

Ref: CU4398

Subject: First consultation on the implementation of the 2019 Recommendation on Open Educational Resources

Madam/Sir,

Under Article VIII of UNESCO's Constitution, Member States are required to submit, every four years, a report on the provisions and measures they have taken to implement the conventions and recommendations adopted by the Organization.

In this context, I am pleased to invite Member States to submit their reports on the 2019 Recommendation on Open Educational Resources, in one of the two working languages of UNESCO, by **31 January 2023**. Practical information on submitting the report is provided in the attached "Guidelines for the Preparation of the Reports from Member States".

Member States are therefore encouraged to organize all necessary consultations with concerned ministries and institutions, notably with key stakeholders, professional associations, civil society partners, private sector entities and National Commissions for UNESCO.

The Secretariat will submit to the 217th session of the Executive Board, in autumn 2023, the first consolidated report on the implementation by Member States of the 2019 Recommendation on Open Educational Resources for its consideration. This report, together with the comments of the Executive Board's Committee on Conventions and Recommendations, will subsequently be submitted to the 42nd session of the General Conference in 2023.

The Communication and Information Sector is at your disposal for any additional information you may require ([oeerrecommendation\(wunesco.org\)](https://www.unesco.org/oeerrecommendation)).

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Audrey Azoulay
Director-General

Encl.: 1

Cc: National Commissions for UNESCO
Permanent Delegations to UNESCO

To Ministers responsible for relations with UNESCO

ANNEX I

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE REPORTS FROM MEMBER STATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2019 RECOMMENDATION ON OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER)

I. Introduction

These Guidelines are intended to assist Member States in the preparation of the reports on the implementation of the 2019 Recommendation on Open Educational Resources (OER) that was adopted by the 40th session of the General Conference of UNESCO on 25 November 2019.

The 2019 Recommendation on OER aims to support five areas of action by: (i) building capacity of stakeholders to create, access, re-use, adapt and redistribute OER; (ii) developing supportive policy; (iii) encouraging inclusive and equitable quality OER; (iv) nurturing the creation of sustainability models for OER, and (v) facilitating international cooperation.

OER are defined in this normative instrument as learning, teaching and research materials in any format and medium that reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license, that permit no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation and redistribution by others. Open license refers to a license that respects the intellectual property rights of the copyright owner and provides permissions granting the public the rights to access, re-use, re-purpose, adapt and redistribute educational materials.

Pursuant to Articles 15 and 16.1 of the Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the UNESCO Constitution, the Director-General of UNESCO has invited Member States by the Circular Letter (CL/4319) to submit the 2019 Recommendation on OER to their competent authorities within a period of one year from the close of the session of the General Conference.

Furthermore, under Article VIII of UNESCO's Constitution, Member States are required to submit a report on the legislative and administrative provisions and any other measures they have taken to implement the conventions and recommendations adopted by the Organization.

II. How to fill in the questionnaire

Prior to completing the questionnaire, Member States are encouraged to organize the necessary consultations within and outside the concerned ministries and institutions, including with professional associations, civil society and private sector partners and National Commissions for UNESCO. The proposed reporting guidelines have been established based on the topics set out in this Recommendation, which can be found at:

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49556&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

UNESCO has created a platform for sharing information on OER activities globally and in numerous countries, available at: www.unesco.org/oer. Member States are invited to consult this site in the preparation of this report, as relevant.

Please designate a contact person responsible for information sharing and cooperation with UNESCO in relation to reporting on this Recommendation.

Member States are encouraged to submit the questionnaire (in English or French) in one of the following ways:

- (i) Online (preferred): the consolidated questionnaire (one per Member State) can be completed and submitted online through a link to be found at: <https://survey.unesco.org/3/index.php?r=survey/index&sid=378852&lang=en>
- (ii) Email: the questionnaire can be completed electronically and sent to: oeercommendation@unesco.org

The responses to the questionnaire, if sent by email, should not exceed 15 pages, excluding annexes and is to be submitted to UNESCO in electronic form only (standard .pdf or .rtf or .doc format).

The report will be made available on UNESCO's website in order to facilitate the exchange of information relating to the promotion and implementation of this Recommendation.

ANNEX II
QUESTIONNAIRE

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Country: **SWEDEN**

Organization(s) or entity(s) responsible for the preparation of the report:

Government Offices of Sweden (Ministry of Education and Research)

in close collaboration with the Swedish National Commission for

UNESCO

Officially designated contact person and institution: **Emma Jansson,**

Desk officer, Ministry of Education and Research

Name(s) of designated official(s) certifying the report: **Eva Lenberg, Director General for Legal Affairs, Ministry of Education and Research**

Brief description of the consultation process established for the preparation of the report:

This report has been prepared by the Ministry of Education and Research in close collaboration with the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO. The Ministry has received written input from government agencies (the Swedish Higher Education Authority, the Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish National Agency for Education and the National Library of Sweden). On the 16th of December, the Ministry invited national actors (government agencies, academia and civil society organizations) engaged in OER to a round-table meeting in which they were invited to share information on initiatives as well as potential challenges in implementing the OER recommendation in Sweden. In total, 16 representatives of organizations participated in the round-table meeting.

REPORTING ON THE SPECIFIC PROVISIONS OF THE 2019 RECOMMENDATION ON OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES {OER):

1. General

1.1 Has the 2019 Recommendation on OER been promoted and shared with appropriate ministries and institutions?

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details.

Information on the recommendation, including a copy of the recommendation itself was sent out by the Ministry of Education and Research to concerned stakeholders in the autumn of 2020, following the circulation of the certified copy of the recommendation by the UNESCO Secretariat.

1.2 Has the 2019 Recommendation on OER been translated into national language(s) (if applicable)?

NOT APPLICABLE/YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

The Recommendation was translated by the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO in 2022: [Unescos-rekommendationer-om-oppna-larresurser-ny.pdf](#)

2. Building capacity of stakeholders to create, access, re-use, adapt and redistribute OER

2.1 Have there been awareness-raising activities on the benefits of OER organized or foreseen to be organized by end of 2023 in your country? (ref.: (i)11.(a), (c))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

Assignment to the Swedish National Library: The Swedish National Library recently reported to the Government on an assignment to map and analyze the use of OER, with a focus on public libraries. The study concludes that use of OER has increased somewhat in higher education institutions (HEI) during the last few years, but that use is still marginal. It also concludes that the technical infrastructure needed is mostly in place.

Link to the assignment in Swedish:

Uppdrag om öppna lärresurser och allmänhetens delaktighet i forskningsprocessen - Regeringen.se

<https://www.kb.se/samverkan-och-utveckling/nytt-fran-kb/nyheter-samverkan-och-utveckling/2022-10-20-oppna-larresurser-har-en-outnyttjad-potential.html>

Mötesplats OER is a collaboration between Wikimedia Sweden, the Swedish Association for Open, Flexible and Distance Education (SVERD) and representatives from various Swedish universities and cultural heritage institutions. The aim of this network is to promote the adoption of OER in Sweden. Mötesplats OER gathers various actors that share an interest in OER: Educators, policy makers, actors managing information resources and infrastructure as well as advocates for open and accessible learning. Mötesplats OER has organized two national conferences in 2021 and 2022 respectively.

[In English – Mötesplats OER \(motesplatsoer.se\)](#)

On November 26th 2022, The Swedish Council for Higher Education and SVERD arranged a webinar called “Ett hållbart ekosystem för implementering av UNESCO:s OER rekommendation” (a sustainable ecosystem for implementing the UNESCO OER Recommendation)

[In Swedish: Ett hållbart ekosystem för implementering av UNESCO:s OER rekommendation | hpu.uhr.se](#)

The Swedish National Heritage Board arranged a series of webinars in 2021, that in part focused on how OER can be used by cultural heritage institutions in their collaboration with educational institutions.

[In Swedish: Återblick Kulturarv i skolan 2021 | Riksantikvarieämbetet \(raa.se\)](#)

- 2.2 Have capacity-building programmes on how to use/re-use, adapt and redistribute OER as well as related digital skills taken place? (ref.: (i), 11.(b), (e), (f))acac

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

Capacity building programmes on the institutional level have taken place. In 2020-2021, the University of Gothenburg conducted a project which focused on producing open educational resources and courses for users outside of the university.

“Digiteket” is a platform for digital capacity building, including specific material on OER, aimed at library personnel but is open for everyone to use. All content on Digiteket is under a Creative Commons license, allowing creators to retain copyright while allowing others to copy, distribute, and make some uses of their work. Digiteket is hosted by the National Library of Sweden.

- 2.3 Are there existing national or institutional OER repositories and/or plans to establish such repositories by end of 2023? (ref.: (i), 11.(d))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

There are several repositories in use for OER run by different organisations, here are a few examples:

Lektionsbanken

<https://lektionsbanken.se/>

This site is owned by the Teachers' Union.

Lektion.se

<https://www.lektion.se/>

Is a free and open homepage by teachers, for teachers, with a bank of ideas for lessons.

There is also a forum through which teachers all over the country can communicate with each other and a collection of links with information. It is financed by advertising.

Kunskapsbanken

<https://www.statensmedierad.se/mik-sveriges-kunskapsbank>

The Swedish Media Council has a repository that offers OER related to media and information literacy.

These are only a few examples. School organisers might have their own repositories in place for sharing OER, teachers often turn to various groups on social media to exchange resources and some learning management systems have built-in features to share teaching material.

Regarding Higher Education, there are no national OER repositories, but Canvas Commons, which is part of the learning management system Canvas used by the majority of Swedish HEI, could partly be seen as a repository. Most initiatives focus on sharing experiences and results rather than OER. On an institutional level some HEI share some OER on their websites.

- 2.4 Have there been capacity-building interventions focused on the use and/or development of OER repositories and tools and/or are there such interventions foreseen by end of 2023? (ref.: (i), 11, (d), (b))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant

See question 2.1.

Several Swedish HEIs inform about the legal frameworks concerning copyright and OER on their webpages.

The Swedish National Agency for Education has carried out some exploratory work to analyse the need for a national platform for the distribution of OER, what a quality assurance model for OER could look like and who would be best suited to develop and maintain such a platform. The design sprint methodology was used for this exploration with input from representatives from various stakeholders, such as the teaching profession, and the edtech-industry. No decision has been made about the development of a national repository.

3. Developing Supportive Policy

- 3.1 Is there a policy at national and/or institutional level(s) that foresees that educational resources are developed using public funds and made available as open educational resources? (ref.: (ii), 12, (a))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

- 3.2 How do policies and existing frameworks in place at national and/or institutional level(s) provide incentives for stakeholders (e.g. teachers, learners, researchers) to use/re-use/adapt and redistribute OER, including for professional and academic merit? (ref.: (ii), 12, (b), (c), (d), (f))

Please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

The use and development of OER is not included in national merit frameworks.

- 3.3 How do procurement models in place at national and/or institutional level(s) provide incentives for governmental bodies and institutions to support OER use/re-use/adaptation and/or redistribution OER? (ref.: (ii), 12, (b), (c), (d), (f))

Please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

In Sweden, the quality assurance system does not cover educational resources. The use and choice of educational resources are decentralized to the municipalities and schools, as well as to the HEI:s. Most of the learning materials used in the Swedish education system are produced by commercial publishers. There are also market regulations in place to ensure that government bodies do not infringe upon the market of commercial learning resources.

Since the autumn 2022 Sweden has a new government that aims to put increased emphasis on textbooks. Initiatives are under way to make sure that ultimately each pupil in Swedish schools has at least one textbook per subject.

- 3.4 To what extent have OER policies been embedded into national policy frameworks and strategies and aligned with other open policies and guiding principles such as those for Open Access, Open Data, Open Source Software and Open Science? (ref.: (ii), 12, (e))

Please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

OER is not embedded into national policy frameworks and strategies.

- 3.5 Have policies and/or guiding principles been developed with regard to privacy and data protection during the production and use of OER, OER infrastructure and related services? (ref.: (ii), 12, (h))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

4. Encouraging effective, inclusive and equitable access to quality OER

- 4.1 Are there OER in national languages? (ref.: (iii), 13. (b))

YES/NO

Please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

There is no comprehensive list of OER in Sweden. However, many of the resources developed are in Swedish.

- 4.2 Are there OER available for use in low/no connectivity contexts? (ref.: (iii), 13. (a))

YES/NO

No information available. In 2021, 96,5% of the households and 93,4% of the enterprises in Sweden had access to 1 Gbit/s broadband or fiber in their absolute proximity.

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

- 4.3 Have OER have been contextualized for local social, economic and cultural contexts? (ref.: (iii), 13.(b), (c), (d))

Please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

See answer to question 3.3.

- 4.4 Have quality assurance criteria for OER, based on principles of learning excellence, equity and inclusion, been developed and/or adapted? (ref.: (iii), 13. (f))
NO

Please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant

- 4.5 Have studies and/or research on OER development been conducted and/or are planned to be conducted by end of 2023 at the national and institutional level? (ref.: (iii), 13.(e))
YES

Please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

A study by the Swedish National Library was conducted in 2022, see answer to question 2.1.

5. Nurturing the creation of sustainability models of OER

- 5.1 Have OER sustainability models (in particular those that foresee that the cost of accessing educational materials is not shifted to individual educators and students) been developed and/or are foreseen to be developed by end of 2023? (ref.: (iv), 14, (a), (b), (c), (d))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

- 5.2 Have mechanisms to encourage feedback from stakeholders and constant improvement of OER been established? (ref.: (iv), 14, (f))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

6. Promoting and reinforcing international cooperation

- 6.1 Has your country and/or institutions in your country signed agreements and/or other collaborative mechanisms, including for funding to co-develop and/or share OER through inter-institutional, national, regional and/or international cooperation? (ref.: (iv), 14, (g)); (v), 15 (a) (b), (d), (e), (f))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

SV ERD has been assigned to work with OER in collaboration with The International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) and is leading the ICDE OER Advocacy Committee since 2018.

- 6.2 Have specific clauses related to OER been incorporated, where appropriate, in international agreements concerned with cooperation in the field of education? (ref.: (v), 15, (d))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

- 6.3 Are there peer networks that share OER, based on areas such as subject matter, language, institutions, regions and level of education at local, institutional, national, regional, and/or international level currently active? (ref.: (v), 15, c))

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

Yes, the network for IT in Higher Education (ITHUs) Subnetworks share internally, some resources are in public domain. The national Learning Management System network (LMS-network) also shares resources and material both within the network and between institutions using the same LMS. A Nordic LMS-user collaboration is forming right now and the plan is to focus on sharing and learning from each other in the Nordic countries.

7. Miscellaneous

- 7.1 Has your country used OER to meet the educational challenges in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic?

YES/NO

If yes, please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

OER played a role during the pandemic, but it is difficult to say to which extent compared to ordinary circumstances. A project carried out in public-private partnership provided several learning resources, both OER and commercial resources made available for free during a limited period. A summary in Swedish of the project can be found here:

<https://skolahemma.se/summering-av-skola-hemma-vad-hande-egentligen/>

- 7.2 Please enter below any other information or achievements you would like to share regarding your country's implementation of the 2019 Recommendation on OER.

Please provide details and hyperlinks as relevant.

Several of the above questions have been answered with NO. This should however not be interpreted as a lack of interest for the question of OER in Sweden, especially in the field of higher education. The result of the questionnaire does rather reflect that the activities in the field of OER is more on an institutional than a national level. In discussions with national networks and stakeholders in the field of higher education in Sweden OER is a topic that is highly active.

In the round table discussion hosted by the Ministry of Education and Research, all invited actors agreed that quality and quality assurance is a necessity to consider in the discussions concerning OER. Civil society is a big producer of OER in Sweden. Libraries, including libraries connected to educational institutions, are an important part of the infrastructure concerning procurement and, to a degree, quality assessment.