



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Committee on Environmental Policy

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

##### Twentieth meeting

Geneva, 28, 29 and 30 May 2025

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

##### Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

## Annotated provisional agenda for the twentieth meeting

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m.  
on Wednesday, 28 May 2025

### I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.
2. Capacity-building workshops:
  - (a) Implementing the second strand on “Whole institution approach and education for sustainable development”;
  - (b) Implementing the third strand on “Digital education, information and communications technology and education for sustainable development”.
3. Twentieth anniversary celebration of the adoption of the Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development.
4. Implementation of the Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development:
  - (a) Preliminary results on progress achieved and challenges encountered in the fifth phase of implementation;
  - (b) Update on recent national-level developments (policies, actions, programmes, initiatives);
  - (c) Regional framework of cooperation for sustainable development: outcomes of the 2025 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and its side events;
  - (d) Proposal to host the Rounder Sense of Purpose Framework on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website.
5. Implementation update: first priority strand on “Quality education and education for sustainable development”.



6. Implementation update: second priority strand on “Whole institution approach and education for sustainable development”.
7. Implementation update: third priority strand on “Digital education, information and communications technology and education for sustainable development”.
8. Implementation update: fourth priority strand on “Entrepreneurship, employment, innovation and education for sustainable development.
9. Education for sustainable development and youth:
  - (a) Update on Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform activities;
  - (b) Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform draft 2026 activity plan.
10. Recent activities promoting education for sustainable development in other international forums and strengthening synergies with other organizations and processes.
11. Steering Committee participation in upcoming regional and international forums.
12. Update on planned publications for 2025 on education for sustainable development.
13. Status of the trust fund and resource requirements.
14. Twenty-first Steering Committee meeting (2026) official documents forecast.
15. Calendar of meetings.
16. Other business.
17. Closure of the meeting.

## **II. Annotations to the provisional agenda**

### **1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

*Timing: Wednesday, 28 May, 10–10.10 a.m.*

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is expected to adopt the agenda for its twentieth meeting as set out in the present document. The draft agenda was prepared by the secretariat in cooperation with the Chair and the Bureau of the Committee.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Documentation**

Annotated provisional agenda for the twentieth meeting (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2025/1)

### **2. Capacity-building workshops**

*Timing: Wednesday, 28 May, 10.10 a.m.–1 p.m.*

#### **(a) Implementing the second strand on “Whole institution approach and education for sustainable development”**

*Timing: Wednesday, 28 May, 10.10 a.m.–noon*

2. The workshop will be structured around two key areas aimed at strengthening capacity for implementing the whole institution approach in ESD.

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<sup>1</sup> The annotated provisional agenda and other documents for the meeting, including informal papers, will be made available on the meeting web page: <https://unece.org/info/Environmental-Policy/Education-for-Sustainable-Development/events/398585>.

3. The first part of the workshop will focus on gathering input for a Delphi study currently underway to determine the key characteristics of a whole institution approach policy framework. A summary of the results from the first consultation round will be presented, providing an overview of emerging perspectives. Participants will then have the opportunity to reflect on these findings, offer feedback, and engage in small group discussions on the different application contexts in which the whole institution approach is to be implemented. This will include considerations of cultural diversity, varying educational levels and different forms of education, ensuring that the policy framework is adaptable and relevant across diverse educational settings.

4. The second part of the workshop will centre on the whole institution approach toolkit, which is designed to provide practical guidance for integrating ESD through a whole institution approach. The discussion will focus on the first two levels of the toolkit: understanding the broader national education context; and identifying opportunities and potential within schools for embedding sustainability principles. Participants will assess how these levels apply to their specific contexts, providing valuable feedback on the toolkit's relevance and effectiveness. The session will also serve as a platform for clarifying key aspects of the toolkit and addressing participants' questions. Beyond refining the content, the workshop aims to foster a sense of collective ownership, supporting the toolkit's applicability and encouraging its widespread adoption across different national and institutional settings.

5. Through these two complementary components, the workshop will contribute to both the development of a policy framework guiding whole institution approach implementation and to the refinement of a practical toolkit that will support its application at different educational levels.

**(b) Implementing the third strand on “Digital education, information and communications technology and education for sustainable development”**

*Timing: Wednesday, 28 May, noon–1 p.m.*

6. The workshop will examine the role of generative artificial intelligence and other digital technologies in advancing ESD, focusing on their current status, applications and related policies. Participants will discuss opportunities and challenges in integrating these technologies into ESD and explore how the Steering Committee can support effective and responsible digital transformation. The session will also consider strategies to align digital education policies with ESD principles, ensuring inclusivity, equity and ethical use of artificial intelligence in learning environments.

**3. Twentieth anniversary celebration of the adoption of the Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development**

*Timing: Wednesday, 28 May, 3–6 p.m.*

7. The afternoon session of the meeting will be devoted to commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the UNECE Strategy for ESD, which coincides with the twentieth session of the Steering Committee. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on the Strategy's achievements, showcasing key milestones, honouring contributors, and engaging youth to ensure an intergenerational focus. The programme of the event will be elaborated by the organizing committee established during the nineteenth meeting of the Steering Committee (Geneva, 29–31 May 2024) with the purpose of coordinating the celebratory event (information paper No. 1).<sup>2</sup>

8. The Committee members will be invited to complete a template for statements, which will be circulated to Steering Committee members prior to the meeting (information paper No. 1).

<sup>2</sup> ECE/CEP/AC.13/2024/2, para. 90.

**Documentation**

Draft programme and template for statements for “20-year Anniversary of UNECE Strategy for ESD” celebration event (information paper No. 1).

**4. Implementation of the Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development****(a) Preliminary results on progress achieved and challenges encountered in the fifth phase of implementation**

*Timing: Thursday, 29 May, 10–10.30 a.m.*

9. The Steering Committee will be briefed on the findings of the fifth mandatory reporting cycle, which was carried out at the end of the fifth phase of implementation (2019–2024) of the UNECE Strategy for ESD (information paper No. 2).

10. The Committee will be invited to consider both the progress made and the remaining challenges as presented in the national implementation reports, and in particular to discuss the implications of the findings from the fifth reporting round for the implementation of activities beyond the fifth phase of implementation.

**Documentation**

Preliminary results on progress achieved and challenges encountered in the fifth phase of implementation (information paper No. 2).

**(b) Update on recent national-level developments (policies, actions, programmes, initiatives)**

*Timing: Thursday, 29 May, 10.30–11.30 a.m.*

11. Countries will be invited to complement the secretariat’s presentation with interventions on outstanding activities and initiatives implemented since the nineteenth Steering Committee meeting, in particular with regard to how implementation of national strategies for ESD contributes to the new developments and challenges for ESD in the region, taking into consideration the four key strands of the Strategy’s new implementation framework (2021–2030) – quality education and ESD; whole institution approach and ESD; digital education, information and communications technology and ESD; and entrepreneurship, employment, innovation and ESD – as well as the cross-cutting issue of the role of youth in ESD. Given the limited time available, countries will have a maximum of 10 minutes each for interventions.

**(c) Regional framework of cooperation for sustainable development: outcomes of the 2025 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and its side events**

*Timing: Thursday, 29 May, 11.30 a.m.–noon*

12. The Steering Committee will be briefed on the main outcomes of the 2025 UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (Geneva, 2–3 April 2025) and of its two side events (information paper No. 3), as follows:

- “Young People Driving Transformation: Education for Biodiversity and Sustainable Development Goals in Action”, co-organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Geneva Environment Network, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), ECE, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and the Government of Cyprus (31 March or 1 April 2025, to be confirmed);
- “The Pact for the Future and Declaration on Future Generations: Unpacking the Opportunities to Engage Young People in Policy and Decision-making between Now

and 2030”, co-organized by UNEP, Geneva Environment Network, the United Nations Youth Advisory Council under United Nations country team Azerbaijan, UNESCO Youth Climate Action Network, UNESCO/ESD Youth Network, FEE and the Government of Cyprus (31 March or 1 April 2025, to be confirmed).

#### **Documentation**

Concept note and programme of the two side events (information paper No. 3)

#### **(d) Proposal to host the Rounder Sense of Purpose Framework on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website**

*Timing: Thursday, 29 May, noon–12.30 p.m.*

13. The Steering Committee will be briefed about the background and content of the Rounder Sense of Purpose Framework of educator competences and its connection to the original UNECE competence framework, including the proposal to host the content of the Rounder Sense of Purpose Framework website on the ECE website, as either: (a) pages describing each of the competences, complete with rationale and background research; or (b) the same information plus the fully functioning searchable database of teaching activities.

#### **Documentation**

Outline of the background and content of the Rounder Sense of Purpose Framework (information paper No. 4)

### **5. Implementation update: first priority strand on “Quality education and education for sustainable development”**

*Timing: Thursday, 29 May, 12.30–1 p.m.*

14. The Steering Committee will be provided with an update on the progress made in implementing the first priority strand on “Quality education and education for sustainable development” of the implementation framework of the UNECE Strategy for ESD from 2021 to 2030.

15. Participants will be invited to share best practices and challenges encountered in implementing this strand.

### **6. Implementation update: second priority strand on “Whole institution approach and education for sustainable development”**

*Timing: Thursday, 29 May, 3–4 p.m.*

16. The Steering Committee will receive an update on the implementation of the second priority strand on “Whole institution approach and education for sustainable development” of the implementation framework of the UNECE Strategy for ESD from 2021 to 2030, and on the next steps for carrying out the planned activities for implementing the second priority strand, outlined in the draft workplan.

17. The Steering Committee will be also updated about progress in developing a toolkit on whole institution approach and education for sustainable development.

18. Countries and relevant stakeholders will be invited to present initiatives and activities that support the whole institution approach, including case studies and lessons learned. Discussions will explore synergies with other education reforms and sustainability policies.

## **7. Implementation update: third priority strand on “Digital education, information and communications technology and education for sustainable development”**

*Timing: Thursday, 29 May, 4–4.30 p.m.*

19. The Steering Committee will be briefed on the status of efforts to develop a workplan for implementing the third priority strand on “Digital education, information and communications technology and education for sustainable development” of the implementation framework of the UNECE Strategy for ESD from 2021 to 2030, focusing on digital education and the role of information and communications technology in advancing ESD. This session will provide insights into ongoing projects, technological innovations and challenges related to digital transformation in education.

20. Member States will be invited to share their experiences and best practices in leveraging digital tools and information and communications technology for ESD, including online learning platforms, open educational resources and digital literacy initiatives.

## **8. Implementation update: fourth priority strand on “Entrepreneurship, employment, innovation and education for sustainable development”**

*Timing: Thursday, 29 May, 4.30–5.30 p.m.*

21. The Steering Committee will discuss progress made in implementing the fourth priority strand, focusing on the role of ESD in fostering entrepreneurship, employment and innovation. The session will provide an overview of the outcomes of the second activity organized at the regional level – the UNECE Forum on ESD: “Empowering Youth for Sustainable Futures: Entrepreneurship Education and Youth Engagement” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2025/4) (Limassol, Cyprus, 27–28 June 2024).

22. Participants will be invited to reflect on key takeaways from the Forum and to explore ways to enhance the contribution of ESD to entrepreneurship education, youth employment and green innovation.

23. The Steering Committee will be also updated on the status of implementation of the third and last activity within the three-year Swiss-funded project (2023–2025) (information paper No. 5).

### **Documentation**

Outcomes of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Forum on Education for Sustainable Development: “Empowering Youth for Sustainable Futures: Entrepreneurship Education and Youth Engagement” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2025/4).

Update on development of a guiding competence framework for sustainable entrepreneurship and sustainable innovation education and of an educational toolkit (information paper No. 5).

## **9. Education for sustainable development and youth**

*Timing: Thursday, 29 May, 5.30–6 p.m.*

### **(a) Update on Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform activities**

24. The Coordinator of the UNECE ESD Youth Platform will provide an update on the activities and initiatives undertaken since the nineteenth meeting of the Steering Committee (information paper No. 6). The session will focus on youth engagement in ESD and strategies to enhance youth participation in decision-making processes.

**Documentation**

Brief summary of activities organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform since the last meeting and the draft activity plan for 2026 (information paper No. 6)

**(b) Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform draft 2026 activity plan**

25. The Youth Platform will present its draft activity plan for 2026, outlining key objectives, proposed initiatives and areas for collaboration with national and regional stakeholders. The Steering Committee will be invited to discuss and approve the proposed plan (information paper No. 6).

**Documentation**

Brief summary of activities organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform since the last meeting and the draft activity plan for 2026 (information paper No. 6)

**10. Recent activities promoting education for sustainable development in other international forums and strengthening synergies with other organizations and processes**

*Timing: Friday, 30 May, 10–11 a.m.*

26. The Steering Committee will receive updates on global and regional initiatives promoting ESD in other international forums, including developments in the processes aimed at implementing ESD at the global level led by UNESCO, outcomes of relevant international conferences, and progress on global partnerships supporting ESD implementation.

27. A representative of UNESCO will provide the Committee with the following:

(a) A short overview of the highlights of the Greening Education Partnership, in particular the roll-out of the Green School Quality Standard and the Greening Curriculum Guidance, as well as Greening Education Partnership participation in the ECE region;

(b) A brief overview and updates on the ESD for 2030 country initiatives among ECE member States.

28. Participants will be invited to share experiences from their engagement in international forums and discuss opportunities for strengthening synergies between the UNECE Strategy for ESD and global education policies. Among other things, the Steering Committee will be briefed on recent activities held under the aegis of UNEP, the European Commission, the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, Global Education Network Europe and the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians.

29. Delegations and, in particular, stakeholders such as international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), regional environmental centres and research institutions, may wish to inform the Steering Committee of activities related to the Strategy's implementation currently being carried out or planned at the national and international levels.

**11. Steering Committee participation in upcoming regional and international forums**

*Timing: Friday, 30 May, 11–11.15 a.m.*

30. The member States and observers will be invited to share information on and inform the Committee of their planned participation in upcoming regional and international forums related to ESD, and to discuss ways of promoting the Committee's work.

## 12. Update on planned publications for 2025 on education for sustainable development

*Timing: Friday, 30 May, 11.15–11.45 a.m.*

31. The Chair will update the members of the Steering Committee on progress regarding the preparation of the two publications forecast for publication in 2024:

(a) *Guiding Framework for Twenty-first Century Competences for Innovation and Entrepreneurship*;

(b) *Youth Empowered: From Words to Action*.

32. At its nineteenth meeting, the Committee agreed to postpone both publications to 2025.<sup>3</sup> The Committee will be updated on the status of preparation of the above-mentioned publications.

33. The Steering Committee will be invited to discuss any issues related to the process of preparing the publications, and the members responsible for that process will update the Committee in that regard.

34. The Steering Committee will also be invited to discuss potential proposals for publications for the next period. Possible proposal for the two publications to be published in 2027 are: (a) *Quality Education Matters: Frameworks and Future-fit Practices in Education for Sustainable Development Across the Region*; and (b) *Advancing Education for Sustainable Development: A Whole Institution Approach Framework for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Region*.

## 13. Status of the trust fund and resource requirements

*Timing: Friday, 30 May, 11.45 a.m.–12.15 p.m.*

35. The secretariat will present an update on the financial status of the trust fund supporting ESD activities, including an overview of contributions received and a projected resource needs note (information paper No. 7). Since the funding situation of the Strategy for ESD is always very difficult, and regional activities are funded exclusively through member States' contributions to the trust fund, advance indications of pledges by member States are vital.

36. The Chair of the Steering Committee will invite the members of the Committee and national focal points to consider the funding situation regarding the Strategy's activities in recent years, with a view to examining alternative ways of addressing the matter, including providing in-kind contributions to various programme activities.

37. The Steering Committee will be invited to discuss the funding perspectives of capacity-building activities for the next phase 2025–2026, based on the activities outlined in the adopted workplan and taking into consideration the priorities of the 2030 implementation framework.

38. During the discussion, the Steering Committee will be expected to look for ways to mobilize additional funds for supporting the Strategy's trust fund to provide uninterrupted functioning of the secretariat, which supports activities organized by the Committee, and funding of capacity-building activities at the national and subregional levels.

### Documentation

Contributions, incurred expenses and estimated resource requirements (information paper No. 7)

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<sup>3</sup> ECE/CEP/AC.13/2024/2, paras. 157–158.

**14. Twenty-first Steering Committee meeting (2026) official documents forecast**

*Timing: Friday, 30 May, 12.15–12.30 p.m.*

39. The Steering Committee will discuss and agree on the number and titles of official documents to be prepared for its twenty-first meeting in 2026.

40. Members will be encouraged to propose topics for reports and studies that align with emerging ESD priorities.

**15. Calendar of meetings**

*Timing: Friday, 30 May, 12.30–12.40 p.m.*

41. The Steering Committee will discuss the timing and format of its twenty-first meeting in 2026, as well as other relevant working group meetings.

**16. Other business**

*Timing: Friday, 30 May, 12.40–12.50 p.m.*

42. The Steering Committee will be invited to discuss any additional issues or proposals not covered under other agenda items. Delegations wishing to propose topics are encouraged to inform the secretariat in advance.

**17. Closure of the meeting**

*Timing: Friday, 30 May, 12.50–1 p.m.*

43. The Chair will summarize the key outcomes of the meeting and provide closing remarks, before formally adjourning the twentieth meeting of the Steering Committee.

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