



United Nations
Economic Commission for Europe



**REPORT
ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNECE STRATEGY FOR
EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT¹**

*Within the framework of the
United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014)*

SUBMITTED BY CANADA

The following report is submitted on behalf of the Government of **CANADA** in accordance with the decision of the UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development

Name of officers (national focal points)* responsible for submitting the report:

1. Dr. Gerald Farthing, Deputy Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth, Manitoba
2. Ms. Pat Dolan, Executive Director, Public Education and Outreach Directorate, Environment Canada
3. Mr. David Walden, Secretary-General, Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Signature (on behalf of above):

Sheila Molloy

Date: November 15, 2006

Full name of the institution: Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC)

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¹ This documents was not formally edited

* The above three people have been named the Canadian Focal Points. Their full coordinates are found after the response to question B.

- A. Provide brief information (not more than half a page) on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on which types of public authorities were consulted on or contributed to its preparation; how the stakeholders were consulted and how the outcome of this consultation was taken into account; and the material used as a basis for the report.

Discussions were held among the three focal points, coordinated by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) to determine whether it was feasible for Canada to report either by responding yes or no to the template questions by December 15, 2006 or by responding to the full set of questions by February 1, 2007.

Because of the decentralized nature of education in Canada (see B. below), as well as the need to include formal, non-formal and informal education, all of which entail a thorough consultation and approval process, it was decided that Canada would not be able to provide a report by February 1, 2007. Further, it was decided that it would be impossible to merely respond yes or no to the questions, since there would likely be many exceptions to almost every yes or no answer. Therefore, neither is Canada able to answer the yes or no questions by December 15, 2006.

Canada will endeavour to respond to the template during the course of 2007. A report from Canada should be available in late 2007 or early 2008.

- B. Report any particular circumstances that help clarify the context of the report – for example, whether the decision-making structure is federal and/or decentralized, and whether financial constraints are a significant obstacle to implementation. (This information should not exceed half a page.)

Responsibility for Education in Canada

In Canada, there is no federal department of education and no integrated national system of education. Within the federal system of shared powers, Canada's Constitution Act of 1867 provides that "[I]n and for each province, the legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education." In the 13 jurisdictions — 10 provinces and 3 territories — departments or ministries of education are responsible for the organization, delivery, and assessment of education at the elementary and secondary levels within their boundaries. In some jurisdictions, separate departments or ministries are responsible for elementary-secondary education and for postsecondary education and skills training. The institutions in the postsecondary system have varying degrees of autonomy from direct provincial government control.

Submitting reports to international intergovernmental organizations requires a lengthy consultation and approval process, not only of ministries and departments of education, but also of other bodies that may have an interest in education (either formal, non-formal or informal) with respect to a certain topic. In addition, all Canadian reports are submitted in both official languages, English and French.

Nevertheless, there is considerable activity in support of education for sustainable development in Canada. Some examples include: the establishment of seven provincial / territorial Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Working Groups through a partnership between Environment Canada, the Province of Manitoba, and Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF). The purpose of the ESD Working Groups is to support and foster a culture of ESD in each jurisdiction, by engaging senior leaders from provincial/territorial ministries and departments, federal government, the formal, non-formal and informal education sectors, business and community organizations.

In support of the working groups, a National ESD Expert Council (NESDEC) is in the process of being created. The Council will address cross cutting activities such as sustainability literacy and tracking, research, communication, and sharing of best practices as well as advising the provincial / territorial ESD Working Groups on program directions. The Council will consist of representatives from the various ESD Working Groups as well as other external stakeholders.

Many initiatives are outlined in the report Canada submitted to UNESCO, *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–14) — Canada's Response to the UNESCO Questionnaire, March 2000*, available at <http://www.cmec.ca/international/UNESCO/Sustainable-2006-03.en.pdf>.

CANADIAN FOCAL POINTS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL WORK ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

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