

RECOMMENDATION No. 2

concerning

ADMISSION TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

(1934)

The Conference,

While recognising that diversity of circumstances compels different countries to adopt different systems of organization,

Believing that a certain number of pupils admitted into secondary schools are incapable of benefiting sufficiently from the regular secondary curriculum,

Believing on the other hand that the overcrowding of institutions of higher education and the extent of unemployment among the intellectual classes, are likely to cause dangerous unrest among young people,

That this overcrowding of institutions of higher education is due, among other causes, to the very laudable desire for general culture and the determination to be assured of the advantages of good moral and material conditions in life,

That it is important for the social life of nations, as well as in the interest of individuals, to prepare—along with an elite belonging to the liberal vocations—commercial, industrial, agricultural elites, etc., corresponding to the different types of economic activity, yet possessing at the same time a truly general culture,

1) Deems it necessary, in order to avoid, as far as possible, errors in the guidance of pupils and the discouragement resulting therefrom, to organize vocational guidance during the last compulsory year of elementary school, so that advice to the pupils will be given after collaboration with the teacher, the doctor and the office of vocational guidance—the final decision however to rest with the family;

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2) Believes it desirable to establish better coordination between the elementary school curriculum and the curricula of the secondary schools in order to ensure, especially in the first years of schooling, easy passage from one type of school to another;

3) Wishes to emphasise the importance of the type of schools called in some countries "middle schools", in others "senior elementary schools", "schools of pre-vocational guidance", etc., which though not having as their aim preparation for the universities, are able to give their pupils both sufficient general culture and a practical training, preparing them directly either for immediate entry into a profession, or for certain higher vocational schools;

4) Believes it desirable to improve the methods of selection for admission to secondary schools properly so-called. For this selection the following factors should be taken into consideration:

a) The leaving certificate of the elementary school, as well as the individual report of the elementary school teachers;

b) An examination conducted according to scientific methods aiming not only to determine the knowledge acquired, but also the capacity of the student for continuing his studies;

5) Notes with interest that in several countries there are, sitting on commissions of vocational guidance and of selection, either representatives of the teaching body, or representatives of the parents, and in some cases representatives of both;

6) Draws the attention of the school authorities to the fact that, as all selection means forced elimination, every pupil refused admittance to the secondary schools proper should be guided towards other studies or towards a practical vocational training corresponding with his aptitudes;

7) In spite of the complexity of the problem of free schooling and the diverse conditions in different countries, believes that school fees should in no case prevent attendance at secondary schools;

8) Consequently attaches the greatest importance to the granting of scholarships, the amount of which should cover as completely as possible the cost of studies, and if the financial position of the parents demands it, should even compensate for the child's loss of wages.