



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Welcome to the second edition of the Department of Education's newsletter on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) where we will keep you up to date with the latest ESD news.

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ESD to 2030 – Public Consultation

The Department will hold a Public Consultation on a follow-on ESD Strategy to 2030 during 2021. Details on how you can participate will be published on our website and through social media in the coming months: [Department of Education - ESD](#)



ESD in Higher Education Consultation December 10

On Thursday, December 10 2020, the Higher Education Authority (HEA) hosted a very successful and lively virtual consultation event on the topic of Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education.

This event was a precursor to raise awareness of the wider consultation that will be led by the Department of Education this year as part of the process of developing a new national strategy for ESD. It also provided higher education institutions (HEIs) and other stakeholders with an initial opportunity to reflect on progress and consider future priorities.

Over 70 participants from across the sector participated, including representatives from a broad range of higher education institutions; the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; the Department of Education; the Department of Foreign Affairs; the Irish Universities Association; the Union of Students in Ireland; the Irish Development Education Association, and an Taisce.

Alexander Leicht, Chief of Section for ESD at UNESCO, introduced UNESCO's new *Framework for ESD to 2030* and Leona De Khors, Department of Education, outlined the plans for the national strategy consultation process. The keynote addresses were followed

by a lively panel discussion on experiences of implementing ESD in higher education curricula and the wider campus environment, from the perspective of students and HEI representatives.

Some of the key messages and recommendations that emerged during the event included the need for partnership and a multi-stakeholder approach to ESD; the urgent need for structural and transformative change; and the importance of a transdisciplinary approach, empowering students, and adequate resourcing of the new strategy. The event report will be widely shared and published on social media shortly.



ESD and Guidance Counselling

In October 2020, **The National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE)** facilitated a forum on the theme of **‘An initial investigation into what is the role of Lifelong Guidance in promoting Sustainable Development and Change’**.

Over 130 participants were in attendance (virtually), representing a broad spectrum of guidance provision in Ireland, including further education and training, post-primary, higher education, the Department of Education, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, State and independent agencies, various representative organisations, private practice as well as international guidance experts.

Through the adoption of this theme NCGE sought to introduce and discuss the concept of the relevancy of guidance to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular:

- **Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.**
- **Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.**
- **Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.**

It was clear from participant input that the empowerment that impartial coordinated and integrated guidance delivers has a key role to play in the development, promotion and achievement of both the individual and the collective along a sustainable life journey. As a result, guidance should be at the forefront of supporting the achievement of these ambitious Sustainable Development Goals.

A recording of the forum and the summary report can be accessed at

<https://www.ncge.ie/national-forum-guidance>

Additional articles on green guidance are contained in NCGE's recent *Guidance Matters* publication. This can be accessed at <https://www.ncge.ie/guidancematters>



GAA

As part of its [recently launched](#) Green Club Programme, the GAA and its sister organisations the Camogie Association and the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, have partnered with the local authority sector and expert organisations across five themes (energy, waste, water, biodiversity and transport) to support sustainable development.

The programme has its origins in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Champions Programme launched in September 2019. Both the GAA and Carlow County Council were among the twelve inaugural SDG Champions and initial informal discussions led to the

establishment in January 2020 of an official Green Club partnership between the County and City Management Association (CCMA) and the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association.

Phase 1 of the Green Club Pilot Programme has commenced and features approximately 45 clubs – big and small, rural and urban – from across the four provinces, plus a small selection of county and provincial venues. Phase 1, which is modelled on and run in collaboration with the GAA's Healthy Club Project, will run for twelve months with the objective of developing a Green Club Toolkit to be shared, further tested, and refined as the programme expands beyond the initial phase.

To support a more complete community-based intervention and link the club programme to education and action within the school setting, two aligned programmes will be developed, one designed for the primary school setting and the other for inclusion in the GAA PDST Future Leaders Transition Year Programme.

Both programmes will draw on the UNESCO Sustainable Development Goal framework. Both programmes will be developed with the support of the Department of Education's, Education for Sustainable Development Advisory Group and in consultation with young people from both the primary and post-primary school setting.

To find out more about GAA Green Clubs click [here](#)

ECO-UNESCO Ireland



Enter ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards 2021! – Free to Enter

The Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA) is a fun and exciting way to empower young people aged 10 to 18 to become better citizens, to build awareness of environmental

issues in the community and promote local actions and lifestyle changes to the environment

It is an environmental awards programme which recognises and rewards the work of young people (10-18) who carry out local environmental action projects. The YEA is a positive and engaging way for young people to learn new skills and protect the environment. ECO-UNESCO has a wide range of supports and resources available including a YEA *Six Steps Programme* manual, trainings and workshops. Submissions are due by 26 February 2021.

Registrations are now open > [Sign up here](#)

Youth for Sustainable Development Programme

What future do you want? One which is more environmental & social equal? Then why not join the six-week Youth for Sustainable Development programme? No matter where you live you can join 10 for an hour and a half session once a week.

- 👉 Explore topics around climate and social justice
- 👉 Gain key skills, debating, critical analysis, teamwork
- 👉 Develop long-lasting friendships
- 👉 Guest speakers, case studies & lots of activities

[Sign up here](#)

The Heat is On! - European Environmental Youth Summit

The Environmental Youth Summit (EYS) is a one-year project to bring together young people from Spain, Scotland, and Ireland to learn from each other and experts and influence environmental policy. Participants will take part in workshops, structured dialogue with policymakers, nature excursions, and cultural exchange.

The EYS has partnered with Resilience Earth in Spain, Wester Ross Biosphere in Scotland, and Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere in Scotland.

When?

Youth Summit will take place online in three sessions:

1st session: January 25 & 26 and February 3 & 4

2nd session: March 2021

3rd session: May/June.

Who can take part?

Young people aged 13 – 18 living in Ireland.

Registrations are now open! > [Sign up here](#)

Irish Second-level Students' Union Arts Initiative



As part of the new Irish Second-level Students' Union (ISSU) Arts Initiative, participants are invited to submit pieces in relation to the theme of sustainability – What does sustainability look like and mean to you?

Creations should take inspiration from concepts surrounding a sustainable future. Participants may base their ideas on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, or may use a more personal meaning of sustainability.

Pieces of any medium are welcome, and will be categorised as follows: 2D and 3D art (painting, drawing etc.); digital visual art (photography etc.); literature (stories, poems etc.), and performance (drama, spoken word etc.).

Participants' work and the top pieces selected in each category will be showcased in a

virtual art exhibition hosted online, and shared with the ISSU's 480 member schools.

Please contact Beth Doherty at beth.doherty@issu.ie for details on how to make a submission and the closing date of the competition.

SEAI Can Help you Teach and Save Energy in School



Teach Energy

[Primary resources](#) are linked to the primary science and SESE curriculum. These include: interactive whiteboard lesson plans, factsheets, posters, books including a new reader *Climate SOS*. *Climate SOS* is available to borrow from libraries around the country, order a hard copy or [download an e-book](#).

[Post-primary](#) teachers can use a range of online activities. They are designed to support the teaching and learning of energy and sustainability in the Junior Cycle. They are suitable for students of science, CSPE, geography, home economics and religion. Learning outcomes for each specification are highlighted in each section.

Free teacher and student workshops are available in school or online. These hands-on, interactive workshops will help to bring the themes of energy, climate action and sustainability to life. See the [website](#) for full details and how to book.

Why not sign up to the [You Tube](#) channel where you will find student videos as well as energy experiments.

Save Energy

In 2019, 70% of schools reported their energy use as part of the statutory obligation for schools to report energy use annually. When you report your energy use you will get a score. You will be able to see any changes in your energy use and it can help you to see what action you might need to take to reduce energy and emissions as well as saving money on bills.

In order to help you complete your annual report SEAI is offering free online workshops from 23 February 23 to 5 March to show you how to use the online system. [Get more information and book your workshop today.](#)

Deadline for submission of energy use is **16 April 2021**.

Contact SEAI Schools at www.seai.ie/schools or schools@seai.ie

BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition – Tea Bag Project

The recent BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition (BTYSTE) event again had a wide range of entries related to ESD and sustainability. One such entry came from St. Mary's High School in Middleton. The project involved an investigation into the plastic content of tea bags to see which was the most sustainable and eco-friendly.

TY Students Anna Brenner, Grace Rooney and Suzanne Dignam carried out a range of scientific experiments on tea bags to find out what they contained, comparing the amount of plastic found in each to determine the most eco-friendly tea bag. They confirmed that tea bags do contain plastic and that the level of plastic varies from tea bag to tea bag.

The team used and improved their scientific skills in the course of their investigation while at the same time, highlighting an area of concern in regards to climate change and the role plastic has to play in this issue.

Well done to all involved!

To find out more about the project, check out the [video](#).

To find out more about BTYSTE, click here: <https://btyoungscientist.com/why-get-involved/#main>

Central Statistics Office Publish Report on SDG 5 – Gender Equality

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) recently published the fifth in its series of reports on *Ireland's indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.

[Click Here to read the CSO report on SDG 5 - Gender Equality](#)

Data Protection

We hope you enjoyed this edition of the ESD newsletter. Please feel free to share and circulate it amongst your colleagues, friends and family.

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