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WG/T/2

**PROGRESS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD CLASSIFICATION OF
TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES
(ISCED-T)**

UNESCO Institute for Statistics

TCG 9 Working Group on Teachers

22 November 2022

1. Background

ISCED-T was developed in close consultation with the Technical Cooperation Group on the Indicators for SDG 4 - Education 2030 (TCG). Indeed, at its 6th meeting in August 2019, the TCG acknowledged the classification as a sustainable solution and positive step towards achieving a global public good to enable global policy dialogue on teachers. At the 7th TCG meeting (27 to 29 October 2020), UIS presented options for development of ISCED-T and the TCG, in a post meeting consultation, endorsed the proposed dimensions for classification of Teacher Training Programmes (TTPs) in ISCED-T¹. At the 8th TCG meeting (2 November 2021), UIS presented the draft proposal of ISCED-T submitted to the 41st session of UNESCO General Conference (GC) for adoption. UIS also presented the proposal for collecting metadata on the countries definition of ‘trained’ and ‘qualified’ teachers and discussed the implications of ISCED-T for data reporting on SDG 4.c.1. In the post-meeting consultation, the TCG endorsed the proposal to collect the metadata as this will contribute to clarifying some of the current uncertainties regarding the quality and the comparability of data on trained and qualified teachers. The TCG also endorsed the mapping of national TTPs to the five main classification dimensions of ISCED-T, the use of the resulting mapping to produce internationally comparable data, and the development of an international standard for “trained” and “qualified” teachers².

ISCED-T was adopted at the 41st session of UNESCO GC in November 2021. Further to the adoption of the classification, the UIS developed an implementation strategy, with inputs from ISCED-T Technical Advisory Panel³ (see Annex 1). The execution of this implementation strategy started in 2022.

2. Implementing ISCED-T 2021

The first activity to the implementation strategy of ISCED-T was to disseminate the classification manual globally in the 6 UN official languages, and this activity has been completed (see [UIS ISCED microsite](#), [UNESCO Digital Library](#)). The other key activities of the strategy include:

- **Feasibility study on ISCED-T:** planned to be carried out in a sample of 10 to 20 volunteer countries with a global geographical representation. So far, volunteered countries are: Belgium (the French Community), Burkina Faso, Chad, India, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger,

¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). 2021. “Technical Cooperation Group: Report for 2020 - 7th TCG Meeting Report and Indicator Development for 2020.” Montreal: UIS. <http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2021/01/TCG-Report-2020.pdf>.

² UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). 2022. “Technical Cooperation Group on the Indicators for SDG4 – Education 2030 (TCG): Eight Meeting. Post-TCG 8th Meeting Consultation”. March 2022. Montreal: UIS. <https://tcg.uis.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2022/03/TCG-Consultation-Report-Dec-2021.pdf>.

³ ISCED-T TAP is a gender-balanced group consisting of 11 experts in teacher training and qualifications, teacher statistics, and international classifications from 12 organizations and from all UNESCO regions. The TAP includes the following organizations: Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA), Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS), Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), Centro de Investigación Avanzada en Educación (Center for Advanced Research in Education) (CIAE) - Universidad de Chile, Education International, Eurostat, Network for International Policies and Cooperation in Education and Training (NORRAG), International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Pacific Community, Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) which also acts as the secretariat for the United Nations Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications (UNCEISC). The UIS acts as the Secretariat of the TAP.

Switzerland. It is expected to have a few additional volunteered countries from Southeast Asia, the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean regions to participate to the study.

The feasibility study aims to pre-test ISCED-T survey instruments, which mirror an approach similar to the one used for ISCED 2011, where countries, after preparing the list of their teacher training programmes and the related qualifications, will produce a draft mapping to the classification which will be assessed and 'approved', before use to report data on the stock of trained and qualified teachers (as needed for monitoring SDG Target 4.c related indicators).

In addition to help fine-tune ISCED-T survey instruments for the global data collection, the feasibility study will help collect information on national teacher training programmes, pathways to the teaching profession and continuous professional development, which will feed into the development of the Operational Manual (OM) of ISCED-T. The OM will provide guidelines for classifying national TTPs and related qualifications. It is expected to be produced during the second half of 2023. The feasibility study is planned to be carried out from November 2022 to June 2023. An expanded data collection approach is envisaged, which will include 'web-scraping' followed by country review, completion, and validation before submission to the UIS.

- **Survey tools and training materials:** the necessary training and survey instruments will be provided to Member States to support their understanding of the new classification and their data reporting on it. Countries will be required to prepare and report their TTPs and related qualifications, their national pathways to the teaching profession, and their continued professional development programmes. They will also be required to produce a draft mapping of their TTPs to ISCED-T. UIS and OECD/Eurostat (for OECD countries) are expected to assess and approve the national ISCED-T mappings produced.
- **Global minimum standard of teacher qualifications by level of education taught:** part of the implementation strategy of ISCED-T aims to explore the development of such standard to reflect both empirical and political processes. For the empirical process, the metadata collected by UIS in 2022 on the definition of 'trained' and 'qualified' teachers and on the minimum ISCED level of academic qualification required to teach, were used to prepare a proposal of global minimum standard of teacher qualifications by level of education taught (ISCED 02, 1, 2, 3). This proposal will be presented and discussed at the 9th Meeting of the TCG. The proposal of the global minimum standard based on empirical process will be accompanied with a proposal for political process of validation. The aim is to define a meaningful global metric for minimum teacher qualifications by level of education taught to contribute to policy dialogue on teacher quality.
- **Countries review and validation of the UIS inventory on TTPs:** as part of ISCED-T implementation process, the review and validation of the national TTPs inventoried in 2020 to inform the development of the classification will be carried out by country (160 countries in total). The resulting validated TTPs will be used, together with the TTPs collected during the

feasibility study, to prepare the Operational Manual on ISCED-T, necessary for the roll out of data collection at the global level.

- **Global data collection on ISCED-T:** this activity is sequentially planned after completion of the feasibility study and production of the Operational Manual. Fine-tuned survey instruments based on experiences/findings from the feasibility study will be produced and administered globally for data collection on ISCED-T.
- **Review and ‘approval’ of national mapping to ISCED-T before use for data reporting:** ISCED-T implementation strategy proposes that the draft mappings for UNESCO/OECD/Eurostat (UOE) countries could be assessed by OECD, Eurostat, and the UIS before being ‘approved’. For non-UOE countries, the draft mappings will be assessed by UIS prior to ‘approval’.

3. Points for decision

As UIS is embarking in data collection on ISCED-T, the following points are proposed for the TCG decision.

- Decision point 1: Do you approve the implementation strategy of ISCED-T as presented in section 2 ‘Implementing ISCED-T 2021’? [Yes]/[No (please indicate why)].
- Decision point 2: Do you approve the draft questionnaire proposed for the feasibility study? [Yes]/[No (please indicate why)]

Annex 1: Implementation Plan of ISCED-T 2021



Implementation Plan of ISCED-T 2021

March 2022

I. Background

In November 2021, the 41st session of UNESCO General Conference adopted ISCED-T (see Annex 1) the following resolution: ([41 C/resolution 15](#))

Towards a global classification framework for teacher policy dialogue – developing an International Standard Classification of teacher-training programmes, ISCED-T

The General Conference,

Recalling 40 C/Resolution 18 and 210 EX/Decision 8,

Having examined document 41 C/20,

1. *Notes with satisfaction* that, in accordance with 40 C/Resolution 18, a technical advisory panel was established and a draft proposal for an International Standard Classification of Teacher-Training Programmes (ISCED-T) was presented to and discussed with a wide range of experts, including Member State representatives from national ministries of education and national statistical offices;
2. *Approves* the International Standard Classification of Teacher-Training Programmes (ISCED-T) annexed to document 41 C/20;
3. *Invites* the Director-General:
 - a. to prepare an operational manual aimed at providing guidance to users on the interpretation and application of the International Standard Classification of Teacher-Training Programmes (ISCED-T);

- b. to provide training and capacity-building support to countries to prepare them for the implementation of ISCED-T in national and international data collection exercises in the coming years;
- c. to explore the feasibility of developing a global minimum standard for teacher qualifications which could be used for the monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 4.c.1, along with national standards currently used for monitoring;
- d. to form an ISCED-T Committee to advise the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) regarding the classification of teacher-training programmes and qualifications and to identify potential areas for further development;
- e. to continue to review periodically and to revise ISCED-T to ensure that it is consistent with developments in the policies and characteristics of national teacher-training programmes and the related teacher qualifications;
- f. to submit a progress report of the work accomplished to the Executive Board at its 217th session and every four years thereafter.

During the General Conference, Member States made the following suggestions concerning the classification:

- capture pathways to the teaching profession;
- consider reflecting in-service teacher training programmes (TTPs), including continuing professional development (CPD);
- work out practical aspects related to the feasibility of ISCED-T and its use for data reporting on SDG Target 4.c;
- provide training and technical support to Member States for reporting on ISCED-T.

The aim of this document is to propose an implementation plan of the classification that incorporates these suggestions.

II. ISCED-T implementation

II.1. Denomination of ISCED-T

Considering that the General Conference adopted ISCED-T in November 2021, it is proposed to name the classification **ISCED-T 2021**.

The proposed denomination is consistent with the denomination scheme used for ISCED 2011 and ISCED-F 2013, which were adopted by the General Conference in 2011 and in 2013, respectively.

II.2. Key considerations for ISCED-T implementation

To roll out ISCED-T and carry off the few concerns raised by Member States during its adoption, the following points are proposed to be part of the implementation plan of the classification:

- Develop ISCED-T questionnaire to collect information on pre-service teacher training programmes and the related teachers' qualifications according to the classification dimensions. To prepare the extension of ISCED-T beyond pre-service TTPs as suggested by the Member States delegates during the General Conference, the questionnaire will also collect a limited amount of information on pathways to the teaching profession, in-service TTPs or continuous professional development (CPD) programmes. Section II.4.2 attempts to outline a draft 0 of the structure of ISCED-T 2021 questionnaire.
- Produce instruction guidelines for the data collection exercise, like the UIS Instruction Manual for Survey of Formal Education (see <http://uis.unesco.org/uis-questionnaires>) and the UNESCO-OECD-Eurostat (UOE) data collection manual 2020 (see <http://uis.unesco.org/fr/node/3092299>).
- Produce an Operational Manual of ISCED-T providing guidelines for classifying national teacher training programmes and related qualifications (for example, see [ISCED 2011 Operational Manual](#)). The Operational Manual may include dedicated sessions on pathways, in-service or CPD programmes, if there is enough evidence to identify, characterize, and report on in-service trainings or CPD programmes that could be considered equivalent to certain pre-service teacher training programmes. For example, qualifications gained through 'accredited prior learning' or on-the-job experience are treated the same in ISCED-A (ISCED-Attainment 2011) as equivalent qualifications gained by more formal study routes (see paragraphs 35 and 83 of [ISCED 2011 Manual](#)).
- Explore the development of a global minimum standard of teacher qualifications reflecting both empirical and political processes. From an empirical point of view, the development of the global minimum standard could use information from ISCED-T mappings which will inform about the type of TTPs and related qualifications offered in different countries. From a political point on view, such a global minimum standard will sought to help define meaningful benchmarks for teacher qualifications by level of education taught and contribute to policy dialogue on teacher quality. The development of the global minimum standard will be a good logical place to do further work on ISCED-T to incorporate pathways to the teaching profession.
- Define and standardise the classification outputs, including ISCED-T mapping to be used by countries for data reporting. Set standards on the classification outputs, including clear guidance for:
 - Reporting on current TTPs OR historical TTPs and their related qualifications;
 - Reporting on trained teachers "flow" OR trained teachers "stock";
 - ISCED-T mapping production and approval process (UIS, OECD/Eurostat);
 - Mechanisms for quality assurance of data collected;
 - Collecting metadata on national definitions of 'trained' and 'qualified' teachers;

- Synthetic data/results to be presented for each country. Results at too detailed level could suggest that there are significant differences between different TTPs characteristics, which may not be an accurate reflection. As illustrative example, even though ISCED-P (ISCED-Programmes 2011) allows for the classification of programmes with and without access to higher ISCED levels, the UIS doesn't usually make this distinction in the published data. A same approach could be applied regarding the reporting of teachers who have received different types of training, and limit published data to those who have received a certain minimum amount of pre-service training (or have received any pre-service training).
- Implement ISCED-T 2021 globally, as adopted by the General Conference.
 - In terms of feasibility study (piloting), an approach similar to the one used for ISCED 2011 could be used, where countries, after preparing the list of their TTPs and the related qualifications, will produce a draft mapping to the classification which will be assessed before being 'approved'. ISCED-T mappings should be 'approved' before countries start using them to report data on indicators used for SDG Target 4.c monitoring. A feasibility study, prior to large scale roll out, could be carried out in a small sample of countries with global geographical representation;
 - As was done in the cases of ISCED-P and ISCED-A, the draft mapping to ISCED-T for UOE countries could be assessed by OECD, Eurostat, and the UIS before being 'approved'. For non-UOE countries, the draft mappings will be assessed by UIS prior to 'approval'.
 - An 'approval' Committee of ISCED-T mappings may need to be set up, with guidance from UIS and ISCED-T TAP.
- Develop an international definition of 'trained' and 'qualified' teachers. While this work is quite related to the development of a global minimum standard of teacher qualifications, a first step in accomplishing it is to collect metadata on countries' standards and definitions of 'trained' and 'qualified' teachers underlying the data they currently report for the monitoring of SDG global indicator 4.c.1. The proposed metadata template, which is included in the 2022 UIS survey of formal education was endorsed in October 2021 by the Technical Cooperation Group on the Indicators for SDG 4 – Education 2030 (TCG) at its 8th meeting (see Annex 2).

II.3. Dissemination of ISCED-T

- The text of ISCED-T, as adopted by the General Conference, will be published globally as the ***International Standard Classification of Teacher Training Programmes: ISCED-T 2021***. The classification will be published in the six UN languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.
- Member States and other relevant users will be informed of the implications of ISCED-T for monitoring of SDG target 4.c.

II.4. ISCED-T 2021 survey and other supporting documents

1. Operational Manual

Planned after the feasibility study to enable the use of TTPs collected and validated with countries.

2. Other survey instruments

As indicated in section II.2, the aim is to survey all countries, i.e. UOE and non-UOE countries. The feasibility study will be addressed through the pre-validation of country's ISCED-T mapping (e.g. by region or countries group) before use for data reporting.

Survey instruments include the questionnaire and respondents' instruction manual.

- **ISCED-T 2021 questionnaire**

The main objective of the questionnaire is to collect data on pre-service TTPs and the related qualifications for a 'clinical' application of the classification. To help respond to some suggestions from the General Conference, it is proposed to start collecting some data on pathways to the teaching profession and on in-service trainings or CPD programmes. Collecting data on pathways, in-service TTPs or CPD will aid to start developing a database to inform further work on how best extend ISCED-T beyond pre-service TTPs. To avoid confusing countries, clarification will be added to the questionnaire on the purpose of collecting data on pathways and in-service or CPD programmes.

Therefore, it is proposed to design ISCED-T 2021 questionnaire to collect:

- National pre-service TTPs and related qualifications as required to inform on ISCED-T classification dimensions and coding scheme.
- Limited amount⁴ of information on:

⁴ One option would be to target the main pathways to the teaching profession, and the most common/popular and recent in-service TTPs or CPD, and limit data reporting to metadata or a set of characteristics largely considered as key. The definition of this core set of characteristics needs further work, and could be based on meta-analysis or at least some concrete countries information.

- pathways to the teaching profession of trainings on offer at national level (e.g. to which pathway(s) a given TTPs refers to – answer to be selected from a pre-defined list of pathways).
 - in-service TTPs or CPD that could be considered equivalent to certain pre-service teacher training programmes.
 - Consider adding questions to gather evidence that will guide the development of a global minimum standard for teacher qualifications required to teach a given level of education;
 - Limit data reporting burden on countries, by aligning the content, where possible, with information already collected in UIS ISCED 2011 questionnaire.
- **Instruction manual of ISCED-T 2021 survey**

The instruction manual will aim to help data providers in Member States complete ISCED-T questionnaire and produce the mapping of their national TTPs to ISCED-T.

II.5. Countries training and technical support on ISCED-T 2021 data reporting

This represents an important part fully integrated to the implementation strategy of ISCED-T to enhance countries' understanding of the new classification and stimulate data reporting using the survey tools provided to survey respondents.

II.6. Provisional roadmap

Activities	2022 (quarter)				2023 (quarter)			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Finalize ISCED-T based on suggestions from the 41st session of UNESCO GC								
<i>Disseminate ISCED-T manual globally (in the 6 UN official languages)</i>								
Develop a data collection strategy for ISCED-T, with inputs from ISCED-T TAP								
Develop survey tools for ISCED-T and training materials								
Carry out the feasibility test of ISCED-T (in a sample of 10 to 20 volunteer countries)								
Countries to prepare the list of their TTPs and the related qualifications, and their pathways to the teaching profession and continued professional development								
Countries to produce a draft mapping to ISCED-T								
UIS (and OECD and Eurostat, for OECD countries) to assess and approve the ISCED-T mappings produced								
Countries to use their ISCED-T mappings to report data on trained and qualified teachers (as needed for monitoring SDG Target 4.c).								
Develop ISCED-T Operational Manual (OM)								
Prepare the concept note								
Validate the Teachers Training Programmes (TTPs) in the UIS TTP inventory database								
Prepare a sample of TTPs (based on information collected from the feasibility test, and the validated TTPs from UIS inventory) for illustration/interpretation and application of ISCED-T in the OM								
Commission a consultant to write the OM								
Roll out data collection on ISCED-T globally and produce ISCED-T mappings								
Data collection (on TTPs and related qualifications)								
Data processing - Draft ISCED-T mappings								
Define process to approve draft ISCED-T mappings								
An 'approval' Committee of the mappings may need to be set up (jointly UIS, OECD, and Eurostat)								
Release approved ISCED-T mappings								
Collect metadata on national definitions of trained and qualified teachers.								
Explore the feasibility of developing a global minimum standard for teacher qualifications by level of education taught (SDG global indicator 4.c.1) (empirical process).								
Coordinate with the United Nations Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications (UNCEISC) for ISCED-T to become Member of the Family of International Statistical Classifications								

Annex 1.a. ISCED-T as adopted by the 41th session of the General Conference (see annex to document [41 C/20](#))

Annex 1.b. Metadata template⁵ to collect the definition of ‘trained’ and ‘qualified’ teachers used by countries to produce the data they currently report for the monitoring of SDG Target 4.c (indicators related to trained and qualified teachers).

⁵ Consider collecting information on ISCED 01 as well, to align with the UOE data collection, which collects data about the minimum level of qualification required to become a classroom teacher at ISCED 01 and ISCED 02.

Metadata on trained teachers		Pre-primary ISCED 02	Primary ISCED 1	Lower secondary ISCED 2	Upper secondary ISCED 3
How are trained teachers defined in your country?	Please provide your national definition for trained teachers				
	If applicable, please indicate the minimum level of academic qualification required to teach the specific level of education				
	If applicable, please indicate the minimum requirement in terms of duration of pre-service teaching practice (in weeks)				
Metadata on qualified teachers					
How are qualified teachers defined in your country?	Please provide your national definition for qualified teachers				
	Please indicate the minimum level of academic qualification required to teach the specific level of education				

Appendix

"Minimum level of the qualification: the ISCED level of the teacher training programme (and its related qualification) required to teach the specific level of education.

Source: ISCED-T draft proposal."

"Teaching practice is the theoretical duration of the work-based (in-school) component of the overall (most common) teacher training programme that prepares teacher to teach the specific level of education.

Source: ISCED-T draft proposal. "

"Qualified teachers: A qualified teacher is one who has the minimum academic qualifications necessary to teach at a specific level of education in a given country. This is usually related to the subject(s) they teach.

Source: Instruction Manual: UIS Survey of Formal Education (<http://uis.unesco.org/uis-questionnaires>, p.24)".

"Trained teachers: A trained teacher is one who has fulfilled at least the minimum organized teacher-training requirements (pre-service or in-service) to teach a specific level of education according to the relevant national policy or law. These requirements usually include pedagogical knowledge (broad

principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that transcend the subject matter being taught - typically approaches, methods and techniques of teaching), and professional knowledge (knowledge of statutory instruments and other legal frameworks that govern the teaching profession). Some programmes may also cover content knowledge (knowledge of the curriculum and the subject matter to be taught and the use of relevant materials).

Source: Instruction Manual: UIS Survey of Formal Education (<http://uis.unesco.org/uis-questionnaires>, p.24)".