International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 2011
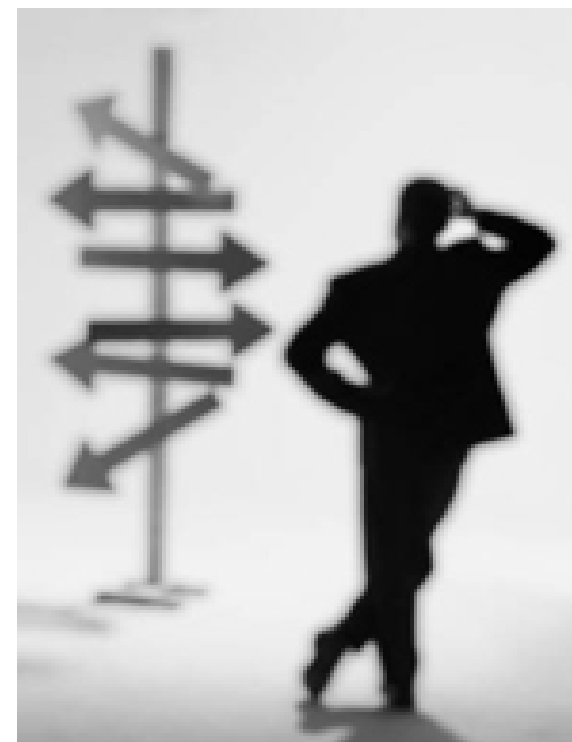
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What is ISCED?

Why an ISCED review?

Review Process

ISCED 2011 in brief

Some examples

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) presents a classification of education and training systems with a standard set of concepts and definitions. It is designed to serve as a framework to classify educational programmes in internationally agreed categories. It can be used for assembling, compiling and presenting cross-nationally comparable statistics and indicators of education.

The basic concepts of ISCED are:
❑ Internationally valid
❑ Comprehensive for the full range of education systems

Two main cross-classification variables:
❑ Levels of education
❑ Fields of education

ISCED has three main components:

❑Internationally agreed concepts and definitions;
❑Common classification system;
❑ISCED mappings of educational programmes and qualifications in countries worldwide.
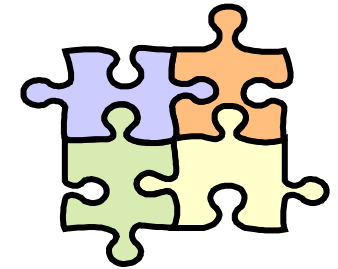
ISCED Mappings

ISCED mappings ensure a transparent process of coding national educational programmes into comparable structures for use in international statistics by linking the classification criteria to the properties of the educational programmes.

Educational Activities:

ISCED defines the term educational activities as <u>deliberate</u>, <u>organized</u> and <u>sustained</u> activities, involving some form of communication, which are designed to bring about learning.

Scope of Education:

ISCED covers <u>formal</u> and <u>non-formal</u> education offered throughout a person's life. ISCED **DOES NOT** cover <u>informal</u> or <u>random learning</u>.

<u>Formal</u> and <u>non-formal</u> education include a variety of programmes such as initial education, second chance programmes, literacy programmes, adult education, continuing education, open and distance education, apprenticeships, technical or vocational education, training, or special needs education.

Education Programme Vs. Qualification

Education Programme:

Educational programmes are defined as a coherent set or sequence of educational activities that are designed and organized to achieve predetermined learning objectives or a specific set of educational tasks over a sustained period.

Educational Qualification:

In ISCED, the term 'qualification' is synonymous to other terms such as diploma, certificate, degree or credential.

Programmes Vs Qualification

In ISCED, educational programmes are classified first and qualifications are subsequently classified.

ISCED is not designed for the direct assessment of the competencies of learners engaged in educational activities. The educational programmes that an individual has participated in or has successfully completed are, at best, only an approximation of the skills and competencies obtained.

□A lot of change in the education system around the world in particular in tertiary (higher) education since 1997.

□Some domains were not covered by ISCED 97: completion, education attainment, graduation.

□Some problems appeared in the use of ISCED 97: use of destination dimension, not enough emphasis on vocational education.

□Growing importance of international comparisons asking for a better ISCED and a better use of ISCED.

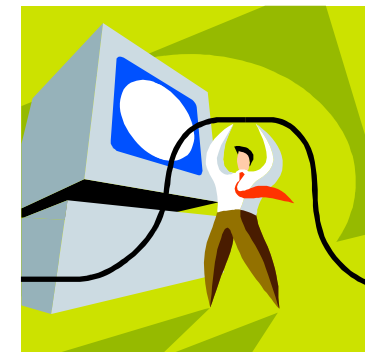□ and there was no review since 97: question of governance.

❑ 2007 (October): UNESCO General Conference giving mandate to UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) to review the ISCED 97

❑ 2009- 2010: Five Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) meetings

❑ 2010 (May): Presentation of the First consolidated draft to International Agencies

❑ 2010 (September): Consultation to the Member states (around 190)

❑ 2010 (December): Technical Advisory Panel finalise the ISCED review.

❑ 2011 (March): UNESCO Executive Council

❑ 2011 (October): UNESCO General Conference for final approval of the ISCED 2011.

ISCED 2011- in brief

- ❑ 9 levels (7 in ISCED 97)

- ❑ 4 levels for tertiary education (2 in ISCED 97)

- ❑ Completion of a level is always explained

- ❑ Orientation is a main dimension from level 2 to new level 5

- ❑ Formal, non formal, informal defined

- ❑ No change in the fields of education

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A three-digit codes are used for each programme
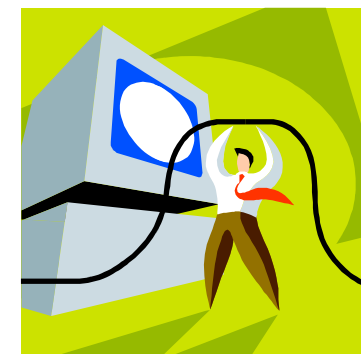
First digit: indicates the Level of Education
> Nine main levels ISCED 1-9

Second digit: indicates the categories within one level
- ISCED level 0: target age group;
- ISCED level 1: no categories in use;
- ISCED level 2 to 5: orientation;
- ISCED level 6: duration and position in the national qualification structure;
- ISCED level 7: position in the national degree and qualification structure;
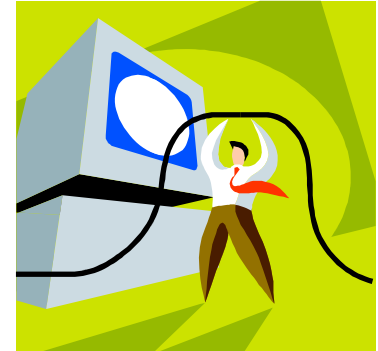- ISCED level 8: no categories in use.

Third digit: indicates the subcategories regarding the access to higher level programmes
- ISCED level 0 and 1: no subcategories in use;
- ISCED level 2 to 5: level completion and access to higher level programmes;
- ISCED level 6, 7 and 8: no subcategories in use.

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Third digit: indicates the subcategories regarding the access to higher level programmes for ISCED level 2 to 5

0. No completion of ISCED level

1. Completion of ISCED level 2 without access to higher level programmes

2. Completion of ISCED level 2 with access to higher level programmes

For educational attainment, educational qualifications from ISCED level 2 programmes that are too short for consideration as ISCED level 2 completion are classified as ISCED level 1

Similarly, educational qualifications from ISCED level 3 programmes that are too short for consideration as ISCED level 3 completion are classified as ISCED level 2.

ISCED 1997

Level 0 = 'Pre-primary education'

"Programmes designed primarily to introduce very young children to a school-type environment, i.e. to provide a bridge between the home and a school-based atmosphere."

Main classification criteria: educational properties of the programme; school or centre based; the minimum age of children (3 years) and the upper age limit.

Subsidiary criterion (proxy): pedagogical qualifications of staff.

ISCED 2011

Level 0 = 'Early Childhood Education'

"Programmes typically designed to support children's cognitive, social and emotional development and introduce young children to organized instruction outside of the family setting.

ISCED 0.1. Early childhood development: (children younger than 3 years)
ISCED 0.2. Pre-primary education (from age 3 to entry into Level 1).

Programme duration/intensity: at least 2 hours per day and 100 days a year.

Existence of a regulatory framework: guidelines, standards and/or instructions describing the learning opportunities provided to young children.

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ISCED 2011

Level 2 = 'Lower Secondary Education'

Main criteria

a. Transition to more subject oriented instruction;
b. Entry requirements;
c. Cumulative duration since the beginning of ISCED level 1.(8-10 years)

Subsidiary criteria

a. Typical entry age;
b. Instruction by subject teachers and teacher qualifications;
c. Relationship with compulsory education

ISCED 2011

Level 3 = 'Upper Secondary Education'

Main criteria

a. Final stage of general and vocational secondary education;
b. Entry requirements;
c. Cumulative duration since the beginning of ISCED level 1 (12-13 years)

Subsidiary criteria

a. More differentiated programmes, with an increased range of options and streams
b. Teacher qualifications

General secondary education programmes that do not give direct access to tertiary education should be classified as ISCED level 2.
When identifying transition points between ISCED levels, correspondence between general and vocational pathways should be ensured.

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ISCED level	Categories (Orientation)	Subcategories (Level completion and access to higher level programmes)
ISCED 2	2.1. General	2.1.0. General ISCED level 2 programmes **too short** for completion of ISCED level 2, **no access** to ISCED level 3 2.1.2. General ISCED level 2 programmes **sufficient for completion** of ISCED level 2, **access** to ISCED level 3
	2.2. Vocational	2.2.0. Vocational ISCED level 2 programmes **too short** for completion of ISCED level 2, no access to ISCED level 3 2.2.1. Vocational ISCED level 2 programmes **sufficient for completion** of ISCED level 2, **no access** to ISCED level 3 2.2.2. Vocational ISCED level 2 programmes **sufficient for completion** of ISCED level 2, **access** to ISCED level 3

Programmes at ISCED level 4, or 'post-secondary non-tertiary education', are typically designed to provide individuals who completed ISCED level 3 with non-tertiary qualifications that they require for progression to tertiary education or for employment when their ISCED level 3 qualification does not grant such access.
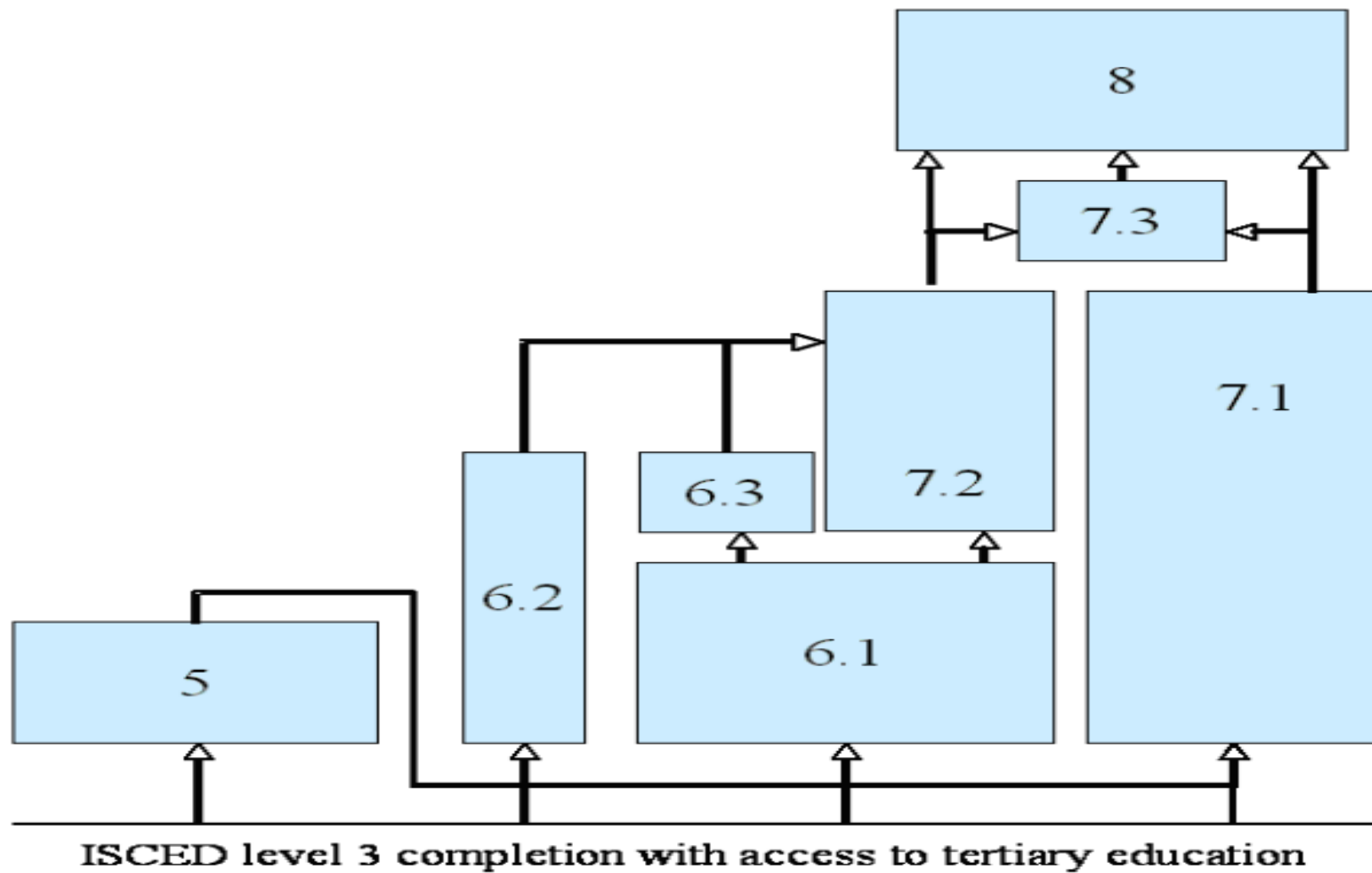
Main criteria
a. Orientation;
b. Complexity of content higher than ISCED level 3 and below the level of tertiary education
c. Entry requirements.

Subsidiary criteria
None

! Programmes designed to review the contents of ISCED level 3 programmes – for example, with the aim of preparing students for tertiary education entrance Examinations - should not be included at this level.

ISCED level 3 completion with access to tertiary education

ISCED 5: Short cycle tertiary education or equivalent
ISCED 6: Bachelor level education or equivalent
ISCED 7: Master level education or equivalent
ISCED 8: Doctoral level education or equivalent

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The following three categories for a programme's position in the national degree and qualification structure are defined for ISCED level 7:

1. Programmes leading to <u>first degrees/qualifications</u> with a duration of <u>more than four years</u> that do not require prior tertiary education;
2. Programmes leading to <u>second degrees/qualifications</u> following <u>completion of an ISCED level 6 programme</u>;
3. Programmes leading to <u>further degrees/qualifications</u> following <u>completion of another ISCED level 7 programme</u>

More information:
http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=8006_2
01&ID2=DO_TOPIC

Comments on the draft:
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