



Education for Sustainable Futures

Reforming school curricula through the integration of sustainable development concepts



The five-year programme **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the Western Balkans (2012–2016)** is based on the six pillars of the UNECE Strategy on ESD. In the evaluation report “10 years of the UNECE Strategy on ESD, 2005–2015”, presented at the Eighth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, the programme was one of the selected examples of best practice.

The programme is currently being implemented in Kosovo*, Montenegro and Serbia with the financial support of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Kosovo*, and EuropeAid. The Regional Environmental Center (REC) seeks to intensify the programme in the Western Balkans and expand it to surrounding countries

The overarching goals are to enhance European educational reforms through the integration of sustainable development concepts into the curriculum, and to develop a regional ESD culture. The programme makes a direct contribution to the 2013 UNESCO Global Action Programme on ESD by mainstreaming ESD into educational policies in order to bring about systemic change.

The programme also contributes to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), providing capacity building for the resolution “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which was unanimously adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

Programme implementation includes:

- establishing a high-level expert working group with government officials;
- developing a five-year action plan based on the six pillars of the UNECE strategy;
- conducting research in order to identify national strengths and weaknesses in relation to ESD;
- adapting curricula based on research results; and
- providing educational tools, teacher training and regional networking to support the new curricula and promote ESD.

■ Regional results on policy reform

Kosovo*

Cross-curricular sustainable development topics — which include climate change; biodiversity; green economy; and technology, media and society — have been developed with the aim of integrating them officially into school curricula.

Experts from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) have integrated sustainable development principles into the Kosovan curriculum framework and developed learning outcomes for each subject field in the core curriculum that is currently being implemented as part of the EU approximation process. The MEST has provided direct financial support to train teachers on how to make ESD learning outcomes an integral part of their teaching; prepare a manual for teachers on how to implement the new learning outcomes; support Green Pack trainings; and develop content for Green Pack Junior.

Montenegro

Inter-subject themes and topics related to sustainable development, elaborated by the expert working group and REC experts, have been officially approved by the National Bureau of Education and made part of the pre-school, primary-school and high-school curricula, and of general education subjects in vocational schools. Teachers are now obliged to cover climate change; green economy; human rights; environmental protection; sustainable cities and communities; biodiversity; and environment and health in their lessons.

Serbia

In partnership with a Serbian educational project funded by EuropeAid, the Serbian Ministry of Education and experts from the REC have reformed the national curricula in primary and secondary education through the integration of sustainable development learning outcomes into each subject field. They have also developed a cutting-edge teacher-training module on ESD for 10 percent of primary and secondary schools in Serbia.

As a result of the work carried out by the REC and the Ministry of Education, environmental protection criteria have been officially included among indicators for assessing the performance of educational institutions; sustainable development principles have been officially incorporated into indicators for assessing teachers’ professional development; and the concept of environmental responsibility has been integrated into the official school curriculum.



■ Educational tools, teacher training, networking and ESD promotion

Kosovo*

- 1,000 copies of Green Pack have been printed, reaching approximately 240,000 students.
- 700 copies of Green Pack Junior have been printed, reaching over 42,000 students.
- 30 ESD trainings, most with official ministry approval, have been organised for over 870 teachers.
- A committee on ESD has been established, comprising officials from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Environment, the Association of Kosovan Municipalities and the NGO community in order to promote a culture of ESD.

Montenegro

- 700 copies of Green Pack Junior Montenegro have been printed and Green Pack Junior Online has been developed, reaching around 42,000 students.
- 12 ESD trainings, most with official ministry approval, have been organised for over 360 teachers.
- Guidebooks on intersubject themes and topics have been produced in partnership with the Bureau of Education and distributed to schools.
- Experiences have been exchanged between expert working groups.

Serbia

- A manual on new teaching and learning methods has been developed, focusing on student activities.
- “Good Practices on ESD Implementation in the New Serbian Curriculum Framework” is available online.
- 2,000 copies of “How to use the Green Pack” have been printed.
- The Green Pack has been upgraded in line with Serbian educational standards and 1,000 copies have been produced, reaching approximately 240,000 students.
- 59 ESD trainings, most with official ministry approval, have been organised for 1,800 teachers.
- An ESD training module has been developed and delivered in 41 pilot schools, involving 2,600 teachers. Some 7,500 teachers participated in an online training in direct support of the national curriculum framework.

■ Next steps

The programme will seek to enhance and support the educational reforms currently under way as part of the EU approximation process in Kosovo* and Serbia, both of which are implementing projects to reform their primary and secondary school curricula. Work will continue with the

ministries of education in Serbia and Kosovo* to monitor the implemented reforms and expand the scope of ESD trainings to the schools piloting the new curricula. In Montenegro, the implementation of the newly developed curricula will continue to be facilitated through teacher trainings and additional activities. The new curricula will have a direct influence on future generations, making our work critically important. With the support of Austrian Development Cooperation, we are expanding our research on ESD policy reform to four new countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Moldova) through the SEEDLING project, “Introducing the UN SDGs in Schools in South Eastern Europe”.

■ The REC’s educational toolkits and other materials

Green Pack and Green Pack Junior are multimedia environmental education kits for use in teaching children aged between 8 and 15 about environmental protection and sustainable development.

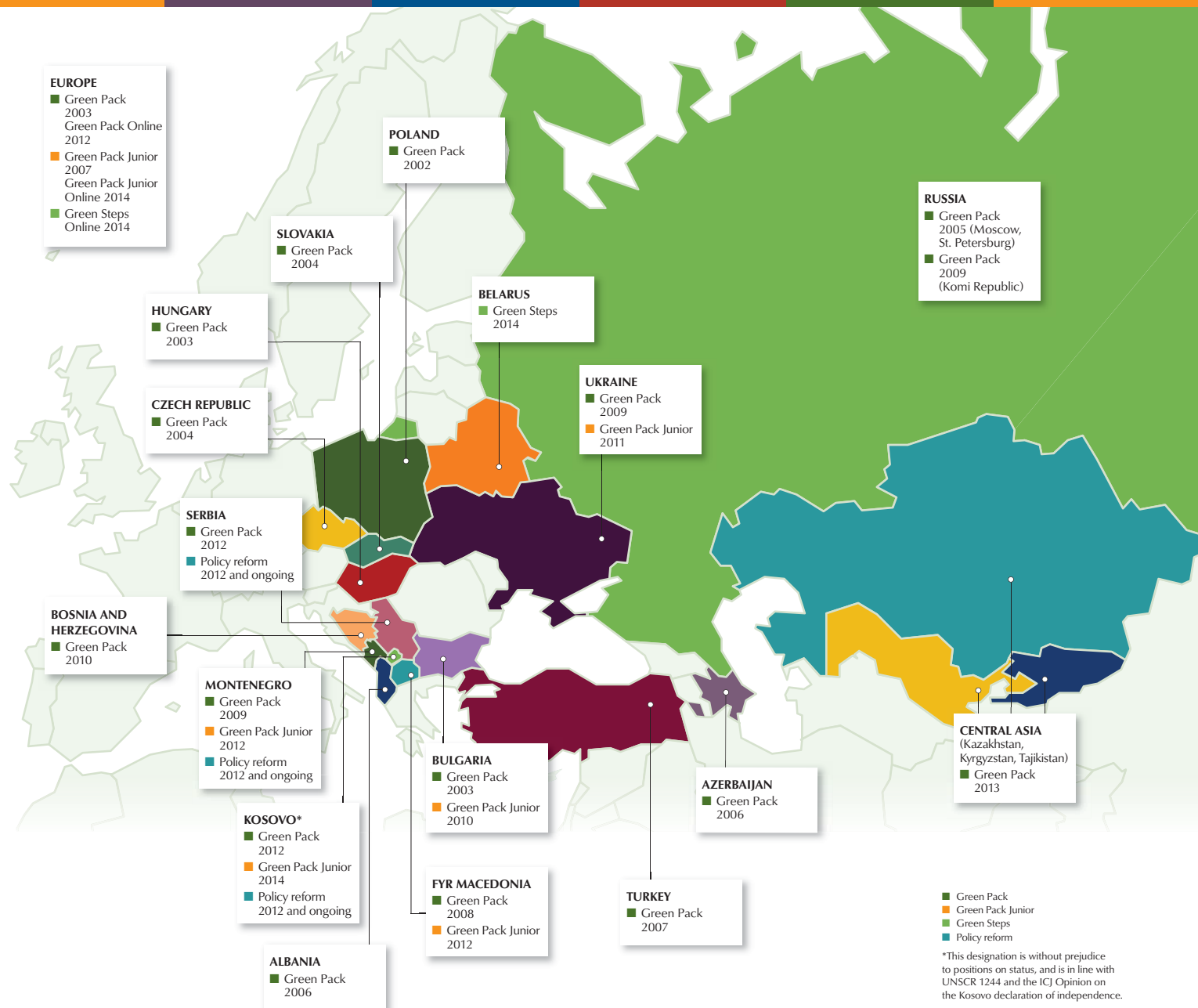
Since 2001, the Green Pack has been implemented in 18 countries. A pan-European version of the Green Pack has also been published. Over 50,000 Green Packs have been produced, more than 40,000 teachers have been trained to use it, and some 4.5 million students have been taught using its interactive multimedia materials.

- For information on the project “ESD in the Western Balkans”, see: www.rec.org/project-detail.php?id=18.
- The news article “Reforming Education in the Western Balkans”, May 13, 2015, can be found at: www.rec.org/news-item.php?id=1025.
- Green Pack Online and Green Pack Junior Online, as well as other information and educational materials, are available at: education.rec.org.
- For Montenegro’s official inter-subject topics on sustainable development for pre-schools, primary schools and high schools, and other information on ESD, see: www.zzs.gov.me/rubrike/obrazovanje_odrzivi_razvoj/

■ Donor support for REC activities complementary to the framework programme (since 2010)

- Austrian Development Cooperation: SEEDLING project
- Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea through the Italian Trust Fund: Courses for Sustainable Development (sdacademy.rec.org)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency: Local Community Resilience for the Sustainable Development of River Basins in South Eastern Europe (CRESSIDA) (Module 1 of the 2014 Course for Sustainability: (sdacademy.rec.org/courses_by_year#2014))





Contacts

For more information on the programme, please contact

Brendan Duprey, PhD ■ Expert II Education for Sustainable Development ■ e-mail: bduprey@rec.org

For more information on Green Pack, Green Pack Junior and Green Steps, please contact

Kliment Mindjov ■ Senior Expert Education for Sustainable Development ■ e-mail: kmindjov@rec.org

The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe

2000 Szentendre ■ Ady Endre ut 9-11 ■ Hungary

Tel: +36 26 504 069 ■ Fax: +36 26 311 294 ■ www.rec.org ■ education.rec.org



REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

