of bodies like WWGS, teacher unions and management bodies.

The Department also has a representative on the Implementation group for the SDGs led by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and this will help achieve greater linkages between ESD and SDGs and thus aim to achieve a better balance in environmental, social and economic areas of sustainable development.   Actions to promote the SDGs could also include promotion of ESD.

Engagement throughout Education system

Scope for clearer and more specific **DES sectoral engagement with SDGs** was identified as key to progressing the Strategy across the education system. The optimal situation, and a target for 2020, is for every section of the DES to have a clearly identified role in the strategy. It was envisaged that this would include a more defined role for the Inspectorate, who can play a positive advocacy role through School Self Evaluation, advice, evaluations. The State Examinations Commission has done a great deal of work on ESD and SDGs, which might become a full policy statement in time. It was suggested that other sections of the DES, including Teacher Education Section and Social Inclusion Unit, had very limited direct links to any recommendations in the 2014 iteration of the Strategy and it would be very positive if their role could be identified more precisely from 2018 onwards.

The Advisory Group considers that much work has been done in the Curricula area already and that the NCCA audit of the curriculum will strengthen the messages about the ESD and SDGs. The Group considers that the potential of Transition Year as a vehicle to promote ESD and SDGs may still be under-utilised by many schools, but greater clarity on the future direction of the Senior Cycle reform will be needed before it can be realistically examined. The Group supports continued integration of ESD into the Curriculum and Assessment process and has proposed a number of actions at each level from Early Years, primary and post-primary through to Further Education and Higher Education.

Teacher Education Continuum

While it was acknowledged that much work had been done, it was considered that the pace of change needed to increase if we are to educate and change to address critical global issues of our time.   It was considered that the continuum of **Teacher Education,** through from Initial Teacher Education to continuing professional development, can play a significant role in embedding ESD in schools. Including ESD as a mandatory area of study in future drafts of the Teaching Council's *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers* was recommended. Scope was also identified to build on current practice and forefront ESD as a criterion in the work of support services such as PDST and JCT and Teacher Professional Networks (subject associations) when designing CPD for teachers. It was considered that this would complement the embedding of ESD in curriculum development at all levels**.**

The Advisory Group considers that much progress has already been made in promoting ESD through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and there are many areas where teacher education providers are actively engaged with the incorporation of ESD principles into aspects of teacher training as set out in Section 2 of the report. Nonetheless further work could be done. The Group will consider opportunities to further embed ESD into CPD and has included actions in the Plan in this regard. This includes, for example, seeking accreditation of ESD training by the Teaching Council in the context of Cosán, any new strategies developed by the support services would reference ESD, Teacher Professional Networks be encouraged to promote ESD and SDGs at conferences and other events etc.

Leadership of Principals

Leadership support was also considered essential in schools and the role of principals in that regard to ensure ESD is understood as environmental, socio-economic, cultural and political in focus and to embedding it into the daily learning and life in schools. It was recommended that the Higher Education Authority make sustainability a condition for the award of grants to Higher Education Institutions and that it be part of the strategic dialogue process.

The Advisory Group agrees that school leadership is very important in the context of the promotion and embedding a culture of sustainable development within schools. Amongst the actions agreed are that the Centre for School Leadership will be asked to consider how to increase awareness of ESD among school leaders and to take account of ESD in the development of the continuum of support for school leaders and the approval process for same.

Early Years education

Submissions considered that **Early Years education** offers huge potential in supporting the implementation of ESD and SDGs principles as evidenced in the *Aistear* programme. Much work has been done in this area and that was acknowledged.

The Advisory group welcomes the acknowledgement that much work has been done in this regard. It will continue to seek opportunities to further embed ESD content and principles throughout the Early Child Education Centres programme and the ongoing development of the *Aistear - Síolta* Initiative.

Clearer definitions of what ESD represents

Some submissions sought **clearer definitions of what ESD represents**, and of the overlaps and complementarity with Development Education (DE) and Global Citizenship (GC). Conversations with Irish Aid have shown the desirability of greater cohesion and clearer messaging and much greater synergies between Development Education and ESD activities going forward. It was also considered that there needed to be greater co-operation between Irish Aid, the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in relation to respective strategies and reporting requirements under SDG 4.7.

The Advisory Group accepts there is a need for clearer definitions of what ESD represents and the overlaps and complementarity with DE and GC. The Group also considered that the need for greater cohesion and clarity of messaging was evident.

Student voice

Review participants also highlighted the need to give **student voice** more prominence, as leaders of the SDGs, within schools and within the system. This could be achieved through, for example, the inclusion of the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) or Irish Second-Level Students' Union (ISSU) on the ESD Advisory Group. Students' Councils, it was suggested, could enhance the understanding of ESD among teachers and students and ensure that the strategy fits with how schools operate in practice. It was also considered that there is a link between the aims of Wellbeing for teachers and learners and with ESD. It was recommended that the Lifeskills survey would include some questions around ESD.

The Advisory Group fully supports further participation of students and young people to help promote and embed the ESD strategy. It will establish a sub-group to consider what actions can be taken in this regard including to support the student voice and Student Councils to promote ESD and SDGs in and outside schools. It will also work with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and other relevant bodies on relevant actions to support ESD as appropriate.

Baseline data

In order to better inform the planning for and monitoring of the ESD, it was considered that there is a need to extend the use of **key measurable and baseline data** in the 2018-2020 phase. There is a need to seek other opportunities to identify possible indicators of change and development by, for example, participating in the optional citizenship section in PISA in 2021 and reengagement with the International Civic and Citizenship Education Survey.

The Advisory Group accepts that there is a need to have baseline data on the current position on ESD at school level. It is pleased to note that there is considerable willingness among certain bodies to provide such data and to track it. The Group is also conscious of the need to ensure that schools are not over-burdened with data collection and suffer survey fatigue. The Group considers that we should promote inclusion of ESD where feasible in existing national

and international surveys/testing (such as in the Lifeskills survey) and continue to collect data through bodies such as An Taisce, WWGS, Irish Aid and others. A number of actions have been proposed in this regard. The group also considers that it would be useful to establish a sub-group on Data to oversee these actions with a view to ensuring we have good data on ESD and can monitor progress and benchmark against international trends and standards where possible.

Funding
Some submissions also considered that there needed to be **targeted funding for ESD** in schools and saw scope for it to be connected to the Wellbeing budget to cover areas such as CPD training, a material budget for ESD activities such as creating a school garden, support to set up a National Association for ESD teachers and support for exemplary schools to support school visits from other schools.   Others sought a specific budget to promote ESD and SDGs at all levels.

The Advisory Group would advise that any funding available for ESD activities must be found from within existing programmes within each of the sectoral areas within the Department of Education and Skills and other Departments.

Conclusion

Taking account of the stakeholders' contributions to the review process as set out in this Section, the Advisory Group gave careful consideration to identifying actions that would build on progress to date and key to advancing the ESD Recommendations identified in the National Strategy. The Advisory group was mindful of the need to ensure that the actions would be realistic and achievable within the timeframe available and that they would yield data that would inform ESD for all into the future.

Section 4: Education for Sustainable Development Action Plan Q4 2018 – Q4 2020

TOPIC	New Action Number	Actions	Who	When
Priority Area 1. Leadership and coordination				
Department of Education and Skills (DES) Education for Sustainability Advisory Group	1.1	Increase number of Education for Sustainability Advisory Group Meetings from 2 to 3 per year and host annual national forum	DES/Education for Sustainability Advisory Group	Q4 2018
	1.2	Establish sub-groups of the Education for Sustainability Advisory Group on the following themes: - Awareness raising - Data collection and baseline measurement - Sustainability in action - Promoting participation of young people - Curriculum	DES/Education for Sustainability Advisory Group	2018
	1.3	Review membership of the Education for Sustainability Advisory Group and terms of reference	DES/Education for Sustainability Advisory Group	Q1 2019
Synergies between Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Development Education (DE)	1.4	Continue to develop greater synergies between Education for Sustainable Development and Development Education by greater collaboration between the Department of Education and Skills, Irish Aid and other key stakeholders. - Collaboration on developing Education for Sustainable Development and Development Education related continuing professional development content for Junior Cycle for Teachers staff. - Promotion of Education for Sustainable Development, Development Education and the Sustainable Development Goals in Transition Year.	DES/Irish Aid	Ongoing

		- Acknowledgement of the significant and complementary role Development Education plays in the Education for Sustainable Development Strategy.		
Education for Sustainable Development Portal	1.5	Share updates on the work of Advisory Group (e.g. minutes/sub-group proposals etc.) on the Scoilnet Portal	DES	Q4 2018
Priority Area 2. Data Collection and Baseline measurement				
Lifeskills Survey	2.1	Compare 2018 Lifeskills Survey results with 2015 findings - Conduct annual survey of teachers' awareness of Education for Sustainable Development Strategy, Sustainable Development Goals and global justice issues. - Conduct analysis of Education for Sustainable Development related results.	DES	Q4 2018
Consulting children and young people on Education for Sustainable Development	2.2	Repeat Consultative Sessions with children and young people on Education for Sustainable Development periodically and consider recommendations/findings.	DES/ Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA)	Q4 2019
Data collection of data baseline data/ update data and provide identify measurable	2.3	Provide baseline data/update data and provide data on identifiable and measurable outcomes as relevant: - Irish Aid – provide data on school engagement across all partners - World Wise Global Schools (WWGS)– provide up to date data on continuing professional development provision - Green Schools – provide baseline data	Irish Aid WWGS	Q4 2018 Q4 2019/20

progress as relevant		- Blue Star Schools – provide baseline data (update of 2017-18 annual report) - Global Citizenship Schools – provide baseline data - Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) – provide data on school engagement - Monitor uptake of Politics and Society and the number of Sustainable Development Goals based projects undertaken - Engage with relevant Non-Governmental Organisations (e.g. Trócaire and Concern) and European Union and Council of Europe initiatives in Ireland to enhance baseline data.	An Taisce – Green Schools Blue Star Schools Global Citizenship Schools SEAI Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit (CAP)/ State Examinations Commission (SEC)/ Parents, Learners and Database Section (PLDS) Trócaire, Concern and Council of Europe	
International Benchmarks	2.4	Ensure Education for Sustainable Development is included in - reports for Eurydice – - Global Education Network Europe (GENE) Roundtables Identify bodies tracking engagement with Education for Sustainable Development/Sustainable Development Goals	DES/ Irish Aid	2019/2020
Priority Area 3. Curriculum at pre-school, primary and post-primary				
Early Years	3.1	Continue rollout of the new national Aistear continuing professional development programme and mentoring initiatives under the National Síolta Aistear Initiative.	DCYA/ DES/Early Years Education Policy Unit(EYEPU)	2018/2019
Early Years	3.2	Include Education for Sustainable Development content as opportunities arise through ongoing review and further development of the Aistear continuing professional development strand of the National Síolta Aistear Initiative.	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Q4 2019

Early Years	3.3	Trócaire will continue its programme of work on Development Education/Education for Sustainable Development/Global Citizenship Education programme in early years	Trócaire	Ongoing
Audit of ESD in Early Years curricula	3.4	A specific focus on Education for Sustainable Development will be included as part of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment review of *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*.	NCCA	From 2020
Primary	3.5	The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment will continue to review the primary curriculum with a view to considering concepts of citizen education, values education and Education for Sustainable Development in its curriculum and assessment developments.	NCCA	Ongoing
Primary	3.6	As part of the review the primary curriculum, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment will publish a draft overview of a redeveloped primary curriculum which will incorporate findings from the consultation on Education about Religions and Beliefs and Ethics.	NCCA	Q4 2019
Junior Cycle CPD and ESD	3.7	Complete the roll-out of new Junior Cycle specifications which incorporate Education for Sustainable Development related strands.	DES/NCCA/Education for Sustainability Advisory Group	Q3 2019
	3.8	The DES will consult with the NCCA in regard to the development of Short Courses in the area of ESD		Q2 2019
	3.9	Continue to build on established partnerships in developing Education for Sustainable Development related continuing professional development content to support the implementation of Junior Cycle specifications		
	3.10	Identify opportunities to embed Education for Sustainable Development content and principles into new/reviewed Senior Cycle specifications.	NCCA/DES	To 2020
	3.11	Ensure Education for Sustainable Development is considered as part of discussions/developments during the Senior Cycle Review	NCCA	Ongoing

Senior Cycle	3.12	The Department of Education and Skills will consult with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in regard to the development of Short Courses and Transition Units in the area of Education for Sustainable Development.	NCCA	To 2020
	3.13	The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) will continue to provide continuing professional development support for all Politics and Society teachers in Phase 2 of the roll out in line with the support agreed for Phase 1 schools.	PDST	To 2020
Curricular Reform	3.14	Education for Sustainable Development will be included as a standing item on DES curriculum related steering groups including: - Primary Curriculum Steering Group - Junior Cycle Steering Group - Senior Cycle Reform Steering Group	CAP/ NCCA	To 2020
ESD in state examinations	3.15	All forms of state assessments will reflect Education for Sustainable Development principles and themes in a manner that is appropriate to the subject specification	CAP/NCCA/ SEC	To 2020
Priority Area 4. Teacher Education and Professional Development				
Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Initial Teacher Education (ITE)	4.1	DES will publish Criteria and Guidelines for professional undergraduate programmes in Early Childhood Education and Care. The Criteria and Guidelines will reflect a knowledge, competences and values framework that supports ethical, democratic leadership that promotes sustainable development in Early Childhood Education and Care settings.	DES/ Early Years Education Policy Unit (EYEPU)	Q4 2018
	4.2	Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) will carry out a review of Further Education and Training programmes for Early Childhood Education and Care practitioners.	QQI	Q4 2019
ITE	4.4	Consult with the Teaching Council about the accreditation of teacher participation in ESD learning activities, in the context of Cosán	DES/Teaching Council	Q4 2019
ITE	4.5	The scope for student teachers to engage with Education for Sustainable Development should be considered by the Teaching	Teaching Council/ITE Providers/ Irish Aid/	Q4 2019

		Council in the context of proposals for revised accreditation Criteria and Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme providers.	Ubuntu Network/ DICE	
Association of Teachers'/Education Centres in Ireland (ATECI)	4.7	Continue to monitor and report on Education for Sustainable Development/Global Citizenship Education course provision in Association of Teachers' / Education Centres in Ireland (ATECI)	DES - Teacher Education Section (TES)/ ATECI	Ongoing
Association of Teachers'/Education Centres in Ireland (ATECI)	4.8	ATECI to carry out annual audit of ESD including courses on citizenship, human rights, gender equality and development education	ATECI	To 2020
Teacher Education and Professional Development	4.9	Encourage Teacher Professional Networks to adopt relevant Sustainable Development Goals and promote ESD through conferences, training materials and information to members where relevant.	TES	Q4 2019
Teacher Education and Professional Development	4.10	Any new strategy developed by the support services should explicitly reference Education for Sustainable Development where relevant	TES	Q? 2019
		Any new strategy developed by the Teaching Council should explicitly reference Education for Sustainable Development where relevant.	TES	
Teacher Education and Professional Development	4.11	STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Continuing Professional Development framework should take account of the potential of ESD as a motivator to encourage students to engage with STEM and to understand it influences and is influenced by ESD.	TES	Q4 2019
Teacher Education and Professional Development	4.13	Centre for School Leadership (CSL) should be encouraged to consider how to increase awareness of Education for Sustainable Development among school leaders.	TES / CSL	Q4 2019

Junior Cycle continuing professional development and Education for Sustainable Development	4.14	Junior Cycle for Teachers will extend provision of ESD focused CPD for new Junior Cycle subjects.	TES / JCT	Ongoing
	4.15	Build capacity across the Junior Cycle for Teacher teams in supporting Education for Sustainable Development.	TES/ JCT	Q2 2109
	4.16	Extend partnerships in developing Education for Sustainable Development related content to support Junior Cycle for Teachers teams.	TES/ JCT	Q2 2019
"Doing Development Education":	4.17	World Wise Global Schools (WWGS) will continue to: - provide Development Education continuing professional development for post primary teachers and -provide World Wise Global School guides "Doing DE" to support teaching, learning and the measuring of progress.	WWGS	Q4 2019
Education for Sustainable Development Resources	4.18	Develop Guidelines around Quality Assurance of materials to promote ESD in the curriculum.	CAP/ TES/ Inspectorate	Q2 2020
	4.19	Develop advice for schools to support implementation of national strategies such as Education for Sustainable Development, in the context of advisory activities related to school self-evaluation	Inspectorate	Q3 2020
Resources for teachers – Blue Star	4.20	Blue Star schools will resource provision for teachers around how European Union policies support the SDGs - Blue Star Schools to produce an annual report - Expand at Primary - Consider opportunities at post-primary level when Wellbeing in Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Politics and Society are embedded	European Movement Ireland	To 2020
Priority Area 5. Further Education and Training				
'Education for Sustainable Development in further Education and Training (2015)'	5.1	Through the Further Education and Training annual planning and funding process, provision will be developed in areas that might include: - Green procurement - Energy management - Sustainability marketing - Economics and sustainability - Planning and architecture skills	SOLAS/ Education and Training Boards (ETBs)	2019

Research and scoping as a prerequisite to future programme development in the Further Education and Training (FET) Sector		- Deep retrofitting for domestic dwellings - Heating controls - Research should focus on outcomes to measure progress - The use and maintenance of electric and hybrid vehicles		
	5.2	Within the Further Education and Training Professional Development Strategy, ensure that appropriate continuing professional development is available in areas such as Education for Sustainable Development, Development Education and Sustainable Development Goals.	SOLAS/ ETBs	2019
	5.3	Continue to review curriculum of relevant craft apprenticeships as part of ongoing programme reviews, to incorporate new building regulations and techniques. Continue to support development of apprenticeships and traineeships with components of sustainable development such as wind turbine maintenance and arboriculture	SOLAS/ ETBs	2019
Priority Area 6. Higher Education and Research				
Targets and monitoring in the future	6.1	The Higher Education Authority (HEA) will (delete 'to') consider the availability of data to monitor and track the provision of Education for Sustainable Development, Development Education and Sustainable Development Goals (inserted 'related') courses across the sector.	HEA	Q4 2018
Funding	6.2	Review of funding to the HEIs (2.1m) to support ESD and SDGs	HEA	Q4 2018
HEI's Bronze Status	6.3	Athena SWAN initiative to be progressed in order that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) can apply for Bronze Status by 2019	HEIs	Q4 2019
Sustainable Development Promotion	6.4	Continue to support the implementation of the new System Performance Framework and the Funding Model for HEIs to highlight and measure elements which contribute to ESD against	HEA	To 2020

		the National Action Plan, especially in the promotion of participation by socially disadvantaged groups and tracking community engagement and volunteering among students and staff of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).		
Sustainable Development Promotion	6.5	Increase participation in the Green Campus initiative among the Higher Education Institutions.	HEA	2019/2020
Emphasising ESD in Higher Education Institute (HEI) initiatives	6.6	Exploit opportunities to promote Education for Sustainable Development in, for example - Universities of Sanctuary - Community engagement policies and practices - Global Teacher Awards - Centre for Global Development work - Green Campus - Environmental Initiatives. Capacity building and research opportunities for academics in higher education to be made available.	HEIs / Suas/ Irish Aid	2019/2020
Priority Area 7. Promoting participation by Young People				
Student Voice	7.1	Student Voice and Student Councils will be supported in promoting and embedding good Education for Sustainable Development practice across schools.	DES/ Student Councils/ Schools	Q4 2018
Student Voice	7.2	The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment will continue to include Student Voice as part of the process of curriculum development.	NCCA	Ongoing
National Youth Strategy	7.3	Promote the conservation and protection of the environment through practical environmental projects for young people	Department of Children and Youth Affairs/ DES/ Irish Aid	Q1 2019
	7.4	Support the implementation in the youth sector of the Sustainable Development Goals		

Priority Area 8. Sustainability in Action					
Green Schools	8.1	Consider complementary programmes which re-inforce the whole institution approach of the Green Schools programme subject to - applicable support for Green Schools (and associated targets) and - appropriate agreements with Green Schools.	DES/ An Taisce - Green Schools	Q1 2019
Energy Consumption	8.2	Adjust data collection to provide more granular detail in respect of school engagement with energy consumption.	SEAI	Up to 2020
Energy Reduction Performance	8.3	Monitor the reduction of energy consumption by the Department of Education and Skills to target of 33% by 2020.	DES	2020
Energy Consumption	8.4	Sustainable Development data (e.g. energy consumption) should be included in relevant D.ES reports.	DES	2020
Travel	8.5	Carry out staff survey on Travel to Work again	DES	By 2020
Travel	8.6	Increase the number of students walking, cycling, scooting, using public transport or carpooling on the way to school by 20% by 2020.	An Taisce – Green Schools/ Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport/ National Transport Authority	Q4 2020

Appendix 1 ABBREVIATIONS

ARíS – Arts Rich Schools

ASTI – Association of Secondary School Teachers, Ireland

ATECI – Association of Teachers'/Education Centres in Ireland

DES – Department of Education and Skills

CAP – Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit, DES

CAROLINE – Collaborative Research Fellowships for a Responsive and Innovative Europe

CSPE –Civic, Social and political Education

CEN – European Centre for Standardization

CPD – Continuing Professional Education

DCCAE – Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment

DECLG – Department of Environment, Community and Local Government

DCYA – Department of Children and Youth Affairs

DE – Development Education

DEBI – Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation

DES – Department of Education and Skills

DFAT – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

DICE – Development and Intercultural Education

DTTS – Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

ECEC – Early Childhood Education and Care

ERB and Ethics – Education about Religions and Beliefs and Ethics

ERG – Energy Research Strategy Group

ESD – Education for Sustainable Development

ETBI – Education and Training Board Ireland

ETB(s) – Education and Training Board(s)

EU – European Union

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency

ERSG – Energy Research Strategy Group

EYEPU – Early years Education Policy Unit

FET – Further Education and Training

GCE –Global Citizenship Education

GENE – Global Education Network Europe

GLOBE – Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment

HEI(s) – Higher Education Institution(s)

HEA – Higher Education Authority

ICT – Information and Communications Technologies

IDEA – Irish Development Education Association

INTO – Irish National Teachers' Organisation

IOs – International Organisations

IPPN – Irish Primary Principal's Network

IRC – Irish Research Council

ITE – Initial Teacher Education

JCT – Junior Cycle for Teachers

NCCA – National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

NGO(s) – Non-Government Organisation(s)

NPF – National Planning Framework

NSS – National Spatial Strategy

NTA – National Transport Authority

NSAI – National Síolta Aistear Initiative

NCYI – National Youth Council of Ireland

OPW – Office of Public Works

PDST – Professional Development Service for Teachers

PLDS – Parents, Learners and Database Section, DES

QQI – Quality and Qualifications Ireland

RSA – Road Safety Authority

SDG(s) – Sustainable Development Goal(s)

SEAI – Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland

SEC – State Examinations Commission

SFDS – Schools Financial and Database Section

SIU – Social Inclusion Unit, DES

SOLAS – An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (Further Education and Training   Authority)

SPHE – Social, Personal and Health Education

STEM –Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

STEAM –Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics

STEMM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine

TDGs – Technical Guidance Documents

UCD – University College Dublin

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

TCD – Trinity College Dublin

TES – Teacher Education Section, DES

TPN(s) – Teacher Professional Network(s)

TUI – Teachers Union of Ireland

WWGS – World Wise Global Schools

Appendix 2 Submissions

Submissions were received from the following:

1. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)
2. Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (D.CCAE)
3. Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) Letterfrack
4. Eco Unesco
5. Eco Unesco Youthmembers
6. Irish Development Education Association (IDEA)
7. Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN)
8. Kate Minnock (teacher)
9. Irish Aid
10. World Wise Global Schools
11. Get Up and Goals
12. Development and Intercultural Education (DICE)
13. Green Foundation Ireland
14. National Youth Council of Ireland
15. Environmental Education Unit (EEU), An Taisce
16. Global Citizenship Schools (INTO)
17. Ubuntu
18. Blue Star
19. Higher Education Authority (HEA)
20. Solas
21. Teaching Council
22. Department of Education and Skills Planning and Building Unit
23. DES Parents and Learners Charter
24. DES Inspectorate
25. DES Social Inclusion Unit (Martin Shiel)
26. National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Aistear
27. State Examinations Commission (SEC)
28. National Transport Authority.