

RECOMMENDATION No. 4

concerning

**THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL TEACHERS**

(1935)

1) The Conference,

Considering that the present economic and social conditions, and the development of knowledge have made the task of elementary school teachers much more difficult and more complex;

That, in the work of education, it is the personality of the teacher which is the decisive factor, and that, consequently, the problem of the professional training of future teachers assumes great importance;

That, in connection with this training, it is necessary to take full account, not only of general and pedagogical knowledge properly so called, but also and especially of moral values;

Is glad to see that, in nearly all countries, this question of the preparation of elementary school teachers occupies a foremost place in the thoughts of school authorities.

2) While bearing in mind the differences of training imposed in the different countries by historic, geographic, economic and social conditions,

The Conference notes that there is a current of opinion in favour of training elementary school teachers in Universities or University Institutes of Education, or in Teachers' Colleges, after the completion of secondary school studies.

3) The Conference expresses the wish,

That the age of admission to the teaching profession and, consequently, that the age of admission to training centres, should be such

R4

that the young teacher, before entering upon his duties, shall have acquired a sufficient moral and intellectual maturity, and a deep consciousness of the importance of his task and of his responsibilities;

That the selection of candidates should not depend solely on knowledge acquired, but that moral, intellectual and physical aptitudes should be seriously taken into account;

That the studies of future elementary school teachers should be free or that, at any rate, scholarships should be awarded to deserving but necessitous candidates.

4) The Conference,

Believes that professional and pedagogical training properly so called should be given in addition to a good general culture;

That, consequently, the duration of studies should be such that the pupils shall be assured, without overworking, both a general culture and a sufficient professional training;

That, nevertheless, it is possible to give this general culture first and to leave to the training centres (Universities, Faculties of Education, University Institutes of Education, Academies or Teachers' Colleges, Training Colleges or Normal Schools) only the professional training, at least in countries where it is not deemed possible to ensure the whole of the general culture and the pedagogical training in the same school.

5) The Conference,

Believes that, in view of the professional training of future elementary school teachers, the curricula and the time-tables should include not only the theoretical study of education and of the auxiliary sciences, but also serious practical training;

That a place should also be given to those economic and artistic disciplines in which elementary school teachers must later initiate the pupils entrusted to their care, either in schools or in organizations of post-school education; and that, in addition, account should be taken of the important role of physical culture in training the personality;

Hopes that the professional training (pedagogical, social and practical) of future elementary school teachers will be inspired by the principles underlying the most progressive thought in education, and will reserve a sufficient place to individual research, and considers that the professional training should be of such a nature that an intimate contact between future teachers and the populations they will have to teach, especially in rural districts, may be assured;

That particular importance will be accorded to the model schools annexed, and that these will include rural schools as well as urban schools.

6) The Conference,

Believes that the training of urban teachers, and of rural teachers where it is deemed necessary to differentiate, should be of the same level and should confer the same status;

Points out, moreover, that, in several countries, future elementary school teachers, in addition to their general professional training, specialise in certain particular disciplines which they will afterwards teach, at least to the older pupils of the elementary schools.

7) The Conference,

Believes that the young teachers should not be permanently appointed until they have completed a sufficiently long period of probation, rationally organized and properly controlled;

Expresses the hope that refresher courses for teachers actively engaged in teaching will be generalised and become a permanent institution.