

THIRD CONFERENCE
OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION OF MEMBER STATES
OF THE EUROPE REGION

Organized by Unesco
with the co-operation of
the United Nations Economic Commission
for Europe

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FINAL REPORT

PART IV

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Unesco's Third Conference of Ministers of Education of Member States of the Europe Region took place in a constructive spirit and atmosphere. All the recommendations were adopted by consensus.

The conference participants discussed the present problems of education in the Member States of Unesco's Europe region and developments since the Second Conference of Ministers of Education; (Bucharest, 1973), in the spirit of the corresponding provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (Helsinki, 1975).

Noting that education systems in the States of the Europe region were developing and changing rapidly, the conference emphasized the growing role of education. For the first time the conference did not confine its attention to the problems of higher education but also considered those of the education system as a whole. The extended range of problems discussed by the conference represented an advance in the exchange of ideas and experience among the Member States of the Europe region.

Proceeding from the above considerations, the conference affirmed the need:

to intensify international co-operation in the field of education and in particular to institute a regular exchange of information and experience regarding education among the Member States of the Europe region and with the Member States of other regions;

to amplify research and develop joint work on the content, methods and organization of the education process at the various levels;

to continue efforts to democratize education, in particular by working for closer correspondence between education, science and culture and the other activities of the life of society;

to take account, in the development of education in the Europe region, of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session (1974).

The conference considered that those lines of emphasis would determine the development of education in the 1980s. They reflected the fundamental objective of education in modern society, which was to create the necessary conditions for the progress of society by meeting the needs of the individual and his aspiration after harmonious and balanced self-fulfilment.

On the basis of these general considerations, the conference adopted the following recommendations:

I

Education for peace

The Conference,

Considering that peace, security and international understanding are indispensable pre-conditions for the full development of education and its democratization,

Recalling resolutions 10.1 and 11.1 adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session, dealing with Unesco's contribution to peace and the role of Unesco in the halting of the arms race,

Having regard to the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session,

Welcoming the recent holding of the World Congress on Disarmament Education organized by Unesco (Paris, June 1980),

Recommends Member States:

1. to support the continuing action carried out by Unesco in furthering education for peace, international understanding and disarmament;
2. to take all possible measures to implement the above-mentioned resolutions and recommendations;
3. to evaluate thoroughly the results of the World Congress on Disarmament Education.

II

Democratization of education

The Conference,

Believing that the democratization of education is a basic prerequisite for the social and economic development of society as a whole and, in the final analysis, for individual human development regardless of race, sex, age, language, religion, political opinions, social origin, economic status or physical or other handicap,

Considering that the democratization of education requires that all should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential, to enter successfully on adult and working life, and to participate in lifelong education,

Believing that democratization of education involves:

the provision of pre-school education, full-time education at school and the availability of part and full-time courses of further and higher education with ease of access for mature students, and also post-experience courses;

the raising of the quality of educational provision at all levels to assist the individual both to fulfil his or her potential and to overcome economic, social, linguistic, physical and other handicaps;

the greater availability of educational and vocational guidance;

the elimination of differences of vocational opportunities between the sexes, taking into account the need to overcome prevailing sex-based role patterns, whenever they offer obstacles to the development of the talents of the individual;

the right of minorities to take part in education on an equal footing;

Considering also the particular problems posed for the democratization of education by the growth of cultural diversity arising from increasing movement of people across national boundaries,

Believing that higher educational establishments have a special role in achieving democratization of education as providers of education, both full and part time, for young people and adults, as centres of research on the educational problems involved, and also as a source of teachers,

Recommends Member States:

1. to continue to study these problems with a view to achieving the democratisation of education and vocational opportunity for all, regardless of sex, race, age, language, religion, political opinion, or social, economic, physical or other handicap; and to use the extension of international links in the field of education to achieve full mutual understanding among peoples as a contribution to lasting peace in the Europe region and throughout the world;
2. to make their experience available to Unesco and to other Member States;

General Considerations and Recommendations

Recommends the Director-General of Unesco:

1. to continue to encourage adherence to the Convention against Discrimination in Education by all Member States with a view to extending its effects;
2. to investigate ways of extending co-operation in this field among Member States;
3. to collect information and study developments with regard to efforts made by Member States for the establishment of equality between the sexes in education and training, and to encourage a broader exchange of experience with regard to this subject between Member States, within the framework of the Organization's existing activities.

III

Main problems of the development of education in their relationship with the socio-economic and cultural development of the Member States of the Europe region

Preamble

Considering that it is essential for education to be in harmony with and contributory to the socio-economic development of Member States, and to enhance the all-round intellectual, cultural, moral and physical development of each individual and to prepare him for adult life and work,

Conscious of the important changes that the content of education should undergo in the light of the rapid increases in knowledge at the present time, especially in science and technology,

Taking into account the growing role of communications and of information systems in society,

Underlining the necessity to strengthen the links between education and the world of work, especially by the introduction of work into the educational process, and by the harmonization of the planning of education in relation to employment,

III/ 1

Content of education

The Conference,

Recognizing the importance of the content of education at all levels of the education system, and having regard to the increasingly decisive role of education in satisfying the needs of the individual and society,

Considers that the content of education should match the just aspirations and real needs of the pupils young people, students and adults for whom it is devised; that it should not be encyclopaedic in character but should seek rather to encourage precision, a methodical approach and critical judgement, thereby developing intellectual curiosity and learning capacity for lifelong education;

Considers that the content of education should be closely related to the world at large, thus offering pupils a genuine and effective preparation for their future lives as individuals and citizens, and that theoretical knowledge should to this end be given a wide application to practical life;

Believes that curricula components based on experience of creativity and productive work should be adapted to the physical and intellectual capacities of the pupil and be integrated into the educational process;

Recommends the Director-General to continue to promote the pooling of studies and experience in this area.

III/2

Education and communication

The Conference,

Mindful of the growing importance assumed by modern communication and information techniques, and of the part they will be playing in our societies,

Considering the rapid development of science and technology, especially in the field of micro-electronics, and the possibilities of its application to education,

Aware of the responsibility of educators in preparing young people to make proper use of these resources,

Recommends Member States to give all necessary attention and support to thorough examination of the effects of these new technological developments on the future trend of education, and to study of the practical measures which may be called for as a result of this trend, with particular reference to content and methods and to teacher training, while ensuring co-ordination between those in charge of the media and education authorities;

Recommends the Director-General of Unesco:

1. to see that this educational and cultural concern is kept in view in all the Organization's present and future activities in the region;
2. to make provision, in the preparation and implementation of Unesco's Second Medium-Term Plan, for facilitating exchanges and co-operation among Member States in this field, and
3. in particular to make a thorough study of the applicability of new technological developments to education, particularly with regard to the use of micro-electronic equipment for educational purposes, including the possibility of joint Europe-region programmes in this field.

III/3

Education and the world of work

The Conference,

Considering the increased social and economic functions of education systems at the present stage of social development,

Being of the opinion that practical work by pupils and students is an important factor in the modern process of education,

Noting the experience gained by the Member States participating in this conference in developing education and linking it with the world of work,

Noting with satisfaction that the special theme of the 38th session of the International Conference on Education will be the interaction between education and productive work,

Considering further there is a growing need to improve the links between education and employment,

Being of the opinion that there is room for further reconciliation between the aims of education for intellectual, personal and social development and the preparation of pupils for the demands of life at work,

Recognizing the right of everybody to be adequately educated for adult life and work, regardless of sex, race and social background,

Convinced that information regarding successful programmes linking education with working life should be widely disseminated,

Recommends Member States:

1. to develop and amplify the connection between education and the world of work and to ensure creative collaboration between educational institutions, business, industry and establishments concerned with science, public health and culture;
2. to assist by all possible means the effort to find ways of enhancing the effectiveness and quality of education, ensuring in particular the best possible balance between general and vocationally oriented education and to take more active steps to introduce practical work into the teaching and education process for pupils and students in secondary and higher educational establishments;
3. to strive to achieve greater efficiency in the process of introducing school-leavers and graduates to working surroundings and providing for their full employment in accordance with the type of education received and for their rapid adaptation to the world of work;

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4. to promote the supply and flow of information and to strengthen co-operation in this field so as to enable them to become more acquainted with the experiences of each other's countries;

Recommends the Director-General of Unesco:

1. to give particular attention in future programmes to problems related to a better articulation between education and the world of work, including in-depth studies, evaluation by specialists and expert meetings aimed at promoting greater co-operation amongst Member States of the Europe
2. to facilitate the dissemination of information through existing information networks on the experiences of Member States in their search for ways in which educational institutions and employers collaborate in the education of students for the world of work.

IV

Higher education in rapidly developing societies

The Conference,

Considering the dynamic changes taking place in the contemporary world, both in the field of science and technology and in societies, as well as their impact on higher education and professional activities,

Being aware that these changes have similar implications in all the Member States of the Europe region,

Considering that the development of research and the strengthening of co-operation amongst scholars in the field of higher education, particularly in the field of general theoretical training of students, are important conditions for the effectiveness of education as a whole,

Considering that further training and refresher courses are a necessity for most graduates during their professional life,

Being aware of the significant impact of the general economic situation on higher education, and of the necessity to secure for all students equal opportunities of success in their studies,

Recommends Member States:

1. to promote in every possible way the establishment of bilateral and multilateral links between research establishments dealing with the problems of higher education;
2. to encourage co-operation in the field of post-experience education by circulating information on national arrangements for post-experience education and by promoting, whenever possible, the exchange of teachers, students, and teaching materials; and to contribute to the publication and dissemination of the experience thus gained;
3. to study with the assistance of Unesco, and take the necessary measures to ensure that students admitted to higher education who suffer from various socio-economic, financial or physical disadvantages, receive in so far as possible the necessary assistance to enable them to undertake or continue their higher studies with chances of success equal to those of other students;

Recommends the Director-General of Unesco:

1. to hold a meeting of those responsible for research institutions on higher education in European countries for the purpose of establishing direct contacts and working out joint research programmes;
2. to consult the Member States and to take appropriate measures for the pooling of experience concerning the content of fundamental theoretical disciplines taught in different types of higher educational establishments.

V

Regional and international co-operation

The Conference,

Noting the essential role of the development of international co-operation in the field of education, science, culture and communication in promoting peace and international understanding,

Considering that the free passage of ideas, in keeping with the ideals of the Unesco Constitution, is important for the development of the human personality,

Mindful of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which was signed in Helsinki in 1975 and has considerably assisted the development of co-operation between European States in the field of economics, technology and environmental protection, as well as in such areas as cultural, educational and information exchanges and personal contacts;

Recognizing the importance of the role that can be played by European educational co-operation in safeguarding peace and security in the region and strengthening mutual confidence among countries and peoples,

Emphasizing that bilateral and multilateral co-operation in education is an important means to enable the countries, peoples and students of the region to know each other better, thus contributing to the education of children and young people in a spirit of peace, international understanding and co-operation and respect and friendship among peoples,

Taking into account the experience acquired in carrying out the recommendations on co-operation among Member States in the field of education adopted at the Second Conference of Ministers of Education (Bucharest, 1973),

Having in mind the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its eighteenth session as well as the preparation of a proposed intergovernmental Unesco conference to promote its implementation,

Underlining the successful conclusion and signing of the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the Europe region as an important step towards the implementation, on an equal footing, of co-operation in the scientific and cultural field,

Noting with appreciation the recent holding of the World Congress on Disarmament Education organized by Unesco in June 1980,

Expressing its appreciation for the attention given to European co-operation in the field of education in Unesco's present programme and budget as well as in the Draft Programme and Budget for 1981-1983,

Noting with appreciation the useful and fruitful work of the Unesco Institute for Education in Hamburg,

Recommends Member States:

1. to promote and foster activities aimed at developing European co-operation in the field of higher education, having regard to the work already carried out by existing national, regional and international organizations, and in so doing, to pay due attention to the relevant provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe;
2. to ratify and actively to implement the Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the Europe Region adopted in 1979 and, in particular, to participate in the work of the regional committee established by the Convention;
3. to conclude, where feasible, bilateral agreements on mutual recognition of diplomas and academic degrees;
4. to identify their own priority interests within the general framework of Unesco's education programme and to notify the Organization thereof;
5. to carry out, in consultation with Unesco and making the best possible use of its clearing-house services, joint studies of a comparative nature on well-defined problem areas of common interest, preferably through their National Commissions;
6. to encourage and expand in every possible way activities designed to develop international co-operation in education;
7. constantly to improve and strengthen direct contacts between higher educational establishments in the various countries;

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8. to promote joint efforts by specialists of the Member States of the region to consider and to formulate joint recommendations on the problems of higher education, and particularly on the structure of curricula and on effective methods of managing the learning process and organizing teaching activities, as well as on rational forms of organizing the training of specialists at this level;
9. to organize on a broad basis international, and particularly regional, conferences, meetings, symposia and exhibitions, and to increase exchanges of students, post-graduate students, trainees, teachers and scholars, and also of information and documentation in the field of higher education;
10. to initiate and develop various forms of bilateral and multilateral co-operation with a view to enhancing the implementation of the recommendations contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace and, in particular, to exchanging experiences on projects pursued with that end in view;
11. to continue co-operation with a view to studying and improving the history and geography curricula and textbooks used in their schools with the aim of eliminating inaccuracies, as well as elements conducive to racial hatred, national and other discrimination, injustice or advocacy of violence and war, and thus promoting the objective and faithful representation of their respective countries;
12. to intensify their co-operation in the teaching of foreign languages, particularly those not widely spoken or taught, by setting up, whenever feasible, university departments and courses for such languages, organizing summer schools and holiday camps, creating posts for associate professors, offering scholarships for translators, exchanging information, documents and experience between experts and encouraging joint research in this area;
13. to continue the exchange of information on the basis of the results already achieved, and to strengthen their co-operation in the following areas, among others:

concepts relating to the development of secondary education; the provision of secondary education for all;

joint studies of teaching methods, educational innovation and the use of technical teaching aids;

the education of disadvantaged children and young people and those physically or mentally handicapped and the training of their teachers;

the planning of educational systems (especially at the level of higher education);
14. to lay special emphasis in their co-operation on the following types and forms of activity inter alia:

direct contacts among their ministries of education; the pooling of experience and information on matters concerning the content and organization of secondary and higher education;

direct contacts between higher educational institutions, making possible the exchange of all documentation on teaching, programmes and textbooks, as well as the exchange of lecturers, research workers and students, and the carrying out of joint research;

forms of subregional co-operation such as the programme of co-operation in South East Europe which provides machinery for information and the exchange of teaching aids and educational innovations (CODIESEE), membership of which should in future be open to the relevant institutions of all European States;
15. to offer other Member States the opportunity of studying their experience in meeting educational problems of common concern;
16. to simplify their arrangements, as far as possible, for encouraging and developing exchanges and co-operation between individuals in higher education, between faculties and between institutions, taking into account both the interests of the individuals concerned and the goal of achieving the free movement of academics and ideas;

Recommends the Director-General of Unesco:

1. to make available in appropriate form the results of efforts to conclude agreements on the mutual recognition of diplomas and academic degrees, and the experience gained in this matter with regard to the assessment of diplomas and degrees;

2. to support the work of the Regional Committee and, in co-operation with the Member States, to organize the exchange of information on practical work related to recognition of studies as well as on the goals, structures and contents of the educational systems and their development;
3. to initiate and promote scientific studies and/or country analyses on questions relating to the criteria applied for the assessment and comparison of studies, diplomas and academic degrees;
4. to pay due attention to the problem of the analysis of different terminology in higher education for the purposes of the application of the multilateral Convention;
5. to hold a meeting of experts, after the adoption of all the regional conventions, to study whether it is possible to harmonize the general position of Member States with regard to the basic concepts and definitions which are crucial to the success of measures to draw up a world convention on the recognition of diplomas and degrees in higher education;
6. to assist European Member States in selecting problem areas for joint studies in the field of education;
7. to give adequate financial support for the publication and widest possible distribution of the results of the joint studies carried out by European Member States;
8. to organize, in co-operation with the Member States and within the framework of Unesco's education programme regional exchanges of information and experience on research on teacher training, curricula, and teaching materials concerning education for international understanding;
9. to encourage the exchange and joint production of teaching material, particularly films and other audio-visual material, as well as the exchange of information about modern teaching techniques, including the use of television, radio and films;
10. to continue and intensify his contribution to the progress of relations and exchanges with respect to education in the Europe region, taking into account the resources at his disposal;
11. to advise Member States wishing to study educational experience elsewhere, on that most likely to be relevant;
12. to examine the research staffing requirements of the Unesco Institute for Education in Hamburg in the light of its widened responsibilities in the field of co-operation and inter-relations between industrialized and developing countries.

VI

Co-operation with the developing countries in the field of education

The Conference,

Recalling resolution 9.1 adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its twentieth session on Unesco's contribution to the establishment of a new international economic order,

Recognizing the role of education in the economic and social development of peoples and the need for each country to introduce education systems appropriate to the special requirements of its own development,

Recognizing the need to plan and develop education in the context of a new international economic order,

Bearing in mind the tremendous efforts made by the developing countries in education, within the context of overall efforts for national development,

Recalling Unesco's role in expanding international co-operation in respect of the framing of education policies and of education in general,

Confirming that Recommendation No. II/13 of the Second Conference of Ministers of Education of the European Member States has helped to foster co-operation between the Member States of the Europe region and the developing countries,

Mindful of the special responsibility of the Member States of the Europe region, in view of their experience and resources, to meet the needs and aspirations of developing countries in this field,

Recommends Member State to promote, encourage and intensify their co-operation with the least-developed countries of the region and with other developing countries, on both multilateral and bilateral levels, with the object of contributing by all means, including the transfer of technologies and resources and the training of specialists, to the improvement of the general, technical and higher education of developing countries;

Recommends the Director-General of Unesco:

1. to continue and intensify co-operation with developing countries in the sphere of education;
2. to give special attention to the educational needs and educational potential of developing countries, in accordance with their development plans and priorities, and especially to study the possibilities of the Europe region for carrying out multilateral activities both on a consultative and on an operational basis, designed to improve education in the least-developed countries of the Europe region and in developing countries in other regions;
3. to identify and suggest to Member States of the Europe region new ways and means to co-operate with developing countries in the field of education.

VII

Education of migrant workers and their families

The Conference,

Considering that the democratization of education requires compensatory attention to underprivileged groups, and that these include migrant workers and their families, who should be able to pursue their education so that they can both take their place in the educational system of the receiving country on an equal footing with the nationals of that country and maintain their cultural identity,

Recalling the principles and the spirit of Unesco's Constitution and resolution 1/1.2/1 of the twentieth session of the General Conference of Unesco concerning the promotion of appreciation of and respect for the cultural identity of individuals, groups, nations or regions,

Considering that the general awareness of this problem on the part of the countries receiving migrants, as reflected in various instances in bilateral agreements, has made substantial progress possible in the protection of migrants' children and also of migrants themselves in respect of continuing education,

Considering that, nevertheless, the efforts in question have so far been focused mainly on facilitating the access of migrants' children to elementary or basic education and that, while this represents an important step forward, it is not sufficient to ensure genuine equality of opportunity for these children,

Recommends Member States:

1. to develop their co-operation with regard to the education of migrant children and young people with a view to their full development as individuals able to participate as adults and at work in either their host or home country;
2. to pay special attention to migrant children of pre-school age and to the provision of pre-primary education for them in their mother tongue without neglecting the need to initiate migrant children in the language of the host country;
3. to ensure and encourage access for migrant workers and their families to all levels of educational and vocational courses, while enabling them as far as possible to improve their knowledge of their mother tongue;
4. to conclude for this purpose such bilateral and subregional agreements as they may deem necessary;

Recommends the Director-General of Unesco:

1. to continue and widen action to promote the right to education of migrant workers and their families in Member States which are countries of immigration, at the request of and in collaboration with the States concerned and bearing in mind the need to show respect for the cultural identity and the cohesion of the migrant family;
2. to encourage, to this end, co-operation between interested Member States, particularly the countries of immigration and those which are countries of emigration.

VIII

European Centre for Higher Education

The Conference,

Emphasizing the importance of wide co-operation in the Europe region in the field of education, based on observance of the principles of international law,

Considering that such co-operation has a part to play in the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe by creating a climate of understanding and peace and bringing about a pooling of experience and ideas and exchanges of students and specialists in the field of higher education in the Europe region,

Considering that education, and particularly higher education, plays an important part in the development of European co-operation,

Welcoming the support given by Unesco to regional co-operation in Europe,

Recalling resolution 7/12 on European co-operation adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its twentieth session (Paris, 1978),

Expressing appreciation for the contribution made to this end by the European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES) and other Unesco centres in the field of education in Europe,

Recommends Member States:

1. to promote and foster activities aimed at developing European co-operation in the field of higher education, having regard to the work already carried out by existing national, regional and international organizations;
2. to strengthen the support given to the above-mentioned centres;
3. to encourage a strengthening of the co-operation activities of CEPES;
4. to support the development of the activities of CEPES in the fields of information and documentation, with particular reference to the relationship between the individual, higher education and society, flexibility of curricula, the access of new sections of the population to higher education and the democratization of higher education;

Recommends the Director-General of Unesco:

1. to arrange for a study of CEPES with a view to making more effective use of the opportunities offered by the Centre and to promoting co-operation in the field of higher education in Europe, bearing in mind that Member States have expressed a wish to be kept informed in view of the conference's special interest in the Centre;
2. to consider appropriate measures, having regard to the conclusions of MINEDEUROPE/3 and to the provisions of the Convention on the recognition of studies, diplomas and degrees in Europe, to strengthen the activities of CEPES.