EXTRACT

FROM THE MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA No 29 of 29 July 2016

12. ON APPROVING THE 2012-2015 NATIONAL REPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE UNESCO CONVENTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION OF 14 DECEMBER 1960

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1. Approve the 2012-2015 National Report of the Republic of Armenia on the implementation of the provisions of the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education of 14 December 1960, pursuant to the Annex.
2. Assign the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Armenia to ensure within a 10-day period the English translation of the 2012-2015 National Report of the Republic of Armenia on the implementation of the provisions of the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education of 14 December 1960.

Prime Minister
of the Republic of Armenia — HOVIK ABRAHAMYAN

[*e-signature*]

1 August 2016

Yerevan

Annex

to Protocol Decision No 29 of the
sitting of the Government of the
Republic of Armenia of 29 July 2016

THE 2012-2015 NATIONAL REPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE UNESCO CONVENTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION OF 14 DECEMBER 1960

I. Information on the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures taken by the State at the national level

1. Ratification of the Convention

1.1 <u>If the Convention has not been ratified yet:</u>

Does your country plan to ratify this instrument? Yes/No

- Please indicate the stage of ratification process reached by your country.
- Please briefly explain which are the obstacles or difficulties encountered in completing the ratification process and the means of overcoming them.

1.2 <u>If the 1962 Protocol instituting a Conciliation and Good Offices Commission to be responsible for seeking the settlement of any disputes which may arise between States Parties to the Convention against Discrimination in Education is not ratified yet:</u>

- Does your country plan to ratify this instrument?

  Yes/No

- Please indicate the stage of ratification process reached by your country.

  – ***Under way***

- Please explain which are the obstacles or difficulties encountered in completing the ratification process and the means of overcoming them.

2. Legal framework governing the protection of rights guaranteed in the Convention and the Recommendation in the national legal system

2.1 <u>In case your country is a State Party to the Convention:</u>

- Is the Convention directly applicable in your country's domestic law following its ratification?

  Yes/No

- If not, has it been incorporated into the national Constitution or domestic law so as to be directly applicable?

  This seeks information on whether the provisions of the Convention are guaranteed in a domestic legal instrument (Constitution, legislative text or other national provisions).

- Please indicate whether the provisions of the Convention can be invoked before and given effect to by courts, tribunals and administrative authorities.

Information should be given about the judicial, administrative and other competent authorities having jurisdiction with respect to the rights guaranteed by the Convention and the scope of such competence. If possible, illustrate on the basis of available case law and jurisprudence.

Pursuant to point 1 of Article 5 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia of 22 February 2007 "On international treaties", international treaties of the Republic of Armenia having entered into force shall constitute an integral part of the legal system of the Republic of Armenia, the norms of which apply directly within the territory of the Republic of Armenia. Moreover, after amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia of 6 December 2015, part 3 of Article 5 of the Constitution prescribes that in case of conflict between international treaties ratified by the Republic of Armenia and the norms of laws, the norms of international treaties shall apply.

2.2 <u>In case your country is not a State Party to the Convention:</u>

- Have legislative measures been taken pursuant to the Recommendation?
- Please explain briefly the ways in which public policies and programmes correspond to its provisions.
- Information supplied should demonstrate how such norms and programmes comply with commitments under the Recommendation.

2.3 <u>For either the provisions of the Convention or the Recommendation, please list the principal national laws and regulations adopted in order to implement them.</u>

The Republic of Armenia acceded, on 5 September 1993, to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education adopted on 14 December 1960.

Before and after that period, laws (as well as other legal acts) — targeted at ensuring equal access to education and excluding discrimination in education, regardless of cultural, economic, political and other conditions, as well as at assisting in ensuring equal opportunities for education —have been adopted and have been in force in the Republic of Armenia.In particular:

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (H.N.-0772-1-HO-52) “On language”[1] was adopted on 17 April 1993, which prescribes the main provisions of the language policy of the Republic of Armenia, regulates the state of language, language relations of the bodies of state power and public administration, enterprises, institutions and organisations.

The first Constitution of the Republic of Armenia was adopted on 5 July 1995[2], in which fundamental rights and freedoms of persons and citizens are enshrined. For the purpose of implementing in recent years comprehensive reforms, amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia were adopted on 6 December 2015. The following provision on discrimination is enshrined in Article 29: "Discrimination based on sex, race, skin colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion, world view, political or other views, affiliation to a national minority, property status, birth, disability, age, or personal or social circumstances shall be prohibited."The right

[1]http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=1793&lang=arm
[2] http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=1793&lang=arm

to education is enshrined in Article 38: “Everyone shall have the right to education.The programmes of compulsory education and the duration thereof shall be prescribed by law.Secondary education in state education institutions shall be free of charge. Everyone shall, in the cases and in the manner prescribed by law, have the right to free of charge education on a competitive basis in state higher and other vocational education institutions.Higher education institutions shall, to the extent prescribed by law, have the right to self-governance, including academic freedom and freedom of research".

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-297)[3]“On education” was adopted on 14 April 1999, which, based on the constitutional provisions, to a certain extent, guides the development of the education system. This Law stipulates state guarantees for the right to education, pursuant to which: “The Republic of Armenia shall ensure the right to education, regardless of the nationality, race, gender, language, belief, political or other views, social origin, property status or other circumstances.”The legal equality of women and men has also been provided for in this Law.

Following implementation of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “Oneducation”, a number of legal acts regulating separate fields of education have been adopted as well. In particular:

For the purpose of implementing the state policy in the field of general education, ensuring the quality of and access to education, as well as improving the legislative framework of education, the Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-233-N) “On state inspectorate of education”[4] was adopted on 15 November 2005, and the Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-160-N) “On general education”[5] was adopted on 10 July 2009. The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-200-N) “On making supplements and amendments to the Law of the Republic of Armenia 'On general education'”[6]was adopted on 1 December 2014, which provides for a transition fromthe system of general education to universal inclusive education. The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-20-N) “On making amendments and supplements to the Law of the

[3] http://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=22493
[4]http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=2450
[5] http://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=53007
[6] http://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=94683

Republic of Armenia 'On education'"[7]was also adopted on 8 April 2015, which prescribes the compulsory condition for a free of charge twelve-year (including vocational education) education. The Law shall enter into force from 1 January 2017.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-164-N) “On primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education”[8] was adopted on 8 July 2005.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-62-N) “On higher and post-graduate professional education”[9]was adopted on 14 December 2004.

For the purpose of improving the legal framework for supplementary and continuing education, the Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-83-N) "On making supplements and amendments to the Law of the Republic of Armenia 'On education'"[10] was adopted on 21 June 2014, which served as a basis for the approval of the Procedure for organising and implementing supplementary education programmes, prescribed by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1062-N of 10 September 2015, as well as the Procedure for evaluating and recognising the results of non-formal and informal instruction, prescribed by point 2 of the same Decision.

The principles of the state policy of the Republic of Armenia at different levels of education, the legal and organisational, financial and economic grounds, the legal relations of natural and legal persons participating in the education process, the grounds for the right to education at different levels of education enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, etc., are regulated by the above-mentioned laws.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-57-N) "On ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men"[11] was also adopted on 20 May 2013.

Following adoption of the mentioned laws, a number of legal acts have also been approved, supporting correct implementation of the laws. In particular, they are as follows:

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[7]http://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=97395
[8] http://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=1855
[9] http://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=1595
[10] http://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=91364
[11] http://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=83841

Procedure for enrolment of a learner in an education institution of the Republic of Armenia, carrying out the main general education programmes, the transfer and dismissal of a learner from an institution, as well as organisation of education of children enrolled in general education later than the prescribed period, which was approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 1640-N of 24 November 2010;

Procedure for admission to education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, carrying out primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education programmes, which was approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 254-N of 5 April 2012;

Standard Procedure for studies under credit system in the field of primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education, which was approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 732-A/Q of 10 July 2014;

Procedure for admission of foreign nationals to primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, which was approved by Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1295-N of 25 August 2011;

Procedure for granting student allowance and state stipend in state education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, carrying out primary vocational (handicraft) and/or secondary vocational education programmes, which was approved by Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No1330-N of 28 November 2013;

Procedure for admission and secondment of citizens of bordering or high mountainous settlements to education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, carrying out primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education programmes, which was approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 651-N of 12 June 2014;

Procedure for training of professors and masters of vocational education of the education institutions carrying out primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary

vocational education programmes, which was approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 1058-N of 29 October 2014;

Procedure for admission to state and non-state higher education institutions (according to Bachelor's degree education programme), which was approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 597-N of 26 April 2012;

Procedure for granting student allowance and state stipend in higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, which was approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1183-N of 27 July 2006;

Procedure for admission to and instruction in Master's programme at higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, which was approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 1193-N of 6 December 2007;

Procedure for admission to and instruction in doctoral studies, and registration for post-doctoral studies and external doctorate degree, which was approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 238-N of 25 February 2016;

Procedure for instruction, in the form of distance learning, in professions of higher and post-graduate professional education, which was approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 124-N of 11 February 2010, and Procedure for admission of foreign nationals, as well as members of families of diplomats working in the diplomatic service bodies of the Republic of Armenia, operating in a foreign state, to higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, which was approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 700-N of 28 April 2011.

II. Information on the implementation of the Convention or Recommendation (with reference to their provisions)

1. Non-discrimination in education

1.1 Is discrimination in education based notably on grounds specified in the Convention/Recommendation fully outlawed in your country?

Yes/No

1.2. <u>Please explain which measures are adopted to:</u>

- Eliminate discrimination within the meaning of the Convention/Recommendation?
- Prevent discrimination within the meaning of the Convention/Recommendation?

Education in the Republic of Armenia is provided in accordance with the requirements of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On language”: “The official language of the Republic of Armenia is Armenian which shall serve all spheres of life of the Republic. The language of teaching and upbringing in education and learning systems within the territory of the Republic of Armenia is literary Armenian. In the communities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia general education instruction and upbringing may be organised in their native language in accordance with the state programme as well as with state support, by compulsory instruction of Armenian".

Admission of a learner to a school of general education is carried out pursuant to Procedure for admission to, transfer from and removal of a learner from the institution of general education approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 1640-N of 24 November 2010.

General education is provided starting from the age of six which may be attained by the end of the given calendar year. Admission of learners to an institution of general education is carried out on the basis of the application of the parent of a school-age child or the legal representative thereof or the contract concluded between the institution and the parent. The parent shall be responsible — as prescribed by law — for failure to ensure the right of the child to general education (or failure to enrol in school) before attaining the age of 16.

In the 3rd degree of general education — in high school learners maypursue their studies only where they havea certificate of basic education.

The admission to school of children of a citizen belonging to a national minority is carried out through instructing the child in his or her national (native) language or at school (classroom) providing a course in that language and in case of absence thereof the choice of the language of instruction is made by the parents of the children (learners).

The choice of the language of instruction for children of foreign citizens, persons not having Armenian citizenship, those with dual citizenship, as well as where one of the parents is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia and the other is a foreigner is made by the parents of these children (their legal representative).

Admission to state and accredited non-state institutions of handicraft and secondary vocational education shall be carried out according to the admission procedure approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science for the given academic year.

For the purpose of sparking interest in secondary vocational education and increasing the enrolment of learners atthis level, since 2011-2012 academic year admission has been carried out without admission examinations, except for professions pertaining to the fileds of art, healthcare and sports. In this case, the competition-based admission (including primary vocational (handicraft)) is carried out on the basis of arithmetic mean of the grades in the graduation document and the total sum of the grades in the subjects considered to be competitive.

Admission to a higher professional education institution is carried out pursuant to Procedure for admission to state and non-state higher education institutions (according to Bachelor's degree education programme) approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 597-N of 26 April 2012.

Admission to higher professional education institutions of the Republic of Armenia is also carried out on a competitive basis, based on admission examinations.

Pursuant to the above-mentioned procedure, winners of International Olympiads in different subjects of general education instructed at a secondary school, medalists of World and European championships for different sports — having indicated the relevant professions in the admission application — are admitted to higher a

education institution without admission examinations with the use of reserve seats allocated by the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

Persons with secondary, primary vocational or secondary vocational education may be admitted to higher education institutions without age limit.

Pursuant to the procedure, citizens of the Republic of Armenia with dual citizenship and foreigners may be admitted to higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia on general grounds or according to the procedure for admission of foreigners to education institutions.

Admission to Master's degree and doctoral studies is carried out respectively in accordance with Procedure for admission to and instruction in Master's degree programme in higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 1193-N of 6 December 2007 and Procedure for admission to and instruction within doctoral studies, as well as for registration for post-doctoral studies and external research approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 238-N of 25 February 2016.

Thus, the process of admission of learners atdifferent levels of education is regulated by legal acts approved for that purpose and discrimination is excluded.

As regards the rights and obligations of the learners of different levels and other participants in the educational process, they are regulated by Laws of the Republic of Armenia "On general education", "On primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education" and "On higher and postgraduate professional education", as well as by the statutes of educational institutions. Thus, the noted legal acts regulate the relations established between the participants in the educational process, as well as non-discriminatory attitude.

2. Equal opportunities in education

2.1 Please explain what are the concrete actions taken by your government to guarantee equal access to all level of education in your country?

On 23 June 2011, the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On approving Education Development State Programme of the Republic of Armenia for 2011-2015" was

adopted, which was based on strategic programmes and development concepts for separate fields of education approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia. In particular, this programme prescribes the following objectives:

1. to increase access to education at all levels, to create equal opportunities for everyone to receive quality education based on his or her preferences and abilities;
2. to improve the quality of education bringing it in line with internationally recognised standards ensuring thecontentment of the public and business community witheducational services;
3. to ensure progressive growth of funds allocated from the state budget to education and efficient mechanisms for their use.

We would like to particularly state the following from the outcomes of the programme:

- extending the opportunities for all school-age children, including children in need of special conditions for education, children of national minorities and of all other vulnerable groups to receive quality basic education;
- increasing enrolment in professional education programmes, particularly for the benefit of young persons of vulnerable groups;
- improving educational and material base of schools of general education, ensuring access to the Internet in all schools.

According to data of the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia, almost all the people in Armenia are literate. The census conducted in 2011 showed that only 0.3 per cent of the population of Armenia was illiterate. The rate of literacy of people aged 15-24 comprises approximately 100%, and the ratio of the number of literate women to men aged 15-24 comprises 1. Thus, the literacy rate of adults and young people comprises approximately 99%, and there is no significant gender inequality in this regard.

Concurrently, in 2014 the enrolment picture at different levels of education is as follows: gross enrolment ratio at school of general education comprised 87.8%; moreover at elementary school it comprised 93.1%, at basic school — 92.6%, at high

school — 72.4%. The enrolment ratio of learners in the field of primary vocational (handicraft) education comprised 7.4% and in the field of secondary vocational education — 12.2%. Gross enrolment ratio in the first level degree of higher professional education comprised 46.8%, whereas in the second level degree — 13.5%[12].

Conditioned by the requirements forsuccessfully carrying out reforms in the field of education, "Prospective Development Strategic Programme of the Republic of Armenia for 2014-2025 " approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 442-N of 27 March 2014 envisaged consistent increase in state expenditures for education both in rated value and against the GDP ensuring the target of 3.7% against GDP by 2025. Nonetheless, the economic recession, decrease in GDP and narrowing of the scope of budget resources limited the possibilities for maintaining the expenditures in the envisaged amounts[13]. Expenditures for education against GDP comprised 2.55 in 2012, 2.40 in 2013, 2.54 in 2014, 2.40 in 2015.

The majority of state allocations targetedat the field of education — over 77.1%, was directed towards the financing of the field of general education in 2015 and 17.3% — towards the financing of professional education programmes as compared with 78.9 and 16.2% of 2014. Respectively, 4.9% and 5.6% were allocated for other programmes during the mentioned years[14].

Procedure for granting student allowance and state stipend in state education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, implementing primary vocational (handicraft) and/or secondary vocational education programmes, was approved by Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No1330-N of 28 November 2013. In order to increase the involvement of learners also atthis level of education, since 2011-2012 academic year, admission has been carried out without admission examinations, except for professions pertaining to the fields of art, healthcare and sports.

Procedure for granting student allowanceand state stipend in higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, whichwas approved by point 1 of Decision of

[12] "Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia" Statistical Analytical Report, 2014
[13] "Prospective Development Strategic Programme of the Republic of Armenia for 2014-2025 ", 2014
[14] "Medium-Term Expenditure Framework of the Republic of Armenia for 2016-2018 ", 2015

the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1183-N of 27 July 2006, has been implemented since 2006. Competitive education and the idea of student rotation according to academic performance play an essential role within the general context of the mentioned reforms. Pursuant to the requirements of the mentioned Procedure, the state shall continue to refund the tuition fees of socially disadvantaged students in the amount of 50-100%. Information on free of charge and stipendsystem in the field of professional education is also introduced below in subclauses "3.2" and "3.3".

2.2 Please indicate how strategies and programmes are being implemented with a view to ensuring, in your country, equality of educational opportunities (in terms of access, participation and completion).

According to Prospective Development Strategic Programme of the Republic of Armenia for 2014-2025: "The field of education in Armenia is highlighted as one of the preconditions for sustainable progress of the country, reproduction and development of human capital, therefore, the development of this field is deemed to be one of the priorities for development of the country.

Increasing education quality and effectiveness at all levels of the education system, bringing them in line with international standards, ensuring affordable/accessible education for all the strata of the population are priority objectives."

For the purpose of ensuring equally accessible quality education and increasing the effectiveness of the field of education, reforms at all levels of education are being implemented in the country. Separate strategies and concepts also support those reforms.Moreover, all the processes implemented in the field of education are targetedat exercise of the right to education — equally for both women and men, without any discrimination — enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia.

General education is a priority in the sector of education as a basis for preparing children for independent life and further professional education. A range of initiatives have been implemented in the field of general education, in particular:

a new mechanism for financing schools is applied (financing is carried out according to the number of pupils of the school);

12-year education system has been introduced, the process of publishing new textbooks and fully providing the learners with textbooks has been implemented. Textbook circulation system — ongoing mechanism for publishing textbooks — has been applied, which has led to reduction of expenses for obtaining textbooks, while the pupils of a more vulnerable group are provided with textbooks free of charge. Free of charge textbooks are also provided to pupils of 1st-4th years at the expense of state funds;

courses ensuring comprehensive development of a person and applied qualities acquired by means of education have been introduced. For the purpose of developing robotics in schools of general education, robotics groups have been established in 47 general education institutions of the Republic. The subjects "Information Technologies", "Basics of Telecommunication" and "Microelectronics" were introduced in 5 high schools in 2015. Introduction of the subject "National Songs and Dances" was a new step, which envisages preserving and passing on national values to generations, establishing a value system, instiling patriotism, preserving Armenian mindset. Introduction of the subject "Chess" was unprecedented, which sparked interest among the international educational community;

unified examination system forschool graduation and admission to higher education institutions has been applied, as a result of which the process of transition of learners from school to higher education institutions has been facilitated;

a network of high schools, operating separately and comprising 109 schools has been applied. High school (10th-12th years) is the main level ensuring pre-vocational education which greatly affects correct professional orientation and further learning success of learners. High schools have been provided with the required school property, computer devices, laboratories for physics, chemistry, biology, modern libraries equipped with literature. In 2012, the resource centres of all high schools were equipped with modern literature in Armenian, Russian and English.In 2014, all high schools were provided with mobile computer laboratories and interactive boards, reconstruction worksof 12 high schools have started since 2015;

the application of modern information and communication technologies, as a new means for teaching and learning, has been expanded. Therefore, Internet access and equipment with computer devices inschools have been improved (the number of pupils per one computer amounted to 17.2 in 2015 and the indicator amounted to 26.4 in 2011). "Armenian educational portal" (www.armedu.am) has been exploited, the content has been replenished and updated, on-line educational events have been organised (contests, Olympiads, conferences, discussions, surveys, photography and other creative competitions etc.). For the purpose of increasing the quality of and access to general education, electronic educational materials for the subjects "Mathematics", "Physics", "Chemistry" and "Biology", which are accessible for all schools, have been developed within the scope of the second credit project“Education Quality and Relevance” (http://esource.armedu.am);

the system "Distance learning" has been applied (http://learning.armedu.am), by which distance courses of eight school subjects of the advanced stream of the 10th year (Armenian language, Russian language, Foreign language (English), Algebra, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Armenian History) were organised for pupils of high school, "Graphic editor (Adobe Photoshop) software instruction", "School local network exploitation skills training", "Graphic design software (CorelDRAW) instruction", "Skills for organising distance learning", "English" courses were organised for teachers and groups of pupils etc.;

the website "Database for Digital Resources" (http://lib.armedu.am) has been operated, where textbooks and training manuals, educational and methodical materials, subject related criteria and programmes have been posted;

each year Republican Olympiads of 16 subjects of general education have been organised for schoolchildren, while Armenia has had team participation in International Olympiads of the subjects "Mathematics", "Physics", "Chemistry", "Information Science", "Astronomy" and "Biology";

pupil councils have operated within schools of general education, as a result of which the participation of learners in the process of school management has increased;

in terms of ensuring access to education and equal opportunities, importance has been attached to issues related to inclusion of children — in need of special conditions for education — in education andquality improvement of provision of educational services. Currently 23 special schools of general education for children in need of special conditions for education operate in the Republic. At the same time, the list of schools implementing inclusive education has been expanded; the number of these schools is 156 where 4706 children — in need of special conditions for education — study. The mentioned schools — according to the “Procedure for financing necessary for the organisation of education of children in need of special conditions for education in the schools of general education and "Special institutions of general education of the Republic of Armenia" state non-commercial organisations” approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1365-N of 25 August 2005 — receive additional funds from the state budget for the purpose of organising education of children in need of special conditions for education. Schools are equipped with parent and resource rooms where individual classes are organised for children in need of special conditions for education according to Individual Curriculum Plan(ICP), involving additional specialists: special pedagogue (speech therapist, hearing and visual impairment specialists) social care teacher, psychologist.

The “Sun” talking computer programme functions in special school No 14 for visually impaired childrenin Yerevan; the school is equipped with over 14 textbooks printed in Braille, as well as talking textbooks.

A special class for sign language instruction is organised atYerevan Special Educational Complex for Children with Hearing Impairments, which is the only institution in the Republic to organise education for deaf children. The Bilingual Method is applied at the school; teaching is carried out by two methods: sign language and mother tongue.

Yerevan Medico-psychological Pedagogical (MPP) Assessment Centre has operated for the purpose of assessing the educational needs of children.

Reforms — *in the field of primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education* — during the recent years have been implemented within the scope of

"Vocational Education and Training Reform Programme for 2012-2016 and the Schedule of its Implementation Measures" approved by Protocol Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 27-16 of 4 July 2012. In particular, atthis level of education:

the list of professions has been revised and new professions have been included based on the requirements of the labour market. They include 112 professions of handicraft education with 299 qualifications, out of which over 55 professions are currently being taught, 247 professions of secondary vocational education with over 252 qualifications, out of which 100 professions are currently being taught;

160 state educational standards concerning professions in primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education, as well as relevant curricula and module programmes have been developed and approved;

according to the new model of vocational education and training planning and performance management system, over 184 persons have been trained (directors, members of the collegial management board etc.). Over 2500 persons, engagedin the activities of the VET system, have been also trained;

training manuals, educational and methodical materials have been developed and published for the VET system (25 – during 2014-2015). TV programs, video materials have been developed; booklets and posters have been published. Research works related to the VET policy and strategy have been carried out;

12 regional state colleges have been renovated and furnished with new equipment: property, laboratory and computer equipment, workrooms etc. Equipment and property have been provided to 5 education institutions with the purpose of technical re-equipment of vocational schools;

National Training Fund has been operating since 2011, the aim of which is to support the organisation of training, qualification improvement and re-qualification courses complying with the requirements of the labour market and directed towards the development of knowledge, abilities and skills necessary for ensuring professional activities of those employed and unemployed.

Representatives of public administration bodies and social partners are included in the composition of the Board of Trustees of the Fund;

Standard Procedure for studies under credit system in the field of primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education was approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 732-A/Q of 10 July 2014; activities have been carried out in 4 institutions of secondary vocational education directed towards pilot implementation of credit system in respect of the professions "Economics, accounting and audit" and "Modelling and design of clothing";

since 2011-2012 academic year the admission of learners in this level of education has been carried out without admission examinations, except for professions pertaining to the fields of art, healthcare and sports;

steps have been taken to ensure involvement of children — in need of special conditions for education — of vulnerable groups in the system of primary and secondary vocational education, facility conditions of some institutions have been adapted for persons with disabilities. Increased funding for financing the provision of education for children in need of special conditions for education and state non-commercial organisations of the Republic of Armenia implementing primary vocational (handicraft) education has been established and introduced according to point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 884-N of 15 July 2010. Livelihood Improvement through Fostered Employment (LIFE) for People with Disabilities programme, implemented in 2012 by “Save the Children” and partner organisations “Unison”, “Full Life”, “HDP” with the support of US Agency for International Development, highly contributed to the development of physical accessibility of institutions of secondary vocational education and institutional capacities in working with persons with disabilities. Thanks to the programme, at least 1200 young people with disabilities had an opportunity for short term or long term training;

“Vocational Education and Training Portal” (www.vetarmenia.am) has been developed as an electronic tool maintaining educational networks, the process of data input is currently underway. An information platform forprimary and

secondary vocational education has been created and operatesat “Dasaran.am” website.

Reforms in the field of *higher and postgraduate professional education* are implemented in accordance with the principles of the Bologna Process. Within the scope of the implemented reforms:

the new list of professions and qualifications of higher professional education has been approved and introduced according to point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No1191-N of 23 October 2014, as well as supplement to graduation document (diploma) of higher education has been introduced since 2007. Three tier system of higher education has been applied, higher education standards and National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) of the Republic of Armenia have been introduced, which will ensure comparability of national qualifications with the European qualifications. Academic credit accumulation and transfer system has been introduced at all levels of higher and post-graduate professional education;

National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance has been operating since 2008; new procedures for internal and external quality assurance and accreditation have been introduced;

Competitive Innovation Fund has been operating since 2011, which provides opportunities to all higher education institution to receive, on a competitive basis, grants for implementing innovative education programmes and infrastructures. Activities aimed at improving intra-university system of 21 state and 5 non-state higher education institutions were carried out during 2014-2015. The higher education institutions submitted self-analysis reports within the scope of the process;

the expansion of joint programmes implemented by higher education institutions through contracts signed between higher education institutions, based on common educational standards, is underway. With the support of the EU, student exchange and joint education programmes, as well asreview of education programmes according to educational outcomes are being carried out athigher education institutions;

Procedure for distance learning of professions of higher and post-graduate professional education has been introduced since 2010, which will enable to make the application of e-environment, innovative technologies in the fields of education and science more systematic and ensure additional educationalopportunities for citizens;

Pursuant to the Procedure for granting student allowance and state stipend in higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, the State has implemented refund of tuition fees for socially disadvantaged students in the amount of 50-100 %. In 2015, the procedure for reviewing the mechanisms aimed at refund of tuition fees for students of socially vulnerable groups was implemented, the circle of socially disadvantaged students was expanded — including also first year students.Refund of tuition fees for 719 first year students, studying under the Bachelor's and Master's educational degrees, in the amount of 50-100 % has been allocated by the State. It is characteristic that, as compared to the 2014/2015 academic year, refund of tuition fees has significantly increased; in the 2014-2015 academic year, the tuition fees of 1030 students studying under the Bachelor's educational degree were refunded, where in the 2015-2016 academic year — of 1379 students. In the 2014-2015 academic year, tuition fees of 40 students studying under the Master's educational degree was refunded, whereas in the 2015-2016 — of 52;

work has also been conducted topromote mobility and recognition of qualifications. Qualifications acquired abroad pass an evaluation and recognition process in the Republic of Armenia, conducted by National Information Centre for Academic Recognition and Mobility (NICARM) fund, based on which a statement of information on complete, partial recognition or rejection is issued — in Armenian or in English — in compliance with international standards. Information on national qualifications is also provided. Moreover, statements of information on qualifications are issued to the individuals who intend to continue their education or work abroad, as well as accurate and reliable information is provided to state authorities, higher education institutions, employers of the Republic of Armenia. Thus, Armenia is currently performing the function of mutual recognition of diplomas and other

documents certifying the results of education, such as certificates, etc. in compliance with international and European requirements.

At the same time, during 2012-2015, implementation of a number of annual measures in the field of education, aimed at the fight against corruption, protection of children's rights, gender policy, social protection of disabled persons, has been ensured, as well as the development of the education sections of periodic national reports of the Republic of Armenia on application of the provisions of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, etc.

On 20 May 2013, the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men" (HO-57-N) was adopted, which prescribes the guarantees for ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities of women and men in political, social, economic, cultural, as well as other fields of public life, and regulates the relations arising with regard thereto. The purpose of this Law is to ensure equality of women and men in all fields of public life - including the sectors of education and culture, legal protection of women and men against possible discrimination, support for formation of civil society, and the establishment of democratic relations in the society.

In order to promote legal equality between women and men and prevent discrimination, public administration bodies of the Republic of Armenia, along with several international organisations, such as OSCE Yerevan Office, UN Population Fund, etc., implement various programmes, which assist the authorities and the civil society in improving the legislation.At the same time, works are being implemented with the media to improve the coverage of existing problems and to break the stereotypes. Data on the involvement of both men and women atdifferent levels of education are presented in the following subpoints.

2.3 Please describe the actions planned and taken in your country to ensure inclusion of all learners in learning process.

Since 2012, conditioned by the events in Syria, a number of measures have been taken aimed at ensuring inclusion of school age children and persons of different ages — immigrated into Armenia — in education and social adaptation thereof. In particular, in 2015, within the scopes of "Capacity Building and Improvement of Living Standards for Refugees Program" implemented by the Armenian Representation of "Save the Children" organisation, centres for organisation of pre-school education with alternative models for children between the ages of 5 and 6 were created at general education schools No 1 and No 21 of the city of Yerevan. The centres were furnished and provided with relevant supporting educational and methodical materials. The National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia conducted relevant training courses for educators and their assistants. The pre-school groups will operate under a 4-hour regime. The programme is aimed at raising the level of access to pre-school education for children of families having moved from Syria to Armenia and solving their problems with integration.

Besides, within the scope of the programme "Target Initiative for Armenia" funded by the EU, Armenian language is taught for migrants, refugees and the members of other vulnerable groups lacking knowledge of Armenian at the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan of Yerevan.

Taking into consideration the number of immigrants, the principle of immediate response has been applied, depending on their age. Allschool age children have been provided with the opportunity to continue their education in corresponding classes of schools of general education, irrespective of the documents certifying the class. And the young people who have lost the graduation document acquired in Syria, have been provided with the opportunity to study in the final year of an institution of general education of the Republic of Armenia and receive a graduation document of the Republic of Armenia.

In order to ensure maximum integration, all refugees have been centralised in several schools, where they have been provided with individual psychological, as well as educational and methodical assistance. Numerous Syrian-Armenians have been enrolled in Basic School No 14 after Nar-Dos in Yerevan (here they are also

taught Arabic by a Syrian-Armenian teacher), as well as at High School No 114 of Yerevan.

At the same time, two-months and one-month Eastern Armenian language courses were organised for Syrian-Armenians of school age and different age groups having moved to Armenia. For the purpose of not interrupting the national instruction of children of school age, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia, in co-operation with the institutions of Diaspora, jointly established Kirikian School, where study was organised according to the Syrian state programme, Syrian-Armenian teachers were involved.The school closed after one year, and the Syrian-Armenian children continued their study at other schools. In order to overcome the difficulties of learning the Russian language, free of charge and partially paid courses were organised for these children with the support of the Russian Centre of Science and Culture in Yerevan (the organisation "Rossotrudnichestvo"). In order to overcome the language and syllabus-related difficulties, individual trainings are still being organised for newcomer Syrian-Armenian pupils atArmenian basic and high schools. According to the data of the 2015-2016 academic year, around 2000 schoolchildren having moved from Syria, study in Armenian schools.

The admission of foreign nationals (including representatives of the Armenian Diaspora) to vocational education institutions of the Republic of Armenia is regulated by international treaties of the Republic of Armenia on co-operation in the sectors of education and science concluded between the Republic of Armenia and other states, as well as in accordance with the Procedure for admission of foreign nationals, as well as members of families of diplomats working in the diplomatic service bodies of the Republic of Armenia, operating in a foreign state, to higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 700-N of 28 April 2011, the Procedure for admission to primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1295-N of 25 August 2011.

The purpose of the existence of separate procedures for admission is to:

make education at educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia accessible for foreign nationals;

contribute to upbringing with the spirit of respect towards nations and mutual understanding, help spark interest among the youth in Armenian cultural heritage and contribute to the development of Armenian studies.

Foreign nationals having received secondary education in the Republic of Armenia and residing in Armenia (including refugees, persons having received temporary shelter, etc.) may also be admitted to primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational, higher education and research institutions on a general basis. The examination questions are translated during entrance examinations for those lacking knowledge of the Armenian language. In the rest of the cases, all the prescribed conditions of the competition apply to them equally, and in case of earning high points — they have the right to benefit from free of charge (stipend) seats.

Applicants having preferred to be admitted through the procedure for admission for foreign nationals may be admitted to the fee paid eduction system (first year) of primary vocational (handicraft), secondary vocational and higher education institutions, where they are fluent in the Armenian language and have minimum knowledge of the examination subjects. Foreign applicants having been admitted to state higher professional education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, with no knowledge of the Armenian language, are admitted to the preparatory faculty (departments) of higher education institutions for a one-year period, where they learn Armenian and study admission examination subjects.

According to the mentioned procedure, foreigners of Armenian origin or representatives of Armenian Diaspora may be allocated with 70 free of charge (stipend) seats where they have applied for the professions of Armenian studies, Pedagogy and Art.

Foreign citizens are provided with dormitories, if they wish.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, the number of Diaspora Armenian students in higher education institutions and secondary vocational education institutions of the Republic of Armenia was 3638, of which 447 were Syrian-Armenians.Since 2012, tuition fees of Syrian-Armenian students have been fully or partially — 70-75 % —

refunded at the expense of resources of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, The Armenian General Benevolent Union and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.During the 2013-2014 academic year, tuition fees of 375, and during the 2014-2015 academic year — of 396 Syrian-Armenian students were refunded.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, the number of other foreign (non-Diaspora Armenian) students in higher education institutions and secondary vocational education institutions of the Republic of Armenia was 1428, of which 38 study free of charge - at the expense of stipends granted on the basis of interstate agreements.

And the measures taken within the scope of the social sphere, social services, aimed at educational needs of socially vulnerable groups, are the following:

A number of concepts and principles have been prescribed by the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Social Support" (HO-231-N) adopted on 17 December 2014, which exclude discrimination, ensuring equal opportunities of provision of social assistance to persons in a *difficult life situation*. The latter, pursuant to the law, are considered persons who are in an objective situation obstructing their vital activity, conditioned by one of the circumstances — or any combination thereof — related to loss of independent living skills resulting from disability, disease, age, remaining without parental care, poverty, unemployment, conflicts in the family, cruel treatment, violence, being subjected to exploitation (trafficking) in human beings, helplessness, solitude, social isolation, pernicious habits, experiencing an accident or emergency situation, being in a place of imprisonment or return from those places, that an individual cannot overcome himself or herself. Their *basic needs* have been prescribed as "the complex of minimum living conditions necessary for a natural person (food, clothing, accommodation, medical assistance and service, secondary education or primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education, housing and utilities services)".

Within the scope of social services, the law has specified rehabilitation aid, one of the objectives whereof is targeted at "the rehabilitation of the lost or reduced professional abilities of persons, development of capacities for using professional skills or acquiring new professional skills, professional orientation of a person aimed at the creation of accessible conditions for carrying out work activities by previous or new profession, professional education, professional instruction (raising of qualification,

re-specialisation, preliminary vocational preparation, handicraft instruction), professional adaptability, finding suitable job and ensuring self-employment".

Social welfare institutions provide residents with educational-instructional or teaching and educational services.

Regional bodies of social services support exercise of the right of the child to education (including pre-school education), organisation of children's education, and solving the issues of family upbringing.

The measures implemented with the aim to overcome the main issues of inclusion of disabled persons are the following:

Regulation of disability issues is based on the priority of defence of human rights. Everyone must be protected from the legal perspective, and the policy implemented must be aimed at exclusion of discrimination and full integration of everyone into society.

Currently, determined efforts are being made by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia; based on the ideology of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (hereinafter referred to as "International Classification of Functioning or ICF" created by the World Health Organisation), principles of and approaches to the assessment of special conditions for children's education are being reviewed with the support of the UN Children's Fund.

With this regard, as presented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, "creation of a background for introducing the comprehensive personality assessment model of defining disability based on International Classification of Functioning (ICF)" was enshrined as a priority issue for the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the years 2013 and 2014. For the purpose of regulating the problem, "Concept paper for indroduction of comprehensive personality assessment model of defining disability based on WHO International Classification of Functioning" with new approaches and instruments was approved by point 1 of Protocol Decision No 1-8 of the sitting of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of 9 January 2014.

If previously the definition of disability was mainly conditioned by a permanent function disorder caused due to a disease, injury or maim, which leads to the limitation of one of the vital activities of a person or a combination thereof, according to the new model, as a result of comprehensive personal assessment, equivalent to his or her individual capacities and needs, it is necessary to provide relevant social services to ensure their participation and social integration.

The previously functioning standards did not take into consideration the role of social and environmental factors in the circumstance of disability, while the participation of an individual in public life is not so much conditioned by his or her state of health, but by all those circumstances surrounding him or her, which have a positive or negative influence on his or her activities.

Social factors include the accessibility of the environment, education, employment, the attitude of surrounding people, etc. As a result of the medical-social services implemented by the Agency of Medical and Social Expertises of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, a person's individual rehabilitation programme (IRP) is drawn up based on the comprehensive assessment of a person's needs, and relevant social services are provided equivalent to his or her individual capacities and needs, to ensure his or her participation and social integration.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia "On social protection of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Armenia" (H.N.-0800-1-HO-57) adopted in 1993, the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On general education" (HO-160-N) adopted in 2009, and the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On education" (HO-297) adopted in 1996 regulate the issues of education of children and youth withdisability.

The procedures for the implementation of such programmes as the provision of prosthetic and orthopaedic and rehabilitation appliances, including prosthetic and sound-generating devices, hearing aids, wheelchairs, provision of medical and social, as well as mental health rehabilitation services, performance of such services as the printing of books in special fonts designed for people with visual problems and recording of "talking books" and the procedures for ensuring the accountability thereof have been developed and clarified.

Steps have been taken to introduce the universal inclusive education system, in particular:

On 1 December 2014, the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On making amendmentsto the Law of the Republic of Armenia ‘On general education’" (HO-200-N) was adopted, which provides that the universal inclusive education system shall be introduced in the Republic of Armenia until 1 August 2025. For the purpose of ensuring implementation of the Law, “Action plan and the timetable of the universal inclusive education system introduction activities” have been approved by point 1 of Protocol Decision No 6-12 of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of 18 February 2016. According to the Action Plan and the Timetable, a number of special institutions of general education of the Republic will be reorganised into pedagogical and psychological assistance centres. As a result of implementation of the system, children in need of special conditions for education will receive a pedagogical and psychological assistance service at 3 levels: in the school of general education, in the territorial and republican pedagogical and psychological assistance centres.A new form of funding will be introduced in schools of general education and a vacancy for a teaching assistant will be made available. The introduction of the system will be carried out step by step, starting from marzes and gradually covering the whole territory of the Republic. The process is envisaged to start in 2016. The US Agency for International Development, the Office of the United Nations Children's Fund in Armenia, "World Vision Armenia" International Development and Charitable Organisation, "Bridge of Hope" NGO assist in the implementation of the Programme. The newly-established system will allow to organise the education and upbringing of children in need of special conditions for education without separating children from their families, ensuring their comprehensive social development and enrolling them in an institution of general education. Through the policy pursued in the field, it is envisaged to promote the opportunities of receiving quality education for children in need of special conditions for education by introducing an inclusive education system in all schools of general education.

The state also ensures the provision of learning support materials. During the last three years, nearly 40 educational and methodical manuals and other instruction materials have been developed, printed and procured for the purpose of organising

the education of children in need of special conditions for education. Schools of special and inclusive education have been provided with these materials.

Besides, in the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh.Abovyan, specialists are trained to work with persons with disabilities within the framework of the educational programmes of "Surdopedagogy" and "Tiflopedagogy".

Pursuant to point 105 of the Procedure for admission to state and non-state higher education institutions (according to the educational programme for the Bachelor's degree) approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 597-N of 26 April 2012, citizens disabled while performing their duties during compulsory military service, in case of successfully passing the examinations, shall be admitted on an out-of-competition basis, at the expense of the funds of the State Budget of the Republic of Armenia.

Besides, pursuant to point 106 of the mentioned Procedure, persons of the first or second groups of disability and children with disabilities under the age of 18 who have scored enough points to get admitted under the fee paid system, shall be admitted to free of charge system at the expense of the funds of the State Budget of the Republic of Armenia.

The mentioned procedures are of a continuous nature, and in order to receive funding, a higher education institution must submit an application to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia.

Furthermore, measures are being implemented to adapt the buildings of educational institutions to the needs of persons with disabilities. The 5th and 9th blocks of the National Polytechnic University of Armenia have been adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities. A programme converting the existing literature into audio books was installed in one of the computers in the reading hall of the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh.Abovyan for visually challenged visitors. The lecture halls on the first floors of the blocks of Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences are adapted to the needs of persons with movement disorders, therefore classes for students with movement disorders are conducted on the first floor. In the future, the higher education institution envisages to procure special devices for disabled students with visual and hearing problems. Since 2014, "Unison" NGO has been implementing a programme aimed at introducting an inclusivity policy

in higher education institutions. Currently, the inclusivity standards of higher education institutions are being developed. All the stakeholders, including the representatives of higher education institutions have been involved in the process of policy development, and some of them have already expressed willingness to facilitate the inclusivity process.

Besides, the buildings of educational institutions, namely 2 kindergartens, 12 schools of general education, 1 special school of general education, and 2 colleges have been adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities (construction of wheelchair ramps, renovation of sanitary facilities, installation of platform lifts) at the expense of the funds allocated from the 2015 State Budget.

The School Meals Programme has been introduced, and relevant funds have been allocated from the State Budget of the Republic of Armenia for implementation of the Programme since 2014. Meanwhile, the School Meals Programme under the United Nations World Food (UN WFP) Programme is still underway. UN WFP envisages to continue the School Meals Programme until 2017, expanding the geography of the Programme and increasing the number of the stakeholders. The Government of the Republic of Armenia has undertaken the commitment of ensuring the continuity of the School Meals Programme, and to this end, the strategy and the implementation plan of the Sustainable School Meals Programme was approved by point 1 of Protocol Decision No 52-37 of the sitting of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of 27 December 2012. And in 2014-2016, the Sustainable School Meals Programme was introduced in 3 marzes of the Republic, namely, in Ararat, Syunik and Vayots Dzor marzes. Within the framework of the Programme, children in primary classes of state schools of general education as well as children enrolled in pre-school preparation groups (pre-school education institutions) in the mentioned 3 marzes receive free of charge meals. The Programme is aimed at increasing the enrolment in primary classes, as well as fostering healthy lifestyle among learners. It is envisaged to gradually increase the number of marzes included in the Programme, thus increasing the number of children receiving school meals.

3. Progress made with respect to implementing the right to education

3.1 <u>Universal primary education</u>

- Please provide information on the progress made with respect to ensuring universal access to primary education.
- Please provide details on the availability of compulsory and free of charge primary education in your country:
- *Is primary education available free of charge to all?* ***Yes****/No*
- Is primary education compulsory in our country?

  Yes/No

Pursuant to the laws of the Republic of Armenia "On education" and "On general education", elementary education, being the first degree of secondary education, is free of charge and compulsory. Until 2015, the basic general education was compulsory, but on 8 April 2015 amendments were made to the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On general education", by virtue of which part 4 of Article 4 of the Law was amended to read as follows:

> "4. Secondary education shall be compulsory, except for the cases prescribed by law.
>
> 5. Secondary education shall be free of charge at state education institutions.
>
> 6. A 12-year secondary education shall be provided in the Republic of Armenia"[15].

The provision of the Law prescribing the requirement for the secondary education to be compulsory shall enter into force on 1 June 2017, before that, basic education shall be deemed compulsory.

Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On general education", the basic programmes of general education shall be formed according to the principles of succession and continuity. They shall be classified as follows:

> the 1st degree — elementary (4 years);
>
> the 2nd degree — basic (9 years) ;
>
> the 3rd degree — secondary (12 years).

[15] Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-21-N) “On making amendments to the Law of the Republic of Armenia ‘On general education’”, part 4 of Article 4.

Thus, the 2nd degree of general education, i.e. basic education, is still deemed compulsory in the Republic of Armenia and comprises also elementary education. Secondary education is free of charge in all educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia offering general education programmes.

The highest enrolment of learners is at the level of elementary education — 93,1%. This may be explained by the fact that literacy of learners develops mainly in elementary schools.

Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On education" (HO-297-N), the requirement for the basic general education to be compulsory remains for learners under the age of 16 and the twelve-year secondary education may be realised before the learner attains the age of 19, if this right has not been exercised earlier.

Persons under the age of fourteen may be engaged in creation of works (creative work) and/or performance thereof in cinematographic, sports, theatrical and concert organisations, circuses, television and radio companies upon written consent of one of the parents/guardian/adopter or of the guardianship and custody body which must not cause harm to their health and morals, as well as must not interfere with their education or safety.

Persons between the ages of fourteen and eighteen may not be engaged in work on weekends, non-working days — holidays and memorial days — except when participating in sporting and cultural events.

A temporary employment contract shall be concluded with persons under the age of 16.

The minimum age of marriage for women and men was set at eighteen by the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On making amendments to the Family Code of the Republic of Armenia" (HO-26) of 20 May 2013.

3.2 Secondary education

- Please provide information on the general availability and accessibility to all of secondary education, including technical and vocational

secondary education and training in your country.

- Is it available free of charge?

  Yes/No

- If so, please describe the extent to which it is

As it was mentioned in the preceding subpoint “3.1”, pursuant to the laws of the Republic of Armenia "On education" and "On general education" the 12-year secondary education in state educational institutions is free of charge.

As of 2014, there were 1437 institutions offering general education programmes in the Republic, 1391 of which were state institutions (see Table 2). The number of pupils attending schools of general education was 359559, 47.7% of which were girls. The number of teachers teaching at schools of general education was 39843, 84.8% of which were women. As compared to the preceding years, the number of teachers working in the field of general education has decreased which is conditioned by both the decrease in the number of learners and the programmes aimed at the efficiency improvement of the system.

Based on the enrolment rates at different levels of general education, the following observations may be made. There is no significant problem with regard to enrolment in general education in Armenia. On a comparable basis, gross enrolment in secondary education is considerably high — in the last four years, it has comprised approximately 87.8% on average.

As it has already been mentioned, the highest enrolment of pupils is at the level of elementary education —93.1%. The enrolment in the system of basic education has slightly decreased comprising 92.6% and is homogeneous in terms of territory, gender and poverty groups and there have been no significant disparities in this regard. The gross enrolment rate at high schools is relatively low, comprising 72.4%. After graduating from basic school, 19.1% of the population of the relevant age continued their studies in primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education institutions[16]. According to the data received from NSS, as well as from the Ministry of Education and Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, the number of those

[16]"Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia" Statistical Analytical Report, 2014.

who have not continued their studies in another institution after having completed the basic education does not exceed 5%.

The basic general education is compulsory for all, except for cases prescribed by law, and probably this is the reason why the enrolment rate in basic schools is high. Thus, in general, it can be noted that all groups of the population have access to basic education and there have been no significant disparities in this regard. Therefore, enrolment of almost all children in basic schools is guaranteed in Armenia.

The secondary education in Armenia is free of charge. However, families incur additional educational expenses for the education of their children which include the purchase of textbooks, school supplies and transport expenses but generally, this is not a major problem for families at the levels of elementary and secondary education. However, these additional educational expenses are a *heavy* burden for poor families and especially for those having children studying at higher grades. Besides, in order to enter a higher education institution after completing high school, most of the learners often take private classes/lessons which also require expenses from the families. In households with a child studying in higher grades, the average monthly expenses were estimated at AMD 6232 for one pupil, 21% of which on textbooks, 25% on other expenses, 47% on private classes and 7% on the tuition fee[17]. Thus, according to the learners, the two main reasons/arguments for failing to continue studies in high school after graduating from basic school are the completion of the basic education and the social standing of the family (or high tuition fees). It should be noted that in 2013 the UN Committee on the Rights of a Child in its observations on the 3rd and 4th periodic reports of Armenia has expressed its concerns stating that significant numbers of children, including those below the age of 14, are dropping out of schools to work in informal sectors such as agriculture, construction and gathering of waste metal, etc[18]. This fact is a matter of concern.

The problem of non-completion of education is especially common among national minorities. The social and cultural conservatism in ethnic communities serves as a reason for the incomplete education of children or manifestations of gender disparity. These include, for example, Yezidi, Kurd and Russian-Molokan communities. In rural areas representing these ethnic communities, the rate of absenteeism of pupils from

[17]"Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia" Statistical Analytical Report, 2014.
[18]http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC-C-ARM-CO-3-4.pdf.

schools is rather high, also, the rates of academic progress are low, there are many cases of dropping out of schools very early, and there is a differentiated approach among parents to the education of girls and boys conditioned by cultural traditions. Yezidis, Kurds and Molokans attach great importance to work and usually do not continue their studies after completing the 9-year education which is compulsory in the Republic. Yezidis and Kurds consider the 9-year education satisfactory and even entirely sufficient for girls. The passive and even indifferent attitude towards education among Yezidis and Kurds is conditioned by both cultural conservatism and inertness and the pessimism about building a future with the help of education. Information concerning the education of national minorities is presented in more detail in subpoint “3.9” relating to national minorities.

In addition to the above mentioned phenomena, it should also be noted that there is also gender disparity in the overall composition of learners in the Republic, i.e. the number of boys among learners at primary and basic schools prevails. Yet the picture changes at high school where the number of girls among learners increases which is conditioned by both demographic factors and the fact that many boys having graduated from basic schools prefer to continue their studies at the vocational education level. Thus, the targeting of education becomes more accentuated after basic school.

Time series of Millennium Development Goals Indicators of Armenia defined for the field of education, which are provided in *Table1*, come to prove this. In order to ensure/keep these target indicators defined for 2015, particularly, in the field of general education, programmes aimed at improving education quality and raising access to education will continue, which will be funded under Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework of the Republic of Armenia by years. Simultaneously with other programmes, particularly:

- provision of free of charge textbooks and study materials to the pupils of elementary grades as well as to the socially disadvantaged children will continue;
- the scopes of School Meals Programme will be expanded by involving larger number of pupils from elementary schools;

- the programme aimed to strengthen high schools will continue. Increase of enrolment in high schools will subsequently contribute to a greater enrolment of learners in the vocational education system;
- support to socially vulnerable groups in the field of vocational education will continue in order to make this education level more accessible for learners, etc.

Simultaneously, cooperation with a number of international organisations implementing programmes aimed at social protection of learners, will continue.

Primary vocational (handicraft) education programmes have been implemented in 44 state education institutions, 24 out of which — in primary vocational (handicraft) and 20 — in secondary vocational education institutions. The number of students has amounted to 7295, 25.2% of which are women. Ninety-eight point one percent (98.1%) of students have studied in a free of charge instruction system, and 1.9% — in a fee paid instruction system. The pedagogical staff has been composed of 987 persons, 62.2% of which are women. Instruction has been carried out on the basis of basic and secondary education. The gross enrolment ratio of students has made up 7.4% (4.0% of women and 10.4% of men), the Gender Equality Index (coefficient of correlation of men's gross enrolment ratio to women's gross enrolment ratio)" — 0.38[19]. Ninety-three point five per cent (93.5%) of students (95.4% of the students studying on a free of charge basis) have received stipend (more than AMD 4000)[20]. Stipend in primary vocational (handicraft) education institutions amounts to AMD 4 650.

Secondary vocational education programmes have been implemented in 83 state education institutions. Sixty-seven state secondary vocational education institutions operate under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. The number of students has amounted to 26846, 53.3% of which are women. Forty-eight point one percent (48.1 %) of students have studied in a fee paid instruction system, and 51.9% — in a free of charge instruction system. Instruction has been carried out on the basis of basic and secondary education. The pedagogical staff has been composed of 4052 persons, 75.3% of which are women. Thirty-five point eight per

[19] "Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia" Statistical Analytical Report, 2014.
[20] "Social Situation of the Republic of Armenia", 2014.

cent (35.8 %) of students (68.9% of the students studying on a free of charge basis) have received stipend (more than AMD 4000). The stipend in secondary vocational education institutions amounts to AMD 4750. Thirty-two point three per cent (32.3 %) of 161 students of state secondary vocational education institutions, in need of dormitory, are provided therewith. Sixteen (16) non-state secondary vocational education institutions have operated with 1637 students studying therein, 73.7% of which are women.

The gross enrolment ratio of students has made up 12.2% (13.9% of women and 10.7% of men), the Gender Equality Index (coefficient of correlation of men's gross enrolment ratio to women's gross enrolment ratio)" — 1.29.

Since 2012-2013 academic year, the number of seats in free of charge instruction system (full refund of tuition fees in the form of allowance) of educational institutions implementing primary (handicraft) and secondary vocational education programmes has generally increased by 50%. In 2015, the number of students of secondary vocational education institutions studying on a free of charge basis has increased by 42% since 2012; at the same time, the state expenditures in relation to free of charge instruction have increased by around 45%.

Meanwhile, the number of students of primary vocational (handicraft) education institutions studying on a free of charge basis has decreased as compared to 2012, whereas the amount of state funding for primary vocational (handicraft) education has increased by 10% since 2012. It should be mentioned that the number of students having admitted to the educational institutions implementing primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education programmes has decreased conditioned by demographic problems — the number of pupils with basic school education decreased in 2015.

At the same time, before 2011, admission to state and accredited non-state secondary vocational institutions was carried out on a competitive basis through admission examinations. With the aim to enhance attractiveness of secondary vocational education and enrolment of learners at this level of education, since 2011-2012 academic year admission has been carried out without admission examinations, except for the professions pertaining to the fields of art, healthcare and sports, in case whereof professional examination shall be taken. The competition-

based admission (including primary vocational (handicraft)) is carried out on the basis of the arithmetical average of the grades in the graduation document and the total sum of the grades in the subjects considered to be competitive for the given profession.

As a result of the above mentioned activities, enrolment at primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education level has generally increased in the recent years. The simple analyses of enrolment rates provided in *table 1*[21]come to prove this. Thus, for example, enrolment in high school has decreased by 6.9 percentage point as compared to 2011, meanwhile, in the same period, enrolment at primary and secondary vocational education levels has respectively increased by 3 and 2.1 percentage points. This implies that certain proportion of pupils of high schools and graduates of secondary school have preferred to continue their education at the vocational education level, which proves the efficiency of the implemented policy. Besides, at this level of primary vocational education, the number of boys prevails, whereas at the secondary vocational education level there are no substantial gender differences.

At the same time, efforts aimed at ensuring continuity of the learners' education and revising the content of education, modernising professions, encouraging learners and other activities have continued to be made at this level of vocational education. In particular:

procedure for admission and secondment of citizens of bordering or high mountainous settlements to education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, carrying out primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education programmes, as well as the list of professions establishing certain privileges for citizens of bordering or high mountainous settlements were approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 651-N of 12 June 2014;

the process of transition from secondary vocational education institutions to higher education institutions has been facilitated. Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-17-N) "On making amendments and a supplement to

[21] ”Millennium Development Goals of Armenia. Time Series of Indicators” http://armstat.am/en/?nid=180.

the Law of the Republic of Armenia 'On education'" adopted on 5 June 2014,graduates of secondary vocational education institutions, having shown high academic performance, may continue their education in higher education institutions under relevant profession – in the second year – through distance learning;

the lists of vocational education and training professions have been revised by bringing them in line with the requirements of labour market, National framework of qualifications (NFQ) and UNESCO classification of occupations. The revised lists of professions of primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education as of education programmes, instruction bases, forms, duration of instruction and qualifications were approved by Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1139-N of 1 October 2015;

at the initiative of UN International Labour Organization (ILO), in November 2015 "IPSC" Institute for Political and Sociological Consulting (www.ipsc.am) carried out "Research on need assessment of management boards of state secondary vocational education institutions", which is aimed to promote development of secondary vocational education and training in Armenia.

3.3 Higher education

- Please explain to what extent access to higher education, based upon individual capacity, including technical and vocational education and training, is realized in your country.
- Please describe the efforts made by your government to ensure that there is no discrimination on the ground prohibited by the Convention to enter and complete higher education.

In 23 state higher education institutions and 12 branches thereof, 69538 students have studied at the first level education programme of higher education (Bachelor's degree), 52.8% of which are women (see *Table2*).Sixty thousand seventy-eight (60 078) students or 86.4% of the students have studied on a fee paid basis, and 9 460 students or 13.6% — on a free of charge basis.Eleven point four per cent (11.4 %) of the students have received stipend (83.7% of the students studying on a free of charge basis). Academic and teaching staff has been composed of 9 931

persons, 52% of which are women. Thirty-nine non-state higher education institutions have operated with 10085 bachelors studying therein, 47.9% of which are women. The gross enrolment ratio of students has made up 46.8% (49.4% of women and 44.2% of men), the Gender Equality Index (coefficient of correlation of men's gross enrolment ratio to women's gross enrolment ratio)" — 1.1.

One point two per cent (1.2 %) of 1670 students of state higher education institutions in needs of dormitory, have been provided therewith.

Fourteen thousand four hundred seventy-six (14476) master's students have been enrolled in the second level education programme of higher education, 65.7% of which are women. The gross enrolment ratio of students has made up 13.5% (17.3% of women and 9.5% of men), the Gender Equality Index (coefficient of correlation of men's gross enrolment ratio to women's gross enrolment ratio)" — 1.81.

The number of students studying in doctoral studies amounted to 1223, 52.8% of which are women[22].

The higher professional education in Armenia is provided in state and non-state higher professional education institutions (including accredited) on a free of charge and fee paid basis.

Legislation on higher education of the Republic of Armenia is mainly regulated by the Laws of the Republic of Armenia "On education" and "On higher and postgraduate professional education" as well as secondary legislative acts deriving therefrom.

Law and separate regulations prescribe the minimum requirements for admission to all the three levels of higher education institution, unified graduation and admission examinations according to the professions and universities.

For certain socially vulnerable groups — taking also into consideration the academic performance of a student — admission and education in higher education institutions are organised under privileged conditions to ensure access to higher education for all the citizens. This is regulated by the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On higher and postgraduate professional education" and the Procedure for granting student allowances and state stipends in higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, as well as internal regulations of higher education institutions of the

[22] ”Social Situation of the Republic of Armenia”, 2014.

Republic of Armenia, which must not contradict to the norms prescribed by law. Pursuant to Article 6 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On higher and postgraduate professional education":

"The higher education institution shall, at its own expense and in the amount of at least seven per cent of the budget generated from the tuition fees of students, taking as a basis the high academic performance and the social group, partially refund, in the form of student allowances, the tuition fees of at least ten per cent of the students studying in fee paid instruction system – for the students holding the following status:

(1) socially disadvantaged students (those from families falling under the grade with one point higher than the marginal grade of socially disadvantaged condition of families) — in the amount of at least 30 per cent;

(2) students left withoutparental care after attaining the age of 18 — until they attain the age of 23 — in the amount of at least 50 per cent;

(3) students having been deprived of one parent (having one parent) and having not attained the age of 23 — in the amount of at least 50 per cent;

(4) students having a child under the age of 1 — in the amount of at least 50 per cent;

(5) students from families with three and more minors or three and more students — in the amount of at least 30 per cent;

(6) students having a disabled parent of 1st or 2nd group, including a disabled parent considered as a freedom fighter — in the amount of at least 30 per cent;

(7) students having passed compulsory fixed-term military service and engaged in combat duty at military units carrying out combat duty — at least 30 per cent;

(8) socially disadvantaged students (from families falling under any grade higher than the grade of 0 kept on records in the evaluation system of socially disadvantaged condition of families) — at least 20 per cent;

(9) students holding other status, which may be defined by the higher education institution".

Rotationevaluation system is being implemented in the higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, which enables the students, having shown the best academic performance in the year, to study on a free of charge basis. Free of charge seats are also provided to the student studying in target spheres.

In addition to the above mentioned, the citizens of the Republic of Armenia — for the purpose of studying in the higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia — are also supported by the Youth Foundation of Armenia, as well as a number of other foundations financing education of the students of Armenian nationality (including Armenian General Benevolent Union, Hrayr and Anna Hovnanian Foundation). Credit funds, provided through state subsidies by the commercial banks and credit organisations of the Republic of Armenia, are also available as a financial support with an interest rate of 12-15%, 2-3% out of which is subsidised by the state according to the academic performance of the student, and are provided upon the recommendation letter of parents/guardians and for the purpose of studying in state and non-state higher education institutions.

Pursuant to the Procedure for admission of foreign nationals, as well as members of families of diplomats working in the diplomatic service bodies of the Republic of Armenia, operating in a foreign state, to higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, approved by point 1 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 700-N of 28 April 2011, making education in the higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia accessible for foreigners and organising for them instruction either in literary Armenian or foreign languages is guaranteed. Pursuant to the mentioned procedure, admission of the foreign nationals to the higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia is not carried out on a competitive basis; the number of fee paid seats is not limited either. Performed knowledge checks are only aimed to assess proficiency in the Armenian language and other subjects defined for admission in order to direct the applicant either to the first year or to the foundation course.

No cases of obvious inequality between women’s and men’s rights, substantially considered as a possible violation of law, have been recorded so far.

Issues related to students’ accommodation, health and rest conditions are also important. With regard to the students from marzes studying in the higher education

institutions of the capital, the state provides state grants to 300 students in total, as a result the students are able to solve the problem of accommodation with little rental fee. At the same time, students are provided with dormitories at discounted prices.However, this is not enough to meet the students' demand for accommodation. Therefore, in order to solve the accommodation problem, students have to rent apartments which are rather expensive even in the suburbs of the capital (the average price for renting an apartment is AMD 50 000-60 000).

Average monthly expenses for the households having a child studying in the higher education institutions has amounted to AMD 31386 per one student, 86% of which is the fee, 6% — the textbooks, 7% — other costs, 1% — private classes.At the same time, 79% of the learners studying in higher education institutions are from not poor households, 20% — from poor and about 1% — from extremely poor households.Besides, according to the results of the surveys carried out among persons aged16-20, among the persons failed to continue their education, the number of girls having finished basic education has made up 8.7%, boys — 14.9%, girls having finished secondary school — 57.9%, boys — 62.7%[23]. Comparison of the mentioned rates actually states that girls finish their education earlier and this is more typical to the marzes of the Republic of Armenia.

There are first aid rooms necessarily functioning in all higher education institutions for the purpose of providing first aid to students. Besides, there is a student medical clinic in Yerevan which renders a relevant service to the students of a given higher education institution within the framework of contracts signed with the higher education institutions.

Most of the state higher education institutions have, under their subordination, operating institutions for organising leisure, where the students of the given higher education institution may spend their holidays at a low price. Moreover, higher education institutions also provide free of charge holiday tickets to socially disadvantaged students having shown high academic performance.

As a result of the above mentioned activities, enrolment at the highest professional education level has generally increased in the recent years. The simple analyses of

[23]"Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia" Statistical Analytical Report, 2014.

enrolment rates provided in *table1*[24] come to prove this. Thus, for example, enrolment of learners has increased by 3.6 percentage point in Bachelor's degree and 3.4 percentage point — in Master's degree, as compared to the year 2011. This is to state that the reforms made in the field of higher education resulted in the increase of targeting.

In spite of the above mentioned regulations, the higher education system in the Republic of Armenia still faces a problem with increasing access, which is mainly conditioned by insufficient financial resources. To solve this problem, it is envisaged to increase the portion for higher education in the Gross Domestic Product of the Republic of Armenia, introduce a mechanism for financing — based on performance — of state higher education institutions, increase allocations for providing funding for the costs of education of students, diversify the sources and instruments of financing, improve conditions in dormitory, create new dormitory complexes and promote instruction in a foreign language, ensure affordability and accessibility of higher education for different social groups and for persons in need of special conditions for education.

3.4 Adult education and lifelong learning

- What efforts has your government made to establish a system of continuing education on the basis of individual capacity?
- What are the concrete measures implemented to ensure equitable access to continuing education?

According to the 12-year education system, the child starts attending school from the age of 6. However, the Procedure for admission to, transfer from and removal of a learner from a general education institution of the Republic of Armenia regulates also the enrolment in school of those children who, for different reasons, have not attended school on time.

In compliance with the referred procedure, children above 16 not having attended school may master the general education programmes through self-education and as an external student obtain a basic education certificate (or academic certificate of secondary education). Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On making

[24] "Millennium Development Goals of Armenia. Time Series of Indicators" http://armstat.am/en/?nid=180.

amendments to the Law of the Republic of Armenia ‘On education’" (HO-20-N) of 8 April 2015, 12-year secondary education in the Republic of Armenia may be realised before the learner attains the age of 19, if this right has not been exercised earlier.

The term "education of adults" has been used in the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education". The Law provides for the implementation of education of adults along with other educational programmes within primary vocational and secondary vocational education institutions. In this context, short-term (1-6 months) educational programmes are also implemented at primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education institutions for professions in demand in the labour market.Persons having completed those courses are granted a completion document, namely a certificate.

The following essential provision has been enshrined in the Procedure for admission to state and non-state higher vocational education institutions of the Republic of Armenia of the Government of the Republic of Armenia N 597-N of 26 April 2012: "Persons with secondary education, primary vocational education or secondary vocational education may be admitted to higher education institutions without any age limit."

Since it is impossible to ensure the harmonious development of a person and his or her competitiveness in the labour market only through a formal education system in the current rapidly changing social-economic conditions, the regulation of the field of supplementary and continuing education, the assessment and recognition of knowledge, abilities and skills gained through non-formal and informal training have become important in Armenia, as well as in many European countries.

As a comparatively newly established direction in the system of education in the Republic of Armenia, the field of supplementary and continuing education is in need of reforms, particularly improvement of the legal framework. As a result of the study of the current situation in this field and analysis thereof, the National Report on Supplementary and Continuing Education in the Republic of Armenia and the Strategy and Action Plan for Supplementary and Continuing Education in the Republic of Armenia have been approved by Orders of the Minister of Education and

Science of the Republic of Armenia N 1162-A/Q and N1163-A/Q of 20 December 2012.

And the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On making supplements and amendments to the Law of the Republic of Armenia ‘On education’" (HO-83-N) was adopted on 21 June 2014, which served as a ground for the approval of the Procedure for organising and implementing supplementary education programmes and the Procedure for assessment and recognition of the results of non-formal and informal instruction, prescribed by points 1 and 2 of Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia N1062-N of 10 September 2015.

In implementing the approved procedures, each person, irrespective of national, religious or racial affiliation or educational degree, will have the right to make his or her knowledge, abilities and skills gained by any means (non-formal, informal), recognised by the State, as well as benefit from the supplementary education programmes offered by natural and legal persons guaranteed by the State in order to be competitive in the labour market and be employed.

For effective introduction of the system, in 2013-2014, an experimental programme for recognition of abilities gained through non-formal and informal learning was implemented for one profession, and it is envisaged to organise the process, as the launch of operation of the system, for 3 primary vocational and secondary vocational professions.

For the purpose of disseminating the ideology of supplementary and continuing education and raising awareness about the current policy, an information guide and methodical manual entitled "Supplementary and Continuing Education" have been drafted, a team of trainers has been formed, which conducts courses based on a training manual with representatives of primary vocational and secondary vocational education institutions of Yerevan and of all provinces of the Republic of Armenia implementing supplementary education programmes, territorial employment agencies and employers.

The widely popular mass media outlets in the Republic of Armenia regularly provide coverage of the gradually growing importance of the filed of supplementary and continuing education, the recently adopted legal acts and the new opportunities that

the State offers for assessment and recognition of the results of non-formal and informal instruction, ensuring about the field.

In the context of ensuring interrelation between the labour market and the educational system, the "Concept Paper on Development of Professional Orientation in the Republic of Armenia" approved by point 1 of Protocol Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia N40 of 4 October 2012 proposes to introduce such a model of professional orientation system, the essential basis of which will be the ensuring of opportunities for the effective selection, change of profession and continuing development of a career for persons in different age groups and in different social and working situations throughout their whole lives, taking into consideration the personal attributes of a person, as well as the changing situation of the labour market. The exclusion of any type of discrimination in regard to professional orientation is singled out in the main principles for the introduction of the system.

In the presented model, the main levels providing services are the system of general education, primary vocational (handicraft), secondary vocational and higher professional education, as well as the territorial employment centres, the institutes for the selection of a profession, career guidance, re-specialisation and requalification that are out of the educational system. An objective has been set to enhance the existing Methodical Centre for Professional Orientation and reserve the ensuring of methodologies and training of specialists of the structures of the system to it.

The "Career Management" modular programme has been drafted and is envisaged to be introduced at vocational education and training institutions as an optional subject. From 2013 till now, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, jointly with the "Methodical Centre for Professional Orientation" SNCO and with the support of the European Foundation for Education, has carried out activities for the introduction and exploitation of career centres at 22 vocational education and training institutions. Higher education institutions have also established career centres, the main goal whereof is to strengthen the bonds between the labour market and the higher education institution and support students in their internships and alumni in finding jobs.

The "Methodical Centre for Professional Orientation" SNCO also greatly supports to learners of the 9th year of basic school and those of high schools with respect to professional orientation.The supporting manual "Disciplinary Work in School: Problems of Professional Orientation" and the relevant modules of the manual (for each age group) have been published for supervising teachers. Every year, the Centre conducts training courses for deputy directors for specialised assistance and supervising teachers in a certain number of general education schools of the marzes of the Republic of Armenia and in Yerevan. Learners are informed about professional orientation issues during the classes of the supervising teachers.

One of the 12 annual programmes carried out by the State Employment Agency through the State Budget of the Republic of Armenia within the scope of state employment support programmes is the programme "Organising of Professional (Vocational) Instruction for Unemployed Persons and Job Seekers Facing the Risk of Dismissal", the goal of which is to ensure stable employment by preparing specialists in accordance with the demands of the labour market and by raising the level of their competitiveness in the labour market. Beneficiaries of the programme are unemployed persons and job seekers facing the risk of dismissal. Professional (vocational) preparation (primary vocational preparation and handicraft instruction) is organised within the framework of the programme for up to 6 months, and re-specialisation and raising of qualification – for up to 3 months. A stipend is paid to the job seeker engaged in the professional (vocational) training courses every month during the whole period of the training. At least 11% of those included in the programme are expected to be persons with disabilities.

3.5 Quality education

- Please provide information on the measures taken by your country to ensure equivalence in all educational institutions in:

– the standards of education

– the conditions relating to the quality of the education provided (e.g. infrastructure, teacher/learner ratios, teaching and learning materials)

– the provisions to ensure that children learn in a safe environment free from

violence or harassment, including school-related gender-based violence (at, around, and on the way to school).

Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education”,“State educational standards shall be established and promulgated in the Republic of Armenia, which shall be deemed as the basis for assessment of education level and qualification of graduates, irrespective of the form of education they have received as well as legal and organisational form of educational institutions”.

Uniform state educational standards shall be established for educational programmes implemented at different levels of education in the Republic of Armenia. State standards of secondary education, higher and postgraduate professional education shall be established by the Government of the Republic of Armenia. State standards of secondary vocational education shall be established by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. Ensuring compliance with the requirements of state educational standards is compulsory for both state, as well as private/non-state education institutions.

In connection with shifting to the 12-year education system “State standard of general education” was drafted and approved in the field of general education. In 2015, revision of the content of general education —subject syllabuses, standards, as well as the standards for state general education for 1st-12th years — began with the support of the World Bank. For that purpose, in 2015, a study was conducted, the results of which were transferred to the working group revising the specified documents.Due to the reforms under the Bologna and Turin Processes, educational standards were revised in the field of professional education as well. The new standards are targeted at improvement of the quality of professional education, capacity building for personnel training in compliance with the demands of the labour market and European standards.

The State Inspectorate for Education was established in 2005 for the purpose of evaluating the efficiency of implementation of educational programmes, exercising state supervision over the quality assurance of education within educational institutions and other organisations implementing general education programmes and primary vocational (handicraft) education programmes.

Licensing is deemed as a process of official authorisation of educational activities of an educational institution.The education programmes provided for by law may be implemented only in case of availability of a licence — a document certifying the right to official authorisation. The licence is issued to an educational institution in case of meeting the following requirements: availability of main pedagogical and/or academic and teaching staff, laboratory base and teaching space, teaching and methodical support, library and information system, educational internship base.

With a view of rendering an opinion on licensing of education programmes of educational institutions, Licensing Agency was established and currently operates within the staff of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia upon point 1 of the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 676-N of 12 May 2011.

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia has undertaken the improvement of licensing process and several legal acts have been adopted having their aim to exercise supervision over the compliance with the conditions and requirements of licences for the activities carried out under higher professional education programmes and to impose sanctions in case of failure of complying therewith. In its turn, it has fostered the responsibility for educational activities carried out in the field of higher education by considerably raising the effectiveness of handling the problems existing in the higher education system.

In accordance with the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 18-N of 10 January 2013 the applications on licensing and reports may be submitted by licensed persons to the licensing body also through an electronic system, which facilitates the implementation of licensing process by interested organisations by considerably simplifying the licensing process and making the field more transparent.

The Law of the Republic of Armenia (HO-84-N) “On making amendments to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On licensing”” was adopted on 19 June 2013, which was conditioned by the current reforms in the field of education and is aimed at implementing the principles of Bologna process. The educational institutions carrying out professional medical education programmes pursue their educational activities upon laws and legal acts regulating the field, as well as implement education

programmes by ensuring the instruction of learners in compliance with the requirements of these programmes. However, by 2015, the authorisation of educational activities (licence) was issued by another agency (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia). Hereinafter, the licensing process shall be carried out by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia also in respect of medical professions.

The aim of the amendments to the law is to have single state policy, single standards of state policy in the field of education, as well as to ensure equal framework for licensing conditions and requirements for educational institutions, which will foster responsibility for educational activities carried out in the field of education by considerably raising the effectiveness of handling problems existing in the professional education system.

“National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation” (ANCA) was established upon point 1 of the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1486-N of 27 November 2008. Starting from 2015, higher professional education institutions of the Republic of Armenia started receiving accreditation by ANCA. ANCA holds full and associate membership in International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies Of Higher Education (INQAAHE) and European Association for Quality Assurance Of Higher Education (ENQA) respectively. It has its aim of fostering international recognition of the quality of higher education of the Republic of Armenia and ensuring the competitiveness thereof. The graduation documents issued by higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia accredited by ANCA are recognised by the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). ANCA is in charge of external quality assessment and quality assurance of higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia. Seventeen state, private and interstate higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia have undergone institutional accreditation in compliance with international standards, whereas fourteen state and private higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia have undergone institutional and contractual institutional accreditation by ANCA.

EU TEMPUS and TWINNING programmes have key role in improvement of quality of education within the framework whereof all actors of higher education system of the Republic of Armenia manage to improve, upon active exchange of experience and

joint activities with EHEA countries, the infrastructures of the higher education system of the Republic of Armenia and receive an opportunity of undergoing training in order to work under EHEA standards. In 2011-2012, internal quality assurance centres have been established within higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia.

At the same time, with a view of ensuring compatibility with international standards, rating system of educational institutions has been introduced. The rating system of general education schools is presented at “http://schoolrate.armedu.am” website, whereas that of higher professional education institutions— at “www.ranking.armedu.am” website.

In 2015 the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, with the support of Council of Europe (CoE), within the framework of “Strengthening Integrity and Combating Corruption in Higher Education in Armenia” project and jointly with the expert group and higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, elaborated model ethics codes (rules of conduct) and guidelines for the development thereof, which will enable the higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia to develop own rules of conduct with a view of strengthening integrity within higher education. When describing certain values in the model form, ‘non-discrimination’ and ‘discrimination’ expressions were stressed, as was the case with descriptions of values of ‘fairness’, ‘impartiality, justice and social justice’, ‘respect for others’. These values (principles) and the remainder of those included in the model form are mainly based on the elaboration of Pan-European Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED) of the Council of Europe and on two documents constituting a part of initiative on this platform —Ethical Principles (for Education) and Ethical Behaviour of All Actors in Education (Smith and Hamilton, 2015). The aforementioned principles and documents have been considered during elaboration of the new Draft Law of the Republic of Armenia “On higher education”.

In 2014,“Ethical Norms for Teachers”was elaborated and introduced in all general education schools of the Republic of Armenia. A similar document is designed to be elaborated for teaching personnel of primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education institutions.

3.6 Teaching profession

- Please describe the conditions of teaching staff at all levels in your country.
- Please explain briefly the measures your country takes to improve the living and teaching conditions of teaching staff.
- Please explain briefly the measures your country takes regarding the training for the teaching profession.
- Have there been instances of discrimination as regards the training for the teaching profession in your country?

  Yes/**No**

The Government of the Republic of Armenia undertakes continuous measures aimed at improving the professionalism of pedagogues, public standing thereof and raising the attractiveness of the profession of a teacher. According to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education” “The remuneration rate for the work carried out by pedagogical (academic and teaching) staff at state education institutions may not be lower than the average salary of employees of budgetary institutions”. This requirement of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education” is ensured in the field of professional education. Professional education institutions provide the academic and teaching staff with incerments at the expense of funds received from their paid instruction systems.

A policy on increasing the salaries of pedagogues is implemented for the purpose of increasing the interest in the profession of pedagogue and improving the quality of education in the field of general education. Throughout the past fifteen years, the salary of teachers has increased by nearly 160 per cent. In 2015, the monthly average base salary of teachers constituted AMD 152.1 thousands. Each year, “Best Teacher of the Year”, “Best Principal of the Year” and “Best Educator of the Year” contests are organised; the best candidates are granted with awards by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia.

Armenia participates in EU eTwinning project wherein teachers from Armenian schools, specialised in different subjects, act very actively and show good results.

Online events, forums and contests are organised with cooperating schools in abroad.

In accordance with Article 50 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education” adopted in 1999, The Government of the Republic of Armenia has defined additional remuneration for teachers of general education schools in borderline, highland and mountainous settlements.

The system of granting qualification grades through competence evaluation of teachers of general education institutions is introduced upon point 3 of the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1745-N of 10 November 2011, which enables teachers to receive incerments for the creative work performed thereby and active professional activities thereof.

In the field of higher education the average salary (without taxes) of academic and teaching staff, working on a full-time basis, constitutes about AMD 80000. Nevertheless, the mentioned amount differs as of separate higher education institutions and depends also on the differentiated remuneration system of academic and teaching staff. In the Republic of Armenia the average salary (without taxes) of civil servants constitutes about AMD 150000.

Continuous works are implemented with regard to raising the organisational and financial autonomy, accountability, effectiveness of management of higher education institutions. Within the framework of this process six state higher education institutions have changed their legal and organisational form by becoming a foundation from the state of SNCO. This change implies also development of entrepreneurial activities in higher education institutions, in the result whereof the higher education institution will become more independent and will have an opportunity to maintain close contacts with the private sector, to improve the quality of education by combining education, research and practical work.

In order to raise the autonomy and accountability the ‘ATHENA’ project has been implemented and currently the ‘GOVERN’, ‘TEMPUS’ projects, as well as programmes aimed at fight against corruption— with the support of the Council of Europe and the “Open Society Foundation” Armenian Office— are in implementation process.

In line with the introduction of the 12-year system of education, training of teachers are continuously implemented in the marzes [regions] of the Republic of Armenia and in the city of Yerevan at the expense of State Budget of the Republic of Armenia. The training programme includes topics on computer literacy, new education programmes, legislation, inclusive education, system of assessment and new teaching methods (80 hours). The current process provides an opportunity to ensure a 5-year period of training for the entire teaching staff. In recent years the pedagogical staff makes use of the social package designed for state servants of the Republic of Armenia.

The Procedure "For training of lecturers of educational institutions implementing primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education programmes and that of masters of practical instruction" has been approved upon the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 1058-N of 29 October 2014. Pursuant to the existing procedure trainings for lectures and masters of practical instruction have been implemented, which were attended by teaching staff from all state education institutions of the system.

For the purpose of supporting the education centres of Diaspora and contributing to the preservation of Armenian identity, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia implement intensive instruction of Armenian language, training courses for teachers of Armenian language and history, team leaders and dancing-masters, within the framework of "Diaspora" Summer School Programme.

Thus, the choice of a profession is free and learners choose the profession of a pedagogue based on their preferences and abilities.

Therefore, the participation in training courses for pedagogues does nor presume any discrimination; trainings are designed for all practising pedagogues.

3.7 Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms

- Please briefly report on national efforts made for directing education to:
- the full development of the human personality
- the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental

freedoms.

Armenia attaches particular importance to issues concerning the human rights education. In particular, it is worth mentioning the establishment of a working group by the UNDP Armenian Representation and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, which has elaborated “National Action Plan for Human Rights Education” for 2012-2015. The Action Plan provides for events aimed at human rights education among teachers and pupils.

One of the first steps taken under state policy to that regard, proved to be the “National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights” approved upon the Executive Order of the President of the Republic of Armenia NK-159-N of 29 October 2012, as a tool ensuring the implementation of joint and comprehensive policy in the sphere of human rights protection.

In implementation of the above mentioned strategy, the “Action Plan Deriving from National Strategy On Human Rights Protection” was approved upon point 1 of the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 303-N of 27 February 2014, which provides for undertaking of steps for ensuring tolerance towards different religions and beliefs in general education schools, as well as actions aimed at preservation of the national and ethnic identity.

The general education programmes approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia include topics on tolerance, human rights, racial discrimination, history and culture of national minorities. The subject entitled “Me and the World Around Me” has been introduced in 2nd-4th grades of general education schools, the aim whereof is to enlarge the children’s understanding of and knowledge on the surrounding world, develop their life skills and abilities. Thematic units relating to fundamental human rights, legal equality between women and men, elimination of violence, tolerance and civil society are included in the standard and syllubus of the subject entitled “Social Studies” taught at general education schools.

With the support of UN Development Programme, a manual for teachers (headmasters), entitled “Teaching Tolerance”, has been developed and introduced in elementary schools, that entitled “Variety and Tolerance” — in basic schools, as well as that entitled “Dignity and Tolerance” — in high schools. The programme teaches tolerance, co-operation to pupils, promotes conflict resolution, etc. Teachers applying

the manual have undergone corresponding training within the scope of the programme.

The educational and methodological manual entitled “How to Prevent Violence at School” has been developed for pedagogues of educational institutions with the support of the “Hope and Help” organisation and has been distributed to all educational institutions.

At the same time, information on history, cultures and religions of other peoples and nations has been included in the courses entitled “World History”, “Armenian History” and “History of the Armenian Church”.

Teaching of topics concerning the rights of women and men is also of particular importance in the education system. Special courses concerning the topics on the legal equality between women and men are organised in a number of higher education institutions of the Republic.

The Republic of Armenia Gender Policy Strategy Programme for 2011-2015 of was approved upon point 1 of Protocol Decision of the session of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 19-3 of 20 May 2011, within the framework whereof the following measures have been implemented in the field of education:

A training module entitled “Gender Equality and Gender Violence” was developed for pedagogues, psychologists, social workers and administrative workers of educational institutions in 2014. Within the scope of this module topics on legal equality between women and men, prevention of violence on the grounds of sex have been included in training programmes designed for principals, deputy principals and teachers of general education schools, primary vocational (handicraft) and secondary vocational education institutions of the Republic of Armenia.

“Trust” Social Work and Sociological Research Centre has organised courses on violence on the grounds of sex for separate target groups, wherein pupils, pedagogues from high schools, students and lecturers from pedagogical higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia have been involved,

In 2013 within the framework of the three-year project of the US Agency for International Development, entitled “Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s

Empowerment in Armenia", the Centre for Gender and Leadership Studies was established in YSU. YSU Centre for Gender and Leadership Studies performs enhanced research, educational functions and assists jointly with Armenian higher education institutions, local NGOs and international agencies in professional promotion of women. The two-year Master's Programme on Women, Leadership and Development has been introduced in the Faculty of Sociology of Yerevan State University since 2015.

Despite measures undertaken in the field of policy on legal equality between women and men, however, some obstacles still remain in the system of education in respect of ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for both male and female. In particular, in the analytical statement of information entitled "Inclusion of gender-sensitive perspectives in general education programmes and textbooks of the Republic of Armenia", implemented recently by the World Bank, the following remmarkable recommendations have been made:

to reflect the principles of gender equality in state educational standards, subject syllabuses and textbooks;

to work out standards ensuring gender equality for compiling and reviewing textbooks;

to raise the gender awareness among all participants of educational process.

General education institutions possess their websites which contribute to the awareness raising of learners in respect of implemented programmes and legal issues. The official websites such aswww.edu.am, www.aniedu.am, www.armedu.am, www.ktak.am, www.vetarmenia.am, http://ranking.armedu.am/en and http://studyinarmenia.org/ also prove to be a great source of information. With a view of ensuring the participation of stakeholders forums and public consultation pages have been created, which strengthen the feedback.

3.8 Private education and religious and moral education

- Please provide brief information on the regulatory framework relating to the establishment or maintenance of private educational institutions.
- Please briefly describe the education policy framework for minimum educational standards as regards the rights of the parents/legal guardian

for providing religious and moral education for their children.

Activities of private/non-state education institutions

In the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education” the principles of state policy on education of the Republic of Armenia enshrine the following provisions:

- guaranteeing for citizens opportunities of receiving education in state and non-state education institutions;
- ensuring legally equal status of state and accredited non-state education institutions and that of graduation documents issued thereby.

Non-state education institutions are also available in the Republic of Armenia, wherein education services are also rendered on paid basis. The non-state education institutions may be established only as prescribed by law, whereas education programmes may be implemented therein only in case of availability of relevant licence. Non-state higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, accredited by the NCQA, acquire state-funded free of charge seats for instruction (as in case of state higher education institutions).

In state and non-state schools the standard requirements, syllabus requirements, as well as those to graduates are deemed as uniform and the same for all. Non-state schools implement also foreign, optional, authorial general education programmes which are prescribed by law and may not contradict the requirements for state standard of general education. Non-state general education institutions acquire the right to issue a state-recognised graduation document upon receiving relevant licence.

Secondary vocational and higher professional education institutions undergo accreditation process carried out as of the education institutions and professions thereof.

Accreditation process provides an opportunity to create legally equal conditions for learners and graduates of state and non-state education institutions. A state final competence evaluation examination is organised for graduates of previous years having received education under secondary vocational and higher professional education programmes, as a result whereof a state-recognised diploma is issued.

In case of violating the conditions and requirements of licensing, the licence of the educational institution for implementing educational programmes may be withdrawn. As of January 2012, the number of non-state higher education institutions was 44. During 2012-2015 as a result of observations on the compliance with the mandatory licence conditions and requirements, 8 licences under higher professional education programmes were terminated, 3 licences under secondary vocational education programmes and 5 licences under general education programmes were suspended, 3 educational institutions implementing secondary vocational education programmes and 5 educational institutions implementing general education programmes received warning, 2 higher education institutions were dissolved and merged. Currently totally 37 non-state higher professional, 16 secondary vocational and 48 general education institutions operate in the Republic of Armenia.

Religious education

The principles of state policy in the field of education referred to in the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On education" state that education in educational institutions is of secular nature. Religious activities and advocacy in educational institutions are prohibited.

The subject entitled "History of the Armenian Church" is taught in 5-11th grades of general education schools, which contains information on history, cultures and religions of other peoples and nations. Some studies show that most of the representatives of religious organisations hold positive attitude towards the subject entitled "History of the Armenian Church" by considering the topics thereof as a part of national history and, in case it does not contradict the beliefs thereof, they learn it with pleasure. In parallel to this, according to an established point of view the textbooks on the subject entitled "History of the Armenian Church" are much more aimed at the instruction of theology of the Armenian Church[25]. Still in 2013 the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended Armenia to review the academic programmes of schools so that to reflect the freedom of religion[26]. Meanwhile, as a result of inquiries conducted among children of religious and national minorities it was found that sometimes they were compelled to carry out ritual actions (for example,

[25] "Issues of religious education in general education schools of the Republic of Armenia", S. Danielyan, A. Ghazaryan, H. Hovhannisyan, A. Avtandilyan, 2012 http://www.religions.am/files/7318/pastathter/ps7.pdf.
[26]http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fARM%2fCO%2f3-4&Lang=en.

praying or crossing oneself) during the course on “History of the Armenian Church”[27]. In contrast to such points of view, we would like to state the following: the academic programme of the subject entitled “History of the Armenian Church” includes the history of traditional classical religions, as well as the history of Christianity including the widespread and main stories from the Bible which are exclusively presented as historical events and not as theological stories or dictated faith.

The subject is aimed at contributing to the generalisation of national-spiritual description of the rising generation by having it familiarised with and communicated to national and universal values. This issue is of special importance in respect of transmitting common moral values and concepts to the new generation, as in many countries of the world and in Armenia as well, the church is considered as the most important institute possessing universal values. Consequently, the course makes an important contribution to the harmonised formation of common world outlook, psychology and moral perceptions of learners. The course is also aimed at completing the scope of questions relating to the subjects on Armenian studies — the History and Culture of Armenia, thus fostering knowledge of learners on these subjects, communicating additional necessary information, as well as revealing spiritual and religious factors that condition the course of many events and phenomena. The course also helps to etymologize a number of questions concerning our life and household activities, the explanation whereof is related to national and religious traditions. It also helps to perceive a number of values of Western, in particular, Pan-European life, which are also related to Christianity. The textbooks on the subject entitled “History of the Armenian Church” have been worked out by the subject-related specialists of the National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and the specialists of the Christian Education Centre of Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin.

At the same time an improvement of school education programmes on religion and faith has been carried out, *i.e.* professional meeting-seminars have been held for those responsible in the field of education, teachers, as well as some Toledo Guiding Principles have been included in the programme on professional training course for teachers teaching the subject entitled “History of the Armenian Church” of general education schools.

[27] http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Publications/2014_Field_Study_Rights_of_Chidren_arm.p.

The rights and obligations of parents are enshrined in Article 36 of the amendments made to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, adopted on 6 December 2015: “Parents shall have the right and responsibility to take care of the upbringing, education, health, full and harmonious development of their children”. While the rights of the child are enshrined in Article 37: “A child shall have the right to freely express his or her opinion, which, as of the age and maturity of the child, shall be taken into consideration in matters concerning him or her.The interests of the child must be attached primary importance in the matters concerning him or her”. Article 41 of the Constitution states the following: “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to change one’s religion or beliefs, and freedom — either individually or jointly with others — to manifest them, in public or in private, in preaching, church ceremonies, other rites of worship, or in other forms”. The rights and obligations of learners and parents are enshrined also in Articles 20 and 28 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On general education”.

3.9 Rights of national minorities

- What are the rights given to national minorities to carry out their own educational activities protected?
- As regards the educational standards in educational institutions run by minorities, please describe the legal and policy framework existing in your country.

11 ethnic communities — Assyrian, Yezidi, Kurdish, Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Georgian, Jewish, Polish, Greek, German, as well as more than 30 non-governmental organisations of these communities continue to operate, in a self-organised manner, within the Republic of Armenia the activities whereof are mainly aimed at preservation and development of the native language and culture.

Pursuant to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which has entered into force, on the part of the Republic of Armenia, from 1 May 2002, Assyrian, Yezidi, Greek, Russian and Kurdish languages have been recognized as regional languages or as languages of national minorities.

The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia is deemed as the main core element for implementation of state policy on the protection of the rights of persons holding affiliation to national minorities. In particular, pursuant to Article 38 of the amendments made to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia adopted on 6 December 2015: “Everyone shall have the right to education. The programmes on and duration of compulsory education shall be prescribed by law. Secondary education in state education institutions shall be free of charge. Everyone shall, in the cases and under the procedure provided for by law, have the right to receive free education on a competitive basis in state higher and other vocational education institutions”. While Article 56 states: “Everyone shall have the right to preserve his or her national and ethnic identity. Persons holding affiliation to national minorities shall have the right to preserve and develop their traditions, religion, language and culture”.

Pursuant to the Laws of the Republic of Armenia “On general education” and “On language”, the general education and upbringing in the communities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia may be organised in their native language, within state programme and under state sponsorship, by compulsory instruction of the Armenian language”.

At the same time, pursuant to Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No 1392-N of 25 July 2002, in individual cases (at schools in mountainous, highland, borderline rural settlements, in urban and rural schools possessing classes in the languages of national minorities and in other cases) a class with less learners may be opened upon the authorisation of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. This Decision provides an opportunity of opening classes comprised of only Yezidi children in Yezidi-populated communities. Pursuant to the Procedure “For enrolment of a learner in an educational institution implementing basic general education programmes of the Republic of Armenia, for the transfer and dismissal of a learner from the institution, as well as for the organisation of education of children having been enrolled in general education later than the prescribed period”, approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 400-N of 5 May 2016 “On making amendments to the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia No 388-N of 3 March 2012”, the learner holding affiliation to a national minority is enrolled in

school (class) providing an instruction of the national (native) language of the learner or in school (class) providing a course on that language, whereas in case of non-availability thereof — the parent of the learner selects the language of instruction.

Within the framework of the 2012-2017 programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, the possibility of of receiving basic education of high quality on the part of the representatives of national minorities is expanded. Pursuant to the programme and timetable for the development of education of national minorities elaborated by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, each year school textbooks are published and republished for the schools of national minorities, and regular trainings are conducted for teachers of the schools of national minorities.

Each year the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia approves model curriculumof general education schools (classes) of national minorities where class hours are allocated for studying native language, literature, culture and history of national minorities for the 1st-12th grades (41 class hours per week).

For the instruction of the subject entitled “Native Language and Literature” 4 class hours a week are allocated for 1st-5th grades each, and 3 class hours a week — for the 6 th-12th grades each. Furthermore, in the settlements with mixed population where the number of national minorities is small, an opportunity of facultative instruction of language is envisaged. The instruction of Yezidi and Kurdish is carried out in elementary grades of the schools of rural areas resided by Yezidis and Kurds in case of availability of relevant specialist, irrespective of the number of children.

The Yezidis, Kurdish and Assyrians residing in Armenia have created an educational and methodical basis in general education system with the support of state institutions. There subject-oriented Commissions on “Iranian Studies” and “Semasiology” are operating within the National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia which carry out expertise of academic programmes, textbooks, manuals in the Yezidi, Kurdish and Assyrian languages.

A database of pupils representing national minorities has been created within the Department of General Education of the Staff of Yerevan Municipality in order to involve them in their national holidays or in other events and to encourage them.

On the basis of preliminary applications submitted by the communities of national minorities residing in Armenia funds are allocated from the State Budget for the publication of textbooks. Due to the allocated funds the following has been published:

1) textbooks for 1st-4th grades in the Assyrian language, textbook for the 1st grade entitled “Speak in Assyrian” and textbook-copybook for 1st-2nd grades entitled “Write and read in Assyrian”,

2) the Kurdish “ABC book”, the Kurdish textbooks for the 2th-9th grades,

3) the “ABC book” for the Yezidi language, the Yezidi textbooks designed for 2nd-12th grades. The Yezidi Community has also shown active participation in the elaboration of these textbooks.

4) the standard and the syllabus for 1st-12th grades of Kurdish and Assyrian have been approved;

5) the textbook entitled “Armenian studies-5” and textbooks on Mathematics for higher grades have been translated from Armenian into Russian and provided to the pupils of the schools of national minorities by the National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia,

6) the syllubus for 1st-9th grades for the Yezidi language, the Yezidi language textbooks for 1st-9th grades and those for 11th grade — in an electronic form, are posted at http://lib.armedu.am, *i.e.* in the “Database of Resources” sub-site of the “Armenian Educational Environment” portal operated by the National Institute of Educational Technologies. The electronic Kurdish language textbooks for 2nd-7th grades are also posted here,

7) training courses have been organised for 21 teachers teaching Yezidi (2013), 16 teachers teaching Kurdish (2014), 7 teachers teaching Assyrian (2015).

Due to lack of highly-qualified teachers of the Yezidi language, the Yezidi language is taught, by way exception, by teachers recommended by non-governmental

organisations, who do not possess relevant education. Non-governmental organisations of national minorities in the Republic of Armenia have established Sunday schools operating in their languages. In 1995, “Arbela” Armenian-Russian-Assyrian scientific and cultural centre was established in the secondary school in Verin Dvin and operates up to now. Events entitled “My native language”, “Our language is the token of our existence” (the Assyrian language day — on 21 April), have been held and are currently held at school. The Assyrian New year — Hab-Nisan, is celebrated as well. Polish, Greek, Georgian, Jewish, German, Belarusian and Ukrainian Sunday schools operate as of 2014. The courses are open to everyone, without restrictions on age and nationality. The courses are arranged at the Culture house allocated by the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the educational and cultural activities of national minorities. Where necessary, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia renders assistance by providing premises in schools in order to open centres, Sunday schools for national minorities. For instance, a lecture hall has been provided within the territory of basic high school of Gyumri Pedagogical University to the "Polonia" Alliance of the Poles of Armenia Charitable Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and the Sunday school.

Classes with the instruction of the Russian language operate in 42 general education schools for the population of Russian and Slavic national origin, where the instruction of general education subjects is carried out in Russian, except for the subjects entitled “Armenian language and literature” and the “History of Armenia”. Meanwhile, around 60 general education schools are available in the Republic, which provide advanced instruction of the Russian language: the Russian language is taught starting from the 1st grade. Special textbooks and methodological manuals have been published for these schools. Textbooks recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, as well as syllabuses recommended and approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia are used at schools (classes) with the instruction of Russian language.

Training courses, seminar-consultations, “Best Teacher of the Year” contests on the Russian language and other events are organised jointly with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and the National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, the Russian Centre of Science and Culture in Yerevan. Training courses for teachers are

organised also in the Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University. The list of subjects of school Olympiads held annually in the Republic includes also those on the Russian language (school, district, municipal, marz [regional] and republican stages). Contests and festivals dedicated to the Russian language are organised as well. The schoolchildren of Armenia take part in the distance Olympiad of the Russian language. Educational and methodical literature is annually imported into Armenia from the Russian Federation. The “Russian Language in Armenia” journal is published in the Republic of Armenia and is provided to all schools free of charge.

Within the scope of “Education Quality and Relevance” credit project, in the communities of Dvin and Dimitrov of Ararat Marz of the Republic of Armenia, pre-school groups have been set up where Assyrian children of pre-school age, whereas in the community of Shamiram of Aragatsotn marz — Yezidi children of pre-school age are also involved; repair and finishing works, as well as those on the provision of property have been carried out. Pre-school education centres have been established in school buildings in a number of rural communities of marzes of Shirak, Aragatsotn, Armavir and Ararat of the Republic of Armenia, where classes operate for children of national minorities, aged 4-5, during the first half of the day.

On the whole in 2014-2015 academic year, totally 473 children from the families of national minorities were involved in the pre-school education institutions of the Republic of Armenia.

The mentioned initiative enables to make the pre-school education available for the children of senior pre-school age. At the same time it expands the enrolment of children of national minorities in general education programmes, and facilitates their integration and assists the instruction of the Armenian language. No restriction (on the grounds of nationality, ethnic, gender and other affiliation) is imposed in respect of enrolment in pre-school groups.

The applicants holding affiliation to national minorities of the Republic of Armenia are admitted to higher education institutions both on general grounds and based on the applications submitted by the heads of national minorities.

Since 2007, each year based on the results of admission examinations, upon the recommendation of the community concerned, seats have been provided, on a non-competitive basis, to the representatives of national minorities, *i.e.* those from

Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish communities, for the purpose of studying at the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Yerevan State University. Whereas since 2010 — each year, representatives of other national minorities having been proposed by the organisations representing relevant communities in the Council and having expressed a wish to study in the departments related to culture and language at higher education institutions with the aim of developing national culture and language, also have the opportunity to avail of these privileges upon the decision of the Republican Admission Commission. In 2012, 1 seat was allocated for the representatives of each of Assyrian and Yezidi communities, in 2014 — 2 seats for those of Yezidi community, in 2015 — 1 seat for the representatives of each of Assyrian and Yezidi communities. Subsequently, upon the motion of the Coordinating Council for National and Cultural Organisations of National Minorities of the Republic of Armenia, the higher education institutions apply full or partial discount of the tuition fee for students. It should be mentioned with regret that proper interest and motivation for higher professional education yet have not been developed among national minorities. With a view of raising awareness among them, particularly at the initiative of the Yezidi community, numerous events are organised aimed at increasing the focus by the Yezidis on the professional education, which are actively attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia.

The applicants holding affiliation to national minorities, who are admitted to state higher education institutions, avail of the privileges defined by the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On education”, including participation in the rotation process arranged at higher education institutions, as well as enjoy the right to discount of the tuition fee in the prescribed manner, are provided with state educational allowances, participate, as of their preferences and in the prescribed manner, in inter-higher education institution and intra- higher education institution exchange process, participate in the admission to Master’s Degree studies, etc.

Pursuant to point 2 of the Decision No 399-N of 4 April 2013 of the Government of the Republic of Armenia “On approval of seats, as of professions, under the Master’s Degree educational programme for on-site instruction with full refund (free of charge) of tuition fee provided by the State in the form of student allowance for the 2013-2014 academic year of higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia”, one of the

reserve seats under the Master's Degree educational programme for on-site instruction with full refund of (free of charge) tuition fee in the form of student allowances was provided to a representative of the Yezidi community upon the order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, in order to continue the education within Master's Degree studies with the specialisation in Oriental studies (Iranian studies) of Yerevan State University.

Classic Assyrian is taught in the second semester of the first year and in the first semester of the second year under the Master's Programme at the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Yerevan State University, and Yezidi language is taught at the Faculty of Oriental Studies if the instruction of this language corresponds to the profession chosen by the student.

The students of Yerevan State University, Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences, Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan, Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute after M. Nalbandyan, Vanadzor State University after H. Tumanyan, Gavar State University and Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University attend the course on the Russian language as a compulsory subject during each academic year.

Yerevan branch of Ternopil National Economic University — state higher education institution of Ukraine, and the branches of state and non-state higher education institutions of the Russian Federation also operate in the Republic of Armenia.

III. Methods used to draw the attention of the various authorities in the country to the instruments and to remove the obstacles encountered

1. Challenges and obstacles – Please provide information on

1.1 The difficulties and obstacles encountered in the process of implementing the key provisions of the Convention/Recommendation.

1.2 The main issues that need to be addressed for promoting further the implementation of equality of educational opportunities in your country.

1.3 Brief assessment of the effectiveness of the methods introduced to remove obstacles encountered.

Integration of refugee (in particular Syrian-Armenian) children

- transition from Western Armenian to Eastern Armenian creates difficulties for immigrant schoolchildren of Armenian national origin,
- Russian language, as a new foreign language, is difficult to learn which impedes the process of effectively mastering the educational programme,
- the cultural differences between learners hinder the process of effective communication; sometimes these cultural differences give rise to discriminatory treatment,
- pedagogues lack necessary experience and skills in dealing with Syrian-Armenian children; besides pedagogues need to be provided with psychological assistance,
- activities aimed at extracurricular/out-of-school upbringing of children are not effectively organised. The social condition of families impedes the effective organisation of leisure of children, particularly attendance thereby in interest groups in music, art, sports which are mainly arranged on paid basis,
- children residing in rural communities do not have an opportunity to visit cultural centres (museum, theatre, cinema, concert hall, etc.) since such visits assume transportation costs which may become an additional financial burden for their families.

Accessibility of education and participation

- the enrolment indicator of learners in the third degree of general education is law,
- the enrolment of the poor, especially those in extreme poverty, as well as the representatives of national minorities in higher professional education system is low,

- general education schools have limited capacities for providing education to children in need of special conditions for education; the teaching staff needs trainings on inclusive education,
- higher education is not sufficiently accessible and available for persons in need of special conditions for education,
- educational and material resources and conditions of buildings of many educational institutions fail to comply with contemporary requirements.
- most of the buildings of educational institutions were built still in 1970s. In particular, 32.4% of general education schools needs capital repair, whereas 16.4% thereof — routine repair. At the same time, gas supply is not available in 30.3% of schools and water supply is not available in 6.6% thereof.[28] Building conditions of educational institutions are not accessible for persons with disabilities so they must be adapted,
- the educational standards, subject syllabuses and textbooks, as well as the requirements to learners of general education schools need to be reviewed,
- the network of hostel buildings is required to be improved in accordance with the format of urban-type European universities.

Legislative/legal framework

- Legal grounds deriving from the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On education" and the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On general education" need to be elaborated and approved for the transition to inclusive education.

Education management

- the system of keeping on records the children having been dropped out of schools and that of involvement thereof in education, is incomplete,
- the data on the involvement of children in need of special conditions for education are not complete,

[28] "Social State of the Republic of Armenia", 2014.

- a non-classified official statistics on the inclusion of national minorities in different educational levels is not collected,
- an official statistics on the cases of violence against children in general education schools and on reasons giving rise thereto, is not collected. For the purpose of giving an assessment to the mentioned phenomenon inquiries and surveys are sometimes carried out upon the initiative of separate organisations.

2. Awareness-raising

2.1 Briefly describe activities carried out to:

- draw the attention of the various authorities of the country to the Convention/Recommendation
- raise public awareness of the principles of non-discrimination and equality of educational opportunities enshrined in the Convention and the Recommendation, and their national or local dissemination, in particular to non-governmental organizations.

For the purpose of raising public awareness on the provisions of the Convention Against Discrimination in Education and the Recommendation the authorities of the Republic of Armenia have adopted the principle of transparent and reporting policy (legal and institutional) which enables to permanently keep the principles of implementation of the provisions of the mentioned documents and the problems arisen in these processes in the centre of attention of the State and public. Thus, contributing to awareness-raising of the wide public, this policy also promotes the involvement of representatives of the wide layers of the society in these processes.

All public administration bodies of the Republic of Armenia, including the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, are provided with operating websites which introduce on a regular basis information on implemented, as well as upcoming projects and events. The information on the most important projects is disseminated via respective press releases (https://www.e-gov.am; http://www.edu.am; http://www.mindiaspora.am; http://www.mincult.am;

http://www.mlsa.am). Simultaneously, information and public relations subdivisions operate within the structure of Republican executive bodies, which ensure public awareness on the activities of ministries, contacts with mass media and non-governmental organisations, provision of informative materials on the topics of public interest etc.

Legal acts and other related documents aimed at the implementation at national level of the provisions of the Convention and the Recommendation concerning the protection of the rights of national minorities are posted in Armenian, Russian and English languages on the official website of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (http://www.gov.am).

The Government of the Republic of Armenia, with the purpose of raising the level of awareness in areas populated by national minorities, has assigned the Marzpetarans [regional governors' offices] of the Republic of Armenia to post on their websites information on national minorities residing in marzes [regions**]**, on relevant events and programmes implemented in relevant sphere, as well as to post the package of documents related to the sphere or make a reference to the website of the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

Besides, during regular visits made to the residences of national minorities, during meetings with the representatives of non-governmental organisations, heads of communities and principals of schools, the employees of the Division for National Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia provide them with the above-mentioned documents and legal acts in an electronic medium.

A three-part collection entitled "A Selection of Documents Regarding the Rights of National Minorities", elaborated and printed by the OSCE Yerevan Office, has been published upon the cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and the Division for National Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. The selection contains the main documents of the UN, the CoE, the OSCE and the main legislative acts of the Republic of Armenia regarding the rights of national minorities. This collection is mostly important in terms of awareness-raising in respect of the rights of the

representatives of national minorities, as well as with regard to its applied relevance for the respective state bodies of the Republic of Armenia.

2.2 Please specify activities undertaken or supported by the National Commission with a view of

- promoting the Convention/Recommendation
- fostering debate on critical issues, in relation to the rights enshrined in theinstruments

The Convention Against Discrimination in Education and the Recommendation have been translated into Armenian and have been published in the Official Journal of International Treaties of the Republic of Armenia N4(12) of 20 December 2004. Official journals are published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and delivered to all central bodies of public administration of the Republic of Armenia and all bodies and entities of the marzes thereof, to all central libraries and those of the communities, as well as to higher education institutions.

The Armenian translation of the above-mentioned documents, legal acts and national projects aimed at the implementation of the provisions thereof, information on the events organised within the framework thereof is posted on the official website of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia (http://www.edu.am); on-line discussions on individual issues are organised under “Public Discussions” section. The whole information is provided on a regular basis to different beneficiaries of the field concerned (educational institutions, academic and scientific centres, NGOs and so on).

Round-table discussions and consultations are organised on a regular basis with the participation of public administration bodies and representatives of civil society during which the objectives and principles of the Convention and the Recommendation, legislative acts aimed at the implementation thereof, the activities of the competent bodies of the field are introduced, existing problems are discussed and solutions are proposed, more coordinated approaches are followed.

While drawing up target projects the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia organises inter-agency discussions and public hearings during

which the representatives of the communities, different social groups of Armenia are granted with an opportunity of introducing the opinions and positions thereof.

Armenian educational centres of the Diaspora, all Armenian community, Pan-Armenian, spiritual scientific and educational entities thereof are informed about all assistance projects aimed at meeting educational needs and handling educational problems of the Diaspora, by using Internet and on-line technical means, phone line, social networks, the official website of the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia (http://www.mindiaspora.am), “Armenians today” electronic newspaper. The project packages are disseminated also abroad by means of diplomatic representatives and consular offices of the Republic of Armenia.

Table 1. Millennium Development Goals of Armenia.

Time Series of indicators*

Goals	Targets	Indicators	2001	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Source**
MDG 2. Ensure Universal Primary Education	Target 3. Ensure elementary general education for all children (for boys and girls equally) and everywhere by 2015.	6. Gross enrolment ratio in educational institutions, %							Administrative Register
		- elementary (1-4th grades)	94.6	96,8	96,7	95,2	94,1	93,1	
		- basic (1-9th grades)		91,6	97,0	94,8	92,6	92,6	
		- high (10-12th grades)		84,4	79,3	74,1	74,0	72,4	
		- secondary (1-12th grades)	86,8	90,1	92,0	89,2	87,9	87,8	
		- primary vocational (handicraft)		7,6	4,4	6,1	7,2	7,4	RA NSS
		- secondary vocational		8,7	10,1	11,0	12,2	12,2	
		- Bachelor's Degree studies		44,0	43,2	44,9	46,9	46,8	
		- Master's Degree studies		8,3	10,1	10,2	12,6	13,5	
		7. Ratio of the number of pupils having reached the 5th grade to the number of pupils admitted to the 1st grade, %	89,2	96,0	93,1	93,8	93,9	93,8	Administrative Register
		8. Literacy rate of persons aged 15 to 24, %	100,0		100,0				Census
MDG 3. Promote Gender Equality and Enhance Women's	Target 4. Eliminate gender disparity by 2005 in the levels of primary and secondary	9. Ratio of the number of girls and boys in education systems:							Administrative Register

Rights	education, whereas by 2015— in all levels of education.								
		- elementary (1-4th grades)	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	
		- basic (1-9th grades)		1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	
		- high (10-12th grades)		1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2	
		- secondary (1-12th grades)	1,1	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	
		- primary vocational (handicraft)		0,4	0,3	0,4	0,4	0,4	RA NSS
		- secondary vocational		1,6	1,3	1,2	1,2	1,3	
		- Bachelor's Degree studies		1,2	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	
		- Master's Degree studies		2,2	2,4	2,1	1,9	1,8	
		10. Ratio of the number of literate women and men aged 15 to 24	1,0		1,0				Census

- See definitions of the Millennium Development Goals, limit values, calculation methodologies at http://www.un.am/en/MDGs_in_Armenia
- ** AR — Administrative Register
- RA NSS — National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia
- Census — Summary materials for Censuses of the Republic of Armenia for 2001 and 2011

Table 2. Statistical data on educational institutions, composition of learners therein and teaching staff (2011-2014)

1. State general education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of institutions	1396	1388	1389	1391
Total number of learners	380696	361228	353580	352029
Girls out of which:	183386 (48.2%)	173769 (48.1%)	169725 (48.0%)	167951 (47.7%)
Number of learners of 1-9th grades	288596	281207	278931	282860
Girls out of which:	135056 (46.8%)	131908 (46.9%)	130909 (46.9%)	132168 (46.7%)
Number of learners of 10-12th grades	92100	80021	74649	69169
Girls out of which:	48330 (52.5%)	41861 (52.3%)	38816 (52.0%)	35783 (51.7%)

2. Non-state general education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of institutions	45	47	45	46
Total number of learners	5743	7480	6866	7530
Girls out of which:	2567 (44.7%)	3349 (44.8%)	3061 (44.6%)	3420 (45.4%)
Number of learners of 1-9th grades	3950	4913	4744	5331
Girls out of which:	1706 (43.2%)	2114 (43.0%)	2022 (42.6%)	2330 (43.7%)
Number of learners of 10-12th grades	1793	2567	2122	2199
Girls out of which:	861 (48.0%)	1235 (48.1%)	1039 (49.0%)	1090 (49.6%)

3. Pedagogical composition of state general education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of pedagogues	40715	39566	38529	37560
Women out of which:	34255 (84.1%)	33369 (84.3%)	32697 (84.9%)	31961 (85.1%)

4. Pedagogical composition of non-state general education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of pedagogues	1042	1264	1314	1458
Women out of which:	862 (82.7%)	1036 (82.0%)	1082 (82.3%)	1188 (81.5%)

5. Educational institutions implementing primary vocational (handicraft) education programmes

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of institutions	43	43	45	44
Total number of learners	5614	6853	7448	7295
Women out of which:	1323 (23.6%)	1820 (26.6%)	1795 (24.1%)	1839 (25.2%)
Number of learners studying free of charge	5207	6312	7121	7154
Women out of which:	1215 (23.3%)	1607 (25.5%)	1673 (23.5%)	1809 (25.3%)
Number of learners studying on paid basis	407	541	327	141
Women out of which:	108 (26.5%)	213 (39.4%)	122 (37.3%)	30 (21.3%)

6. Pedagogical and teaching staff of primary (handicraft) vocational education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of pedagogical and teaching staff	1065	936	1058	987

Women out of which:	707 (66.4%)	604 (64.5%)	679 (64.2%)	614 (62.2%)

7. State secondary vocational education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of institutions	79	81	82	83
Total number of learners	27381	27452	28333	26846
Women out of which:	15128 (55.2%)	14222 (51.8%)	14839 (52.4%)	14308 (53.3%)
Number of learners studying free of charge	8417	9506	11199	13931
Women out of which:	4616 (54.8%)	4858 (51.1%)	6011 (53.7%)	7601 (54.6%)
Number of learners studying on paid basis	18964	17946	17134	12915
Women out of which:	10512 (55.4%)	9364 (52.2%)	8828 (51.5%)	6707 (51.9%)
Number of learners studying under on-site instruction	25663	26032	27230	25920
Women out of which:	14442 (56.3%)	13735 (52.8%)	14491 (53.2%)	14018 (54.1%)
Number of learners studying under off-site instruction	1718	1420	1103	926
Women out of which:	686 (39,9%)	487 (34.3%)	348 (31.5%)	290 (31.3%)

8. Pedagogical and teaching staff of state secondary vocational education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of pedagogical and teaching staff	3545	3449	3842	4052
Women out of which:	2682 (75.7%)	2604 (75.5%)	2887 (75.1%)	3052 (75.3%)

9. Non-state secondary vocational education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of institutions	18	18	17	16
Total number of learners	1826	1855	1792	1637
Women out of which:	1211 (66.3%)	1273 (68.6%)	1212 (67.6%)	1207 (73.7%)

10. Pedagogical and teaching staff of non-state secondary vocational education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of pedagogical and teaching staff	264	250	250	264
Women out of which:	204 (77.3%)	184 (73.6%)	188 (75.2%)	194 (73.5%)

11. State higher professional education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of institutions / number of branches	23/12	23/12	23/12	23/12
Total number of learners	80400	76730	73576	69538
Women out of which:	42336 (52.7%)	40015 (52.2%)	39165 (53.2%)	36744 (52.8%)
Number of learners studying under free of charge system	14169	11825	11310	9460
Women out of which:	7425 (52.4%)	5892 (49.8%)	4886 (43.2%)	4491 (47.5%)
Number of learners studying under paid system	66231	64905	62266	60078
Women out of which:	34911 (52.7%)	34123 (52.6%)	34279 (55.0%)	32253 (53.7%)

Number of learners studying under on-site instruction	51960	48780	45686	44358
Women out of which:	28965 (55.7%)	28050 (57.5%)	27650 (60.5%)	26993 (60.8%)
Number of learners studying under off-site instruction	28440	27950	27890	25180
Women out of which:	13371 (47.0%)	11965 (42.8%)	11515 (41.3%)	9751 (38.7%)

12. Non-state higher professional education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of institutions	45	42	40	39
Total number of learners	14908	13415	12346	10085
Women out of which:	8163 (54.8%)	6972 (52.0%)	5901 (47.8%)	4835 (47.9%)
Number of learners studying under on-site instruction	10700	8733	7341	5348
Women out of which:	6463 (60.4%)	5084 (58.2%)	3956 (53.9%)	2804 (52.4%)
Number of learners studying under off-site instruction	4208	4682	5005	4737
Women out of which:	1700 (40.4%)	1888 (40.3%)	1945 (38.9%)	2031 (42.9%)

13. Academic and teaching staff of state higher professional education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of academic and teaching staff	10784	10126	10295	9931
Women out of which:	5242 (48.6%)	5086 (50.2%)	5261 (51.1%)	5157 (51.9%)

14. Academic and teaching staff of non-state higher professional education institutions

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of academic and teaching staff	1841	1641	1538	1427
Women out of which:	959 (52.1%)	860 (52.4%)	807 (52.5%)	761 (53.3%)

15. Education under Bachelor's Degree studies and Master's Degree studies

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number of learners studying under Master's Degree studies	11547	12105	14932	14476
Women out of which:	8180 (70.8%)	8259 (68.2%)	9978 (66.8%)	9522 (65.8%)
Total number of learners studying under Doctoral studies	1054	1104	1241	1223
Women out of which:	432 (41.0%)	463 (41.9%)	630 (50.8%)	646 (52.8%)