



# UNESCO-UNICEF-World Bank-OECD Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures

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## 1. GENERAL DEFINITIONS

### 1.1. INTERNATIONAL STANDARD CLASSIFICATION OF EDUCATION (ISCED) LEVELS OF EDUCATION

#### ***Pre-primary education (ISCED 02)***

Pre-primary education is typically designed for children from the age of 3 years to the start of primary education (ISCED level 1). The educational properties of pre-primary education [ISCED-P 020] are characterised by interaction with peers and educators, through which children improve their use of language and social skills, start to develop logical and reasoning skills, and talk through their thought processes. They are also introduced to alphabetical and mathematical concepts and encouraged to explore their surrounding world and environment. Supervised gross motor activities (i.e., physical exercise through games and other activities) and play-based activities can be used as learning opportunities to promote social interactions with peers and to develop skills, autonomy, and school readiness.

#### ***Primary education (ISCED 1)***

Primary education usually begins at age 5, 6 or 7, and has a typical duration of six years. Programmes at ISCED level 1 are normally designed to give pupils a sound basic education in reading, writing and mathematics, along with an elementary understanding of other subjects such as history, geography, natural science, social sciences, art and music. The commencement of reading activities alone is not a sufficient criterion for classification of an education programme at ISCED level 1. Programmes classified at ISCED level 1 may be referred to in many ways, for example: primary education, elementary education, or basic education (stage 1 or lower grades if an education system has one programme that spans ISCED levels 1 and 2). For international comparability purposes, the term 'primary education' is used to label ISCED level 1.

#### ***Lower secondary education (ISCED 2)***

Programmes at the lower secondary education level are designed to lay the foundation across a wide range of subjects and to prepare children and young people for more specialised study at upper secondary and higher levels of education. The beginning – or the end – of lower secondary education often involves a change of school for young students and also a change in the style of instruction. Programmes classified at ISCED level 2 may be referred to in many ways, for example: secondary school (stage one/lower grades), junior secondary school, middle school or junior high school. If a programme spans ISCED levels 1 and 2, the terms elementary education or basic school (second stage/upper grades) are often used. For international comparability purposes, the term 'lower secondary education' is used to label ISCED level 2.

***Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)***

Programmes at the upper secondary education level are more specialised than those at lower secondary and offer students more choices and diverse pathways for completing their secondary education. The range of subjects studied by a single student tends to be narrower than at lower levels of education, but the content is more complex and the study more in-depth. Programmes offered are differentiated by orientation and often by broad subject groups. Programmes classified at ISCED level 3 may be referred to in many ways, for example: secondary school (stage two/upper grades), senior secondary school or (senior) high school. For international comparability purposes, the term 'upper secondary education' is used to label ISCED level 3.

**1.2. PROGRAMME TYPES*****General Programmes***

General education programmes are designed to develop learners' general knowledge, skills and competencies, as well as literacy and numeracy skills, often to prepare participants for more advanced education programmes at the same or a higher ISCED level and to lay the foundation for lifelong learning. These programmes are typically school- or college-based. General education includes education programmes that are designed to prepare participants for entry into vocational education but do not prepare for employment in a particular occupation, trade or class of occupations or trades, nor lead directly to a labour market-relevant qualification.

***Vocational or technical education programmes***

Vocational education programmes are designed for learners to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies specific to a particular occupation, trade, or class of occupations or trades. Such programmes may have work-based components (e.g., apprenticeships or dual-system education programmes). Successful completion of such programmes leads to labour market-relevant, vocational qualifications acknowledged as occupationally oriented by the relevant national authorities and/or the labour market.

**1.3. TYPE OF INSTITUTIONS*****Public institutions***

An institution is classified as public if it is: controlled and managed directly by a public education authority or agency; or controlled and managed either by a government agency directly or by a governing body (council, committee, etc.), most of whose members are either appointed by a public authority or elected by public franchise.

***Private institutions***

An institution is classified as private, if it is (i) controlled and managed by a nongovernmental organisation (e.g., a Church, Trade Union or business enterprise), or (ii) its Governing Board consists mostly of members not selected by a public agency.

A **government-dependent private institution** is an institution that receives more than 50% of its core funding from government agencies or one whose teaching personnel are paid by a government agency. The term “government dependent” refers only to the degree of a private institution’s dependence on funding from government sources; it does not refer to the degree of government direction or regulation.

An **independent private institution** is an institution that receives less than 50% of its core funding from government agencies and whose teaching personnel are not paid by a government agency. The term “independent” refers only to the degree of a private institution’s dependence on funding from government sources; it does not refer to the degree of government direction or regulation.

**1.4. TEACHERS AND NON-TEACHING STAFF*****Teacher***

**Teacher** refers to a **classroom teacher**. A classroom teacher is defined as a person whose professional activity involves planning, organizing and conducting group activities whereby students’ knowledge, skills and attitudes develop as stipulated by educational programmes.

For the purposes of this data collection, the category of classroom teacher includes:

- Professional personnel involved in direct student instruction;
- Special-education teachers and other teachers who work with students as a whole class in a regular classroom;
- Chairpersons of departments and similar personnel whose duties include some amount of student instruction; and
- Teachers temporarily not at work (e.g., for reasons of illness or injury, maternity or parental leave, holiday or vacation).

For the purposes of this data collection, the category of classroom teachers **does NOT include:**

- Trainers of the “in-company” part of apprenticeships in a dual vocational education system;
- Special-education teachers in special schools for students with learning difficulties or mental or physical disabilities; and
- Teachers’ aides and teachers’ assistants.

### ***Non-teaching staff***

**Non-teaching staff** are professional support staff. The categories of maintenance and operations personnel and management, quality control and administration personnel are excluded from this survey. Professional support for students includes two subcategories: pedagogical support and health and social support.

Pedagogical support includes professional staff who provide services to students to support their instructional programme. In many cases these personnel were licensed originally as teachers but then moved into other professional positions in education systems. This staff classification includes the following types of personnel: guidance counsellors, librarians, educational media specialists and attendance officers.

Health and social support staff includes all personnel employed in education systems who provide health and social support services to students. They include doctors, dentists, ophthalmologists, optometrists, hygienists, nurses, and diagnosticians; psychiatrists and psychologists; speech pathologists and audiologists; occupational therapists; and social workers.

## **2. MODULE SPECIFIC DEFINITIONS**

### **2.1. MODULE 1 SCHOOL CLOSURES**

**Schools** refer in this survey to all educational institutions from pre-primary to tertiary education.

**A period of time** (as defined) in the survey begins on the date of the beginning of the full closure of the schools and ends on the date of the end of the closure of the schools (i.e., when the school has resumed face-to-face activities).

**Schools were fully closed due to COVID-19:** Government-mandated closures of educational institutions (e.g., closure of buildings) affecting most or all of the student population. In most cases, various distance learning strategies are deployed to ensure educational continuity (according to UNESCO definitions).

**Schools were fully open:** For the majority of schools, classes are being held exclusively in person (e.g. buildings are opened), noting that measures to ensure safety and hygiene in schools vary considerably from context to context and/or by level of education (according to UNESCO definitions).

**Schools were partially open:** Governments have mandated (a) partial reopening in certain areas, and/or (b) a phased re-opening by grade level or age and/or (c) the use of a hybrid approach combining in-person and distance learning. It also includes the countries where national governments have deferred decisions on re-opening to other administrative units

(e.g., region, municipality or individual schools), and where a variety of re-opening modalities are being used (according to UNESCO definitions).

**Hybrid learning:** the use of a hybrid approach combining in-person and distance learning.

**Re-opening** refers to the end of country-wide school closures, even if not all students have returned to school.

**Instruction days** is the number of instruction weeks multiplied by the number of days per week a student goes to school, minus the number of days on which the school is closed for school holidays or public holidays (as planned before the pandemic) or weekends (adapted from OECD Education at a Glance definition of working time of teachers).

## 2.2. MODULE 2: SCHOOL CALENDAR AND CURRICULA

### 2.3. MODULE 3: MANAGING SCHOOL REOPENING – if schools are fully/partially reopened

School feeding is defined here as the provision of food to schoolchildren. There are as many types of programmes as there are countries, but they can be classified into two main groups based on their modalities: (1) in-school feeding, where children are fed in school; and (2) take-home rations, where families are given food if their children attend school. In-school feeding can, in turn, be divided into two common categories: (1) programmes that provide meals; and (2) programmes that provide high-energy biscuits or snacks.

### 2.4. MODULE 4: DISTANCE EDUCATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS

**Distance education:** Education that uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies used for instruction may include the following: paper (e.g., books, take-home packages); TV; radio; Internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcasts, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fibre optics, satellite or wireless communication devices; audio conferencing; and video cassette, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassette, DVDs, and CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with the technologies listed above.

### 2.5. MODULE 5: TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

### 2.6. MODULE 6: LEARNING, ASSESSMENT, EXAMS

**National examinations** are standardized student assessments that have a formal consequence for students such as an impact upon a student's eligibility to progress to a higher level of education or completion of an officially recognised degree. The examinations

should apply to almost all students in the type of programme indicated and assess a major portion of what students studying specific subjects are expected to know or be able to do. Note that examinations differ from assessments in terms of their purpose.

**National assessments** are based on student achievement tests but they do NOT have an effect upon students' progression or certification like the examinations defined above. However, if a standardized test is used as partial criteria for grade promotion, graduation, or access to the next level of education, please use the comments section to explain or qualify your answers.

**Formative assessments** are implemented by teachers/schools to adapt their teaching strategies or as means to provide individual grading to students at the end of a certain period of instruction.

## 2.7. MODULE 7: FINANCING

**Conditional cash transfers:** These are allocations or subsidies given to students or family, conditional on enrolment, continuation, or completion of a school year. They are tied to the social safety systems we now have in many countries. They are intended to ensure the vulnerable groups (girls, the poorest, most marginalized) are not dropped out of the system.

**Capital expenditure** refers to spending on assets that last longer than one year, including construction, renovation or major repair of buildings, and new or replacement equipment. The capital expenditure reported here represents the value of educational capital acquired or created during the year in question (i.e., the amount of capital formation), regardless of whether the capital expenditure was financed from current revenue or through borrowing. Neither capital nor current expenditure includes debt servicing.

**Current expenditure** refers to spending on staff compensation and on "Other current expenditure", i.e., on goods and services consumed within the current year, which require recurrent production in order to sustain educational services (expenditure on support services, ancillary services like preparation of meals for students, rental of school buildings and other facilities, etc.).

## 2.8. MODULE 8: LOCUS OF DECISION MAKING

### ***Guidance to fill-in this module (as recommended by NESLI network)***

The actual decision-making process should reflect who makes decisions in practice. In some cases, a higher level of government may have formal or legal responsibility for decision making, but in practice, that level of government delegates its decision-making authority to a lower level of government. In describing the actual decision-making process, the lower level of government should be identified as the decision maker. Similarly, a higher level of government may provide a lower level of government with choices in a particular area of decision making (e.g., the selection of textbooks for particular courses). In that case too, the lower level of government is the actual decision maker, but within a framework established by a higher level of government. In the end, there is always one level that makes the final decision, either after consultation or within a framework.

There are cases in which one level of government may have the responsibility for an individual decision, but inaction by the higher-level results in a decision being made by a lower level. If a decision is left to the discretion of a lower level through the lack of determination of higher levels, then you should indicate which level actually makes the decision.

There are situations in which the actual decision-making process highly conforms to formal requirements. In these cases, you may use the comment cells to describe the formal decision-making process and refer to documentation of the legal or regulatory framework that underpins that process, along with your country's responses to the decision-making questionnaire. In cases where the formal or legal framework for decision making and the actual decision-making process do not correspond, you should describe the actual decision-making process in your responses to the questionnaire. If the actual practice and formal requirements defer, you can explain this in the comments section.

### **Levels of government**

#### ***Central government***

The central government consists of all bodies at the national level that make decisions or participate in different aspects of decision making.

#### ***State Governments***

The state is the first territorial unit below the nation in "federal" countries or countries with similar types of governmental structures. State governments are the governmental units that are the decision-making bodies at this level. For countries other than federal or similar, where the extent of the state is identical with that of the country, this level is non-existent.

#### ***Provincial/Regional Authorities or Governments***

The province or region is the first territorial unit below the national level in countries that do not have a "federal" or similar type of governmental structure, and the second territorial



unit below the nation in countries with “federal” or similar types of governmental structures. Provincial/regional authorities or governments are the decision-making bodies at this level.

***Sub-Regional or Inter-Municipal Authorities or Governments***

The sub-region is the second territorial unit below the nation in countries that do not have a “federal” or similar type of governmental structure. Sub-regional or inter-municipal authorities or governments are the decision-making bodies at this level.

***Local Authorities or Governments***

The municipality or community is the smallest territorial unit in the nation with a governing authority. The local authority may be the education department within a general-purpose local government, or it may be a special-purpose government whose sole area of authority is education.

***School, School Board or Committee***

The school attendance area is the territorial unit in which a school is located. This level applies to the individual school level only and includes school administrators and teachers or a school board or committee established exclusively for that individual school. The decision-making body – or bodies – for this school may be: an external school board, which includes residents of the larger community; an internal school board, which could include headmasters, teachers, other school staff, parents, and students; and both an external and an internal school board. “School networks”, “networks of schools”, “didactic circles”, and “groups of schools” should be considered as schools. If the school boards in your country do not operate at the individual school level, but at the district level, please select local authorities as the decision-making level.

**2.9. MODULE 9: EQUITY**