

## UNESCO AND SRI LANKA: KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

### I. COUNTRY PROFILE

#### Political system

- The country is a presidential republic
- President: H.E. Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa (since 18 November 2019)
- Premier Minister: H.E. Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa (since 21 November 2019)
- Minister of Foreign affairs Dinesh Gunawardena (since 24 November 2019)

#### Statistical data (source: UNDP Human Development Report)

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| • Population (millions) :                                   | 22.0                  |
| • Human Development Index :                                 | 0.782 / 72e rank      |
| • Life expectancy at birth (years) :                        | 77                    |
| • Gross national income per capita (2011 PPP\$) :           | 12,707                |
| • Internet users (% of population) :                        | 34.1                  |
| • Carbon dioxide emissions per capita (tons) :              | 1.1                   |
|   |                       |
| • Education (source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics)       |                       |
| • Expected years of schooling :                             | 14.1                  |
| • Compulsory years of education :                           | 11 (from age 5 to 15) |
| • Net enrolment ratio in primary education (%) :            | 99.1                  |
| • Net enrolment ratio in secondary education (%) :          | 91                    |
| • Expenditure on education (% of GDP and of total budget) : | 2.12/11.3             |
| <i>(UN Map of Sri Lanka at the end)</i>                     |                       |

### II. COOPERATION WITH UNESCO

1. **Membership of UNESCO:** since 14 November 1949

2. **Membership on the Executive Board:** no

3. **Membership of Intergovernmental Committees, Commissions, etc.:**

- Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC): Member
- Intergovernmental Council for the International Hydrological Programme (Term expires : 41st General Conference)
- Intergovernmental Council of the "Management of Social Transformations" Programme (Term expires : 41st General Conference)
- Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee
- Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

4. **Visits of the Director-General in the country:** 0

5. **Visits of the former Director-General in the country:** 1

- 14 – 17 August 2016

6. **Permanent Delegation to UNESCO:**

- H.E. Ms Kshanika Hirimburegama, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate (28 January)
- Ms Thilini Jayasekara Deputy Permanent Delegate
- Ms Ruvini Munidasa, First Secretary
- Previous Permanent Delegate: H.E. Mr Buddhi Athauda

7. **UNESCO Office:** none.

- Sri Lanka is covered by New Delhi Office.

8. **National Commission for UNESCO:**
  - Date of establishment: 1949
  - Chairman: Hon. (Prof.) G. L. Peiris, Minister of Education (former Minister of Foreign Affairs), (since August 2020)
  - Secretary-General: Dr. Punchi Nilame Meegaswatte (since 2020)
  
9. **Personalities linked to UNESCO's activities:**
  - **Professor Anoja Fernando** is a member of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) since 2016 and currently serves as rapporteur of the Committee and is actively involved in the drafting of reports. Prof. Fernando is a professor emeritus and former dean at the faculty of medicine, University of Ruhuna, Sri-Lanka. She is also former Chair of the National Bioethics of Sri-Lanka, former president of Asian Bioethics Association and Sri Lanka Medical Association.
  
10. **UNESCO Chairs: 0**
  
11. **Associated schools: 25** (4 Primary/Secondary, 20 Secondary and 1 Teacher Training). Sri Lanka joined the ASP Network in 1958.
  
12. **Category 2 Institutes and Centres: 1**
  - South Asian Centre for Teacher Development in Meepe (since 2014)
  
13. **Biosphere Reserves: 4**
  - Hurulu (1977)
  - Sinharaja (1978)
  - Kanneliya-Dediyagala-Nakiyadeniya (KDN) (2004)
  - Bundala (2005)
  
14. **World Heritage sites: 8**

*Cultural sites:*

  - Ancient City of Polonnaruwa (1982)
  - Ancient City of Sigiriya (1982)
  - Sacred City of Anuradhapura (1982)
  - Old Town of Galle and its Fortifications (1988)
  - Sacred City of Kandy (1988)
  - Golden Temple of Dambulla (1991)

*Natural sites:*

  - Sinharaja Forest Reserve (1988)
  - Central Highlands of Sri Lanka (2010)
  
15. **Tentative List: 3 properties**
  - Seruwila Mangala Raja Maha Vihara (2006)
  - Seruwila to Sri Pada (Sacred Foot Print Shrine), Ancient pilgrim route along the Mahaweli river in Sri Lanka (2010)
  - Ancient Ariyakara Viharaya in the Rajagala Archaeological Reserve (27/02/2020)
  
16. **Intangible Heritage Lists: 1**
  - Rūkada Nātya, traditional string puppet drama in Sri Lanka (2018)
  
17. **Memory of the World Register: 2 elements**
  - Archives of the Dutch East India Company (2003)
  - The Indian Ocean Tsunami Archives (2017)
  
18. **Creative Cities Network: none**

**19. Legal instruments: 17 ratified and 23 non-ratified**

**Ratified:**

- Convention concerning the Exchange of Official Publications and Government Documents between States. Ratification: Paris, 3 December 1958.
- Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Acceptance: Paris, 06/06/1980.
- Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. Acceptance: Paris, 07/04/1981.
- Convention against Discrimination in Education. Acceptance: Paris, 11/08/1983.
- Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas, and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific. Acceptance: Bangkok, 10/01/1986.
- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Acceptance: Paris, 21/04/2008
- Convention for the protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict

**Not yet ratified:**

- 1st Protocol of the Convention for the protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 1954)
- 2nd Protocol of the Convention for the protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 1954)
- Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001)
- Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions (2005)

**20. Anniversary with which UNESCO is associated in 2020-2021: None**

**21. Participation Programme:**

- 2020-2021: 4 national projects and 1 regional project for a total amount of US\$ 105,000 are submitted (to be approved).
- 2018-2019: 3 projects have been recommended by the Intersectoral Committee of 28 March 2019 for a total amount of US\$ 69,000.
- 2016-2017: 3 projects have been approved by the DG and paid for a total amount of US\$ 75 000 and 2 emergency assistance requests for a total amount of US\$ 100 000.
- 2014-2015: 3 projects approved for a total amount of US\$ 62,000
- 2012-2013: 4 projects approved for a total amount of US\$ 91,000
- 2010-2011: 5 national projects and 1 regional project approved for a total amount of US\$ 147,000 and 1 emergency assistance for an amount of US\$ 35,000

**22. Fellowships:**

- Since 2010, 10 fellowships have been awarded to Sri Lanka for a total amount of US\$ 224 512

**23. Payment of assessed membership fees for 2021: unpaid**

- (Assessment rate: 0.057%; contributions assessed for 2021: US\$ 149,239)

**24. Invoicing of the Permanent Delegation:**

**25. Representation within the Secretariat: non-represented (min.2, max.4)**