

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.3/252
7 November 1957

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATISTICAL COMMISSION
Tenth session
Item 14 of the provisional agenda

STATISTICS ON EDUCATION,
CULTURE AND MASS COMMUNICATION

(Prepared by the Statistical Division, United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization)

1. A progress report on the improvement of educational and cultural statistics (E/CN.3/217) was presented by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to the Commission at its ninth session. The Commission, in its report to the Economic and Social Council,^{1/} expressed its particular interest in respect of the efforts on the part of UNESCO towards the recommendation of standards in definitions, classifications and tabulations of educational and cultural statistics. The present report covers mainly the activities of UNESCO during the period 1955-1957, towards the improvement of statistics relating to education, culture and mass communication, with special reference to the proposed standardization of educational statistics.

I. Collection, analysis and publication of statistics

2. Since the publication, in 1955, of the World survey of education: handbook of educational organization and statistics,^{2/} UNESCO has continued to collect and publish basic statistical data on schools, teachers and pupil enrolment at all levels of education, and annual public expenditure on education.

^{1/} E/2876, para. 161-163.

^{2/} UNESCO: World Survey of Education: Handbook of Educational Organization and Statistics. 943 pages. Paris 1955.

The number and proportion of girls enrolled in schools, the number and proportion of female teachers, and the number of foreign students in institutions of higher education, have received special attention in the preparation of international tables on education.

3. A second world survey of education has recently been completed, and is scheduled for publication early in 1958. Special emphasis in this survey is placed on comparative summary figures by level of education for a five-year period (usually 1950-1954), and enrolment trends in primary education (since about 1930). The next survey to be published in 1961, will similarly feature comparative data for 1953-1957, and trends in secondary and vocational education.

4. A statistical study entitled World illiteracy at mid-century^{3/} was published in 1957, based on available census or sample survey data from some 65 countries referring to the period since about 1900 till 1954. This is a continuation of a preliminary study^{4/} published in 1953, and brings to a conclusion a co-operative project between the statistical offices of the United Nations and UNESCO, initiated in 1951.

5. Since 1956, a new series of statistical reports and studies in the field of educational and cultural statistics have been planned for publication. The first titles to appear in this series are:

Film and cinema statistics (UNESCO/ST/S/1), 111 pages. Paris, 1956.

Book production 1937-1954 and translations 1950-1954 (UNESCO/ST/S/2).
83 pages. Paris, 1957.

6. The regular series of preliminary reports now includes the following titles, published since 1955:

Public expenditure on education (UNESCO/ST/R/14), in three parts:

Part I, international tables, 193 pages; Part II (a), country tables, 169 pages; Part II (b), non-self-governing and trust territories, 177 pages.
Paris, 1955, 1956.

^{3/} UNESCO. World illiteracy at mid-century (monographs on fundamental education, XI). 200 pages. Paris, 1957.

^{4/} UNESCO. Progress of literacy in various countries (monographs on fundamental education, VI). 224 + 29 pages. Paris, 1953.

International statistics on libraries and book production (UNESCO/ST/R/15).
22 pages. Paris, 1956.

International standardization of educational statistics (UNESCO/ST/R/16).
11 pages. Paris, 1957.

Draft manual of educational statistics (UNESCO/ST/R/17). 25 pages. Paris, 1957.

7. International statistics relating to education, culture and mass communication are published regularly in the collection: Basic facts and figures. The latest edition in English was issued in 1956, and revised editions in French and Spanish were completed in late 1957.

II. Standardization of Educational Statistics

8. The General Conference of UNESCO, at its ninth session (New Delhi, 1956), adopted the following resolution (3.33):

"The General Conference,

Having examined the report by the Director-General on the standardization of educational statistics through the adoption of international regulation (document 9C/PRG/4).

Considers it desirable that international regulations be drawn up for the standardization of educational statistics,

Decides that such international regulations should cover the questions dealt with in the above-mentioned report by the Director-General, and should take the form of a recommendation to Member States, in the sense of Article IV, paragraph 4 of the Constitution;

Authorizes the Director-General to convene a Committee composed of technicians and experts nominated by Member States to prepare a draft recommendation for submission to the General Conference at its tenth session."

9. According to Article 10 of the UNESCO Rules of Procedure concerning Recommendations to Member States and International Conventions covered by Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution, the Director-General has distributed a preliminary report,^{5/} setting forth the position with regard to the question of international standardization of educational statistics, accompanied by a preliminary draft recommendation.

^{5/} International standardization of educational statistics (UNESCO/ST/R/16);
13 July 1957.

10. In conformity with the resolution of the General Conference quoted above, the Director-General has also convened a Committee composed of technicians and experts nominated by Member States, who will meet in Paris, June 1958, to prepare a draft recommendation for submission to the General Conference at its tenth session (Paris, 1958).

11. The adoption of a recommendation by the General Conference commits each Member State, in virtue of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution, to submitting the recommendation to its competent authorities within a period of one year from the close of the session of the General Conference at which the recommendation was adopted. Furthermore, under Article VIII of the Constitution, each Member State is obliged to report to the Organization "on the action taken up the recommendations and conventions referred to in Article IV, paragraph 4."

12. Meanwhile, it is planned to hold a series of regional seminars on the standardization of educational statistics, with a special reference to the application of UNESCO recommendations on this subject. The first of these seminars, under the Technical Assistance Programme, took place in November 1957, with participants from 16 countries in the region of South Asia and the Far East. Similar regional meetings are envisaged in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America during the period 1958-1960.

13. If the proposed recommendation is adopted by the General Conference at its tenth session, it is also planned to publish, in 1959, a Manual of educational statistics, giving more detailed suggestions concerning the application of the recommendation on definitions, classifications and tabulations of educational statistics. A preliminary form of this manual^{6/} has been circulated to Member States for information and comments.

14. Minimum standards for comparability of statistics relating to libraries, book production, film production and exhibition, and other aspects of cultural life are being worked out with the co-operation of various international non-governmental

^{6/} Draft manual of educational statistics (UNESCO/ST/R/17; 4 September 1957).

organizations competent in the respective fields. Special mention may be made of the work of the Committee on Statistics of the International Federation of Library Associations, which has been of invaluable assistance to UNESCO in formulating standards relating to library and book production statistics.^{7/}

^{7/} See: International statistics on libraries and book production (UNESCO/ST/R/15; 14 March 1956).