

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF REPORTS BY MEMBER STATES ON THE APPLICATION OF THE 1960 CONVENTION AND RECOMMENDATION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION

Preparation of the 11th Consultation

Combating discrimination in education

Eleventh consultation of Member States on the application of the Convention and the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (1960) (2024-2025)

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF REPORTS BY MEMBER STATES ON THE APPLICATION OF THE 1960 CONVENTION AND RECOMMENDATION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION

1. Introduction

The Convention against Discrimination in Education (“the Convention”) and the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (“the Recommendation”), adopted by UNESCO’s General Conference in 1960, are aligned with UNESCO’s constitutional mandate to “advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunities without regard to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social”. The Convention is the first legally binding international instrument focused on the **right to education** and the only one exclusively dedicated to it.

The right to education is one of the key principles underpinning the Education 2030 agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) adopted by the international community in 2015. SDG 4 seeks to ensure the full enjoyment of the right to education as fundamental to achieving sustainable development. Its scope captures the multidimensional nature of the right to education.

Representing a powerful tool to advance SDG 4 by ensuring effective articulation between normative and operational work, the Convention has been recognized as a cornerstone of Education 2030 agenda.

The present Guidelines are intended to assist Member States in the preparation of country reports on the implementation of the Convention and the Recommendation in the context of the 11th consultation.

2. Scope of the Consultation

Considering the Education 2030 agenda, the monitoring of the Convention and the Recommendation is of crucial importance to ensure an education that is truly inclusive for all and to counter persistent inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes at all levels, particularly for the most vulnerable groups. This is particularly true under the current context in which countries are making efforts to recover from the learning disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Concrete measures taken by countries in accordance with their legal obligations under these instruments contribute to implementing the Education 2030 agenda.

As the scope and content of the legal obligations under the right to education are aligned with the 10 targets of SDG 4, efforts are being made to ensure that the components of the targets are included in the guidelines and that these guidelines serve as a valuable contribution to monitoring progress towards SDG 4 targets.

Beyond SDG 4, the Convention is also closely aligned with the normative content on the right to education of other international human rights instruments such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).

In addition, this Consultation is an opportunity to inform the ongoing **UNESCO Initiative on the Evolving Right to Education within a lifelong learning perspective**¹ (launched in December 2021). The Initiative investigates how the right to education could be reinforced placing it within a lifelong learning perspective and in light of the new demands being placed on education. This Initiative builds on the **Report from the International Commission on the Futures of Education**², which suggests to broaden our understanding of the right to education to clearly apply it to all ages and across all times and spaces. The initiative is also in-line with the **Vision Statement of the United Nations Secretary General on Transforming Education**³, and the **Report on the 2022 Transforming Education Summit**⁴ which call for the transformation of education systems to ‘include everyone, regardless of circumstance, context or background’. The Initiative on the Evolving Right to Education aims to open a collaborative and participatory discussion about the international framework to ensure the effective enforcement of the right to education and learning throughout life for all. Finally, the Initiative builds on recent inter-governmental dialogues, including the Marrakech Framework for Action for Adult Learning and Education⁵ and the Tashkent Declaration on Early Childhood Care and Education.⁶

It is also important to note that previous consultations on the Convention and Recommendation revealed that countries now understand the right to education in an extended manner. The 11th consultation builds on the findings of the previous national reports to include various areas that have direct repercussions on the right to education such as, for instance, digital learning, climate considerations, lifelong learning entitlement, and the role of non-state actors in education.

3. Reporting obligations

There are differences in the legal nature of the obligations under the Convention, as distinguished from those under the Recommendation. The Convention has binding force and the States Parties are under the obligation to incorporate its provisions into their domestic frameworks. The Recommendation, non-binding in nature, has political and moral force. Its adoption sought to take into account the difficulties that certain States might experience in ratifying the Convention, in particular with respect to their federal structure.

Bearing in mind the differences in legal scope inherent to the nature of these two categories of instruments, the content of the Recommendation is identical to that of the Convention. Member States are expected to give effect to it in national legislation and education policies.

The reporting obligation under the provisions of Article VII of the Convention and of the Recommendation is the same. Article VIII of UNESCO’s Constitution states that “*Each Member State shall submit to the Organization, at such times and in such manner as shall be determined by the General Conference, reports on the laws, regulations and statistics relating to its educational,*

¹ <https://www.unesco.org/en/right-education/evolving>

² <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379707>

³ https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2022/09/sg_vision_statement_on_transforming_education.pdf

⁴ https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/report_on_the_2022_transforming_education_summit.pdf

⁵ [Marrakech Framework for Action | Institute for Lifelong Learning \(unesco.org\)](https://www.unesco.org/en/marrakech-framework-for-action)

⁶ [Tashkent-declaration-ecce-2022.pdf \(unesco.org\)](https://www.unesco.org/en/tashkent-declaration-ecce-2022)

scientific and cultural institutions and activities, and on the action taken upon the recommendations and conventions referred to in Article IV, paragraph 4". Therefore, even if a country is not a State Party to the Convention, it needs to submit a report on the implementation of the Recommendation, which means that **all UNESCO Member States are expected to submit a national report** on the implementation of these instruments in the context of monitoring consultations.

4. Participation in consultations

The reporting period for the 11th consultation on the implementation of the Convention and the Recommendation covers four years (2021-2024).

The Futures of Education Report calls for a new social contract for education, which requires to understand education as a common good and a shared societal endeavour. To ensure this, extensive consultations involving a broad range of stakeholders is needed. The reporting process therefore needs to be **participatory**. This includes ensuring cooperation between ministries of education and other ministries dealing with aspects of the right to education as well as consulting social partners and **civil society organizations** and other relevant bodies.

The preparation of national reports provides a **good opportunity** for Member States to assess the implementation of the right to education in their country, identify specific challenges, build constructive dialogue with other actors involved in this field and share good practices.

In the preparation of reports, Member States are encouraged to provide **substantive and relevant information in a concise manner**. In addition to a description of the constitutional, legislative, administrative, and policy framework established for the implementation of the provisions guaranteed by the instruments, the information supplied by Member States should demonstrate how legal norms and practices comply with the Convention and the Recommendation.

Relevant information supplied for other reporting instances may be reproduced or referred to with precise indication as to its retrieval. Similarly, hyperlinks to any useful documents or relevant legal and policy texts are most welcome and texts can also be added in the annex.

Country reports submitted for previous consultations can be found on the **Observatory on the right to education**⁷ in the monitoring section of the country profile. The information provided in the reports are valuable both for the Observatory on the right to education as well as for **HerAtlas**⁸, the online monitoring tool for girls' and women's right to education. Information and data regarding countries' education systems are also available through the UNESCO Institute for Statistics database⁹. Beyond monitoring purposes, the consultation findings and reports inform broader work - serving for knowledge generation, advocacy, and technical cooperation.

5. Modalities and structure

The Guidelines are structured around three chapters:

- The **first chapter** covers general information on adherence to the Convention.
- The **second chapter** aims to gather information on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 4. As the most extensive

⁷ <http://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/index.php?action=home&lng=en>

⁸ <https://en.unesco.org/education/girls-women-rights>

⁹ [UIS Statistics \(unesco.org\)](https://uis.unesco.org/)

part of the Guidelines, this chapter covers: inclusion and non-discrimination in education (section 1), all levels and forms of education (section 2), quality education provision and learning environment (section 3) and finally, strengthening governance systems (section 4).

- The **third chapter** seeks to obtain information on the methods used to draw the attention of the various authorities in the country to the instruments.

With a view to simplify the Guidelines while providing necessary substantive information to assist Member States in the preparation of responses, through a participatory process, **two types of guidance** are provided:

- (1) Open-ended and closed-ended questions to be directly filled in by Member States. Please note that multiple answers may be provided where relevant.
- (2) Additional information aimed at guiding Members States to structure and detail their responses to the open-ended questions (including remarks on how to respond efficiently to the questions raised). These elements are presented in italics.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Country name: **Republic of Armenia**

Organization or entity responsible for the preparation of the report:

Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport

Name of contact person:

Artur Martirosyan, Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport

Email and telephone number of contact person:

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I. Ratification and applicability of the Convention against Discrimination in Education¹⁰

- Is your country a State Party to the Convention?

Yes

No: Does your country plan to ratify this instrument?

Yes: Please indicate the stage of ratification process reached by your country and whether assistance is needed:

There is interest but no concrete action has been taken

The ratification process has been initiated

The ratification process is close to completion

Please briefly explain the steps that have been taken and timeline when relevant, any difficulties encountered (legal, institutional, political or practical) in completing the ratification process. And how UNESCO can assist:

No, not considering ratification. Please explain why:

- Is the Convention directly applicable in your country's domestic law?

Yes **No**

- Have courts, tribunals and/or administrative authorities adjudicated on issues or violations regarding the right to education?¹¹

No

¹⁰ <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-against-discrimination-education>

¹¹ Judicial mechanisms play an important role in enforcing the right to education by ensuring legal accountability and therefore contributing to the practical realization of the right to education.

Yes: Have the provisions of the Convention been invoked?

Yes

No

- Please cite the case law and jurisprudence.

Information could also be given about the judicial, administrative and other competent authorities having jurisdiction with respect to the right to education.

II. Information on the implementation of the Convention or Recommendation in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4)

1. Towards an inclusive non-discriminatory education system

For reference: This section relates to the main purpose of the Convention/Recommendation that is to underscore the state obligation to proscribe any form of discrimination in education while promoting equality of educational opportunity as laid out in Articles/Paragraphs 1(1), 2 and 3 of the Convention/Recommendation.

It further corresponds to the overall aspiration of SDG4 which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030. While it covers all the SDG4 targets, it also specifically covers SDG target 4.5.¹²

- Please indicate whether the rights and principles laid out in the Convention/Recommendation informed the elaboration of the education legal and/or policy framework:

Yes No

- If yes, please provide reference:

UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (acceded on 5 September 1993)

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=75858>

Constitution of the Republic of Armenia (adopted on 5 July 1995),

Articles 29. Prohibition of Discrimination, 38. Right to Education

http://www.translation-centre.am/pdf/Translat/RA_Constitution/RA_Constitution_2015_en.pdf

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (H.N.-0772-1-HO-52) “On language” (adopted on 17 April 1993), Article 2. Language of instruction

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=170563>

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-297) “On education” (adopted on 14 April 1999), Article 6. State guarantees for the right to education

¹² Which calls on states to “eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations”.

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=178018>

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-160) “On Pre-primary education” (adopted on 06 May 2020),

Article 4. State policy and principles of state policy in the field of pre-primary education

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=180285>

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-160) “On General education” (adopted on 10 July 2009),

Article 1. Subject matter of the Law, Article 4. State policy in the field of general education,

Article 20. Rights and responsibilities of learners, Article 37. State guarantees for general education

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=185512>

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-164-N) “On preliminary (craftsmanship) and middle vocational education” (adopted on 8 July 2005),

Article 4. Principles of state policy in the field of handicraft and secondary vocational education and state guarantees for the rights of citizens, Article 11. Admission to institutions of handicraft and secondary vocational education

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=174048>

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-62-N) “On higher and post-graduate professional education” (adopted on 14 December 2004),

Article 4. Principles of state policy in the field of higher and postgraduate professional education,

Article 14. Admission to organisations providing higher and postgraduate professional education,

Article 18. Researchers of doctoral studies, researchers of post-doctoral studies and external researchers

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=178451>

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-233-N) “On state inspectorate of education” (adopted on 15 November 2005)

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=75491>

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-57-N) “On ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men” (adopted on 20 May 2013)

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=138982>

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-194-N) “On the rights of persons with disabilities” (adopted on 05 May 2021), Article 15

<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=182971>

Following adoption of the mentioned laws, a number of legal acts have also been approved, supporting correct implementation of the laws.

1.1 Non-discrimination and equality in education

- Please indicate measures adopted to both prevent and eliminate discrimination in education within the meaning of the Convention/Recommendation¹³, and ensure equal access to all levels and types of education (please tick all that apply):

For reference: This notably is covered under SDG target 4.1 and partly target 4.b¹⁴

Legal texts¹⁵ prohibit discrimination and guarantee equal access to education:

- ✓ In pre-primary education (including early learning and care)
- ✓ In primary education
- ✓ In secondary education
- ✓ In technical and vocational education and training
- ✓ In higher education
- ✓ In adult education and alternative learning

- Please indicate the relevant legal provisions:

The Convention against discrimination in the field of education entered into force for the Republic of Armenia on December 5, 1993.

Pre-primary education

Among the principles of the state policy in the field of pre-primary education are: equal opportunities for learning and care, accessibility, availability, inclusiveness and compliance with the age and individual characteristics of the child's development (Law "On Pre-primary education", Article 4, Part 7.1).

Primary and secondary education

From the side of inclusive education:

The Republic of Armenia shall declare universal inclusive education as a guarantee of ensuring the right of each child to education. The policy of inclusive education shall be aimed at ensuring the accessibility, opportunity of equal participation in and quality of education of each child (Law "On General education", Article 4, Part 2.1).

For the purpose of increasing the accessibility, quality and effectiveness of educational services,

¹³ See: Article/Paragraph 1(1).

¹⁴ Which calls on states to "substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available [...] for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes".

¹⁵ Constitution, laws, decrees, regulations, circulars, etc.

the educational institution shall provide the participants of educational process (learner, parent, pedagogical worker, etc.) with services of pedagogical and psychological assistance for the organisation of education (Law “On General education”, Article 17, Part 7).

Article 20 of this Law stipulates that all learners shall have equal rights and responsibilities at educational institutions, as well as learners with need for special conditions for education shall have the right to receive assistance aimed at meeting those needs.

From the side of national minorities:

General education of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia may be organised in their native or national language, by compulsory instruction of the Armenian language (Law “On General education”, Article 4, Part 10).

The admission to school of children of a citizen belonging to a national minority is carried out through instructing the child in his or her national (native) language or at school (classroom) providing a course in that language and in case of absence thereof the choice of the language of instruction is made by the parents of the children (learners).

The choice of the language of instruction for children of foreign citizens, persons not having Armenian citizenship, those with dual citizenship, as well as where one of the parents is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia and the other is a foreigner is made by the parents of these children (their legal representative).

Technical and vocational education and training

The Law “On preliminary (craftsmanship) and middle vocational education” stipulates that learners shall have access to preliminary (craftsmanship) and middle vocational education, including by means of providing and special conditions for education and inclusion (Article 4, Part 9).

Admission to institutions of preliminary (craftsmanship) and middle vocational shall be carried out in compliance with the list of professions approved by the Government, by applying the principles of accessibility, publicity, justice, reliability, transparency and equality (Article 11, Part 5).

For the purpose of sparking interest in middle vocational education and increasing the enrolment of learners at this level, since 2011-2012 academic year admission has been carried out without admission examinations, except for professions pertaining to the fields of art, healthcare and sports. In this case, the competition-based admission (preliminary (craftsmanship) is carried out on the basis of arithmetic mean of the grades in the graduation document and the total sum of the grades in the subjects considered to be competitive.

Higher education

The Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education” sets: that the State shall guarantee for the citizens of the Republic of Armenia the right to receive, on a competitive basis, free of charge higher and postgraduate professional education at state higher education institutions. The citizens of the Republic of Armenia holding dual citizenship shall, upon their choice, shall be admitted to higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, in

accordance with the conditions defined by the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the citizens of the Republic of Armenia or for foreigners.

Non-state higher education institutions providing educational programmes accredited as of professions, may, on a competitive basis, provide free of charge higher and postgraduate professional education through full refund of tuition fees in the form of student benefits paid by the State.

Admission to higher education institutions (for Bachelor's degree) shall be carried out in accordance with the list of professions defined by the Government of the Republic of Armenia, through application of the principles of accessibility, publicity, justice, credibility, transparency and equality.

Admission, on a competitive basis, to the second level (Master's degree) in the two-level system of the higher education shall be carried out by taking account of the grades of the first level (Bachelor's degree), in accordance with the procedure established by the authorised public administration body for education. Admission to doctoral studies shall be carried out through programmes for Master's degree and degree of certified specialist, on the basis of the results admission examinations of the applicants, held on a competitive basis, the procedure and list of professions whereof shall be defined by the Government of the Republic of Armenia (Law "On higher and post-graduate professional education", Article 14, Parts 4-6).

The higher education institution shall, at its own expense and in the amount of at least seven per cent of the budget generated from the tuition fees of students, taking as a basis the high academic performance shown and the social group, partially refund, in the form of student benefits, the tuition fees of at least ten per cent of the students learning within fee-paid instruction system - those of students holding the following status:

(1) students considered as socially disadvantaged (those from families falling under the grade with one Part higher than the marginal grade of socially disadvantaged condition of families) -in the amount of at least 30 per cent;

(2) students left without parental care after attaining the age of 18 - until they attain the age of 23, in the amount of at least 50 per cent;

(3) students having been deprived of one parent and having not attained the age of 23 - in the amount of at least 50 per cent; 11

(4) students with a child under the age of 1 - in the amount of at least 50 per cent;

(5) students from families with three or more minors or three or more students - in the amount of at least 30 per cent;

(6) students with disability of 1st or 2nd group, including students having parents deemed as freedom fighters with disabilities - in the amount of at least 30 per cent; students holding other status.

Adult education and alternative learning

According to the Law "On Education" supplementary educational programmes shall be implemented in order to meet the professional and individual educational needs throughout the

entire life of a person and shall be considered as means of ensuring non-formal instruction (Article 26).

Anyone who meets the entry requirements for the given course shall be eligible to participate in the supplementary education program (Article 26, point 3.2).

- Please list the prohibited grounds of discrimination in education as laid out in legal texts:

The right to education is enshrined in the **Constitution** in Article 38: “Everyone shall have the right to education. The programmes of compulsory education and the duration thereof shall be prescribed by law. Secondary education in state education institutions shall be free of charge. Everyone shall, in the cases and in the manner prescribed by law, have the right to free of charge education on a competitive basis in state higher and other vocational education institutions. Higher education institutions shall, to the extent prescribed by law, have the right to self-governance, including academic freedom and freedom of research”.

The **Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education”**, based on the constitutional provisions, to a certain extent, guides the development of the education system. This Law stipulates state guarantees for the right to education, pursuant to which: “The Republic of Armenia shall ensure the right to education, irrespective of national origin, race, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property status or other circumstances.” (Article 6, Part 1).

Education in the Republic of Armenia is provided in accordance with the requirements of the **Law of the Republic of Armenia “On language”**: “The official language of the Republic of Armenia is Armenian which shall serve all spheres of life of the Republic. The language of teaching and upbringing in education and learning systems within the territory of the Republic of Armenia is literary Armenian. In the communities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia general education instruction and upbringing may be organised in their native language in accordance with the state programme as well as with state support, by compulsory instruction of Armenian” (Article 2).

The **Law of the Republic of Armenia “On the rights of persons with disabilities”** stipulates that in the cases and procedure defined by the legislation, special measures creating more favourable conditions may be established for the exercise of the rights and duties of persons with disabilities, as well as certain groups of persons with disabilities, in order to ensure equal opportunities with others. Special measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for persons with disabilities with others cannot be considered as discrimination if they are proportionate, appropriate and necessary to achieve the legitimate objective pursued (Article 15, Part 1).

In particular, persons with disabilities having gained positive marks during admission examinations shall, in case of other equal conditions, enjoy the right to priority in respect of admission to state preliminary (craftsmanship) professional, state middle vocational, state and accredited non-state higher educational institutions.

Persons with severe and profound functional limitation, and in the case of children, persons with

a moderate degree of functional limitation, in case of gaining at least the passing scores designed for the paid system at admission examinations shall be admitted to free of charge system of state preliminary (craftsmanship) professional, state middle vocational, state and accredited non-state higher educational institutions.

Persons studying within the paid system of state preliminary (craftsmanship) professional, state middle vocational, state and accredited non-state higher educational institutions shall be transferred to the free of charge system of the given educational institution in case of being granted during their studies the status of a person with severe and profound functional limitation, and in a case of child, the status of a person with a moderate degree of functional limitation.

□ Policies, programmes and initiatives aim to prohibit and prevent discrimination and ensure equal access to education

- ✓ In pre-primary education (including early learning and care)
- ✓ In primary education
- ✓ In secondary education
- ✓ In technical and vocational education and training
- ✓ In higher education
- ✓ In adult education and alternative learning

- Please provide details:

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-441-N) “On Approving the State Education Development Programme of the Republic of Armenia until 2030” (hereafter: Education Strategy) was adopted on 16 November 2022, and The Action Plan of the Education Strategy was approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia on 16 March 2023. The need for the development of this strategy stems from the “UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 4, and its targets: poverty eradication, gender equality, justice, productive employment and decent work for everyone, as well as the approaches based on human rights and anti-discrimination, the principle of “leaving no one behind”, the “UN-Armenia Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025” and from other national strategic documents and international commitments.

The ultimate goal of the Education Strategy is: to form an effective and internationally competitive educational system based on national and universal values aimed at the development of the Republic of Armenia, which gives *everyone, at all stages of their life*, the opportunity to receive quality education meeting their needs and abilities, ensures the competitive professional preparedness of individuals to build their own well-being in their country, and taking an active civic position to exercise their own rights and responsibilities, as well as willingness to engage in social good, and the country’s multidimensional security. Thus, the strategy covers almost all SDG4 targets in a comprehensive way. One of three strategic directions until 2030 is *creation of a universal inclusive learner-centred educational environment*, which will make available to every citizen at all stages of their life quality and effective educational services arising from their

development and personal characteristics throughout the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

The Government Decision of the Republic of Armenia No 1363-A of 18 August 2021 on **“Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia for 2021-2026”** is targeted at the *creation of an environment for inclusive education, the modernisation of the content of education and educational programmes, the modernisation and rearmament of necessary infrastructures, the wide use of modern information technologies in the training and management systems and the strengthening of the education-science-labour market bond will be pivotal for all levels of education* (Part 4.3, Paragraph 2).

One of the main targets for general education is to provide and expand access to education for which it was intended to build, capitally renovate or renovate at least 300 schools by the year 2026, as well as making sure they are completely equipped with necessary items and equipment.

Ensuring quality products of general education is impossible without a proper system of development and full access to the network of pre-primary services during early childhood. For this purpose, it is envisaged to continue to expand pre-primary services, improve the quality of those services, create a complete environment for the development of a child and continue to improve the professional capabilities of pedagogues of pre-primary institutions. In particular: to build, capitally renovate or renovate at least 500 kindergartens and preschool institutions by the year 2026, making sure they are fully equipped with necessary items and equipment; to increase the number of children at the age of 3-5 enrolled in pre-primary institutions to at least 85% by the year 2026; to ensure transition to universal inclusiveness in all pre-primary institutions of the Republic of Armenia by the year 2024.

□ Combatting discrimination in terms of curriculum:

- ✓ In pre-primary education (including early learning and care)
- ✓ In primary education
- ✓ In secondary education
- ✓ In technical and vocational education and training
- ✓ In higher education
- ✓ In adult education and alternative learning

- Please provide details:

The **State Standard of General Education** involves the inclusion of anti-discrimination topics in general education programs in subjects such as “Social Studies”, “Me and Environment”. In particular, the subject of Social Studies includes topics related to fundamental human rights and legal equality, the goal of which is to create a citizen who carries the fundamental values of democracy, demonstrates emotional maturity, believes, participates and bears social responsibility. This subject gives student the opportunity to study social processes, form a critical approach to them and have their own position. The student must be able to scientifically understand the problems of human and society, political orders and ideas, the contradictions of sustainable development, explore and interpret them, have cognitive, social and individual abilities and skills,

be aware of local, national and global problems based on national and universal values.

The “Social Studies” subject programs of the 7th and 10th grades of public educational institutions were approved by the Order of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia No 62-N of November 24, 2022. In particular, the purpose of the “Human-law” theme is to present the importance of the right necessary for the coexistence of people and regulating their behaviour, as well as to develop analytical skills and attitudes concerning them.

According to the Order of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia No 1162-A/2 of September 7, 2020, teacher training is planned, and as a result, the following competencies will be acquired:

- a) to compare, analyze, combine the concepts of “values”, “attitude”, make them understandable to the student;
- b) by their behaviour serve as an example for students to firmly understand the possibilities of democratic culture;
- c) to appreciate and understand the role of values in the formation of a democratic culture when teaching the subject, convey value and awareness to the student;
- d) to apply components of the values and attitudes of democratic culture when drawing up lesson plans;
- e) to apply different types of educational activities, effective teaching methods in order to form values and attitudes;
- f) to contribute to the formation of an atmosphere of equality, humanity and justice in the educational process.

The access to the **preliminary (craftsmanship) professional and middle vocational education** programme is available for all. The state educational standards are composed of modules (units) and for each of them, set of learning outcomes with corresponding performance criteria, which can be objectively measured, and assessment means are defined. Those modules are grouped into two clusters: Key skills and Professional Competences. The key skills include the following modules which are common for all qualifications’ standards: Armenian Language and Basics of Speech Culture; Basics of Economics; Basics of Political Science and Sociology; Basics of Law; History; Russian language; Second Foreign language; Physical education; Landscape Studies and Basics of Ecology; Civil Defence and Basics of Emergency Situations; of which the module of Basics of Political Science and Sociology (54 academic hours) and Basics of Law (36 academic hours) are providing the topics and themes regarding to the combating of any discrimination.

- Other measures adopted to both prevent and eliminate discrimination in education and ensure equal access to all levels and types of education:

The Government Decree N 154-N on the procedure for “Discovery and Referral of Children Left Out of Compulsory Education” of 11.02.2021, was approved (and the amendments were approved on 24.05.2024), the electronic platform created for that purpose was launched. As of the end of

May 2024, 703 children have been identified as out of school and returned to school.

1.2 Equality of opportunities and inclusion in education

- Please indicate the actions taken/planned to ensure equality of opportunities (in terms of access, participation and completion), equal treatment and to support the inclusion of all learners in learning processes (*several items may be ticked*):

- **General measures:**

- ✓ Legislation provides for inclusive education for all
- ✓ Policy measures aim to enhance inclusion in education for all
- ✓ Teachers are trained on inclusive education¹⁶ and to value diversity
- Initiatives to address discrimination and promote cultural diversity and mutual acceptance
- Other:
- Multiple and flexible learning pathways¹⁷ are provided for
- Curricula and teaching methods are inclusive in design¹⁸
- Multilingual and intercultural education is supported

Education in the Republic of Armenia is provided in accordance with the requirements of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On language”: the language of teaching and upbringing in education and learning systems within the territory of the Republic of Armenia is literary Armenian. In the communities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia general education instruction and upbringing may be organised in their native language in accordance with the state programme as well as with state support, by compulsory instruction of Armenian.

Admission of a learner to a school of **general education** is carried out pursuant to Procedure for admission to, transfer from and removal of a learner from the institution of general education approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 1640-N of 24 November 2010.

¹⁶ Teachers are prepared to teach all student (beyond just students with disabilities), equipping them with knowledge, values and attitudes that permit every student to succeed. See: [UNESCO policy paper](#): Inclusive teaching: preparing all teachers to teach all students, 2020, p.14.

¹⁷ Multiple and flexible learning pathways are ‘entry points and re-entry points at all ages and all educational levels, strengthened links between formal and non-formal structures, and recognition, validation and accreditation of the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through nonformal and informal education’ ([Education 2030 Framework for Action](#), para. 33). This may include student transfers between courses and institutions and diverse learning modalities (online, in-person, full-time, part-time, etc.) to respond to individual needs and interests.

¹⁸ In designing the curricula and teaching methods, care is given to ensure that all students are provided with an inclusive and supportive learning experience that offers them the opportunity to succeed whatever their background.

General education is provided starting from the age of six which may be attained by the end of the given calendar year. Admission of learners to an institution of general education is carried out on the basis of the application of the parent of a school-age child or the legal representative thereof or the contract concluded between the institution and the parent. At the 3rd level of general education - high school - students may pursue further studies only upon availability of the basic school graduation certificate.

The admission to school of children of a citizen belonging to a national minority is carried out through instructing the child in his or her national (native) language or at school (classroom) providing a course in that language and in case of absence thereof the choice of the language of instruction is made by the parents of the children (learners).

The choice of the language of instruction for children of foreign citizens, persons not having Armenian citizenship, those with dual citizenship, as well as where one of the parents is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia and the other is a foreigner is made by the parents of these children (their legal representative).

In all those settlements, where the general education institution is the only state institution providing education at the given educational level, or all the places licensed for the given educational level in the state institutions operating in the given community are occupied, the student's admission is carried out regardless of the limitation of the places granted by the licence.

Admission to state and accredited non-state institutions of **preliminary (craftsmanship) and middle vocational education** shall be carried out according to the admission procedure approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science for the given academic year.

For the purpose of sparking interest in preliminary (craftsmanship) professional and middle vocational education and increasing the enrolment of learners at this level, since 2011-2012 academic year admission has been carried out without admission examinations, except for professions pertaining to the fields of art, healthcare and sports. In this case, the competition-based admission (including primary vocational (handicraft)) is carried out on the basis of arithmetic mean of the grades in the graduation document and the total sum of the grades in the subjects considered to be competitive.

Admission to a **higher professional education institution** is carried out pursuant to Procedure for admission to state and non-state higher education institutions (according to Bachelor's degree education programme) approved by point 1 of the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 597-N of 26 April 2012.

Admission to higher professional education institutions of the Republic of Armenia is also carried out on a competitive basis, based on admission examinations.

Pursuant to the above-mentioned procedure, winners of International Olympiads in different subjects of general education instructed at a secondary school, medallists of World and European championships for different sports - having indicated the relevant professions in the admission application - are admitted to higher education institution without admission examinations with the use of reserve seats allocated by the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

Persons with secondary, preliminary vocational or middle vocational education may be admitted to higher education institutions without age limit.

Pursuant to the procedure, citizens of the Republic of Armenia with dual citizenship and foreigners may be admitted to higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia on general grounds or according to the procedure for admission of foreigners to education institutions.

Admission to Master's degree and doctoral studies is carried out respectively in accordance with "Procedure for admission to and instruction in Master's degree programme in higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia" approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 1193-N of 6 December 2007, and "Procedure for admission to and instruction within doctoral studies, as well as for registration for post-doctoral studies and external research approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia" No 238-N of 25 February 2016.

Thus, the process of admission of learners at different levels of education is regulated by legal acts approved for that purpose and discrimination is excluded.

As regards the *rights and obligations of the learners of different levels* and other participants in the educational process, they are regulated by Laws of the Republic of Armenia "On general education", "On preliminary (craftsmanship) professional and middle vocational education" and "On higher and postgraduate professional education", as well as by the statutes of educational institutions. Thus, the noted legal acts regulate the relations established between the participants in the educational process, as well as non-discriminatory attitude.

- Please elaborate and, where appropriate, indicate the legal and policy measures taken:

On 1 December 2014, the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On making amendments to the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On general education"" (HO-200-N) was adopted, according to which the Republic of Armenia shall declare the universal inclusive education as a guarantee of ensuring the right of each child to education. The policy of inclusive education is aimed at ensuring the accessibility, opportunity of equal participation in and quality of education of each child.

As a result of the assessment of special educational needs, starting from 2023 by RA Territorial Pedagogical-Psychological Support Centers in accordance with the procedure established by the RA Government Decision No 1265-N of August 11, 2022 "On Establishing the Procedures for Providing Reasonable Accommodations", all reasonable accommodations are offered for the effective organization of the education, which is necessary for the realization of the right to education of children with disabilities.

During 2021-2024, the Republican Pedagogical-Psychological Center conducted 533 training courses on child protection topics (inclusion, exclusion of discrimination and equal opportunities, bullying, and prevention of violence) for 11,270 employees of educational institutions.

The educational materials, modules, and guidelines used during the training courses are available on the [publications](#) subpage of the official website of the Republican Pedagogical-Psychological Center (below are the links).

["Individual Educational Plan" Methodological Guideline](#)

["Individual Educational and Developmental Plan" methodological guide for educators](#)

["Accessible Educational Environment: Physical Environment Adaptations"](#)

[Methodological Guideline](#)

[“Assistive Technologies in the Process of Organizing Education” Guideline for teachers and parents.](#)

[“Change of perception. expanding teachers’ rights and opportunities. interpersonal communication and community engagement to support inclusive education” Educator Training Manual](#)

[“Manual For Teacher Assistant” Methodological Guide for Teacher Assistants](#)

[“Inclusive Teaching” Methodological Guidelines For Teachers](#)

[“Effective adjustments, quality education” methodological guide for teachers](#)

[“How to promote inclusion in a preschool educational establishment” methodological guide for educators](#)

[“Inclusion In Preschool Educational Establishment, Games, and Exercises” Methodological Guide, Manual For Teachers](#)

[“How to Enable Inclusion in Conditions of Distance Education” Methodological Guide, Tips for Teachers](#)

[“How To Enable Child's Inclusion In Conditions Of Distance Education” Methodological Guide, Tips For Parents](#)

Adapted workbooks and methodological guidelines were developed and provided to educational establishments by the Republican Pedagogical-Psychological Center. Relevant simplifications and adaptations of the textbooks for students with special education needs have also been implemented (below are the links).

[“Native Language 1” workbook \(alphabetic level\)](#)

[“Art 2” Workbook](#)

[“Art 2” Workbook/ Manual for Teachers](#)

[“Technology 2” Workbook](#)

[“Technology 2” Workbook / Manual For Teachers](#)

[“MY HOMELAND 5” Workbook for students in the fifth grade of mainstream school.](#)

[“My homeland 5” workbook methodological guide for teacher](#)

[“Me and the surrounding world 2” Workbook for the second-grade students of mainstream school](#)

[“Me and the surrounding world 2” Workbook methodological guide for the teacher](#)

[“Mathematics 2 first semester” workbook for students in the second grade of mainstream schools.](#)

[“Mathematics 2 first semester” Methodological Guide For Teacher](#)

[“Native Language 1” \(READING\) Workbook For first-grade students of mainstream schools](#)

[“Native Language 1” Workbook methodological guideline for teacher](#)

[“Inclusion of children with behavioural disorders in the educational process” Methodological guide, Manual for educators](#)

[“Students With Multiple Developmental Disabilities: Support Content, Organization and Strategies” Methodical Guide, Manual For Teachers](#)

[“About sensory integration” Methodical guideline, Manual for educators](#)

[“Mathematics 1” Workbook for first-grade students of mainstream school](#)

[“Art 1” Workbook](#)

[“Art 1” Workbook/ Manual For Teachers](#)

[“Native Language 1” Workbook/ Methodological Guideline](#)

“Mathematics 1” Workbook

“Mathematics 1” Methodological guidelines for teachers

[“Technology 1” workbook](#)

“Technology 1” workbook / manual for teachers

“Native Language 1” Workbook

“Native Language” and “Mathematics 1” Workbooks, methodological guide educational materials, manuals for teachers.

The Republican Pedagogical-Psychological Center, in cooperation with UNICEF Armenia, implements the “Strengthening the Capacity of Psychosocial Services in Schools” component of the “Strengthening Emergency Preparedness and Resilience in Armenia” program, which aims to have a comprehensive and systematic approach to Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in schools in 2023. To accomplish the previously stated goal, organizations implementing programs related to mental health and well-being in schools have been mapped. This survey aims to summarize current and planned interventions to strengthen collaboration. So, based on the analysis of the survey results, training modules for school psychologists and teachers are being developed, based on which 300 teachers and 50 psychologists will be trained.

According to the Law “On Approving the State Education Development Programme of the Republic of Armenia until 2030” (hereafter: Education Strategy) it is envisaged transferring to universal inclusive education in **preliminary (craftsmanship) professional and middle vocational education** system in Armenia. In order to implement the strategy measures the new draft law “On Vocational Education and Training” was developed and adopted by the RA National Parliament on 22th May 2024, which provides necessary legislative regulations for the implementation of transition to inclusive education in VET. The new law declares universal inclusive education as a guarantee of every student's right to education, through ensuring access to education, equal participation and quality.

Accordingly, the principle of the state policy is to provide the equal opportunities to receive professional education and inclusiveness, in accordance with the level of development, characteristics and degree of preparation of each student. As a matter of state policy and a student's right, the provision of the end results defined by the educational program through reasonable adjustments to the needs of the special conditions of education, with funding from the state budget, is provided.

It is established that the education of students with special educational needs is organized on the basis of the assessment of the need for their special educational conditions, the definition of corresponding pedagogic-psychological support services, and, if necessary, an individual learning plan.

This Law also aims at the creation of a student-oriented and inclusive educational environment presupposes the availability and accessibility of high-quality higher educational services for

everyone throughout the Republic of Armenia.

In the system of **higher and postgraduate professional education** procedure for granting student allowance and state stipend/scholarship in higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, which was approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1183-N of 27 July 2006, has been implemented since 2006. Competitive education and the idea of student rotation according to academic performance play an essential role within the general context of the mentioned reforms. Pursuant to the requirements of the mentioned procedure, the state shall continue to refund the tuition fees of socially disadvantaged students in the amount of 50-100%; the expansion of joint programmes implemented by higher education institutions through contracts signed between higher education institutions, based on common educational standards, is underway. With the support of the EU, student exchange and joint education programmes, as well as review of education programmes according to educational outcomes are being carried out at higher education institutions.

- In general, what challenges were encountered in the implementation of non-discrimination and equal opportunities principles in education? If needed, brief quantitative information may be added.

Prior to the introduction of the new State Standard of General Education, the content of education was not in line with the logic of the prohibition of discrimination, which was reformulated as a result of developments that lasted for about 2 years, and was introduced into the new state standard of general education.

Other relevant general measures, including gender equality

- ✓ Legislation provides for gender equality in education
- ✓ Policy measures aim to enhance gender equality
- ✓ Gender-responsive education sector planning is undertaken
- Providing positive or affirmative action measures
- Providing financial incentives and fellowships
- ✓ Teachers are trained (initial and in-service) on gender equality
- ✓ All barriers for pregnant girls and young mothers in education are eliminated to ensure the continuity of their education
- Re-entry programmes for young mothers are provided for
- ✓ Ensuring safe and adequate gender-sensitive sanitation facilities²⁰
- ✓ Curricula are rid of all stereotypes²¹ and bias
- ✓ Ensuring gender parity in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)
- Ensuring gender parity in technical and vocational training education and training

- ✓ Teachers are trained to combat (TVET) stigmatisation¹⁹

□ Other:

- Please elaborate and, where appropriate, indicate the legal and policy measures taken:

For the purpose of ensuring equally accessible quality education and increasing the effectiveness of the field of education for all, reforms at all levels of education are being implemented in the country. Separate strategies and concepts also support those reforms. Moreover, all the processes implemented in the field of education are targeted at exercise of the right to education –equally for both women and men, without any discrimination – enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia of 20 May 2013 “**On ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men**” (HO-57-N) prescribes the guarantees for ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities of women and men in political, social, economic, cultural, as well as other fields of public life, and regulates the relations arising with regard thereto. The purpose of this Law is to ensure equality of women and men in all fields of public life – including the sectors of education and culture, legal protection of women and men against possible discrimination, support for formation of civil society, and the establishment of democratic relations in the society.

In order to promote legal equality between women and men and prevent discrimination, public administration bodies of the Republic of Armenia, along with several international organisations, implement various programmes, which assist the authorities and the civil society in improving the legislation. At the same time, works are being implemented with the media to improve the coverage of existing problems and to break the stereotypes.

Other steps:

- According to the new State Standard of General Education, all parameters indicating gender elements will be excluded in the textbooks and taught subjects.
- Teacher training programs also includes modules on gender equality, anti-bullying, as well as topics on gender-sensitive and gender-responsive methodology and approaches, as a result of mastering which the teacher is certified in order to apply the knowledge in practice.
- To encourage the inclusion of professionals in the STEM field, a bonus system has been introduced, which also extends to men.
- There are no barriers to the inclusion of pregnant girls and young mothers in education.

- What challenges were encountered in achieving gender equality in and through education? If needed, brief quantitative information may be added.

²⁰ Gender-sensitive sanitation includes clean, safe and separate toilets, with access to water and garbage disposal' ([UNGEI blog post](#), Gender-sensitive sanitation, 2018)

²¹ Stereotype is a set idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong' (Cambridge Dictionary).

¹⁹ Stigmatisation is the act of treating someone or something unfairly by publicly disapproving of them' (Cambridge Dictionary).

Despite the fact that there are no elements of gender discrimination in education in the Republic of Armenia, men continue to make up a high percentage of STEM professions.

- Does the legal minimum age for marriage conform to international standards (18 years) ²²:

Please note that child marriage is a discriminatory practice as often girls can marry at a younger age than boys. Child marriage violates the child's right to education as they are more likely to drop out of school and children who are not in school are more likely to get married.

✓ Yes No

- Please provide reference to the relevant laws and provisions and indicate the exceptions to the legal age of marriage as well as the absolute minimum age:

The minimum age of marriage for women and men was set at **eighteen** by the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On making amendments to the Family Code of the Republic of Armenia" (HO-26) of 20 May 2013. According to the same provision "A person can also marry at the age of 17 with the consent of her/his parents, adoptive parents or trustee. A person can also marry at the age of 16 if she/he has the consent of her/his parents, adoptive parents or trustees and the other person entering into the marriage is at least 18 years old" (<https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=83374>).

Currently, legislative reforms on raising the age limit for marriage are being discussed in the context of the protection of fundamental human rights (<https://escs.am/am/news/20718>).

National minorities:

For reference: Article/Paragraph 5(1)(c) of the Convention/Recommendation provides for the rights of national minorities.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ✓ Legislation provides for the right to education of national minorities | <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers are trained on intercultural education |
| ✓ Policy measures aim to enhance the right to education of national minorities | <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers are trained to combat stigmatisation ²⁴ |
| ✓ Policy elaboration includes consultations with local communities | <input type="checkbox"/> Multilingual and intercultural education are supported |
| ✓ The right to carry out their own educational activities is legally guaranteed for national minorities | ✓ Native language instruction is ensured for national minorities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational standards are established for educational institutions run by national minorities | ✓ Adapting curricula and teaching and learning methods to their needs for national minorities |

²² Please note that according to the Joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on harmful practice, para. 20: "a marriage of a mature, capable child below 18 years of age may be allowed in exceptional circumstances, provided that the child is at least 16 years of age and that such decisions are made by a judge based on legitimate exceptional grounds defined by law and on the evidence of maturity, without deference to culture and tradition."

²⁴ Supra note 15.

- ✓ Positive or affirmative action measures are provided for national minorities
- ✓ Curricula are rid of all stereotypes²⁵ and bias
- Financial incentives and fellowships are provided for national minorities
- Other²³:

- Please elaborate and, where appropriate, indicate the legal and policy measures taken:

The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia is deemed as the main core element for implementation of state policy on the protection of the rights of persons holding affiliation to national minorities. In particular, pursuant to Article 38 of the amendments made to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia adopted on 6 December 2015: *“Everyone shall have the right to education. The programmes on and duration of compulsory education shall be prescribed by law. Secondary education in state education institutions shall be free of charge. Everyone shall, in the cases and under the procedure provided for by law, have the right to receive free education on a competitive basis in state higher and other vocational education institutions”*. While Article 56 states: *“Everyone shall have the right to preserve his or her national and ethnic identity. Persons holding affiliation to national minorities shall have the right to preserve and develop their traditions, religion, language and culture”*.

Pursuant to the Laws of the Republic of Armenia “On general education” and “On language”, the *general education and upbringing in the communities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia may be organised in their native language, within state programme and under state sponsorship, by compulsory instruction of the Armenian language*.

At the same time, pursuant to Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1392-N of 25 July 2002, in individual cases (at schools in mountainous, highland, borderline rural settlements, in urban and rural schools possessing classes in the languages of national minorities and in other cases) a class with less learners may be opened upon the authorisation of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. This Decision provides an opportunity of opening classes comprised of only Yezidi children in Yezidi-populated communities. Pursuant to the Procedure “For enrolment of a learner in an educational institution implementing basic general education programmes of the Republic of Armenia, for the transfer and dismissal of a learner from the institution, as well as for the organisation of education of children having been enrolled in general education later than the prescribed period”, approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 400-N of 5 May 2016, the learner holding affiliation to a national minority is enrolled in school (class) providing an instruction of the national (native) language of the learner or in school (class) providing a course on that language, whereas in case of non-availability thereof - the parent of the learner selects the language of instruction.

Each year school textbooks are published and republished for the schools of national minorities,

²³ Please see: [UNESCO report](#) ‘The right to education of minorities: Overview of States’ measures reported in the 10th Consultation on the 1960 Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, 2023.

²⁵ Supra note 16.

and regular training is conducted for teachers of the schools of national minorities.

Each year the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia approves model curriculum of general education schools (classes) of national minorities where class hours are allocated for studying native language, literature, culture and history of national minorities for the 1st-12th grades (41 class hours per week).

For the instruction of the subject entitled “Native Language and Literature” 4 class hours a week are allocated for 1st-5th grades each, and 3 class hours a week – for the 6th-12th grades each.

Furthermore, in the settlements with mixed populations where the number of national minorities is small, an opportunity of facultative instruction of language is envisaged. The instruction of Yezidi and Kurdish is carried out in elementary grades of the schools of rural areas resided by Yezidis and Kurds in case of availability of relevant specialists, irrespective of the number of children.

On the basis of preliminary applications submitted by the communities of national minorities residing in Armenia funds are allocated from the State Budget for the publication of textbooks.

Classes with the instruction of the Russian language operate in 42 general education schools for the population of Russian and Slavic national origin, where the instruction of general education subjects is carried out in Russian, except for the subjects entitled “Armenian language and literature” and the “History of Armenia”. Meanwhile, around 60 general education schools are available in the Republic, which provide advanced instruction of the Russian language: the Russian language is taught starting from the 1st grade. Special textbooks and methodological manuals have been published for these schools. Textbooks recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, as well as syllabuses recommended and approved by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia are used at schools (classes) with the instruction of Russian language.

The applicants holding affiliation to national minorities of the Republic of Armenia are admitted to higher education institutions both on general grounds and based on the applications submitted by the heads of national minorities.

Subsequently, upon the motion of the Coordinating Council for National and Cultural Organisations of National Minorities of the Republic of Armenia, the higher education institutions apply full or partial discount of the tuition fee for students. It should be mentioned with regret that proper interest and motivation for higher professional education yet have not been developed among national minorities. With a view of raising awareness among them, particularly at the initiative of the Yezidi community, numerous events are organised aimed at increasing the focus by the Yezidis on professional education, which are actively attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia.

The applicants holding affiliation to national minorities, who are admitted to state higher education institutions, avail of the privileges defined by the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education”, including participation in the rotation process arranged at higher education institutions, as well as enjoy the right to discount of the tuition fee in the prescribed manner, are provided with state educational allowances, participate, as of their preferences and in the prescribed manner, in inter-higher education institution and intra- higher education institution exchange process, participate in the admission to Master’s Degree studies, etc.

- What challenges were encountered in realizing the right to education of minorities? If needed, brief quantitative information may be added.

There are cases where girls from ethnic minorities drop out of compulsory education due to early marriage.

Indigenous people:

- Legislation provides for the right to education of indigenous people
 - Policy measures aim to enhance the right to education of indigenous people
 - Policy elaboration includes consultations with local communities
 - The right to carry out their own educational activities is legally guaranteed for indigenous people
 - Educational standards are established for educational institutions run by indigenous people
 - Positive or affirmative action measures are provided for indigenous people
 - Other:
- Financial incentives and fellowships are provided for indigenous people
 - Teachers are trained on intercultural education
 - Teachers are trained to combat stigmatisation²⁶
 - Multilingual and intercultural education are supported
 - Native language instruction is ensured
 - Adapting curricula and teaching and learning methods to their needs for indigenous people
 - Curricula are rid of all stereotypes²⁷ and bias

Not applicable: 98.1% of the population of the Republic of Armenia is Armenians.

- Please elaborate and, where appropriate, indicate the legal and policy measures taken:

- What challenges were encountered in realizing the right to education of indigenous people? If needed, brief quantitative information may be added.

People on the move (migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons and internally displaced persons) and trapped populations²⁸:

- Legislation provides for their right to education
- Policy measures aim to enhance their right
- Financial incentives and fellowships are provided for
- Auxiliary assistance is provided

²⁶ Supra note 15.

²⁷ Supra note 16.

²⁸ 'Trapped populations are those who are unable to migrate to safe locations and remain trapped in locations vulnerable to the impacts of climate hazards' ([UNESCO report](#): The impact of climate displacement on the right to education, 2020, p. 2).

- to education
- ✓ Inclusion in mainstream schools is ensured
- ✓ Positive or affirmative action measures are provided for
- ✓ All administrative barriers to access education are removed
- ✓ Alternative administrative procedures (placement tests, portfolio of evidence, etc.) to overcome administrative barriers²⁹ are provided for
- ✓ Teachers are specifically trained to ensure their inclusion
- Teachers are trained to combat stigmatisation³⁰
- Other:
- Multiple and flexible learning pathways³¹ are provided
- Curricula are rid of all stereotypes³² and bias
- Accelerated learning programmes are provided
- ✓ Non-formal and/or alternative education programmes are provided
- Language classes to newcomers are provided for
- Multilingualism and intercultural education are encouraged

- Please elaborate and, where appropriate, indicate the legal and policy measures taken:

In September 2023, the entire indigenous Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh faced ethnic cleansing and forced displacement following a ten-month-long blockade of the Lachin corridor, which led to a humanitarian crisis and starvation. The Government of Armenia and the entire Armenian society had to mobilise their resources to address the humanitarian consequences of the influx of 115,000 refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh.

The humanitarian crisis and forced displacement have created an urgent need to ensure access to education and continuity of education for around 17,000 children (almost all are involved in public schools), as well as for 3,709 students of state TVET and higher educational institutions.

At the same time, around 150 students from Nagorno-Karabakh have been readmitted/transferred to non-state TVET educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia or continued education at state TVET educational institutions (those are students from general schools of Nagorno-Karabakh); those students' tuition fees are not reimbursed by the state.

The Government has taken additional measures to address this issue by subsidizing a significant portion of education fees and covering additional expenses.

For forcibly displaced population of Nagorno-Karabakh, several measures of inclusion, realization of the right to education, and ensuring continuity of education, as well as of support, were carried out at all levels of education, which are presented below. In particular:

²⁹ While lack of documentation (such as identity papers, birth certificates, residency permits, etc.) should not be an obstacle to access education, these can constitute a barrier to education. See: [UNESCO publication](#): Handbook on the right to education, 2018, p. 96.

³⁰ Supra note 15.

³¹ Supra note 13.

³² Supra note 16.

With the support of the UN Office in Armenia, discussions were organized with partner organizations, during which the issue of inclusion of forcibly displaced students from Nagorno-Karabakh into general education was raised.

An arrangement on cooperation has been obtained with international and local organizations to clarify the possibilities of support programs, particularly in the directions of providing stationery packages for school-age children, psychological support and capacity building of schools.

In 2023, two Government decisions were adopted to support students of TVET and higher educational institutions from Nagorno-Karabakh displaced after 19 September 2023:

- Government Decision No. 1762-L dated 12.10.2023 (“On Approving Scholarship Allocation Procedure aimed at the Full or Partial Compensation of Tuition Fees for Forcibly Displaced Students from Nagorno-Karabakh after September 19, 2023, and on Establishing the Maximum Amount of a Scholarship”), which establishes the procedure and the maximum amounts of compensation (full or partial) of the tuition fees for the academic year 2023-2024.

According to the decision, 1025 students continued their education at state TVET institutions and 1910 students at state higher educational institutions as of the second semester of the 2023/2024 academic year.

- Government Decision No. 2291-L dated 21.12.2023, which aims to compensate tuition fees of students from Nagorno-Karabakh involved in paid-basis education programs at vocational and higher educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia as of 19 September 2023. Support measures will be continuous.

According to this decision, 47 students from state TVET institutions and 727 from state higher educational institutions are beneficiaries as of the second semester of the 2023/2024 academic year.

At general education level students from Nagorno-Karabakh were admitted to schools according to a simplified procedure, regardless of the availability of their documents.

Out of 16954 school students, 5675 were involved in schools in Yerevan, 2930 in Kotayk, 2319 in Ararat, 1490 in Armavir, 1078 in Lori, 714 in Gegharkunik, 710 in Aragatsotn, 647 in Shirak, 637 in Syunik, 479 in Tavush, and 275 in Vayots Dzor regions. School children were also received psychological support at Regional Pedagogical Psychological Centers (the Centers operate under the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia).

The “National Center of Educational Technologies” of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the the Republic of Armenia has created a new platform in the Education Management Information System (EMIS), where the schools registered the data of the children displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh. Those children are included in general educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia, provided with necessary stationery and free textbooks. Psychologists and specialists of Pedagogical Psychological Support Centers also worked with the schools to provide psychological support to the children.

The “National Center of Educational Technologies” has launched a new platform in the <https://kadrer.emis.am/> website since October 16, 2023 within the framework of the Decree No. 1756-L dated October 12, 2023 of the Government of the Republic of Armenia “On approving the support program for forcibly displaced teachers from Nagorno-Karabakh in 2023”. Through the platform teachers have the opportunity to find a vacancy in the subject they specialize in their convenient place of residence and receive a 30% bonus within 2 years. And the teachers in Syunik,

Vayots Dzor Marzes, Chambarak and Vardenis communities of Gegharkunik Marz and Noyemberyan, Ijevan, and Berd communities of Tavush Marz will be given another 50.000 drams fixed bonus. With this program, more than 330 teachers are already working in Marzes.

More than 500 teachers forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh are currently involved (work) in the public secondary schools, of which 330 have been employed within the framework of the mentioned program in the Republic of Armenia regions (marzes), and others are working in Yerevan schools or have participated in competitions announced for vacancies and have been employed on a general basis.

The Republican Pedagogical-Psychological Center of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia currently is implementing the project “Inclusion of forcibly displaced refugee children from Nagorno-Karabakh in education process through promoting their psycho-social resilience” in the framework of UNESCO Emergency Assistance through the Participation Programme. The projects envisages training of schools’ psychologists and development of a relevant module and a handbook for addressing the psychological needs of the refugee children.

UNICEF implemented a program to introduce psychological support services in educational institutions, within the framework of which 300 teachers and 50 psychologists from 5 regions of the Republic of Armenia were trained.

“Teach for Armenia” Foundation carries out the program “Improve Mental Health and Psychological Well-being of School children in Armenia”, within the framework of the program, an intensive training program is being implemented in stages for the pedagogical staff of 225 schools in the Republic of Armenia, which was implemented through 150 trained mentors.

The Faculty of Psychology of Yerevan State University and “The Armenian Psychological Association of Child and Education” conducted courses on the following topics: “War and the Child”, and “Work of School Psychologists During the War” for 10 groups with 400 participants.

“Inclusion Armenia” educational and socio-legal NGO conducted 13 training courses for 351 educators from 171 schools of the Syunik region within the framework of the sub-grant provided by the “War and Peace Coverage Institute” of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund of the United Kingdom Government. A Practical Guide was developed to raise awareness of the procedures for the organization of mental health and psychosocial support in emergency situations and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian operations.

All these support programs/measures have enabled higher educational and TVET institutions, schools, and preschool institutions to provide necessary services to the forcibly displaced population.

- Have specific measures been adopted for climate displaced persons?

Yes

✓ No

- Please elaborate:

- What challenges were encountered in realizing the right to education of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons and IDPs? If needed, brief quantitative information may be added.

Higher education institutions mostly face the problems concerning the documentation as many students who are to continue their studying process after being displaced have lost their documents proving their academic credits or information about their studies. So there were some obstacles in managing the transfer from the previous university.

People with disabilities:

- ✓ Legislation provides for their right to education
- ✓ Policy measures aim to enhance their right to education
- ✓ Inclusion in mainstream schools is ensured
- ✓ Special schools are used as resource centers to inclusive schools
- Positive or affirmative action measures are provided
- ✓ Financial incentives and fellowships are provided
- Other
- Mainstream teachers are specifically trained on disabilities
- Teachers are trained to combat stigmatisation³³
- Auxiliary assistance is provided
 - ✓ Curricula and teaching and learning methods are adapted
- Curricula are rid of all stereotypes³⁴ and bias
- ✓ Education infrastructure and learning materials are adapted

- Please elaborate and, where appropriate, indicate the legal and policy measures taken:

The Law of the Republic of Armenia “On the rights of persons with disabilities” stipulates that in the cases and procedure defined by the legislation, special measures creating more favourable conditions may be established for the exercise of the rights and duties of persons with disabilities, as well as certain groups of persons with disabilities, in order to ensure equal opportunities with others. Special measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for persons with disabilities with others cannot be considered as discrimination if they are proportionate, appropriate and necessary to achieve the legitimate objective pursued (Article 15, Part 1).

In particular, persons with disabilities having gained positive marks during admission examinations shall, in case of other equal conditions, enjoy the right to priority in respect of admission to state preliminary (craftsmanship) professional, state middle vocational, state and accredited non-state higher educational institutions.

Persons with severe and profound functional limitation, and in the case of children, persons with a moderate degree of functional limitation, in case of gaining at least the passing scores

³³ Supra note 15.

³⁴ Supra note 16.

designed for the paid system at admission examinations shall be admitted to free of charge system of state preliminary (craftsmanship) professional, state middle vocational, state and accredited non-state higher educational institutions.

Persons studying within the paid system of state preliminary (craftsmanship) professional, state middle vocational, state and accredited non-state higher educational institutions shall be transferred to the free of charge system of the given educational institution in case of being granted during their studies the status of a person with severe and profound functional limitation, and in a case of child, the status of a person with a moderate degree of functional limitation.

Secondary schools are provided with targeted funding from the state budget for students with disabilities.

According to Article 35 of the Law “On General Education”, to ensure reasonable adjustments in the process of organizing the education of children with special educational needs, including those with disabilities, funds from the state budget are provided for the public educational institutions. These funds are also used for adaptations of the physical environment for children with disabilities.

By decision N 1265-N of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of August 11, 2022, the procedure for providing reasonable adjustments was established, in which a major role is assigned to the provision of total inclusion in the field of education. Reasonable adjustments are intended for persons who have functional limitations due to disabilities in terms of participation in the educational process on an equal basis with others.

Types of reasonable adjustments include:

- 1) adaptations of a non-technological nature - adaptations for which no financial expenditure is required,
- 2) adaptations requiring low-tech solutions - simple adaptations, do not cause additional difficulties,
- 3) adaptations requiring high-tech solutions: adaptations in which advanced or complex devices are used,
- 4) support in performing any action (accompaniers, interpreter/translator, sign language interpreter, note taker, etc.).

In case of reasonable adjustment provision, the person will be able to perform satisfactorily the activities he or she is required to perform or is expected to perform upon admission to an educational institution to participate equally with others in the educational process.

A person has the right to receive reasonable adjustments regardless of sex, race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic characteristics, language, religion, world view, political or other views, membership of a national minority, property status, birth, disability, age, from other circumstances of a personal or social nature.

Also, the RA Government’s decision N 1481- Ն of September 22, 2022, approved the new funding procedure for RA state public educational institutions, according to which each year 1/3 of the institutions will receive an allocation of about 3.3 million AMD (for providing educational accommodations and accessibility).

The financial allocations are also intended to improve the building conditions of educational

institutions. Particularly, to provide an accessible environment for people with physical disabilities, ramps, adapted bathrooms, elevators, etc. are being built.

As for the newly constructed school buildings, the requirements for them are defined by the order N 103-N of the Minister of Urban Development of the Republic of Armenia dated April 9, 2014, “On approval of construction norms for Public educational buildings”. The newly constructed buildings are adapted for people with physical disabilities.

Also, in the Republic of Armenia, there is a special public school for children with locomotor system problems.

Within the framework of the process of total inclusive education, the posts of teacher’s assistant and psychologist have been introduced in all public schools of the Republic of Armenia.

The legal relations regarding the education of students learning in general education level, but unable to attend due to health conditions, treatment at home, hospital conditions (including abroad) are regulated in accordance with the provisions of the order of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of RA N 31-H of August 29, 2022. The basis for the organization of home education is the certificate given by the medical institution about the student's health and (or) the form of treatment and the written application of the student's parent (or legal representative), as well as the contract signed between the parent and the educational institution.

According to the Decision of the Government of the RA No 1784 approved in 2021, with regard to the number of free of charge education places, a student allowance is given to persons (children) with disabilities with severe and deep, and in the case of children, with moderate limitations of functionality defined by the Law “On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”.

As to the **higher education** institutions, measures are taken to adapt the buildings to the needs of persons with disabilities.

Besides, students with disability of 1st or 2nd group, including students having parents deemed as freedom fighters with disabilities receive a tuition discount in the amount of at least 30 per cent.

See the **“1.1 Non-discrimination and equality in education” and “1.2 Equality of opportunities and inclusion in education” sections.**

- What challenges were encountered in realizing the right to education of people with disabilities? If needed, brief quantitative information may be added.

Students from poor households:

- ✓ Financial incentives and fellowships for school enrolment are provided
- ✓ Transport, meals and education material are subsidised or provided
- Teachers are trained to combat stigmatisation³⁵
- Curricula are rid of all stereotypes³⁶ and

³⁵ Supra note 15.

free of charge beyond compulsory bias
education

Positive or affirmative action measures are
provided

Other:

- Please elaborate and, where appropriate, indicate the legal and policy measures taken:

Secondary education at state educational institutions is free of charge.

The state provides the students of the primary education level (first to fourth grades) of the educational institutions implementing the primary education program, as well as all the classes of the educational institutions implementing the special education program, at the expense of the state budget, respectively, with textbooks provided for the elementary general and special general education programs. The state provides textbooks and other materials necessary for learning to children studying in special school-resource centers.

According to the Decision of the Government of the RA No 1784 approved in 2021, with regard to the number of free of charge education places, a student allowance is given to children left without parental care defined by Article 7 of the Law “On Social Protection of Children Left Without Parental Care” admitted to an educational institution with a **preliminary vocational and middle vocational educational** program.

At **higher educational institutions** socially disadvantaged students (those from families falling under the grade with one point higher than the marginal grade of socially disadvantaged condition of families) receive a tuition discount in the amount of at least 30 per cent; students left without parental care after attaining the age of 18 - until they attain the age of 23 - in the amount of at least 50 per cent; students having been deprived of one parent (having one parent) and having not attained the age of 23 - in the amount of at least 50 per cent.

- What challenges were encountered in realizing the right to education of students from poor households? If needed, brief quantitative information may be added.

General education is compulsory and free of charge, however, families incur additional educational expenses for the education of their children which include the purchase of textbooks, school supplies and transport expenses but generally, this is not a major problem for families at the levels of elementary and secondary education. However, these additional educational expenses are a heavy burden for poor families and especially for those having children studying at higher grades. Besides, in order to enter a higher education institution after completing high school, most of the learners often take private classes/lessons which also require expenses from the families.

Thus, according to the learners, the two main reasons/arguments for failing to continue studies

in high school after graduating from basic school are the completion of the basic education and the social standing of the family (or high tuition fees).

From the RA state budget funds areas provided for the reimbursement of the rent of textbooks for children from socially vulnerable families and 38 bordering communities, as well as for the transportation expenses of students from rural settlements in the regions of the Republic of Armenia (for whom the nearest school is located in an area more than 5 km away from their place of residence).

2. Progress made with respect to implementing the right to education across all levels and forms of education

2.1 Early childhood care and education

For reference: Early childhood care and education (ECCE) is not explicitly provided for in the Convention/Recommendation. However, the international community has increasingly recognized the importance of ECCE over the years. The Committee on the Rights of the Child initially recognized “the right to education during early childhood as beginning at birth” (General Comment No. 7). This became more explicit with the 2010 Moscow Framework for Action and Cooperation³⁷ and more recently, the Tashkent Declaration and Commitments to Action for Transforming Early Childhood Care and Education³⁸. In the current context of the Education 2030 agenda, under SDG target 4.2, states have now committed to “the provision of at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education”.

- Please indicate the measures taken to ensure access to quality ECCE (*several items may be ticked*):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prior to pre-primary education, ECCE services are free | <input type="checkbox"/> ECCE services respect a child’s need for early cognitive and social development, foundational learning, responsive care, nutrition, health, safety, protection, and play. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prior to pre-primary education, ECCE services are affordable | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ECCE services are accessible on a non-discriminatory basis | |

- Please elaborate further on the measures taken:

Pre-primary education is regulated by the Constitution, the laws on Education, General Education, Pre-primary education, Local Administration, Child Rights, State Non-Profit Organisations, by Labour and Family Codes, by the Republic of Armenia international agreements, other laws and legal acts.

In Armenia preschool education is not mandatory. The preschool age is 0-6-year-old. Preschool Institutions (hereafter: PSI) are administered by communities. Not all the communities have operating PSIs, therefore child access level to Pre-primary is low. In particular, according to the data for 2023,

³⁷ Which states that “ECCE is part of the right to education and the main foundation for holistic human development”.

³⁸ Which commits states to “Enhance policy and legal frameworks to ensure that the right to education includes ECCE”

child access to PSIs (within 0-5 age population) was 77587 or 71% of relevant age group.

To ensure sustainability of preschool programs that functions a part of secondary primary school, allocations are made from the Republic of Armenia state budget due to estimations calculated by formula for an annual spending per child in primary level. In 2019 the budget allocations mentioned above were directed for organising preschool education of 7000 children. In Yerevan the community-based kindergartens are free of charge due to the community budget allocations. Kindergartens in regions may have charges depends on the decision of community governing bodies

Following the requirements of Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all and Education for All Declaration, on May 6, 2020, the National Assembly of Armenia has adopted the RA Law on Amendments to the Law on Preschool Education which includes the following activity framework:

- Diversify the types of organising preschool education
- Expansion of preschool services with special attention to rural and bordering settlements,
- Establish alternative cost effective models
- Set conditions for inclusion of children in need of special educational conditions.

In particular, the first part of Article 4 of the Law states that the Republic of Armenia declares and ensures inclusivity, accessibility and quality of preschool education as an important guarantee for securing each child's right to education, development and upbringing, secure environment, maintaining and strengthening life and health.

The law also guarantees accessibility and availability of Pre-primary education for all children from urban and rural areas through universally inclusive education, including children with disabilities, socially and economically vulnerable children. Particularly, it is expected to maintain universal inclusion and accessibility of preschool education: accessibility of inclusive and quality preschool education for all children of 3-6 age including children in need of special educational conditions, and maximum engagement of children at age 5.

The program "300 schools and 500 kindergartens to be built, overhauled or reconstructed until 2026" is aimed at ensuring the availability and accessibility of preschool education, within the framework of which the number of newly built preschool institutions by the end of 2023 is 24 kindergartens and 8 preschools. Currently, 14 preschools and 21 kindergartens are under construction, the construction works of which are planned to be completed in 2024.

In 2023, with the financing of the state budget, works aimed at introducing alternative cost-effective preschool models were carried out in 2 settlements.

The final target (2030) of the Education Strategy is that affordable preschool services will be available in all settlements, and every family will be able to use these services, and enrolment of at least 95% of 3-5 year olds in preschool services will be ensured.

- Is compulsory and free of charge pre-primary education available?

- Pre-primary education is compulsory. Please provide the age of enrolment and duration:

- ✓ Pre-primary education is **not** compulsory.
- Pre-primary education is free of charge for all. [Please provide the duration and indicate the extent to which it is free:](#)

- ✓ Pre-primary education is **not** free.

- [Please list the relevant laws and policies. Where applicable, provide information on the direct costs \(e.g., enrolment fees and tuition fees\) and indirect costs \(e.g., schools supplies, uniforms, transport and compulsory levies on parents\). Brief quantitative information may be added.](#)

At the point 2.2 of this section duration of Pre-primary education is filled, however according to the acting legislation pre-primary education is not compulsory.

According to the Decree of Yerevan Mayor (N 706-A 04.03.2016) Yerevan municipal kindergartens are free of charge. The other kindergartens in 10 regions (marzes) of Armenia are not free of charge.

- [What challenges were encountered in realizing early childhood care and education and pre-primary education?](#)

- ✓ Limited access
- Issues of equity and inclusion
- Poor quality programmes
- Other:
- Poor learning outcomes
- ✓ Low number of professionally trained educators
- Lack of support to families

In a number of rural and border settlements, PSIs are either non-existent or located in far-off distances, which impede involving children in the preschool education system. Due to the limited number of preschools in urban communities (settlements), children have to be wait-listed for admission, which is another limitation of access to preschool education.

The financial resources of Republic of Armenia communities are limited to be able to build appropriate preschool educational facilities or provide for complete renovation of existing facilities. Therefore, it is necessary to seek alternative solutions to the issue and make them applicable to communities while maintaining existing preschool educational standards. For this purpose, the conditions of subvention programmes have been revised, increasing the share of government participation in construction, capital repair, reconstruction or renovation of preschool facilities, enabling more communities to apply for such programmes. After the changes made, there were around 180 community applications for preschool buildings in 2022. Still, maintenance costs are also problematic, which in some cases lead to seasonal operation of institutions. The said problem is mostly addressed due to the enlargement of communities and changes in taxation. Nevertheless, some communities continue to need support, especially in relation to the improvement of payment of Pre-primary education staff.

In recent years, the lacking number of Pre-primary institutions in the country has been especially emphasized, however the quality of the educational process in these institutions is equally important. According to the new standards of Pre-primary education endorsed by the Government of the Republic of Armenia, children must be provided with flexible, adaptable and age-appropriate programmes, along with appropriate teaching materials to be developed for children of different age groups.

Lacking pedagogical staff, especially in small settlements, is one of the most serious issues of the Pre-primary education system. The lack of pedagogical and service staff, creates significant difficulties for PSIs. At the same time, the age of pedagogues tends to increase (almost 36.3% have work experience of 16 years or more), while the younger human resources are lacking sufficient practical skills and theoretical knowledge.

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

Pre-primary education services are not provided in around 201 settlements of the country.

2.2 Primary and secondary education

For reference: Article/Paragraph 4(a) of the Convention/Recommendation provides for universal primary and secondary education. In the context of the Education 2030 agenda, SDG target 4.1 calls on States to provide “12 years of free, publicly funded, inclusive, equitable, quality primary and secondary education - of which at least nine years are compulsory.”

Primary education

- Please provide the age of enrolment and duration of primary education:

The age of enrolment to primary education is 6 years old, and duration is 4 years (grades 1-4).

- Is primary education compulsory and free of charge?

- ✓ Primary education is compulsory
- Primary education is **not** compulsory.
- ✓ Primary education is free of charge.
- Primary education is **not** free.

- Please list the relevant laws and policies. Where applicable, provide information on the direct costs (e.g., enrolment fees and tuition fees) and indirect costs (e.g., exam fees, schools supplies, uniforms, transport and compulsory levies on parents). Brief quantitative information may be added.

Secondary education is free of charge in all educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia offering general education programmes. Secondary education includes primary and secondary education.

At the expense of the state budget the state provides to primary school students with textbooks

designed for basic general education programs. The transportation expenses of the students from rural regional settlements of RA (for whom the nearest school is located in an area more than 5 km away from their place of residence) are reimbursed at the expense of the Republic of Armenia state budget. In this tier of schooling there are no mandatory fees for students attending Republic of Armenia public schools.

Pursuant to the laws of the Republic of Armenia “On education” and “On general education”, elementary education, being the first degree of secondary education, is free of charge and compulsory. Until 2015, the basic general education was compulsory, but on 8 April 2015 amendments were made to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On general education”, by virtue of which part 4 of Article 4 of the Law was amended to read as follows:

“4. Secondary education shall be compulsory, except for the cases prescribed by law.

5. Secondary education shall be free of charge at state education institutions.

6. A 12-year secondary education shall be provided in the Republic of Armenia”.

The provision of the law, which stipulates the requirement of compulsory secondary education, entered into force on 1 June, 2017, before which basic education will be considered mandatory.

Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On general education”, the basic programmes of general education shall be formed according to the principles of succession and continuity. They shall be classified as follows:

the 1st degree - elementary/primary (4 years, 1-4 grades);

the 2nd degree - basic (9 years, 1-9 grades);

the 3rd degree - secondary (12 years, 1-12 grades).

Thus, the 2nd degree of general education, i.e. basic education, comprises also elementary education.

Admission to the first grade of school is open for those children who have reached the age of six or are due on December 31 of the given calendar year.

Pursuant to the laws of the Republic of Armenia “On education” and “On general education” the 12-year secondary education in state educational institutions is free of charge.

- What challenges were encountered in realizing primary education?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Limited access | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poor learning outcomes in: |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Issues of equity and inclusion | Foundation literacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High dropout rates | Numeracy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor quality programmes | Social and emotional learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | Others |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Disparity in learning outcomes |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Low number of professionally trained teachers |

In recent years, the *gross enrolment rate* in the general education sector has been averaging

around 90%. The most common reasons for non-attendance are disability, extreme poverty, child labour, ethnicity, refugee status, which are related also to gender-based and regional inequalities. In terms of student enrolment in general education, the third level - high school - is more problematic, where enrolment is 59.5%. Considering that after finishing basic school, only 14.9% (for 2022/2023 academic year enrolment increased to 18.3%) of the population of the reference age group continued their studies in primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education, it can be clearly stated that the majority of basic school graduates do not attend grades 10-12.

Despite the relevant changes in the RA Law on General Education in 2014 shifting the Republic of Armenia to *universal inclusive education*, there is still much to be done in this area. The capacity of secondary schools to provide education to children with special educational needs is limited; adapted physical and learning environment is lacking. Currently, the requirements from school buildings are compounded by those of inclusion and disaster risk management.

Another matter of urgency is the improvement of the *physical conditions in school buildings and availability of material and technical resources meeting international standards* that has a direct link with student achievement. This relates both to school infrastructures in place including utilities, communication, etc., as well as the adequacy of facilities and equipment, and availability of required utensils and resources. The effect is especially significant when it comes to outcomes in the area of natural sciences. In case of schools where the students have indicated infrastructure-related problems, they have scored a minimum of ten points lower in learning outcomes compared to their counterparts from schools that have not reported such problems.

Another issue is the *large number of rural schools in Armenia that have small populations*: schools with up to 100 students represent 31.5% of the total number of schools, while another 35% of schools have 101-300 students. Such schools need to diversify their designation by acting at the same time as community centers offering cultural, sports and entertainment environments and infrastructures.

One of the most important issues of general education is the *inclusion of minors in the education process* temporarily living outside the Republic of Armenia and the introduction of effective reintegration mechanisms for repatriates. A favorable basis for such mechanisms was created by the amendments made to the RA Law “On General Education” in 2022, where the concept of “special education needs” was expanded to include language and cultural dimensions, as well as additional educational support envisaged for students in such circumstances.

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

Gross enrolment ratio was 93.9% in primary education level, 91.5% in lower secondary education level, 54.0% in upper secondary education (+18.3% in vocational education) in the [2022/2023 academic year](#) (the last available official information).

Secondary education

In this part, please provide information on the general availability and accessibility to all of secondary education, including technical and vocational secondary education and training.

- Please provide the age of enrolment and duration of lower secondary education:

The age of enrolment is 10 years old, and duration is 5 years (grades 5-9).

- Please provide the age of enrolment and duration of upper secondary education:

The age of enrolment is 15 years old, and duration is 3 years (grades 10-12).

- Is lower and upper secondary education compulsory and free of charge?

- ✓ Lower secondary education is compulsory.
 - Lower secondary education is **not** compulsory.
- ✓ Lower secondary education is free of charge.
 - Lower secondary education is **not** free of charge.
- ✓ Upper secondary education is compulsory.
 - Upper secondary education is **not** compulsory.
- ✓ Upper secondary education is free of charge
 - Upper secondary education is **not** free of charge.

- Please list the relevant laws and policies. Where applicable, provide information on the direct costs (e.g., enrolment fees and tuition fees) and indirect costs (e.g., exam fees, schools supplies, uniforms, transport and compulsory levies on parents). Brief quantitative information may be added.

The same as for “primary and secondary”.

- Please indicate whether the legal minimum age for employment is aligned with the end of compulsory education:

For reference: The employment laws and those related to compulsory education are interdependent and mutually reinforce each other. If the minimum age of employment is below that of compulsory education, the child is at risk of dropping out of school to work and therefore not completing compulsory education. On the other hand, if compulsory education is lower than the minimum age of employment, once the child has completed compulsory education, the door is open to child exploitation and the violation of labour laws.

- ✓ Yes No o

- Please provide reference to the relevant laws and provisions and indicate how the provision is enforced:

According to Article 17, Part 2, Clause 2.2 of the RA Labor Code, «Persons under the age of fourteen may be engaged in creation of works (creative work) and/or performance thereof in cinematographic, sports, theatrical and concert organisations, circuses, television and radio companies upon written consent of one of the parents/guardian/adopter or of the guardianship and custody body which must not cause harm to their health and morals, as well as must not interfere

with their education or safety.

Persons between the ages of fourteen and eighteen may not be engaged in work on weekends, non-working days - holidays and memorial days -except when participating in sporting and cultural events.

A temporary employment contract shall be concluded with persons under the age of 16”.

The mentioned provisions of the Code have remained unchanged.

- What challenges were encountered in realizing secondary education?

- Limited access
- Issues of equity and inclusion
- High dropout rates
- Poor quality programmes
- Other:
- Poor learning outcomes
- Low readiness of primary graduates
- Low number of professionally trained teachers

The same as for “primary and secondary”.

In the case of vocational education, the biggest issue is the training of human resources in accordance with the current and expected requirements of the labour market.

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

Preliminary vocational education

In 2022/2023 academic year 51 state educational institutions operated in the Republic implementing preliminary vocational programs, of which 23-preliminary vocational and 28-middle vocational. Education has been implemented based on the basic and secondary education. Number of students comprised 6 456, of which 23.1% female. In free of charge educational system studied 90.4% of students, paid – 9.6%. Gross enrolment ratio of students constituted 5.6% (female-2.8%, male8.1%), gender parity index (coefficient of correlation of female gross enrolment to male gross enrolment) was 0.34.

Middle vocational education

In 2022/2023 academic year 99 state and non state educational institutions operated in the Republic implementing middle vocational programs, of which entrants - 11 044 (female-50.8%), students- 33 230 (female-50.9%), graduates- 7 169 (female-53.2%). Education has been implemented based on the basic and secondary education. Gross enrolment ratio of students constituted 15.3% (female-16.7%, male – 14.1%), gender parity index (coefficient of correlation of female gross enrolment to male gross enrolment) was 1.19.

2.3 Higher education

For reference: Article/Paragraph 4(a) of the Convention/Recommendation provides for higher education. Ensuring higher education is essential to achieve SDG4, both targets 4.3³⁹, and target 4.4⁴⁰. Article 4 of the Convention requires states to make “higher education equally accessible to all on the basis of individual capacity”. Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) further adds that this should be pursued by “every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education”. Higher education includes technical and vocational education and training.

- Please indicate efforts made to ensure that higher education, including technical, vocation education and training, is equally accessible to all on the basis of individual capacity and/or is available free of charge (*several items may be ticked*):

- Higher education is free of charge
- Higher education is accessible on the basis of individual capacity (as assessed by reference to relevant qualifications and experience)
- Higher education is accessible through financial incentives and scholarships
- Higher education is accessible through positive or affirmative action measures
- Higher education is accessible through credit transfer system between states
- Higher education allows for multiple and flexible learning pathways (flexible entry and re-entry, recognition, validation, and accreditation of knowledge and skills acquired through non-formal and informal education).
- Other:

- Please list the relevant laws and policies. Where applicable, provide information on the direct costs (e.g., enrolment fees and tuition fees) and indirect costs (e.g., exam fees, university supplies, transport, accommodation). Brief quantitative information may be added.

The right to higher education is enshrined in Article 38 of the Constitution: “Everyone shall have the right to education. The programmes of compulsory education and the duration thereof shall be prescribed by law. Secondary education in state education institutions shall be free of charge. Everyone shall, in the cases and in the manner prescribed by law, have the right to free of charge education on a competitive basis in state higher and other vocational education institutions. Higher education institutions shall, to the extent prescribed by law, have the right to self-governance, including academic freedom and freedom of research”.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-297)“On education” was adopted on 14 April 1999, which, based on the constitutional provisions, to a certain extent, guides the development of the education system. This Law stipulates state guarantees for the right to education, pursuant to

³⁹ Which calls on states to “ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university”.

⁴⁰ Which recommends to “substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”.

which: “The Republic of Armenia shall ensure the right to education, regardless of the nationality, race, gender, language, belief, political or other views, social origin, property status or other circumstances.”. The legal equality of women and men has also been provided for in this Law.

The higher professional education in Armenia is provided in state and non-state higher professional education institutions (including accredited) on a free of charge and fee paid basis.

Legislation on higher education of the Republic of Armenia is mainly regulated by the Laws of the Republic of Armenia “On education” and “On higher and postgraduate professional education” as well as secondary legislative acts deriving therefore.

Law and separate regulations prescribe the minimum requirements for admission to all the three levels of higher education institution, unified graduation and admission examinations according to the professions and universities.

For certain socially vulnerable groups - taking also into consideration the academic performance of a student - admission and education in higher education institutions are organised under privileged conditions to ensure access to higher education for all the citizens. This is regulated by the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On higher and postgraduate professional education” and the Procedure for granting student allowances and state stipends in higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, as well as internal regulations of higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, which must not contradict to the norms prescribed by law. Pursuant to Article 6 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On higher and postgraduate professional education”:

“The higher education institution shall, at its own expense and in the amount of at least seven per cent of the budget generated from the tuition fees of students, taking as a basis the high academic performance and the social group, partially refund, in the form of student allowances, the tuition fees of at least ten per cent of the students studying in fee paid instruction system - for the students holding the following status:

(1) socially disadvantaged students (those from families falling under the grade with one point higher than the marginal grade of socially disadvantaged condition of families) - in the amount of at least 30 per cent;

(2) students left without parental care after attaining the age of 18 - until they attain the age of 23 - in the amount of at least 50 per cent;

(3) students having been deprived of one parent (having one parent) and having not attained the age of 23 - in the amount of at least 50 per cent;

(4) students having a child under the age of 1 - in the amount of at least 50 per cent;

(5) students from families with three and more minors or three and more students - in the amount of at least 30 per cent;

(6) students having a disabled parent of 1st or 2nd group, including a disabled parent considered as a freedom fighter - in the amount of at least 30 per cent;

(7) students having passed compulsory fixed-term military service and engaged in combat duty at military units carrying out combat duty - at least 30 per cent;

(8) socially disadvantaged students (from families falling under any grade higher than the grade of 0 kept on records in the evaluation system of socially disadvantaged condition of families) - at

least 20 per cent;

(9)students holding other status, which may be defined by the higher education institution”.

Rotation Evaluation system is being implemented in the higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, which enables the students, having shown the best academic performance in the year, to study on a free of charge basis. Free of charge seats are also provided to the student studying in target spheres.

On April 23, 2020 (entered into force on September 1, 2020) amendments were made to the Republic of Armenia Government Decision N 1403-N of November 29, 2007, as a result of which the amount of scholarships given to PhD students was increased by 35,000 AMD, making 65.000 AMD for Armenian studies students, 60.000 AMD for Science students, 55.000 AMD for Economics and Lawstudents, as well as 65.000 AMD for Doctoral students.

As a social support, based on the regulations for granting student allowances and state scholarships in universities, the state reimbursed 50-100% of tuition fees of more than 2000 socially vulnerable students, and for 917 students from families living in border or remote mountainous areas.

According to the Government Decision N 1464 of December 13, 2019 tuition fees of 25 full-time Undergraduate students in State Universities with two or more children were fully reimbursed.

Pursuant to the Procedure for admission of foreign nationals, as well as members of families of diplomats working in the diplomatic service bodies of the Republic of Armenia, operating in a foreign state, to higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 700-N of 28 April 2011, making education in the higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia accessible for foreigners and organising for them instruction either in literary Armenian or foreign languages is guaranteed. Pursuant to the mentioned procedure, admission of the foreign nationals to the higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia is not carried out on a competitive basis; the number of fee paid seats is not limited either. Performed knowledge checks are only aimed to assess proficiency in the Armenian language and other subjects defined for admission in order to direct the applicant either to the first year or to the preparation course.

No cases of obvious inequality between women’s and men’s rights, substantially considered as a possible violation of law, have been recorded so far.

There are first aid rooms necessarily functioning in all higher education institutions for the purpose of providing first aid to students. Besides, there is a student medical clinic in Yerevan which renders a relevant service to the students of a given higher education institution within the framework of contracts signed with the higher education institutions.

Most of the state higher education institutions have, under their subordination, operating institutions for organising leisure, where the students of the given higher education institution may spend their holidays at a low price. Moreover, higher educational institutions also provide free of charge holiday tickets to socially disadvantaged students having shown high academic performance.

As a result of the above mentioned activities, enrolment at the highest professional education level has generally increased in the recent years. This is to state that the reforms made in the field of higher education resulted in the increase of targeting.

Considering that Distance learning is now spreading not only in Armenia but all over the world as a form of non-formal education, steps are being taken to make e-learning available throughout Armenia. At present, the courses organized by educational institutions with different means of telecommunication and in different educational platforms, the preparation and broadcasting of TV programmes, the implementation of lectures, lesson preparations and other teaching processes using computer and mobile applications have become applicable in Armenia.

The Law «On Approval of the State Program for the Development of Education of the Republic of Armenia until 2030» aims at upscaling and modernizing distance learning infrastructures of the RA higher education institutions embedding distance learning services, open source information, online training courses.

Regulations based on the Law on Higher and Post-graduate Professional education manage the forms, educational programmes, specialties allowed in distance form, etc.

- What challenges were encountered in realizing higher education?

- ✓ Limited access
- Issues of equity and inclusion
- ✓ Poor quality programmes
- Poor learning outcomes
- Other:
- Low number of professionally trained professors
- Insufficient mechanisms to ensure smooth transition from secondary to tertiary

In spite of the above mentioned regulations, the higher education system in the Republic of Armenia still faces a problem with increasing access, which is mainly conditioned by *insufficient financial resources*. To solve this problem, it is envisaged to increase the portion for higher education in the Gross Domestic Product of the Republic of Armenia, introduce a mechanism for financing - based on performance - of state higher education institutions, increase allocations for providing funding for the costs of education of students, diversify the sources and instruments of financing, improve conditions in dormitory, create new dormitory complexes and promote instruction in a foreign language, ensure affordability and accessibility of higher education for different social groups and for persons in need of special conditions for education.

At the same time, steps have been taken to increase the number and amount of scholarships of Armenian citizens sent to foreign universities and foreign students studying in Armenian universities within the framework of interstate agreements. As for 2022, within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme about 1200 students are included in different programs. Within the framework of interstate agreements, the University faculty has the opportunity to participate in training programs.

The sum scope of *STEM subjects* is not sufficient in general education programmes of RA. More than half of university students are enrolled in the fields of humanities, arts, management and law, while the share of the ICT sector in the economy is constantly growing.

To provide quality education under the conditions of the state policy aimed at ensuring and developing university autonomy and academic freedom, it is necessary to have internationally acceptable and unified tools for *licensing, accreditation and monitoring* of educational programmes.

Currently, these tools are available, but the licensing conditions and requirements of educational programmes are out-of-date, general in nature, and without sectorial distinction. In particular, there are no minimum unified standards for universities set by the state for their infrastructures, total area, management, student/teacher ratio, strategic goals and other criteria. There is a need to establish such unified approaches so that Armenia has a framework of higher education standards comparable to best world practices.

At all levels of higher education, especially in MA and postgraduate educational programmes, the *research and educational components poorly aligned*.

The lack of a strategic approach to the *geographic distribution* of the provision of higher education services deepens factors hindering the effectiveness of educational institutions such as territorial disparity, incomplete applicability of the material and technical base, inflexible financing mechanisms and, generally speaking, the attainment of learning outcomes.

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

In 2022 (the last available official statistics) the gross enrolment ratio in the first level degree of higher professional education comprised 53,4% (64,1% of women and 43,9% of men), the Gender Equality Index - 1.46.

The gross enrolment ratio in the second level degree of higher professional education comprised 12,3 % (16,6% of women and 8.5% of men), the Gender Equality Index-14.1.

In recent years, the enrolment of students in these two levels of higher education has increased.

The number of PhD student entrants for 2022 is 206 78 of whom were female.

2.4 Adult education and alternative learning

For reference: Article/Paragraph 4(c) of the Convention/Recommendation provides for adult education and alternative learning. While SDG4 aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, target 4.6 specifically calls on states to “ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy”. Furthermore, under target 4.4, states are called “to increase and diversify learning opportunities, using a wide range of education and training modalities, so that all youth and adults, especially girls and women, can acquire relevant knowledge, skills and competencies for decent work and life.”

- Please indicate the measures taken to establish a system of continuing education and equitable access to learning and training opportunities (*several items may be ticked*):

- Provision of education for persons who have not received or completed the whole period of their primary education
- Provision of literacy programmes
- Provision of continuous learning (such as learning programmes to develop knowledge, skills, abilities, or competencies for personal and professional development)
- Provision of free of charge learning opportunities

- ✓ Provision of professional training including reskilling and upskilling programmes
 - Recognition, validation and certification of non-formal and informal learning
 - Provision of free of charge career guidance and counselling
 - Lifelong learning entitlements including learning accounts, vouchers, etc.
 - Other:

According to the Law “On Education”, lifelong education is a learning outcomes achieved throughout a person’s life through participation in formal, non-formal education, based on which an individual acquires or improves his/her knowledge, skills, abilities and the system of values through non-formal trainings provided by supplementary education programmes, the maximum duration where of can be up to five months.

Evaluation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes is a voluntary process that is organised, implemented and certified by the provisions of the law “On Education” and other regulatory legal acts. The results evaluated and recognized by the non-formal and informal learning outcomes recognition system can be the basis for entering the labour market and performing a specific job or occupation. The process of organising and carrying out non-formal and informal learning outcome evaluation, recognition and certification shall be coordinated, as well as the National Training Register shall be maintained by an organisation selected in accordance with the procedure established by the authorised public administration body for education.

Non-formal and informal learning outcome evaluation, recognition and certification shall be organised and carried out in the following stages:

- 1) the process of evaluation and recognition of a candidate’s application;
- 2) comparing, assessment of a person’s knowledge, actual abilities and compliance with certain eligibility criteria;
- 3) generalised assessment, conclusion;
- 4) formal recognition and certification of evaluation results, awarding a unified ordinary national document (certificate and insert);

The certificate insert shall be considered an integral part of this document and shall not be valid without the certificate.

- Please elaborate further on the measures taken:

The “Career Management” modular programme has been drafted and is envisaged to be introduced at vocational education and training institutions as an optional subject. From 2013 till now, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, jointly with the “Methodical Centre for Professional Orientation” SNCO and with the support of the European Foundation for Education, has carried out activities for the introduction and exploitation of career centres at 22 vocational education and training institutions. Higher education institutions have also established career centres, the main goal whereof is to strengthen the bonds between the labour market and the higher education institution and support students in their internships and alumni in finding jobs.

The “Methodical Centre for Professional Orientation” SNCO also greatly supports to learners of the 9th year of basic school and those of high schools with respect to professional orientation. The

supporting manual “Disciplinary Work in School: Problems of Professional Orientation” and the relevant modules of the manual (for each age group) have been published for supervising teachers. Every year, the Centre conducts training courses for deputy directors for specialised assistance and supervising teachers in a certain number of general education schools of the marzes of the Republic of Armenia and in Yerevan. Learners are informed about professional orientation issues during the classes of the supervising teachers.

- What challenges were encountered in realizing adult learning and education?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Limited access | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited funding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Issues of equity and inclusion | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor learning outcomes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor quality programmes | <input type="checkbox"/> Low number of professionally trained educators |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

3. Quality education provision and learning environment

For reference: Articles/Paragraphs 2, 4(b) and 5(b) of the Convention/Recommendation provide for quality education. Quality education is fundamental to achieve all targets of SDG4. It is also particularly highlighted in SDG target 4.a that recommends states to “build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all”.

3.1 General measures

- Please indicate whether the legal or regulatory framework lays out the conditions and minimum education standards for the establishment and functioning of public education institutions regarding:

- ✓ State monitoring and inspections
- ✓ Health and sanitation
- ✓ Safety (children learn in a safe environment free from violence or harassment, including school-related gender-based violence (in and around schools))
- ✓ Infrastructure
- ✓ Curriculum
- ✓ Student-teacher ratio
- ✓ School fees (if relevant)
- Other

Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education”, “State educational standards shall

be established and promulgated in the Republic of Armenia, which shall be deemed as the basis for assessment of education level and qualification of graduates, irrespective of the form of education they have received as well as legal and organisational form of educational institutions”.

Uniform state educational standards shall be established for educational programmes implemented at different levels of education in the Republic of Armenia. State standards of secondary education, higher and postgraduate professional education shall be established by the Government of the Republic of Armenia. State standards of secondary vocational education shall be established by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. Ensuring compliance with the requirements of state educational standards is compulsory for both state, as well as private/non-state education institutions.

In 2021, new State Standard of General Education was approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia

Due to the reforms under the Bologna and Turin Processes, educational standards were revised in the field of professional education as well. The new standards are targeted at improvement of the quality of professional education, capacity building for personnel training in compliance with the demands of the labour market and European standards.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia has undertaken the improvement of licensing process and several legal acts have been adopted having their aim to exercise supervision over the compliance with the conditions and requirements of licences for the activities carried out under higher professional education programmes and to impose sanctions in case of failure of complying therewith. In its turn, it has fostered the responsibility for educational activities carried out in the field of higher education by considerably raising the effectiveness of handling the problems existing in the higher education system.

“National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation” (ANCA) was established upon point 1 of the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1486-N of 27 November 2008. Starting from 2015, higher professional education institutions of the Republic of Armenia started receiving accreditation by ANCA. ANCA holds full and associate membership in International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies Of Higher Education (INQAAHE) and European Association for Quality Assurance Of Higher Education (ENQA) respectively. It has its aim of fostering international recognition of the quality of higher education of the Republic of Armenia and ensuring the competitiveness thereof. The graduation documents issued by higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia accredited by ANCA are recognised by the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). ANCA is in charge of external quality assessment and quality assurance of higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia.

EU TEMPUS and TWINNING programmes have key role in improvement of quality of education within the framework whereof all actors of higher education system of the Republic of Armenia manage to improve, upon active exchange of experience and joint activities with EHEA countries, the infrastructures of the higher education system of the Republic of Armenia and receive an opportunity of undergoing training in order to work under EHEA standards. In 2011-2012, internal quality assurance centres have been established within higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia.

In 2015 the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, with the support of

Council of Europe (CoE), within the framework of “Strengthening Integrity and Combating Corruption in Higher Education in Armenia” project and jointly with the expert group and higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, elaborated model ethics codes (rules of conduct) and guidelines for the development thereof, which will enable the higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia to develop own rules of conduct with a view of strengthening integrity within higher education. When describing certain values in the model form, ‘non-discrimination’ and ‘discrimination’ expressions were stressed, as was the case with descriptions of values of ‘fairness’, ‘impartiality, justice and social justice’, ‘respect for others’. These values (principles) and the remainder of those included in the model form are mainly based on the elaboration of Pan-European Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED) of the Council of Europe and on two documents constituting a part of initiative on this platform - Ethical Principles (for Education) and Ethical Behaviour of All Actors in Education (Smith and Hamilton, 2015). The aforementioned principles and documents have been considered during elaboration of the new Draft Law of the Republic of Armenia “On higher education”.

In 2014, “Ethical Norms for Teachers” was elaborated and introduced in all general education schools of the Republic of Armenia.

- Please elaborate on each of the measures taken:

You may include information on policies, protocols or codes of conduct.

- What challenges were encountered in realizing quality education?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-supportive or inadequate learning environments | <input type="checkbox"/> Low quality educational infrastructure and materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Violence in schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate parental support to education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of education | <input type="checkbox"/> Long distances to schools |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflicts or crises | |
- ✓ Other:

According to the Human Capital Index published in 2020, about 35% of primary school students *cannot read and understand simple text*. This is much higher against the regional average of 11%, although slightly lower than the rate of 38% registered by countries with similar economic performance. This indicator was based on the results of TIMSS 2015 - Trends in International Mathematics Science Study. Armenia participated also in TIMSS 2019, registering progress compared to 2015. In particular, the share of students who scored below 400 points decreased from 30% to 20% (TIMSS 2023 results have not been published yet).

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

3.2 Education personnel

For reference: Article/Paragraph 4(d) of the Convention/Recommendation provides for the education personnel. This corresponds to SDG target 4.c which is entirely devoted to the teaching profession as it calls on states to “substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers”.

- Please indicate the measures taken to improve the teaching and working conditions of education personnel, especially teaching staff at all levels and regarding the training for the teaching profession (several items may be ticked):

- ✓ Teacher training is provided without discrimination.
- Teachers' average salaries are competitive or at least comparable to those paid in other professions requiring similar or equivalent qualifications (at all levels).
- Initial training and continuous professional development are provided.
- ✓ Minimum standards and qualifications required for the teaching profession.
- ✓ Measures taken to strengthen the social status and attractiveness of the teaching profession.
- ✓ Measures taken to promote diversity in the teaching workforce, including to redress gender imbalances at different levels of education.
- Establishment of performance monitoring systems.
- Measures taken to increase women in leadership positions in education.
- Other:

- Please elaborate on each of the measures taken:

The Government of the Republic of Armenia undertakes continuous measures aimed at improving the professionalism of pedagogues, public standing thereof and raising the attractiveness of the profession of a teacher. According to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education” “The remuneration rate for the work carried out by pedagogical (academic and teaching) staff at state education institutions may not be lower than the average salary of employees of budgetary institutions”. This requirement of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education” is ensured in the field of professional education. Professional education institutions provide the academic and teaching staff with increments at the expense of funds received from their paid instruction systems.

A policy on increasing the salaries of pedagogues is implemented for the purpose of increasing the interest in the profession of pedagogue and improving the quality of education in the field of general education.

To increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession, the following actions are being taken:

- ✓ Teachers of schools in the regions of the Republic of Armenia, as well as students whose actual place of residence is different (the distance of the school from their place of residence is more than 5 km), is reimbursed for travel expenses. provided from the state budget.
- ✓ In all state educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia, teachers teaching STEM subjects (except Mathematics) are assigned an increased salary.
- ✓ Within the framework of the voluntary attestation program teachers provided positive result of

attestation, are paid with raised rate, as well as receive surcharge, according to collected points.

✓ According to the new regulation, the opportunity to teach in schools will be given to specialists who have received higher education and have completed 30 credits without a teacher qualification. This is another step towards filling vacant positions in schools in the regions.

✓ The e-learning facility also aims to fill vacant teacher positions in regional schools. E-learning is carried out in 95 rural schools of the Republic of Armenia, the number of beneficiary students is 5420 people. E-learning is carried out by 237 teachers. 1652 hours of e-learning are provided weekly.

Programs and events carried out by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia are aimed at promoting all achievements and successes recorded by teachers in schools, all initiatives being implemented and contributing to the improvement of the educational system. The government is taking a number of measures to increase the attractiveness of teaching, including the new scholarship program for students of pedagogical science programs, which was introduced in September this year for all first-year students. In the amount of 70,000 drams per month, which is already a positive trend.

Each year, “Best Teacher of the Year”, “Best Principal of the Year” and “Best Educator of the Year” contests are organised; the best candidates are granted with awards by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia.

Armenia participates in EU e-Twinning project wherein teachers from Armenian schools, specialised in different subjects, act very actively and show good results. Online events, forums and contests are organised with cooperating schools abroad.

For the purpose of supporting the education centres of Diaspora and contributing to the preservation of Armenian identity, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia carried out intensive instruction of Armenian language, training courses for teachers of Armenian language and history, team leaders and dancing-masters, within the framework of “Diaspora” Summer School Programme.

Thus, the choice of a profession is free and learners choose the profession of a pedagogue based on their preferences and abilities.

Therefore, the participation in training courses for pedagogues does not presume any discrimination; trainings are designed for all practising pedagogues.

At the same time, “Teach for Armenia” organization is playing an essential role in terms of staffing schools with teachers. As part of the program, the participants of the Leadership Development Program travel to remote villages, where they start teaching in schools with a shortage of teachers, thus contributing to the improvement of education quality. The teachers sent to these villages receive additional monetary compensation. Teachers working in rural schools, which are located more than 5 km away, also receive compensation.

- What challenges were encountered in the education personnel?

- ✓ Shortages of teaching staff
- o Low quality educational infrastructure and materials
- ✓ Lack of qualified, trained and motivated

teaching staff

o High student - teacher ratio

□ Lack of training centres

□ Other:

In Armenia, the highest educational results are recorded by teachers with 10-20 years of work experience, demonstrating a difference of 30 points compared to teachers with less work experience. The lowest recorded results are of teachers with less than five years of work experience, which points to the need of having differentiated programmes for teachers with different duration of work experience. For example, consistent work should be carried out for the professional growth of teachers with little or no prior teaching experience. Also, the situation speaks of the problems in pedagogical education including lacking tools of pedagogical practice, as a result of which pedagogical practice is in reality transferred to the field of activity of the beginning years of work. In this regard, of particular concern is that almost half (46%) of the teachers in Armenia are over 50 years of age, meaning that Armenia will have to replace one out of every two members of teaching staff with a new one in the next decade. This process can have an essential influence on student learning and educational results, leading to their decrease. Moreover, the fact that only 11% of teachers are under 30, and that new teachers are considerably less in number, can lead not only to a decrease in teaching quality due to limited work experience, but also to the outright physical absence of teachers in general. Already today, 600-700 vacant teacher positions are being registered annually, which are not being filled or are filled with considerable difficulty. This relates not only to rural, but also urban schools. The difficulty of finding teachers is mentioned also by the headmasters of city schools. Intermediate solutions, such as improved arrangements for teacher secondment, compensation for travel expenses, filling the absence of teachers through e-learning, cannot be considered systemic solutions and settle the problem. Challenges of the in-depth improvement of pedagogic education and making the teacher's profession a preferred life path for young people are evident.

At the level of higher education, aging and low reproduction of teaching staff are observed especially in the field of STEM area, as a result of which there is a noted decline in the quality of the scientific-pedagogical staff. The age of more than 39% of university teachers is above 55, while more than 21% are over 65; university teachers under 35 represent 16% of the total; some 44% of university teachers are in the 35-55 age group. Specifically, aging is noted in the fields of natural sciences, engineering, technologies, and mathematics.

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

The average age of post-graduate students and their scientific managers is high. More than 51% of scientific managers are over 65 years old, another 25% are in the 55-64 age group, and only 12% are in the 45-55 age group. Issues of aging and generational change are more noted in STEM. In particular, more than 62% of scientific managers with STEM specializations are over 65 years old, and only 7% are in the age group of 45-55.

3.3 Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms

For reference: Article/Paragraph 5(1)(a) of the Convention/Recommendation provides for the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. This is covered under SDG target 4.7.⁴¹ Please note that this section contributes to the general monitoring of Article/Paragraph 5(1)(a) of the Convention/Recommendation and that the future consultation on the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms // 2023 Recommendation on [...] will be used specifically for monitoring SDG4 indicator 4.7.1.

- Please indicate the national efforts taken in directing education to the full development of the human personality and the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (several items may be ticked):

- ✓ Curriculum includes human rights education.
- ✓ Educational and/or extracurricular activities are organized on human rights education.
- Other:

- Please elaborate on each of the measures taken:

The Law “on General Education” of the Republic of Armenia (adopted 10.07.2009, HO-160-N) stipulates the following provisions, particularly:

“ 1. General education is aimed at each learner's:

- 1) mental, spiritual, physical and social development,
- 2) maintenance of human dignity.”

“2. The state guarantees the provision of the following principles in the field of general education, namely:

“1) the humanitarian nature of general education, the primacy of national and universal values, human life and health, the free and comprehensive development of the individual, the importance of civic consciousness, respect for the individual and his/her rights and freedom, dignity, patriotism, diligence, responsibility, tolerance, the formation of an environmental worldview”;

“3) ensuring the principles of democratic management in the field of general education.”

“2. The learner is obliged to:

5) to be protected from any physical and psychological pressures, exploitation, such actions or inactions of pedagogical and other workers and students, which violate the student's rights, or encroach on his honor and dignity.”

“1. The pedagogical worker is obliged to:

4) ensure the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes described by the expected learning outcomes of learners, to contribute to the formation of abilities.’

“2. The parent of the learner's is obliged to:

4) educate respect for national, historical, cultural values and the homeland a caring attitude

⁴¹ Which calls on states to “ensure that all learners acquire the 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”.

towards historical and cultural wealth and the environment, a tolerant attitude towards other nations and cultures.”

The Law “on the Rights of the Child” of the Republic of Armenia (adopted 29.05.1996, HO-59) stipulates that: “Every child has the right to communicate to his/her own people's history, traditions, spiritual values and world culture.”

The State Standard of General Education involves the inclusion of anti-discrimination topics in general education programs in subjects such as “Social Studies”, “Me and Environment”. In particular, the subject of Social Studies includes topics related to fundamental human rights and legal equality, the goal of which is to create a citizen who carries the fundamental values of democracy, demonstrates emotional maturity, believes, participates and bears social responsibility. This subject gives student the opportunity to study social processes, form a critical approach to them and have their own position. The student must be able to scientifically understand the problems of human and society, political orders and ideas, the contradictions of sustainable development, explore and interpret them, have cognitive, social and individual abilities and skills, be aware of local, national and global problems based on national and universal values.

According to the state standard of general education the following relevant outcomes are defined (per educational programs) for graduates, namely:

- recognize his/her family, national and civil affiliation, show interest and respect for other nations, traditions and values;
- evaluate his/her own and others' opinions and arguments, analyze cause-and-effect relationships and make decisions;
- explain the impact of conflicts on interpersonal and intergroup relations, apply different forms of peaceful conflict resolution as needed;
- show tolerance, sympathy and humanity;
- recognize the values of different periods, nations and cultural-ideological groups, explain their influence and reflection in a local and world culture;
- effectively use various methods to intervene and resolve a conflict, be willing to sympathize and support any person or animal in a difficult situation;
- show a respectful and caring attitude towards national and world art values, as well as show a knowledge of culture and a desire to communicate with it.
- analyze the current issues and challenges of the Republic of Armenia in the local, regional and global context, respond to them as an informed, responsible and patriotic citizen

Whithin the frame of understanding, tolerance and solidarity it is worth mentioning that the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia carried out 13 grant programs in 2023. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia annually carries out the following grant program “Organization of public events aimed at raising awareness of democratic and civil participation, corruption at the national level: including young people with disabilities”. It is aimed at the formation of civic behavior of young people, the development of civic responsibility and coexistence, active civic participation.

In order to promote the social integration of forcibly displaced young people from Nagorno-

Karabakh, 4 programs to be implemented in 2024 which envisage the mandatory involvement of those in the mentioned programs. The programs are: “Organization of courses for increasing the youth awareness and involvement about professional training opportunities, professional orientation programs by means of non-formal educational toolkits”, “Support to the youth social entrepreneurship initiatives”, “Dissemination of information among the youth on population protection and disaster risk management capacity development existing opportunities”, “Promotion of initiatives aimed at patriotism (campaigns, conferences, olympiads etc.), including active involvement of young people from the Diaspora and forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh”.

With the participation of young people forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, some programs are being implemented in 4 communities' youth centers of the Republic of Armenia, namely: in Meghri, Ijevan, Dilijan and Aparan. Among similar programs is “The economic empowerment of women forcefully displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh” program, which aims at developing entrepreneurial skills of women. The program was wrapped up in April 2024 in Dilijan “DUCO” youth center where 20 women and girls participated.

3.4 Non-state actors in education

For reference: Articles/Paragraphs 2(c) and 5(1)(b) of the Convention/Recommendation provide for non-state education provision⁴².

- Please indicate the measures taken to ensure the provision of quality non-state education (several items may be ticked):

- Legal provisions prohibiting discrimination on the grounds listed by the Convention/Recommendation⁴³ explicitly apply to non-state educational institutions.

Please specify:

Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education”, “State educational standards shall be established and promulgated in the Republic of Armenia, which shall be deemed as the basis for assessment of education level and qualification of graduates, irrespective of the form of education they have received as well as legal and organisational form of educational institutions”.

Uniform state educational standards shall be established for educational programmes implemented at different levels of education in the Republic of Armenia. State standards of secondary education, higher and postgraduate professional education shall be established by the Government of the Republic of Armenia. State standards of secondary vocational education shall be established by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. Ensuring compliance with the requirements of state educational standards is compulsory for both state, as well as private/non-state education institutions.

⁴² Private, faith-based, NGOs, community actors.

⁴³ See: Article/Paragraph 1(1).

- Policies aim to guarantee that the development of non-state education does not generate discrimination and that non-state actors offer a relevant alternative (without supplanting public education). [Please specify:](#)

The UN, together with its partners in Armenia, is working to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, 17 interrelated and ambitious goals that address key development challenges facing people in Armenia and around the world. The UN Office in Armenia supports the Government and people of Armenia in achieving the 2030 Agenda in line with national development priorities. 20 structures, funds and programs operating and represented in Armenia implement a wide range of projects in areas such as gender equality, combating climate change, youth empowerment, education, health, employment, nutrition and food security, migration, governance and human rights. As an example, to help Armenia achieve the Sustainable Development Goals at the country level, the UN has supported the development of the SDG National Innovation Center, which draws on innovative methodologies and expertise from around the world, including the UN's own tools and resources, to promote the implementation of SDGs in Armenia. The UN, in cooperation with CSOs and other stakeholders, supports the Government of Armenia in establishing a national SDG Council as the main body coordinating and overseeing the SDG nationalization process in Armenia.

“TUMO” is operating in different communities of Armenia that have been widely approved and recognized by various international educational structures along with numerous concrete proposals and projects on the establishment of similar centres in other countries. The [TUMO](#) Center for Creative Technologies is a free-of-charge educational program that puts teens in charge of their own learning. Our learning program is made up of self-learning activities, workshops and project labs that revolve around 14 learning targets. TUMO has hubs in Yerevan, Dilijan, Gyumri, with 19 TUMO Boxes operating in neighboring towns. Outside of Armenia, there are centers in Paris, Beirut, Tirana, Berlin, Zurich, Mannheim, Coimbra, Kyiv and Lyon.

The vision of “[COAF](#)” vision is that all children of Armenia achieve their full potential and contribute to the advancement of the world around them, and the mission is to provide resources to children and adults with COAF SMART initiatives to advance rural communities through innovation.

Programs and initiatives of “[FAST](#)” foundation aim to contribute to the advancement of science and technology in Armenia from the perspective of an ecosystem that stands on three main pillars: Education, Research, and Commercialization.

“[Teach For Armenia](#)’s” entire strategy focuses on the development of human capital.

Since 2015, Teach For Armenia has supported hundreds of teachers to work in some of the most remote communities while providing them with robust professional development and ongoing coaching. For these reasons, Teach For Armenia is excited to provide two course offerings to individuals who join our two-year Program: a 30-credit certificate and a master’s in teacher leadership at Yerevan State University.

In 2022, the government of Armenia passed a new law allowing accredited organizations to issue teaching certificates through a 30-credit course. The certificate allows recipients to fill critical vacancies in Armenia’s public schools located in high-mountainous and border communities. Teach For Armenia received approval from the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports to issue

a 30-Credit Certificate through its intensive summer training (also known as “Teacher Leadership Academy”).

“Ayb” school has a remarkable place in the educational system of Armenia. Teaching at Ayb School is provided by the Araratian Baccalaureate (AB) Armenian Educational Program, developed by the Ayb Educational Foundation. The AB is a world-class competitive, and demanding curriculum designed for modern public and private educational institutions. The AB is explicitly designed for Armenian schools, and the teaching is in Armenian. The AB program combines several core and elective subjects, including Mathematics, Science, History, Social Studies, Languages, and Art. A Fablab has been opened next to the school, a workshop-laboratory created by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where students apply the theory in practice.

The UWC College, which has an international reputation, operates in Dilijan, Armenia. UWC has 18 schools and colleges on four continents, most of which focus on the 16-19 age group. As part of the program, students from many countries have the opportunity to study for two years at a college, becoming the bearers of cultural exchange, unique experience, and quality education.

These schools, being the centers of excellence and differing in their status from public schools, are legally equal to public schools (as are other non-public schools).

- Legal provisions provide for the rights of the parents /legal guardians for providing religious and moral education for their children. [Please specify:](#)

- Legal or regulatory framework lays out the conditions and minimum education standards for the establishment and functioning of non-state educational institutions. [Please specify what is covered:](#)

- ✓ Registration
- ✓ State monitoring and inspections
- ✓ Qualifications of teachers
- ✓ Health and sanitation
- ✓ Safety (children learn in a safe environment free from violence or harassment, including school-related gender-based violence (in and around schools))
- ✓ Infrastructure
- ✓ Curriculum
- ✓ Student-teacher ratio
- ✓ School fees
- ✓ School closures
- Other

- [Please elaborate:](#)

In the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education” the principles of state policy on education of the Republic of Armenia enshrine the following provisions:

- guaranteeing for citizens opportunities of receiving education in state and non-state education institutions;
- ensuring legally equal status of state and accredited non-state education institutions and that of graduation documents issued thereby.

Non-state education institutions are also available in the Republic of Armenia, wherein education services are also rendered on paid basis. The non-state education institutions may be established only as prescribed by law, whereas education programmes may be implemented therein only in case of availability of relevant licence. Non-state higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, accredited by the NCQA, acquire state-funded free of charge seats for instruction (as in case of state higher education institutions).

In state and non-state schools the standard requirements, syllabus requirements, as well as those to graduates are deemed as uniform and the same for all. Non-state schools implement also foreign, optional, authorial general education programmes which are prescribed by law and may not contradict the requirements for state standard of general education. Non-state general education institutions acquire the right to issue a state-recognised graduation document upon receiving relevant licence.

Preliminary vocational, middle vocational and higher professional education institutions undergo accreditation process carried out as of the education institutions and professions thereof.

Accreditation process provides an opportunity to create legally equal conditions for learners and graduates of state and non-state education institutions. A state final competence evaluation examination is organised for graduates of previous years having received education under secondary vocational and higher professional education programmes, as a result whereof a state-recognised diploma is issued.

In case of violating the conditions and requirements of licensing, the licence of the educational institution for implementing educational programmes may be withdrawn.

Procedure for admission to state and non-state higher education institutions (according to Bachelor's degree education programme), which was approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 597-N of 26 April 2012.

Admission to state and accredited non-state institutions of handicraft and secondary vocational education shall be carried out according to the admission procedure approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science for the given academic year.

- What challenges were encountered in non-state education provision?

- Low quality educational infrastructure and materials
- Low number of professionally trained teachers
- Issues in terms of equity and inclusion
- Weak government regulatory and monitoring capacity

- High student - teacher ratio
- Other:

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

3.5 Digital education

Digital education is both an opportunity for enhancing access but also can lead to challenges in terms of quality education and inclusion⁴⁴.

- Please indicate the measures taken to ensure the provision of quality digital education (several items may be ticked):

Digital technology use in education is provided for in the legal framework.

Please indicate the relevant text and provisions:

The **Law of the Republic of Armenia “On General Education”** defines the concept of “distance education” as a form of implementing an education programme, within which direct and indirect student-teacher interaction is maintained mainly through information technologies and telecommunications (Article 3, point 6.1).

The mechanisms, cases and mandates of various organisations for distance education are defined in the 2020 [Order on the Organisation of Distance Education in General Educational Institutions](#). This document stipulates that relevant educational and teaching materials shall use “information and communication technology” tools.

The term “distance learning” is used at the **Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Preliminary Vocational (Craftsmanship) and Middle Vocational Education”** with the following description: ““distance learning” shall mean co-ordinated way of instruction, when the process of direct and indirect instruction between a student or attendee and a lecturer is conducted mainly through information technologies and means of communication” (Article 3).

At the **Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education”**: “distance learning” described as a “systematic form of instruction, when the direct and indirect instruction process between the learner and the lecturer is conducted mainly by means of information technologies and telecommunication” (Article 3, point 10).

The wide use of modern information technologies in the training and management systems are emphasized in the Government Decision of the Republic of Armenia No 1363-A of 18 August 2021 “**On Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia for 2021-2026**” (Part 4.3, Paragraph 2).

⁴⁴ Please see General Comment No. 25 (2021) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child which covers children’s right to education in relation to the digital environment.

The 2nd objective of the [“The 2021-2026 Action Plan of the Government of The Republic of Armenia”](#) (within responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport) is extensively using modern information and communication technologies in management systems of teaching and education.

The **“Law on approving “The State Program for Education Development till 2030”**“ sets the current issues, targets and ways to meet them. The continuous modernization of digital technologies makes the expansion of the use of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) in the educational process, equipping public schools with modern computer equipment and quality internet connection, increasing the ICT component in education programs, developing the ability to use the existing tools and create new ones imperative. This programme also emphasizes full running of the Education Management Information System, as well as addresses the issue of ICT laboratories and computers in schools highlighting the need to equip schools with laboratory and computer facilities. For equipping educational institutions with laboratories, a relevant programme was implemented only for high schools (grades 10 to 12). In 2019-2020, public high schools were equipped with natural science laboratories. All schools of the Tavush region have also received laboratory equipment within the framework of the EU grant for Educational Innovation to test new standards of general education. Creating laboratory infrastructure in all schools remains a priority as it can be a good prerequisite for improving the quality and efficiency of science education.

On February 4, 2021, the Government of the Republic of Armenia adopted the Decision No 136-N “On Making Amendments to the RA Government Decision No 439-N of 8 April, 2010 “, which regulates the process of formation and approval of the state standard of general education, subject programs and standards, as well as the relations concerning their implementation in general education system of the Republic of Armenia. According to the state standard of general education:

- *Primary education programme graduates* should be able to: use simple digital devices, computer programmes, applications, assistive devices and equipment, while observing safety rules; and recognise the variety of sources and means of information.
- *Basic education programme graduates* should be able to: present the possible impact of the achievements of science, the use of techniques and technologies on nature, man and society; use text and graphic editors, including assistive technologies, be able to process data using the necessary digital tools and programmes; know digital space safety rules, observe the ethics of online communication, be aware of and apply the rules of personal data privacy, and interpret each person’s right and necessity to have a personal space (physical and psychological); and create a digital space and demonstrate basic programming skills.
- *Secondary education programme graduates* should be able to: develop effective solutions to problems by creating and applying algorithms of various complexity, logical reasoning and physical models; explain the scientific fundamentals of technological innovations, present technological achievements as a product of scientific thinking, realise the risks associated with

them for nature and man; apply complex knowledge and necessary navigation skills considering technological developments and diversity of information; discuss ethical issues related to scientific and technical development and have a well-argued opinion about them; recognise and maintain academic integrity when using information sources; and creatively and responsibly use information and digital devices as modern work tools, and the Internet as a platform for learning, work and collaboration.

“Introducing ICT in the field of education and ensuring its continuity” budgetary program (hereafter: Budget Program) is included in the State Budget and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (on an annual basis). Within the framework of the Budget Program a number of activities are being implemented at the expense of state appropriations, including the Education Management Information System, distance education, internet connectivity.

- ✓ Core legislations, policies, strategies or plans for the management, privacy, security, storage, transfer, use, and sharing of education data internally and externally to ensure the right to privacy of learners and education stakeholders (e.g., informed consent, transparent usage policies, etc.)
- ✓ Regulatory framework establishes minimum education standards for digital education to which all actors in education must comply.
- ✓ Measures to remove barriers to accessing digital content⁴⁵, including ensuring access to curriculum-aligned digital content available on free, public, multi-modal national platforms; high-quality content is available in core subjects, official national language(s), and designed with inclusive features to assist learners with disabilities.
- ✓ Digital skills incorporated into pre- and in-service teacher and leadership training curricula to create a culture of digital innovation and growth anchored in equity and inclusion that enables ongoing professional development for existing and emerging staff.
- ✓ Future-ready skills (including digital skills, data and AI competencies, critical thinking, etc.) integrated into formal curriculum at all levels of education
- ✓ Measures address the digital divide, including ensuring access to reliable electricity, meaningful internet connectivity at school and at home, devices suitable for learning and teaching, safe and sustainable software and secure platforms, and integrated education data systems.

- A well-established, sustainable, and cost-effective budget secured from a range of funding sources and intersectoral cooperation, supported by impact focused reporting linked to regional strategic goals.

- Please elaborate on each of the measures taken:

Teachers’ digital competencies are defined in the “Order of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Armenia on the Approval of the Occupational Profile for Teachers” (2022) and

⁴⁵ Lack of internet connection, basic infrastructure or devices.

the “Order of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports on the Approval of the Standard and Model Programme for Teacher Training” (2020).

In accordance with the amendments to the Law on General Education enforced in 2021, professional standards for teachers are defined by the MoESCS.

Teachers’ professional standards describe teachers’ professional development and knowledge, activities, abilities and responsibility.

The teacher is expected to have the following competences in the field of ICT integration: be able to choose relevant teaching strategies allowing to use ICT; be able to implement distance and hybrid learning when necessary; be able to make the explanation of the lesson more comprehensible by using ICT; be able to carry out formative assessments with ICT tools.

The Standard and Model Programme for Teachers Training defines particular training modules. One of those is dedicated to the use of ICT in the educational process. After completing this module, the teacher will be able to: use the learning management system to enrol students, make assignments, take notes, upload and share files, create digital assignments and grading rubrics, organise simultaneous meetings, use the calendar; fill in the electronic class book; use the offline whiteboard tool; use the website of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, the Armenian educational repository, the National Centre for Education Development and Innovation (NCEDI) blog, find necessary information, upload files, use the tools of online educational websites to organise the educational process, create digital online tasks, presentations, videos, edit and share them; collect and format texts using a text editor, create tables, search and replace texts, create automatic lists; and create presentations, design them, insert pictures and texts, create hyperlinks, animations, insert action buttons.

Under the Asian Development Bank (ADB) grant project a distance education platform has been developed to provide more learning modalities and information in a learner-friendly format. It is aimed to deliver online courses and provide teachers and students with real-time feedback mechanisms, assignment distribution and monitoring, and other student-centric learning tools. The ADB and the Government of the Republic of Armenia launched the distance education platform on March 18, 2022.

The platform is designed to manage all the teaching and learning processes. It is the solution and group of tools for educational needs to innovate it. Platform is used to create interactive educational content, use virtual classrooms, and communicate with learners with innovative methods. It also provides a big collection of authoring tools to develop learning materials and use them during the learning process.

In summary, this is the ultimate platform that connects learners, teachers and schools in one place.

The platform will support the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (MoESCS) to ensure quality and continuous education no matter the situation, as well as, it will prove the ability for users from different schools to participate in the same group lessons and get assignments. This option will provide a cross school learning process.

The platform will also benefit schools in remote areas of Armenia that lack qualified teaching staff and will lead to the adoption of a hybrid mode of education in Armenia that will enhance education

outcomes.

Procedure for distance learning of professions of higher and post-graduate professional education has been introduced since 2010, which will enable to make the application of e-environment, innovative technologies in the fields of education and science more systematic and ensure additional educational opportunities for citizens;

- What challenges were encountered in digital education provision (check all that apply)?

- ✓ Lack of quality, curriculum-aligned digital teaching and learning content that supports flexible learning and teaching pathways
- ✓ Lack of equity and inclusion in digital learning solutions
- inadequate safety measures and IT support to respond to issues of child online safety or reduce cyber security risks
- Other:
- Limited access to internet and/or electricity
- ✓ Limited access to hardware (devices, chargers, etc.)
- Difficulty in regulating the use of digital education solutions
- Difficulty in sustainably financing digital education solutions at national scale
- ✓ Lack of digital skills development for meaningful use of digital technology in teaching practice
- Disjointed or fragmented solutions that are not centrally systematized or regulated

COVID-19 crisis has significantly accelerated the usage of ICT and digital education in Armenia which serves as an essential tool for better integrating Education for Sustainable Development. Since 2020 the National Centre of Educational Technologies has initiated a range of activities for smooth transition to online learning in public schools. Specifically, the National Centre of Educational Technologies with UNICEF ARMENIA has initiated a project for ensuring the continuity of education of children irrespective of Force Majeure situation thus expanding the access to education. The project covered the following activities:

- Video lessons have been created from the 1st to the 12th grades for all the subjects including video lessons in.
- Centralised Distance Learning has been organised giving an opportunity for all students in Armenia to have access to online lessons.
- Capacity building in e-course development and online teaching of teachers carried out.

The accumulated experience and capacities in distance learning resulted in another pilot project on addressing teacher shortage in rural areas of Armenia through distance learning meeting SDG4 goal on equitable and quality education. The project has developed a network of Mentor schools among public schools of Armenia, developed their capacity in high quality online teaching and provided them an opportunity to teach online to the students of rural schools with teacher shortage. The online lessons are carried out using all the opportunities of ICT while

engaging students in debates and group work which is an integral part of Education for Sustainable Development.

And since 2021/2022 academic year, teachers from 18 mentor schools selected under the project teach electronically in public schools where there is a shortage of specialists in certain subjects. As of 2022/2023 academic year, 24 mentor schools, 105 rural area schools and around 6500 students were engaged in the program. The program continues and the number of beneficiaries expands as needed.

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

Continuous modernization of digital technologies makes it imperative to expand the use of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) in the educational process, provide general schools with modern computer equipment, media tools and high quality internet connection, add the ICT component in learning programmes, develop the ability to use the existing tools and create new ones. ICT use in the educational process, and especially the need to expand and develop distance/online education became more obvious in 2020, when modern information and communication technologies and electronic platforms were used in the situation created by the spread of the new coronavirus (COVID-19). The situation demonstrated that students, teachers and headmasters had insufficient skills and a low level of media knowledge required for online work amongst themselves as well as lack or insufficient quality of technical means of communication, poor quality of Internet connection, insufficient volume/quantity of respective trainings on distance education for teachers, use of limited tools and online platforms for distance learning. Although a national platform for distance and online education is already in place, it is still in its development phase. Serious work needs to be done on the creation of educational resources in line with the state curriculum and standards; reviewing, upgrading and management of online the education platform, technical equipment, online security, and other issues related to this sphere.

A separate issue is the availability of laboratory and computer equipment at schools. The student/computer ratio in the country's schools is 16.8.

4 Strengthening governance systems

For reference: The Education 2030 Framework for Action states “to ensure quality education and conditions for effective education outcomes, governments should strengthen education systems by instituting and improving appropriate, effective and inclusive governance and accountability mechanisms; quality assurance; management information systems; transparent and effective financing procedures and mechanisms; and institutional management arrangements, as well as ensure that robust, timely and accessible data are available” (para. 18).

- Please indicate the measures taken in terms of governance (several items may be ticked):

- Monitoring mechanisms to assess compliance with the right to education obligations, including through management information systems.
- Monitoring results are made public. [Please provide the link:](#)

- ✓ Monitoring processes are participatory, inclusive and regular.
- ✓ Sector-wide and multisector approach is adopted to education governance.
 - Financial resources are effectively allocated to prioritise the provision of free, quality, public education and are adequately budgeted for in government plans.
- ✓ The decision-making process for the allocation of resources to education is transparent.
- Ensuring crisis-sensitive and disaster risk-informed planning and programming, including the provision of quality education in emergencies.
 - There is a certain degree of decentralization in favour of local public authorities and autonomy for schools to ensure context relevance of their teaching.

- [Please elaborate on each of the measures taken:](#)

Decision-making process for the allocation of resources to education is transparent and participatory. State Budget drafts are formed in accordance with the Government activities of the Republic of Armenia, Medium-term Public Expenditure framework, as well as community development programs. The system of Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework is an indivisible part of the budgetary process. The development of the medium-term expenditure framework is aimed at creating an opportunity of public sector financial resources management in line with the medium-term fiscal objectives and policy priorities. The medium-term expenditure framework serves as a basis for the development of the state budget draft and it is discussed with all stakeholders.

The predominant importance of education for Armenia as a strategic development direction is visible on all levels. The allocation of resources on education has registered more than 25% growth during the past 4 years. This is an illustrative indicator not only in terms of the prioritization of the sector, but also in terms of understanding of the need to fill in the gap that the system has accumulated for the past period of time.

To ensure a secure and comfortable environment the Government has supported the “Safe School” program that has initiated renovation and improvement of school buildings aiming at disaster risk reduction.

In 2021, UNICEF, with the support of a grant from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), in partnership with the RA Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports and the Asian Development Bank, conducted a study to gather evidence that can be used to create and implement successful education development programs.

[The analysis](#) aims to encourage discussions among policymakers and improve the effectiveness of future policies. It also aims to raise awareness among all involved parties about the critical issues that were discovered.

- What challenges were encountered in terms of governance?

- ✓ Budgetary constraints
- Lack of involvement of relevant stakeholders and lack of cooperation/coordination at different levels
- Poor dialogue with teachers' trade unions
- Other:
- Absence of supportive/inconsistent/obsolete legal and policy environment
- Lack or weakness of monitoring systems - including the lack of reliable data

- Please elaborate. Brief quantitative information may be added.

Although public spending on education has continuously increased in recent years, its share in GDP and total state budget spending has remained almost unchanged.

III. Methods used to draw the attention of the various authorities in the country to the instruments

For reference: UNESCO governing bodies have underlined the need for awareness raising. Given the importance of normative action at the national level, wide dissemination of the Convention must be ensured, with the support of National Commissions for UNESCO.

- Have activities been carried out to draw the attention of the various authorities of the country to the Convention/Recommendation and their provisions about the right to education and to raise awareness of the principles of non-discrimination and equality of educational opportunities? (Several items may be ticked)

- ✓ Translation of the Convention/Recommendation into the national and possibly local languages
- Dissemination and advocacy of the core content of the Convention/Recommendation or the core principles of the right to education including through appropriate materials and resources
- Activities undertaken or supported by the National Commission to promote non-discrimination and equality of educational opportunities and to foster debate on critical issues in relation to the rights enshrined in the instruments
- Other: