

# **CURRENT STATUS AND NEXT STEPS FOR ISCED-T**

## 1. Background

At the 6th meeting of the Technical Cooperation Group on the Indicators for SDG 4 – Education 2030 (TCG) in August 2019, the UIS presented a plan for development of an International Standard Classification of teacher training programmes (ISCED-T), based on and complementing the existing International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 2011 and the ISCED Fields of Education and Training (ISCED-F) 2013. ISCED-T would be used to produce internationally comparable data on teacher education programmes and pathways to the teaching profession and to improve the availability and quality of teacher statistics, especially in reference to national programmes for pre-service and in-service teacher education. The TCG expressed its support for ISCED-T in a consultation after the TCG meeting.

At its 40th session In November 2019, the UNESCO General Conference endorsed the development of ISCED-T and stated that it should be developed with the participation of representatives of UNESCO Member States and representatives of other relevant international organizations, including from the teaching profession, with a view to submitting an interim report to the Executive Board at its 210th session in 2020 and a draft proposal to the General Conference for adoption at its 41st session in 2021.

Following the 40th session of the General Conference, the UIS developed and embarked on an implementation plan for ISCED-T. The plan outlines the resource requirements for the development of ISCED-T and the necessary steps to be taken, including:

1. establishment of an ISCED-T Secretariat at the UIS,
2. formation of a Technical Advisory Panel with experts on classifications and teacher education programmes from all UNESCO regions,
3. data collection for the identification of dimensions used to classify training programmes,
4. coding of the dimensions,
5. drafting of the classification,
6. consultation with Member States and relevant international organizations, including from the teaching profession,
7. finalization of the text,
8. submission to and adoption by the UNESCO General Conference,
9. translation and dissemination of the classification, and
10. adaptation of international collection of data on teacher training and qualifications.

Between December 2019 and April 2020, the UIS presented its plans for the development of ISCED-T at meetings of the TCG; the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030; and the OECD Network for the Collection and Adjudication of System-Level Descriptive Information on Educational Structures, Policies and Practices (NESLI). The UIS also contacted other international organizations and expert groups to inform them about the classification and to solicit candidates for the Technical Advisory Panel to support the development of ISCED-T.

Between April and May 2020, the UIS carried out methodological work on options for the calculation of the proportion of teachers with the minimum required qualifications (SDG indicator 4.c.1). The UIS also assessed the implications of the refinement of global indicator 4.c.1 for thematic indicators under SDG

target 4.c, which will be reviewed by the TCG to ensure consistency between the global and thematic indicator frameworks.

In July 2020, the UIS began to conduct an inventory of national teacher training programmes (see Section 2). This data collection is intended to fill gaps in UIS data on teacher training programmes and teacher qualifications and to provide evidence for the identification of dimensions of the new ISCED-T that would be representative for countries in all regions and at all stages of development.

In August 2020, the UIS finalized the membership of a new Working Group on teachers under the aegis of the TCG. The Working Group is composed of 13 experts from UNESCO Member States that represent all UNESCO regions. It will work to improve the collection of data on teachers using different sources of information, such as Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), and human resources and payroll databases. The Working Group will also address the lack of data on teacher qualifications in school surveys and support the development of ISCED-T. Its first meeting will take place on 16 October 2020.

## 2. UIS inventory of teacher training programmes

The methodological development of ISCED-T requires compilation of information on existing national teacher training programmes (TTPs), including their main similarities and differences. The collected data serve as reference database for the development of ISCED-T and for the possible definition of a global minimum standard for national measurement of the proportion of teachers with the minimum required qualifications. This inventory must be as comprehensive as possible to ensure that the resulting classification is globally representative and methodologically sound.

To this end, the UIS has built a database that includes information on 814 pre-service TTPs from 196 Members States.<sup>1</sup> The database was compiled with information from national ISCED mappings maintained by the UIS (<http://uis.unesco.org/en/isced-mappings>) and from online sources, including teacher education institutions, organisations working on teacher education and professional development, and national and international reports on teacher education. The database includes a data dictionary and the following information for each TTP:

- name,
- ISCED level,
- entrance requirements (minimum, most prevalent),
- duration,
- target teaching level,
- orientation,
- qualification awarded upon completion.

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<sup>1</sup> In two additional countries (Holy See and Liechtenstein), information on TTPs is “not applicable” because no TTPs exist in these countries.

## Country coverage and completeness of UIS TTP database

The UIS database of TTPs aims to cover the 210 countries and territories that receive each year the UIS Survey of Formal Education (<http://uis.unesco.org/uis-questionnaires>). As of October 2020, 198 countries are included in the database, corresponding to a coverage rate of 94%.

Among SDG regions, the coverage rate is 94% or higher in Europe and Northern America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania, and sub-Saharan Africa (see **Table 1**). The coverage rates are lower for Central and Southern Asia (86%), Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (89%), and Northern Africa and Western Asia (92%). Among income groups, coverage rates are below the global average in low-income countries (83%) and high-income countries (87%).

**Table 1. Regional coverage rate of UIS teacher training programme database**

<i><b>SDG region</b></i>	Coverage rate (%)
Central and Southern Asia	86
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	89
Europe and Northern America	94
Latin America and the Caribbean	95
Northern Africa and Western Asia	92
Oceania	94
Sub-Saharan Africa	94
<i><b>Income group</b></i>	Coverage rate (%)
High income	87
Upper middle income	95
Lower middle income	94
Low income	83

Source: UIS TTP database, October 2020.

Completeness of the TTP inventory at the national level is difficult to assess because the number of TTPs that exist in each country is often not known. The aim of the UIS is to have a globally, regionally and nationally representative sample of TTPs to inform the methodological development of ISCED-T. Representativity is related to the number of TTPs per country in the UIS database that accurately reflect the main characteristics of pre-service teacher training in each country.

**Table 2** presents the distribution of countries by the number of TTPs included in the UIS database. For 103 countries or 49% of all Member States (53% of the countries in the TTP database), information for at least 4 TTPs is available. 44 countries have information for 3 TTPs, 31 countries have information for 2 TTPs, and for 18 countries information for only 1 TTP is available.

For 14 countries, no information on TTPs was found in the ISCED mappings maintained by the UIS or during the review of secondary sources. Two main reasons explain the lack of TTPs for these countries: (1) the country does not offer any teacher education or training programme or (2) information on TTPs exists but could not be found by the UIS. An example for the former is Liechtenstein, which has no TTP and whose teachers are educated in other countries.

For countries in the second group, information on TTPs was either not reported to the UIS or not found during the online search by the UIS because of social or political crises inside the country, a non-standardized education system (for example regarding pre-service teacher training in Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia), language barriers, or problems accessing national websites. The 14 countries and territories without information on TTPs are: British Virgin Islands, Congo, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gibraltar, Guinea, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Mongolia, North Macedonia, Sint Maarten (Dutch part), Tajikistan, and Yemen.

**Table 2. Number of teacher training programmes in UIS database by country**

Number of TTPs in database	Number of countries	Percentage of target countries (%)
0	14	6.7
1	18	8.6
2	31	14.8
3	44	21.0
4 and more	103	49.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: The 14 countries with no TTPs include 2 countries where availability of TTP is “not applicable”.

Source: UIS TTP database, October 2020.

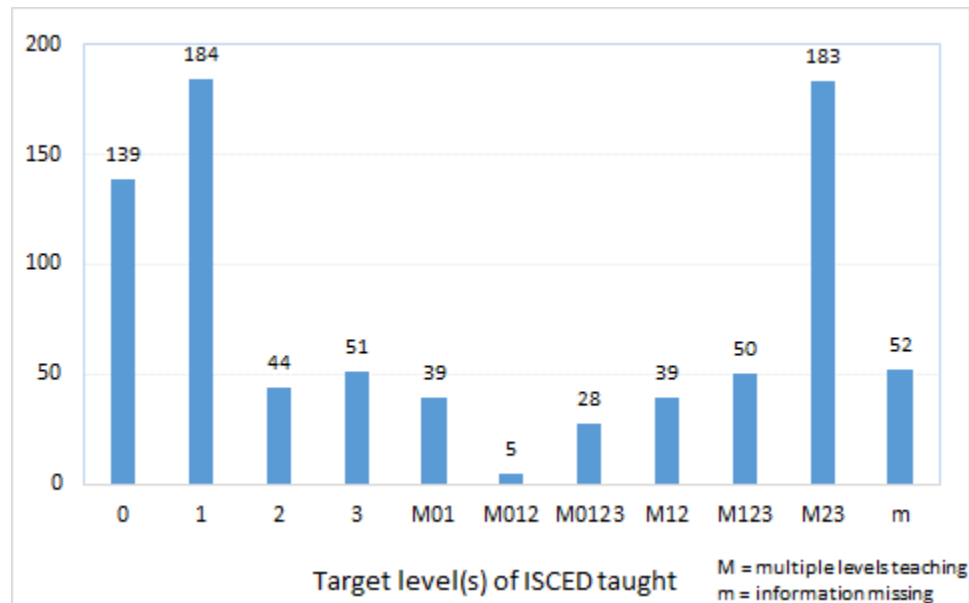
In spite of the large number of TTPs included in the UIS database, it is not known how comprehensive the database is. The information is sufficient to guide development of ISCED-T but validation by countries and further research to add information on missing TTPs is recommended.

### **Target teaching levels of education and qualification awarded at completion of the TTPs**

The UIS database includes 814 TTPs. Of the 762 TTPs with information on the target teaching level(s) of education, 55% (418 programmes) are designed to teach a single level of education, i.e. pre-primary (139 programmes), primary (184 programmes), lower secondary (44 programmes) or upper secondary (51 programmes) (see **Figure 1**). Most of the TTPs designed to train teachers for multiple levels target ISCED levels 2 and 3, i.e. lower and upper secondary education (183 TTPs or 22% of all programmes).

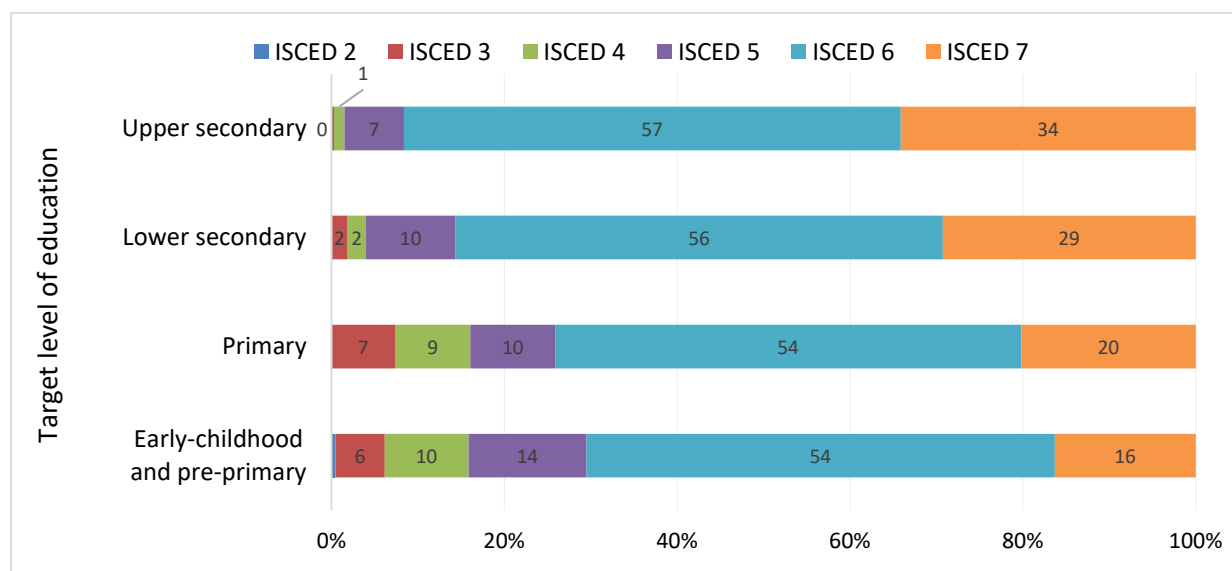
It is possible to split each TTP designed for teaching of multiple levels into TTPs targeting each one of those levels. The split TTPs have the same characteristics as the original TTP targeting multiple levels of teaching, except for the target teaching level, which is now single. If all multi-level TTPs are converted to single-level TTPs for the purpose of analysis, the UIS database contains 1356 instead of 814 TTPs. **Figure 2** presents the TTPs by target level of education and ISCED level of the qualification awarded at completion.

**Figure 1. Number of teacher training programmes by single and multiple target teaching level(s) of education**



Source: UIS TTP database, October 2020.

**Figure 2. Distribution of teacher training programmes by target level of education and ISCED level of the qualification awarded at completion (%)**



Source: UIS TTP database, October 2020.

Irrespective of the level of education for which teachers are trained, ISCED 6 (Bachelor or equivalent) is the most prevalent qualification required to teach, followed by ISCED 7 (Master or equivalent). By target

teaching level of education, the proportion of TTPs that require a qualification at ISCED levels 6 or 7 is 91% for upper-secondary teachers, 85% for lower secondary teachers, 74% for primary teachers and 70% for pre-primary teachers. Less than 10% of TTPs award an ISCED 3 qualification to prepare teachers to teach either of the four target levels of education.

**Table 3** presents the TTPs in the UIS database by country group (SDG region and income level) and by target level of education.

**Table 3. Availability of TTPs by region and target level of education**

Country group	Target level of education					
	ISCED 0	ISCED 1	ISCED 2	ISCED 3	Level unknown	Total
<b>SDG region</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1356</b>
<b>Central and Southern Asia</b>	5	24	26	27	3	85
<i>Central Asia</i>	1	5	4	4	1	15
<i>Southern Asia</i>	4	19	22	23	2	70
<b>Eastern and South-Eastern Asia</b>	34	45	43	40	7	169
<i>Eastern Asia</i>	15	13	14	12	0	54
<i>South-eastern Asia</i>	19	32	29	28	7	115
<b>Europe and Northern America</b>	87	101	105	96	15	404
<i>Europe</i>	78	90	89	85	14	356
<i>Northern America</i>	9	11	16	11	1	48
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	33	59	60	51	10	213
<i>Caribbean</i>	13	26	28	23	8	98
<i>Latin America</i>	20	33	32	28	2	115
<b>Northern Africa and Western Asia</b>	21	41	43	41	8	154
<i>Northern Africa</i>	2	9	12	9	2	34
<i>Western Asia</i>	19	32	31	32	6	120
<b>Oceania</b>	20	27	34	25	2	108
<i>Australia and New Zealand</i>	7	8	9	7	0	31
<i>Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand)</i>	13	19	25	18	2	77
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	29	70	64	54	6	223
<b>Income group</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1338</b>
High income	122	159	165	148	25	619
Upper middle income	56	95	91	82	10	334
Lower middle income	37	80	83	72	11	283
Low income	10	31	31	27	3	102

Source: UIS TTP database, October 2020.

## Target level, minimum entrance requirements, and duration of TTPs

The UIS proposal for the development of ISCED-T identified 3 characteristics that could be considered as the minimum potential dimensions for classification of TTPs: target teaching level, minimum entrance requirements, and duration of the TTP. The proposal elaborated on the rationale for selecting these dimensions for the classification and further suggested a coding scheme – short with a 3-digit code, long with a 6-digit code – that could be used to characterise each TTP. For more information about the proposal, see <http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/08/TCG6-REF-5-Quality-of-international-data-on-teachers-to-report-on-SDG-target-4.pdf>.

**Figure 3** summarizes the database according to these 3 dimensions. For example, 108 TTPs that prepare teachers to teach in primary education are classified as ISCED 5 or 6, are accessible after completion of an ISCED 3 programme, and have 4 years duration.

**Figure 3. Number of teacher training programmes for each target level of education by Initial ISCED classification, minimum entrance requirements and duration**

ISCED classification of TTP	Duration of TTP (years)	Target level of TTP																												
		Pre-primary teachers n=226							Primary teachers n=363							Lower secondary teachers n=374							Upper secondary teachers n=333							
Tertiary: master's degree (ISCED 7) or higher	6		2							5								6								6				
	5		2							13								14								16				
	4		2							5								2								2				
	3																	1		3						1			2	
	2							16				1	22						2	40							2	46	1	
1 or less							14	1				25	1					40	2							36	2			
Tertiary: bachelor's degree (ISCED 5, 6)	6		2							2								2								1				
	5	1	15							20								25								22				
	4		55	2						108	8							105	8							101	8			
	3		47	3	1	1				55	5	1						52	4	1						34	4	1		
	2		18	1	1					15	2	4						18	5	6	2					9	5	6	4	
1 or less				3	3				1	3	2	6					1	3	2	15					1	3	1	14		
Post-secondary non-tertiary (ISCED 4)	6																													
	5	1								1																				
	4		1							1																				
	3	1	3							1	5							2								2				
	2	1	7							1	12							5								2				
1 or less		7	1							11																				
Secondary education (ISCED 2 and 3)	6																													
	5	1								1																				
	4	5								5								1												
	3	3								9								3								1				
	2	2								10								2												
1 or less	2	1							1	1							1													
		ISCED 2	ISCED 3	ISCED 4	ISCED 5	ISCED 6	ISCED 7		ISCED 2	ISCED 3	ISCED 4	ISCED 5	ISCED 6	ISCED 7		ISCED 2	ISCED 3	ISCED 4	ISCED 5	ISCED 6	ISCED 7		ISCED 2	ISCED 3	ISCED 4	ISCED 5	ISCED 6	ISCED 7		
Minimum education level completed (as pre-requisite for entry into the TTP)																														

Source: UIS TTP database, October 2020.



### 3. Next steps for development of ISCED-T

The next steps for development of ISCED-T include establishment of a regionally representative Technical Advisory Panel with experts on classifications and teacher education programmes, and the formation of an editorial group that will draft ISCED-T with input from the Technical Advisory Panel and representatives of UNESCO Member States and other international organizations, including from the teaching profession. A global consultation of Member States (Ministries of Education and National Statistical Offices), during which they will have an opportunity to comment on the draft, will take place after the draft classification has been completed. UNESCO will also consult relevant international organizations, such as the UN Expert Group on Social and Economic Classifications, OECD, Eurostat, and others on the draft of ISCED-T.

The revised draft proposal on ISCED-T, incorporating the results from the global consultation, is expected to be submitted to the 41st session of the General Conference for consideration and adoption, with the comments of the Executive Board thereto. However, depending on the intended scope of ISCED-T, more time may be needed to complete the classification. Two scenarios are outlined below for the consideration of the TCG.

#### Scenario 1: Limited number of dimensions for classification of TTPs

Under this option, ISCED-T is limited to the dimensions of classification of TTPs summarized in Figure 3:

- ISCED level of a programme,
- target teaching level of a programme,
- entrance requirements for a programme,
- duration of a programme.

The work of the TAP and authors of ISCED-T would be restricted to coding of these dimensions and drafting of the accompanying text. Additional dimensions would not be considered. **Table 4** summarizes the tasks and timeline for completion of ISCED-T under scenario 1. This is an ambitious best-case scenario that assumes no delays during the development of ISCED-T.

**Table 4. Tasks and timeline for development of ISCED-T under scenario 1 (limited number of dimensions of classification)**

Task	Output	Date
Compile and analyse inventory of TTPs	TTP inventory	Aug.-Oct. 2020
Establish ISCED-T Secretariat	Secretariat	Nov. 2020
Convene ISCED-T Technical Advisory Panel	TAP meetings	Nov.-Dec. 2020
Develop coding scheme for dimensions of classification	ISCED-T coding scheme	Nov.-Dec. 2020
Draft text of ISCED-T	ISCED-T draft	Jan.-Mar. 2021
Inform UNESCO General Conference Secretariat of planned submission of ISCED-T	ISCED-T announcement	Feb. 2021
Organize review of draft of ISCED-T by Member States and international organizations	ISCED-T review	Apr.-May 2021
Finalize ISCED-T proposal, incorporating reviewers' comments	Final ISCED-T proposal	June 2021
Obtain approval of ISCED-T from TCG	ISCED-T approval	July 2021

Task	Output	Date
Obtain visas and legal clearance for ISCED-T	Visas, legal clearance	Aug.-Sept. 2021
Submit ISCED-T to UNESCO General Conference Secretariat	Submission to GC	Oct. 2021
Adoption of ISCED-T by UNESCO General Conference	ISCED-T adoption	Nov. 2021
Edit text of ISCED-T, incorporating revisions requested by the General Conference	Final ISCED-T text	Nov.-Dec. 2021
Develop communication strategy for ISCED-T	Communication strategy	Dec. 2021-Jan. 2022
Promote ISCED-T	ISCED-T dissemination	Feb.-Mar. 2022
Establish criteria for definition of trained and qualified teachers	International standard	Jan.-Mar. 2022
Develop data collection strategy for ISCED-T	Data collection strategy	Apr.-May 2022
Develop guidance documents and training for Member States	Documentation, training	Apr.-June 2022

## Scenario 2: Expanded number of dimensions for classification of TTPs

Under this option, ISCED-T would include additional dimensions of classifications of TTPs, such as, among others:

- pathways to qualification (concurrent, consecutive, alternative),
- certificate earned at completion,
- induction period.

Identification of and agreement on additional dimensions would only be possible after further research and consultations. Because the next opportunity for adoption of ISCED-T would be the 42nd session of the UNESCO General Conference in 2023, there would be more time to develop the classification.

**Table 5** summarizes the tasks and timeline for development of ISCED-T if more dimensions of classification were to be incorporated, in addition to the dimensions considered under scenario 1.

### Table 5. Tasks and timeline for development of ISCED-T under scenario 2 (additional dimensions of classification)

Task	Output	Date
Compile and analyse inventory of TTPs	TTP inventory	Aug.-Oct. 2020
Establish ISCED-T Secretariat	Secretariat	Nov. 2020
Convene ISCED-T Technical Advisory Panel	TAP meetings	Dec. 2020-Jan. 2021
Review literature on classification of TTPs	Literature review	Feb.-Apr. 2021
Collect additional evidence on existing TTPs and criteria needed for classification	Expanded TTP inventory	May-July 2021
Agree on dimensions for classification of TTPs	ISCED-T dimensions	Sept.-Oct. 2021
Develop coding scheme for dimensions of classification	ISCED-T coding scheme	Nov.-Dec. 2021
Draft text of ISCED-T	ISCED-T draft	Jan.-Mar. 2022
Organize review of draft of ISCED-T by Member States and international organizations	ISCED-T review	Apr.-June 2022
Finalize ISCED-T proposal, incorporating reviewers' comments	Final ISCED-T proposal	July-Aug. 2022
Obtain approval of ISCED-T from TCG	ISCED-T approval	Sept. 2022
Inform UNESCO General Conference Secretariat of planned submission of ISCED-T	ISCED-T announcement	Feb. 2023

<b>Task</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Date</b>
Obtain visas and legal clearance for ISCED-T	Visas, legal clearance	Apr. 2023
Submit ISCED-T to UNESCO General Conference Secretariat	Submission to GC	Aug. 2023
Adoption of ISCED-T by UNESCO General Conference	ISCED-T adoption	Nov. 2023
Edit text of ISCED-T, incorporating revisions requested by the General Conference	Final ISCED-T text	Dec. 2023-Jan. 2024
Develop communication strategy for ISCED-T	Communication strategy	Dec. 2023-Jan. 2024
Promote ISCED-T	ISCED-T dissemination	Feb.-Mar. 2024
Establish criteria for definition of trained and qualified teachers	International standard	Jan.-Mar. 2024
Develop data collection strategy for ISCED-T	Data collection strategy	Apr.-May 2024
Develop guidance documents and training for Member States	Documentation, training	Apr.-June 2024

#### **4. Suggested outline of ISCED-T**

A suggested outline of ISCED-T is presented below. Section 3.e. only applies if scenario 2 with additional dimensions of classification is chosen.

1. Introduction
2. Purpose and scope of the classification
3. Units of classification
  - a. ISCED classification of a programme
  - b. Target level at which teachers are expected to teach after completion of a programme
  - c. Minimum entrance requirements of a programme
  - d. Minimum duration of a programme
  - e. Other criteria for classification of a programme
4. Coding scheme
5. Examples for application of the classification
6. Governance
7. Glossary

#### **5. Decisions**

How does the TCG recommend to proceed with the development of ISCED-T?

1. Scenario 1: limited number of dimensions for classification of TTPs, aim for completion in time for UNESCO General Conference in 2021.
2. Scenario 2: expanded number of dimensions for classification of TTPs, aim for completion in time for UNESCO General Conference in 2023.