United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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Education
Sector

Progress on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education

Findings of the 6th Consultation on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (2012-2016)

Education 2030

UNESCO Education Sector

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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Education Sector

Education 2030

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Overview of the findings

1. Implementation of the Guiding Principles of the 1974 Recommendation is improving, with notable regional variations.
2. The Guiding Principles of the 1974 Recommendation are reflected in the constitution, domestic legislation or education policy of most countries.
3. Nearly all countries' curricula include the Guiding Principles of the 1974 Recommendation, with relatively less attention paid to Cultural Diversity and Tolerance.
4. Most countries take a cross-curriculum approach to teaching the Guiding Principles of the 1974 Recommendation, with a focus on Civics/Citizenship, Social Studies, and History.
5. Most countries regard teaching hours for the Guiding Principles of the 1974 Recommendation as moderately sufficient, and seem satisfied with teaching materials.
6. Learner-centred pedagogical approaches are the most popular.
7. Insufficient teacher training remains a stumbling block.
8. More countries include the Guiding Principles of the 1974 Recommendation in student assessment, with still insufficient attention to assessment of values and attitudes as well as behaviours.
9. The Guiding Principles of the 1974 Recommendation are included in programmes outside formal education, but there is room for progress.
10. New initiatives and political priorities are the most common enabling factors; lack of resources is the greatest obstacle.

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I. Introduction

"The Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms" was adopted by UNESCO's General Conference at its 18th session in 1974 (hereafter the 1974 Recommendation). Every four years, Member States report to UNESCO on measures taken to implement the 1974 Recommendation in pre-primary, primary, secondary and post-secondary/tertiary education. This document summarizes and analyses the main findings of the 6th Consultation on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation (hereafter the 6th Consultation),[1] covering the period of 2012 to 2016.

The findings of the 6th Consultation provide important insight into how Member States are implementing the 1974 Recommendation as well as how they are progressing towards Target 4.7 of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education. Target 4.7 concerns Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education, which are closely related to the 1974 Recommendation (Box 1). Supporting Member States in implementing Target 4.7 is a UNESCO priority and essential to progress across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

BOX 1 Target 4.7

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

II. Background

Revised questionnaire

Member States reported on a questionnaire sent by the UNESCO Director-General. The questionnaire conceptualises the content of the 1974 Recommendation into four Guiding Principles and related Topics (Table 1).[2]

TABLE 1
Guiding Principles and related Topics of the 1974 Recommendation

GUIDING PRINCIPLES	TOPICS
Cultural Diversity and Tolerance	International understanding, solidarity, and cooperation
	Intercultural and interreligious dialogue
	Global citizenship
Peace and Non-violence	Friendly relations among nations
	Preventing violent extremism
	Preventing other forms of violence, including bullying and gender-based violence
Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms	Equality, inclusion, and non-discrimination
	Justice and fairness
	Ethics, morals, and values
Human Survival and Well-being	Climate change
	Environmental sustainability, caring for the planet
	Sustainable development, consumption, and livelihood

BOX 2

The global indicator for Target 4.7 is:

"Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed in (i) national education policies, (ii) curricula, (iii) teacher education and (iv) student assessment."

(Approved by UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/71/313)

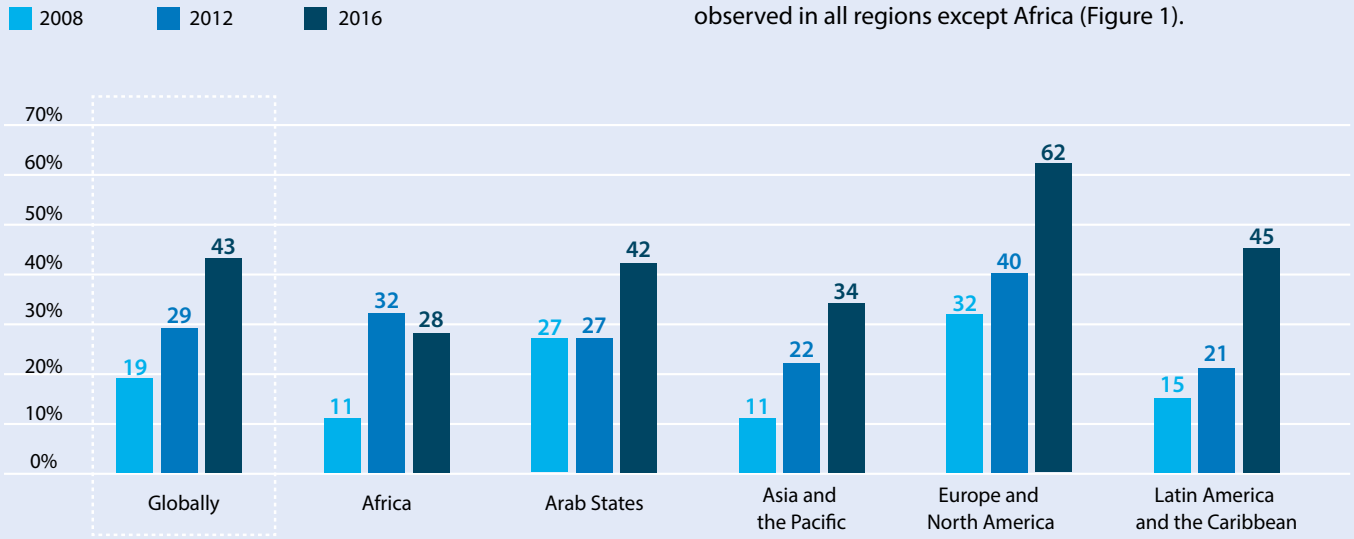
For the 6th Consultation, revisions were made to the questionnaire used in previous consultations in order to address the concerns of Target 4.7 of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education, for which global indicator (Box 2) the questionnaire is the official survey tool. The revised questionnaire was designed to provide a basis to review how the 1974 Recommendation was reflected in countries' education policy, curriculum, teacher education and student assessment, as aspects concerned by the global indicator.

In addition, in order to facilitate reporting by Member States, multiple-choice questions were introduced, along with fewer open-ended questions, to make it possible to quantify reporting data and allow cross-national and cross-regional comparisons.

Higher response rate

For the 6th Consultation, 83 out of 195 Member States responded, a response rate of 43%.[3] This was an increase of 46% from the 29% response rate of the 5th Consultation that ran in 2012, when 57 countries responded. The increase was observed in all regions except Africa (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Countries participating in the 4th (2008), 5th (2012) and 6th (2016) Consultation (in %)



Monde ; Afrique ; États arabes ; Asie et Pacifique ; Europe et

Data analysis and limitations

In the analysis here, comparison with previous Consultations was made when there is a data continuity allowing longitudinal comparisons. However, as data from previous Consultations were mainly qualitative, comparisons were possible only with data that were coded and quantified in the ad-hoc study conducted in 2017 to review the history of the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation.[4]

The data analysed in this report are **self-reported information**, reflecting, therefore, a level of subjectivity that impacts on the nature of the data. This means that comparative interpretation of data must be made with caution.

III. Findings

FINDING 1

Implementation of the Guiding Principles is improving, with notable regional variations

Figure 2
Countries reporting on the improvement in the implementation of the Guiding Principles in the 6th Consultation compared to five years ago, by region (in %)

92% of all countries (70 countries) reported improvement, either moderately or fully, in implementation of the Guiding Principles, compared to five years ago (Figure 2). Improvements are notable in Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean, where the reported rate of 'fully improved' is above the global average. In Africa and the Arab States the rate of 'fully improved' is below the global average, with 8% and 14% respectively.

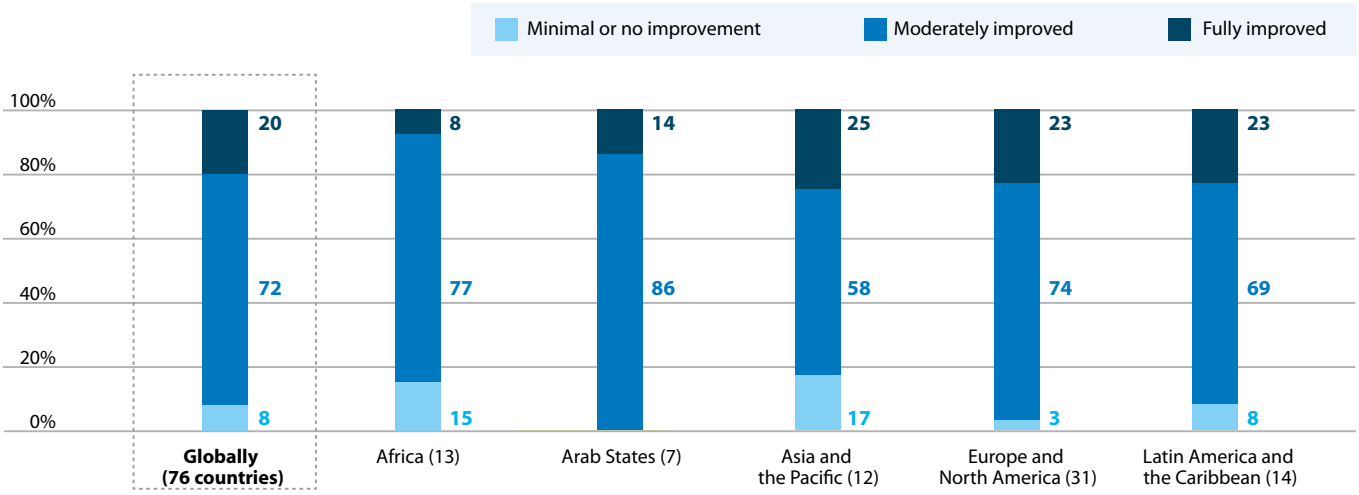
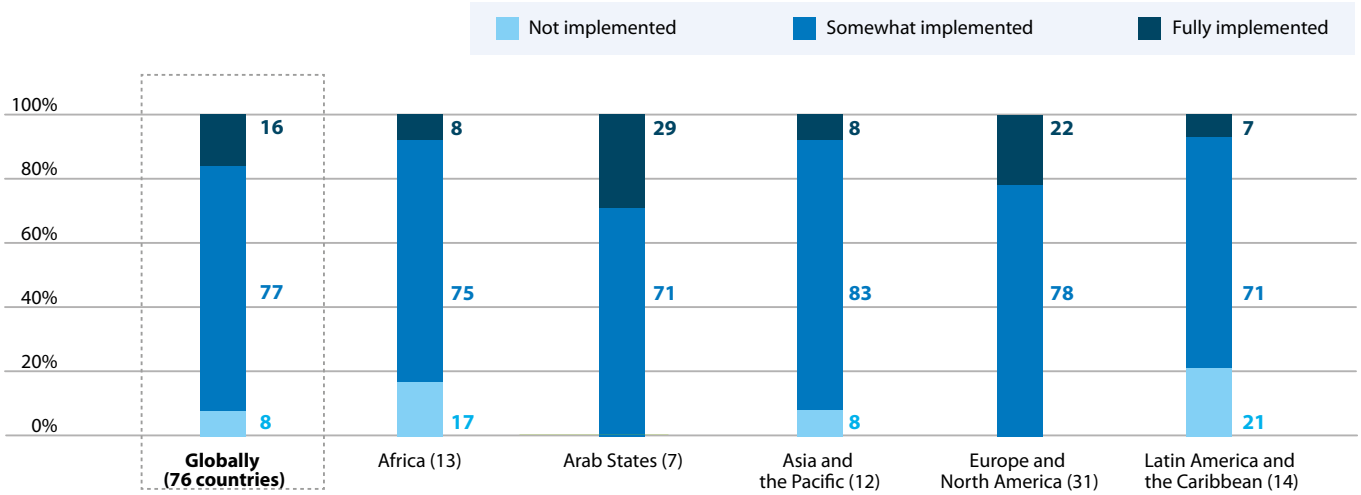


Figure 3
Countries reporting on the current implementation of the Guiding Principles in the 6th Consultation, by region (in %)

Regional variations are also notable in the current status of implementation. All responding countries in Europe and North America as well as Arab States reported either partial or full implementation (Figure 3). The highest rates of non-implementation were reported from Africa (17%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (21%) – above the global average of 8%.



FINDING 2

The Guiding Principles are reflected in the constitution, domestic legislation and education policy of most countries

Figure 4
Countries reporting that the Guiding Principles are reflected in the constitution or domestic legislation, by region (in %)

98% of countries (80 countries) reported that the Guiding Principles were reflected, either fully or partially, in the country's constitution or domestic legislation (e.g., enacting legislation to reduce violence, harassment, and bullying, and to combat discrimination) (Figure 4). 74% of European and North American countries reported full implementation. The no-implementation rate is highest in Latin America and the Caribbean (7%).

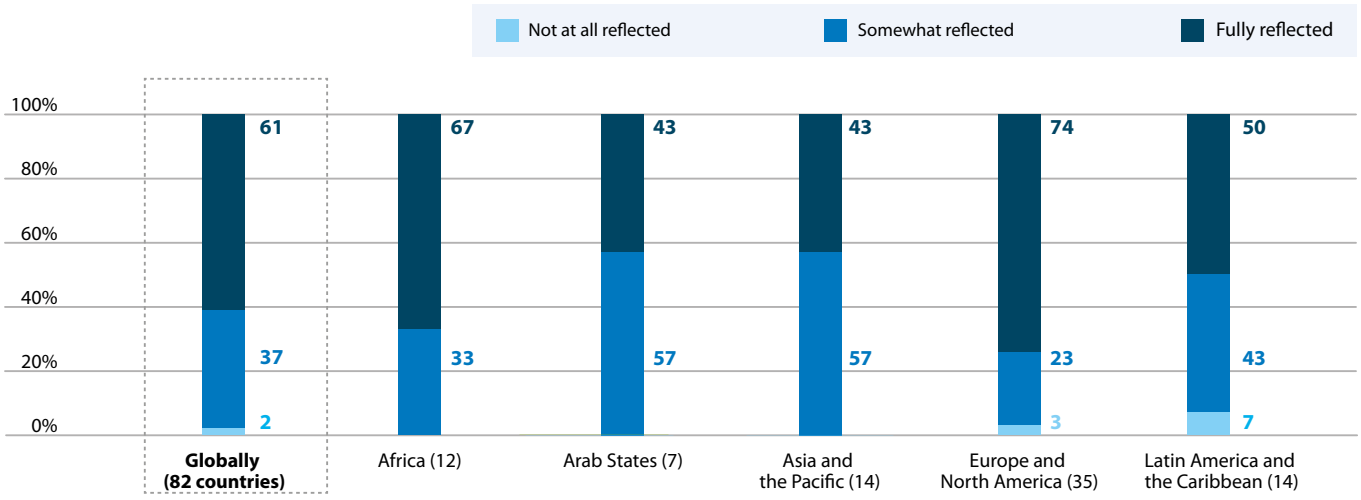
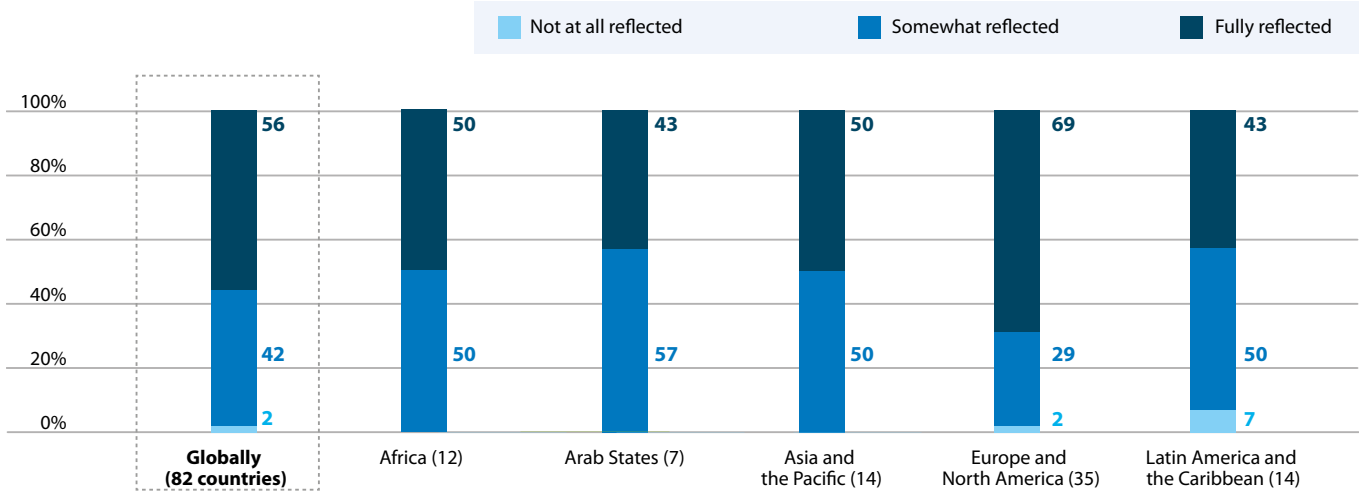


Figure 5
Countries reporting that the Guiding Principles are reflected in education policies and framework, by region (in %)

Implementation (full and partial implementations combined) of the Guiding Principles in the country's education policies and frameworks is equally high, at 98% (Figure 5) – showing a high level of government priority. The rate has increased from 89% in the 5th Consultation. Europe and North America showed the highest rate of full implementation (69%), while the no-implementation rate is highest in Latin America and the Caribbean.



FINDING 3

Nearly all countries' curricula include the Guiding Principles, with relatively less attention paid to Cultural Diversity and Tolerance

Figure 6
Countries reporting inclusion of the Guiding Principles in formal education curriculum, by Guiding Principle (in %)

Nearly all countries (99%, 81 countries) reported that their curricula included the Guiding Principles and related Topics. However, the Guiding Principle related to Cultural Diversity and Tolerance shows a lower rate of inclusion (Figure 6). An analysis of the Topics of the Guiding Principles[5] reveals that this has to do with the relatively low attention paid to the Topic of global citizenship, notably in the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Arab States pay particular attention to the Topic of violent extremism, whereas that related to violence and bullying, including gender-based, is prominent in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

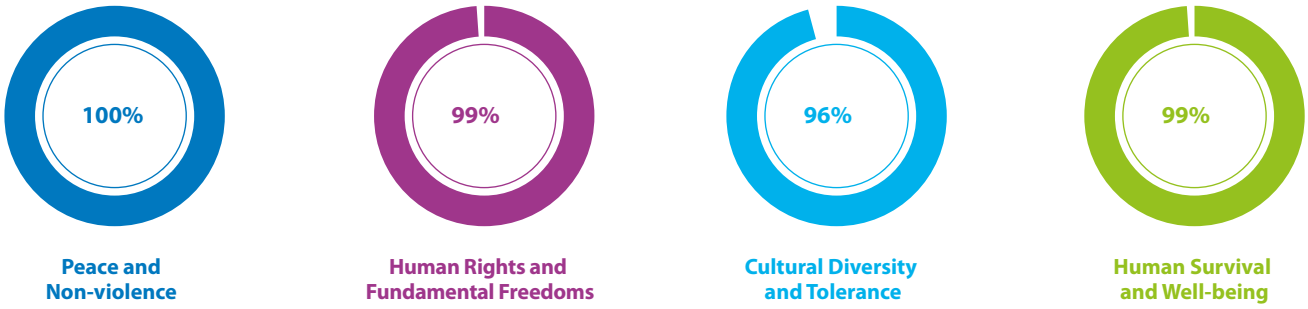
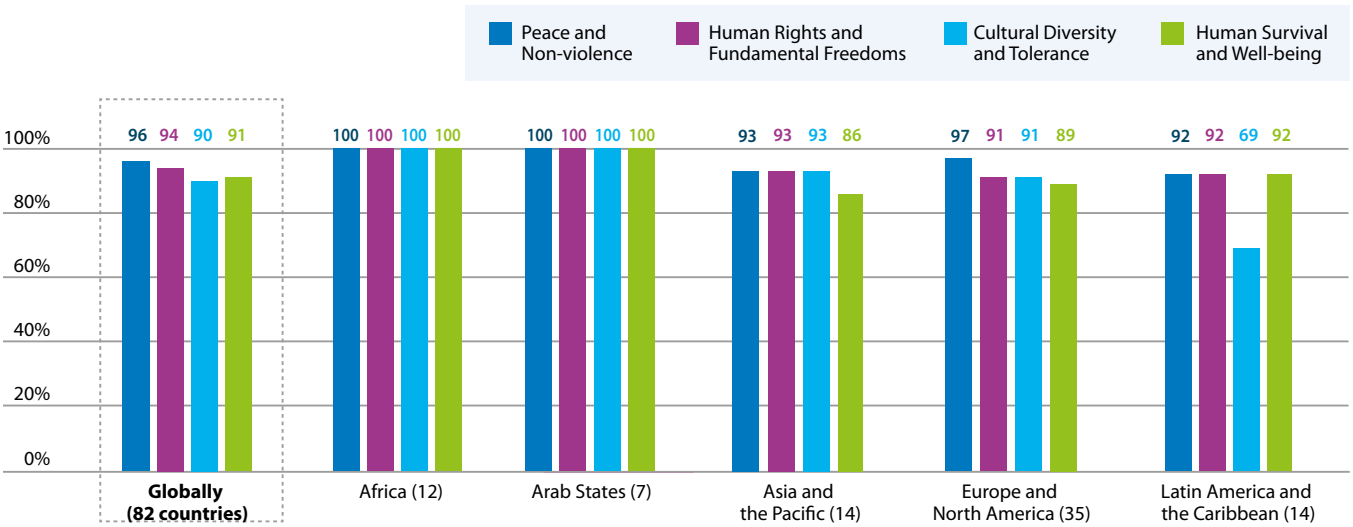


Figure 7
Countries reporting increased emphasis on the Guiding Principles, by region (in %)

The relative lag of Cultural Diversity and Tolerance is confirmed in analysing country responses on increased emphasis on the Guiding Principles in education/curriculum reform or policy development. While 96% of countries increased emphasis on the Guiding Principle related to Peace and Non-violence, 90% of countries increased emphasis in the Guiding Principle related to Cultural Diversity and Tolerance (Figure 7).

Regionally, Africa and Arab States showed the most significant increase in emphasis on all Guiding Principles. In Asia and the Pacific, the Guiding Principle related to Human Survival and Well-being received relatively less attention, whereas in Latin America and the Caribbean, less attention is paid to the Guiding Principle related to Cultural Diversity and Tolerance, with a rate of 69% – this, again, has to do with the region's relatively low attention paid to the Topic of global citizenship.



FINDING 4

Most countries take a cross-curriculum approach to teaching the Guiding Principles, with a focus on Civics/Citizenship, Social Studies, and History

Figure 8
Countries reporting use of various approaches for teaching the Guiding Principles, by region (in %)

88% of countries (72 countries) take a cross-curriculum approach, teaching the Guiding Principles across more than one discipline or subject area of the curriculum, as opposed to 57% of countries reporting that the Guiding Principles were taught in a separate subject (Figure 8). On the whole, all regions strongly favoured a cross-curriculum approach over a separate-subject approach. It is notable that the separate-subject approach was particularly unpopular in the Arab States region.

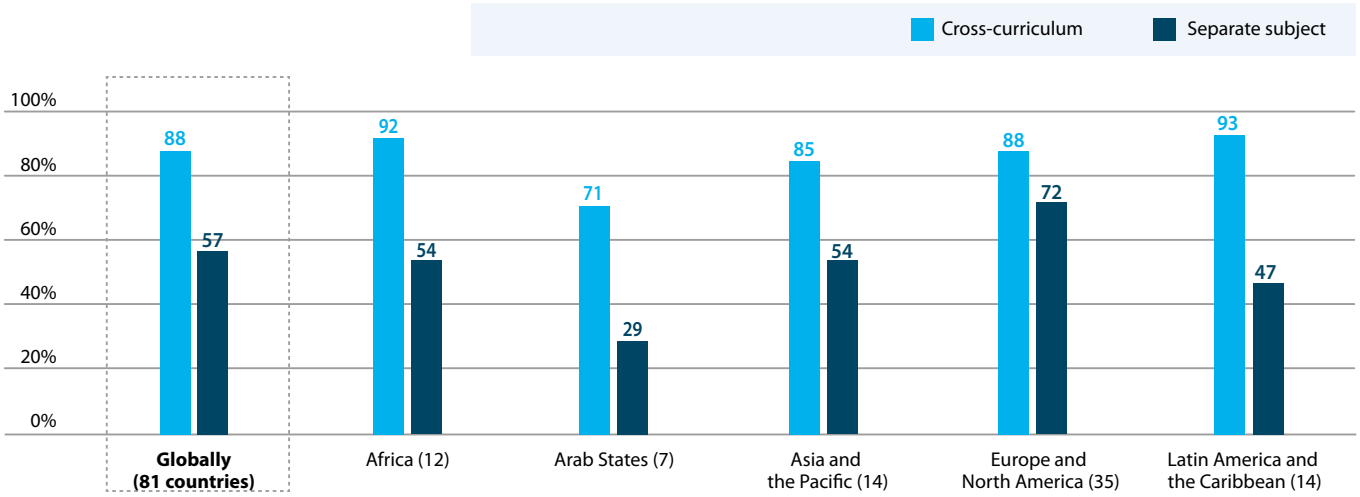
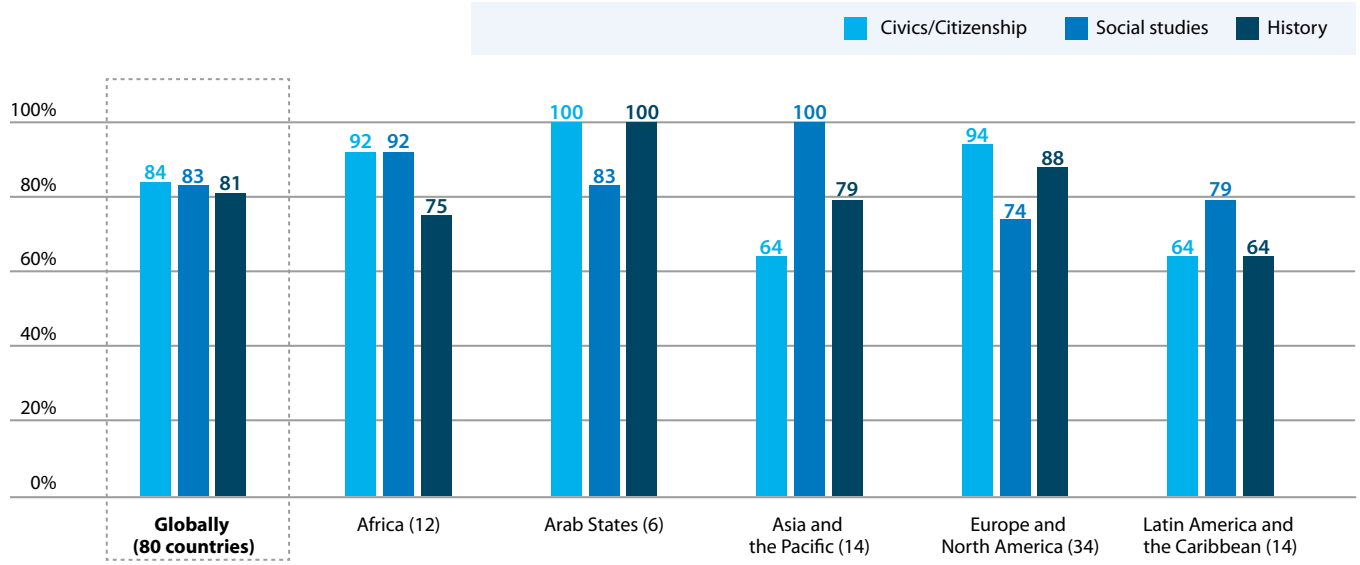


Figure 9
Countries reporting top 3 school subjects for teaching the Guiding Principles, by region (in %)

Globally, the most popular school subjects in which the Guiding Principles are being taught are Civics/Citizenship, Social Studies, and History (Figure 9). In the Arab States, the Guiding Principles are invariably taught through Civics and History subjects; and through Social Studies in Asia the Pacific. Globally, Ethics/Moral Studies, Arts, and Religious education are the least preferred subjects for teaching the Guiding Principles.



FINDING 5

Most countries regard teaching hours for the Guiding Principles as moderately sufficient, and seem satisfied with teaching materials

Figure 10
Countries reporting on the sufficiency of teaching hours for the Guiding Principles, by region (in %)

75% of countries (60 countries) reported that the number of teaching hours for the Guiding Principles is moderately sufficient, and 20% of countries regard the number of hours to be fully sufficient (Figure 10), while 5% reported that the hours are not sufficient. Arab States, Asia and the Pacific and Europe and North America show a higher than average rate reporting on fully sufficient teaching hours. The rate of fully sufficient is lowest in Africa (8%) – while, in Asia and the Pacific, the rate of insufficient teaching hours is highest (8%).

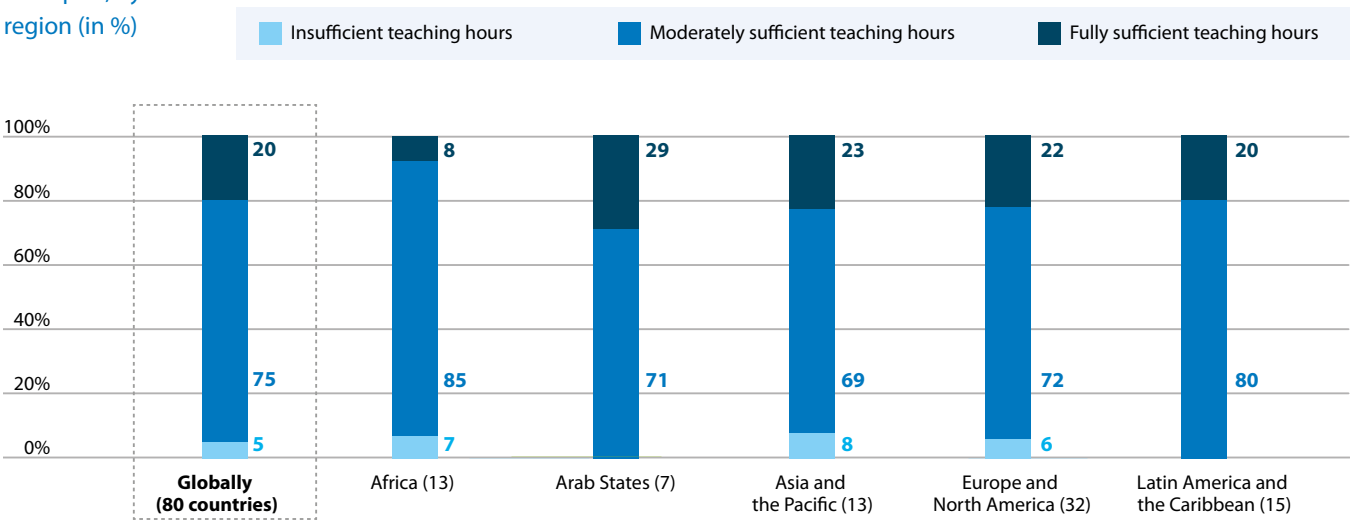
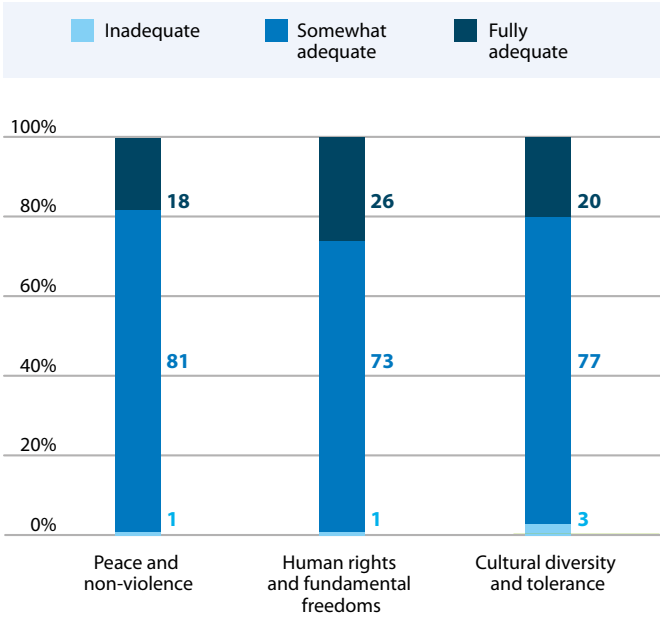


Figure 11
Countries reporting on adequacy of the inclusion of the Guiding Principles in teaching materials, by Guiding Principle (in %)



In addition, the level of teaching materials available to teach the Guiding Principles seems satisfying (Figure 11). 99% of countries (81 countries) report that the Guiding Principles of Peace and Non-violence and Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms are fully adequately or somewhat adequately included in teaching materials. The rate for Cultural Diversity and Tolerance is almost as high, at 97%.[6]

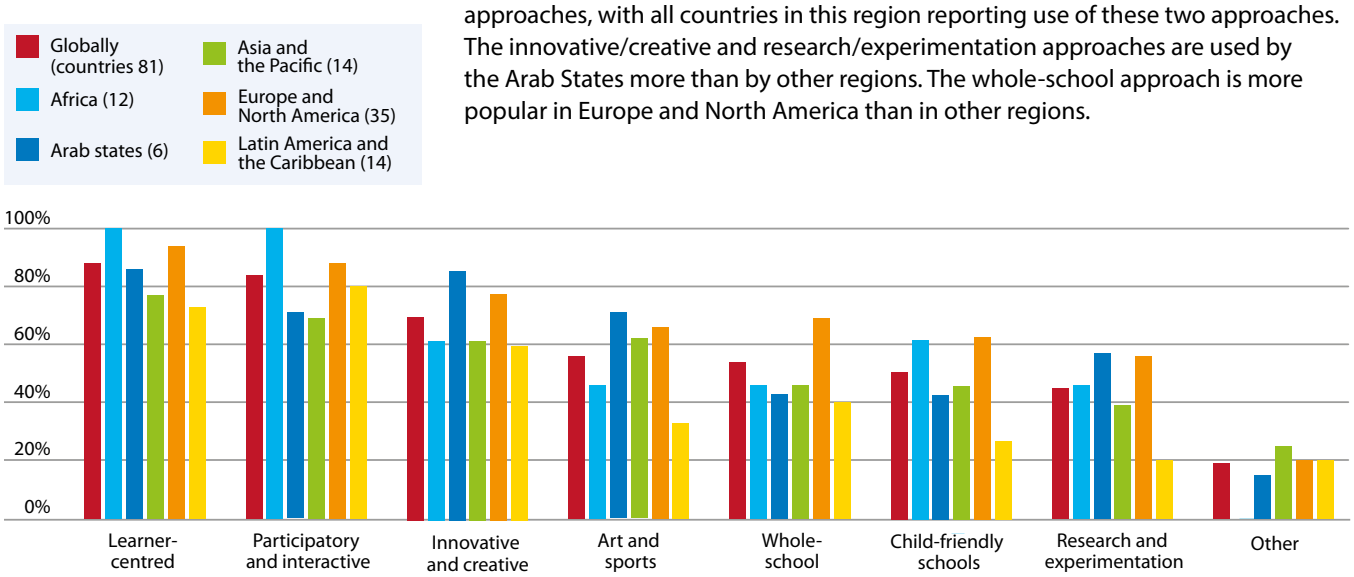
At the same time, there are regional differences. 17% of African countries reported a lack of materials on Cultural Diversity and Tolerance (this rate is negligible in the other regions). 29% of countries in Europe and North America and 21% in Latin America and the Caribbean reported that these materials are fully adequate. Only 8% of countries in Africa and Asia and the Pacific indicate that the materials on Cultural Diversity and Tolerance are fully adequate, well below the global average.

FINDING 6

Learner-centred pedagogical approaches are most popular

Figure 12
Countries reporting the pedagogical approaches used to teach principles related to the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation, by region (in %)

85% of countries (70 countries) reported that they applied multiple pedagogical approaches to teaching the Guiding Principles. A breakdown (Figure 12) shows that learner-centred approaches were most common (88% of countries), followed by participatory/interactive (84%) and innovative/creative approaches (71%). Research/experimentation was less favoured as a pedagogical approach. Asia and the Pacific is particularly committed to the learner-centred and participatory/interactive approaches, with all countries in this region reporting use of these two approaches. The innovative/creative and research/experimentation approaches are used by the Arab States more than by other regions. The whole-school approach is more popular in Europe and North America than in other regions.



FINDING 7

Insufficient teacher training remains a stumbling block

Figure 13
Countries reporting on reflection of the Guiding Principles in pre-service teacher training, by region (in %)

By and large, countries point to a less than sufficient level of support for teacher training on the Guiding Principles in the context of both pre-service and in-service programmes. This trend is striking as country responses also indicate a relatively high level of policy commitment to the Guiding Principles (Finding 2) – this would seem to indicate a readiness to invest in teacher training in order to implement the Guiding Principles but also possible challenges in taking forward the high level of policy commitment.

Globally, 75% of countries (61 countries) reported that the Guiding Principles are somewhat reflected in pre-service teacher training (Figure 13). The rate is highest in Africa (92%). The rate of 'fully reflected' is highest in Europe and North America (19%), followed by Asia and the Pacific (15%). But Asia and the Pacific also has the highest (23%) rate of 'not at all reflected,' showing a wide gap among countries within the region.

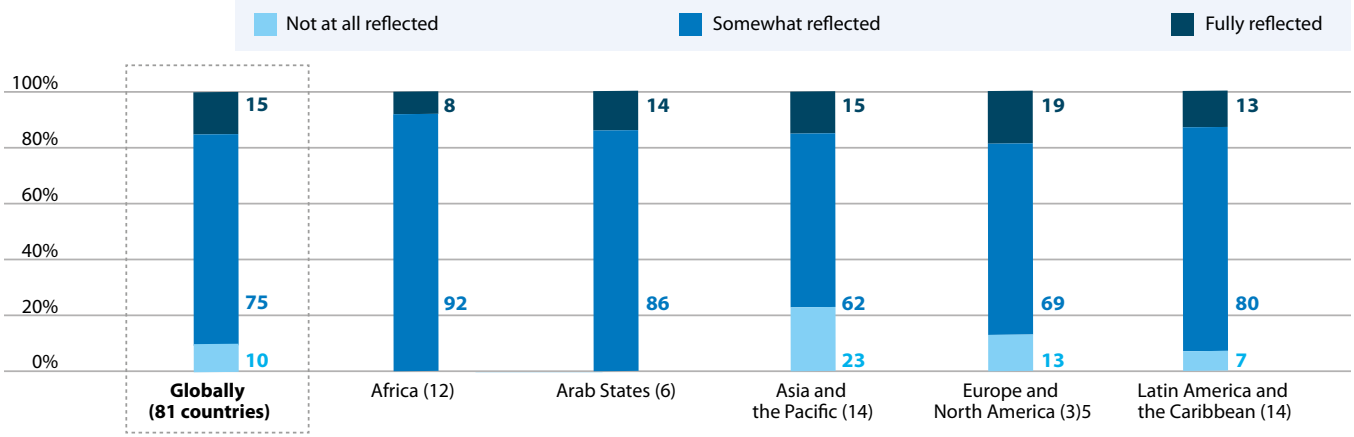
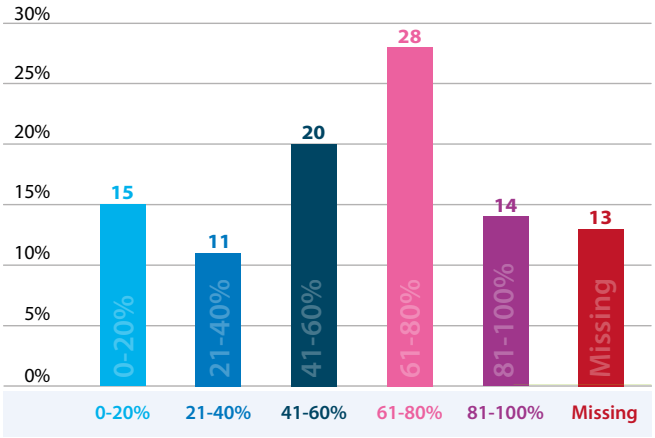


Figure 14
Countries' estimates of the percentage of their teachers receiving training on the Guiding Principles (in %)

Regarding in-service teacher training and professional development, 28% of countries (23 countries) reported that 61% to 80% of their teachers receive training in the Guiding Principles (Figure 14). 26% of the countries reported the training rate below 40%, which indicates a need for more progress with regard to in-service teacher training.

Additional analysis shows that the Guiding Principles are reflected most in the teacher training for primary and secondary education (87% and 92%, respectively).



FINDING 8

More countries include the Guiding Principles in student assessment, with still insufficient attention to assessment of values and attitudes as well as behaviours

Figure 15
Countries reporting inclusion of the Guiding Principles in student assessment, by rounds of consultation (in %)

More and more countries (82%, 64 countries) include the Guiding Principles in student assessment (Figure 15), compared to the 4th Consultation in 2008, when just 14% of countries reported doing so, and 46% in the 5th Consultation.

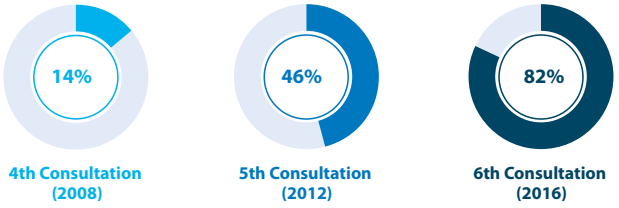
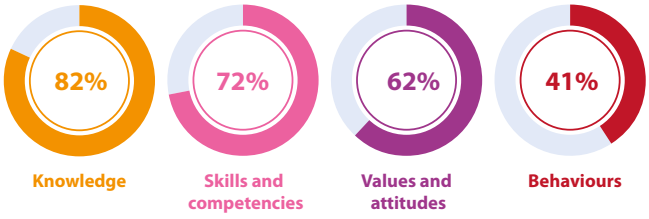


Figure 16
Countries reporting that they assess students on Guiding Principles, by domain of learning (in %)

As for the different dimensions of learning assessed by countries, 82% of countries assess students' knowledge and 72% assess skills/competencies (Figure 16). However, fewer countries report the assessment of values and attitudes, and of behaviours – 62% and 41%, respectively. According to a regional analysis, only 14% of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean reported the assessment on behaviours.

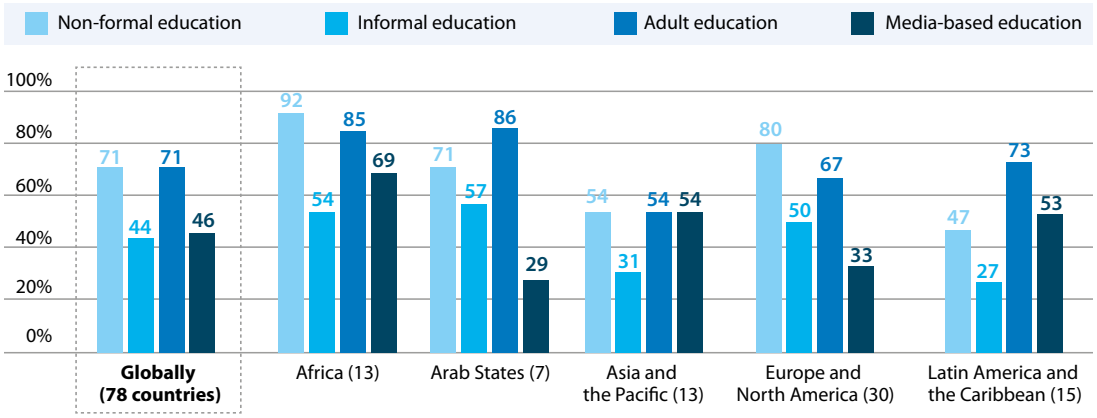


FINDING 9

The Guiding Principles are included in programmes outside formal education, but there is room for progress

86% of countries (67 countries) reported that the Guiding Principles are reflected in programmes outside the school system. A breakdown (Figure 17) shows that 71% of countries include the Guiding Principles in non-formal and adult education programmes, and 44-46% do so in media-based and informal education. The number of countries resorting to non-formal education is highest in Africa (92%), followed by Europe and North America (80%) and Arab States (71%). Africa also leads the regional table in the use of media-based education – 69% of reporting countries, as opposed to 29% and 33%, the lowest two, of Arab States, and Europe and North America, respectively. Arab States compose the region with the highest rate of countries adopting adult education at 86%.

Figure 17
Countries reporting the inclusion of the Guiding Principles in programmes outside of formal education, by region (in %)

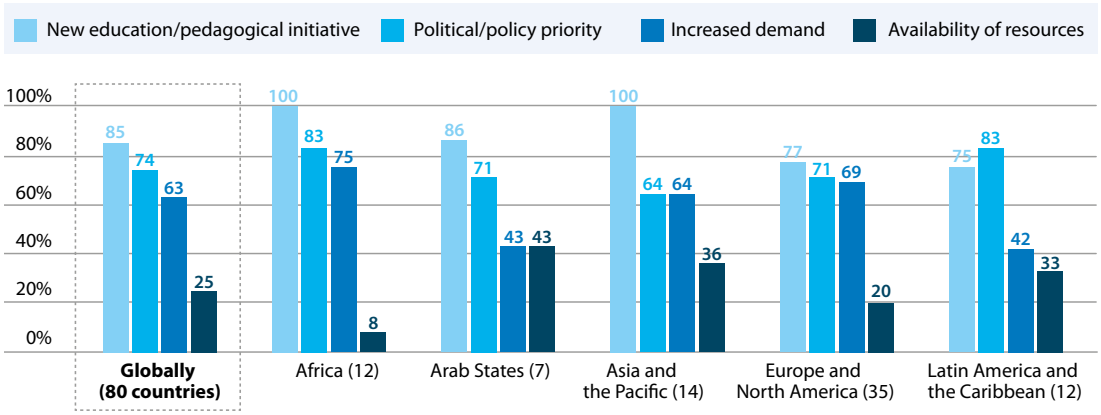


FINDING 10

New initiatives and political priorities are the most common enabling factors; lack of resources is the greatest obstacle

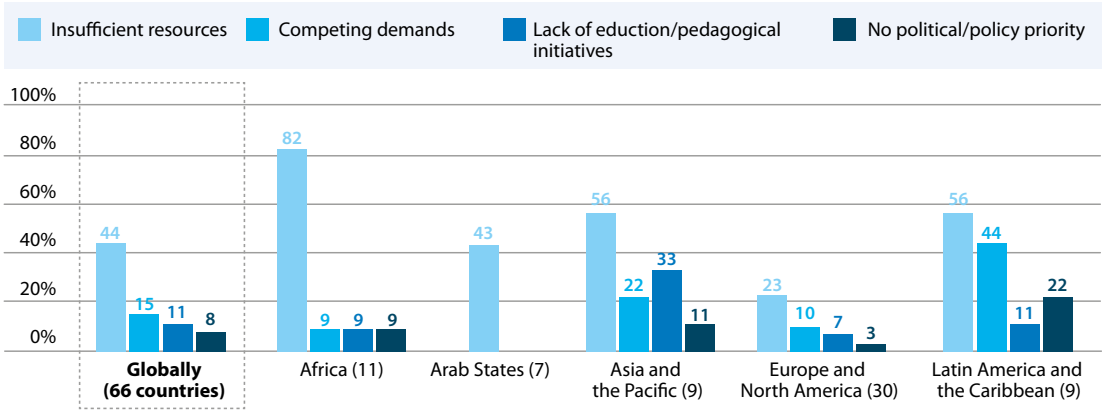
In all regions, the most common enabling factor facilitating implementation of the Guiding Principles was the establishment of new education/pedagogical initiatives (Figure 18). Political/policy priority given to the Guiding Principles was the next highest reported enabling factor in all regions except Asia and the Pacific, where countries also cited increased demand as a prevalent enabling factor. Interestingly, in all regions, availability of resources was the least reported enabling factor.

Figure 18
Countries reporting enabling factors for implementing the Guiding Principles, by region (in %)



Though resources may not be a sufficient factor, they seem to be necessary – the largest number of countries noted the lack of financial, technical, human or other type of resources as the obstacle to implementing the Guiding Principles (Figure 19). This was particularly the case in Africa, where the rate reaches 82%, well above the global average of 44%. In Asia and the Pacific, 33% of countries noted the lack of the concerned initiatives as the major obstacle, far above the global average of 11%. In Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific, competing demands were significant obstacles compared to other regions.

Figure 19
Countries reporting major obstacles to reflect the Guiding Principles, by region (in %)



IV. Conclusion

Country responses to the 6th Consultation show very high policy commitment to the Guiding Principles, which is an excellent foundation to further expand the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation, along with Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education, which are closely aligned with the Guiding Principles.

The response rate to the 6th Consultation, a record high, further attests to the increasing priority that countries give to the Guiding Principles.

Greater progress is required on teacher training and education outside the school system, where implementation is generally lower than the high level of policy commitment would lead one to expect. A stronger balance across Topics in teaching the Guiding Principles would also be important in moving forward, as would student assessments that take in all dimensions of learning.

The preference of countries for learner-centred approaches is in line with what is widely regarded as the most effective way to teaching the Guiding Principles.

More research will be needed to refine the analysis, in particular to gain insight into the disparity between the high level of policy commitment and the need for more progress in teacher education.

The revised questionnaire to be used in the 7th Consultation should mitigate some of the potential level of subjectivity of the self-reporting.

End notes

1 Before the 6th Consultation, the following consultations had taken place:
1st Consultation conducted in 1989 (covering the period 1983-1987); 57 countries responded.
2nd Consultation conducted in 1992-1993 (covering the period 1988-1993); 40 countries responded.
3rd Consultation conducted in 2000 (covering the period 1995-2000); 32 countries responded.
4th Consultation conducted in 2008 (covering the period 2005-2008); 37 countries responded.
5th Consultation conducted in 2012 (covering the period 2009-2012); 57 countries responded.

2 http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002438/243899e.pdf

3 Most of the reporting was complete, covering over 90% of the questions. If a reporting covered less than 10% of the questions of the questionnaire, it was not included in the analysis.

4 UNESCO, 2017, Historical efforts to implement the UNESCO 1974 recommendation on Education in light of 3 SDGs Targets, Paris, France. Available at: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002472/247275E.pdf

5 Data used for the analysis in this document but not shown in the Figures in these pages can be found here: https://en.unesco.org/themes/gced/sdg47progress

6 Human Survival and Well-Being was not included in the analysis due to a low response rate on teaching materials for this Guiding Principle.

More information

https://en.unesco.org/themes/gced/sdg47progress

esd@unesco.org / gced@unesco. org

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Education
Sector

Progress on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education

Findings of the 6th Consultation on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (2012-2016)

"The Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms" was adopted by UNESCO's General Conference at its 18th session in 1974. Every four years, Member States report to UNESCO on measures taken to implement the Recommendation in pre-primary, primary, secondary and post-secondary/ tertiary education. This document summarizes and analyses the main findings of the 6th Consultation on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation, covering the period of 2012 to 2016.

The findings of the 6th Consultation provide important insight into how Member States are implementing the 1974 Recommendation as well as how they are progressing towards Target 4.7 of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education. Target 4.7 concerns Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education, which are closely related to the 1974 Recommendation. Supporting Member States in implementing Target 4.7 is a UNESCO priority and essential to progress across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

Sustainable Development Goals