

RECOMMENDATION No. 34
TO THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION
concerning
ACCESS OF WOMEN TO EDUCATION
(1952)

The International Conference on Public Education,

Convened at Geneva by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Bureau of Education, and being assembled on the seventh July, nineteen hundred and fifty-two for its fifteenth session, adopts on the fifteenth of July, nineteen hundred and fifty-two, the following recommendation:

The Conference,

Considering that every person without distinction of sex should enjoy all the rights and freedoms proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and that such equality should apply in all fields, particularly in that of education;

Considering that every person, man or woman, should be able to receive an education enabling him to develop his aptitudes as fully as possible, play an effective part as a member or citizen of his community his nation and the world, and meet the demands of his special tasks in life;

Considering that in principle, women, like men, should have opportunity to fulfil the tasks appropriate to their aptitudes;

Considering that, account being taken of differences in psycho-physiological development between the sexes, general education for girls should be equal in value and status to that for boys, in order to avoid introducing or increasing social discrimination;

Considering that a varied general and specialised education will certainly help women to fulfil their essential role in the family and in society, and also to develop their special aptitudes;

Considering that nowadays more and more women are obliged to earn their own living, help support their family, or even support it entirely;

Considering that women are called on to play an increasingly active part in social and civic affairs, and that in this respect they bear the same responsibility as men;

Considering that, in practice both economic factors and certain mental attitudes and ways of life limit women's opportunities for access to education, and that the measures proposed should pay due regard to these obstacles while endeavouring to moderate them as much as possible;

Recognising the necessity of adapting the measures proposed and their rate of application to the particular conditions of each country;

Submits to the Ministries of Education of the various countries the following recommendation:

**Studies and plans to facilitate women's access
to education**

1) That nationwide studies be made on the various aspects of women's access to each level and type of education, and the possibilities of using the educational qualifications they thus acquire;

2) That such studies cover among others the following topics:

a) the legal aspect of women's access to education, including not only basic legislation but also its conformity with school regulations and practice, particularly in the field of professional and higher education;

b) statistical data giving a clear idea of the present situation and future quantitative problems;

c) the positive or negative effect of social economic, educational or other factors on women's access to each level and type of education;

d) ways of taking advantage of all available opportunities to overcome obstacles to women's access to education;

e) the financial aspect of measures to be taken to give women further possibilities of access to each level and type of education;

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f) the economic and social measures to be taken to enable women to make active use of their new opportunities of education and training;

g) the actual experience of women in the new fields which are opening up to them in professional life;

3) That the groups responsible for these studies represent not only education authorities and teachers, but also other Ministries concerned, employers' and workers' associations, and the organizations most directly concerned with women's equality of access to each level of education (women's associations, parents' associations, economic and social groupings, cultural and religious organizations, etc.);

4) That, on the basis of the results of these studies, plans be drawn up to make women's education of one or more levels and types, according to the particular situation in each country, universally available;

5) That in drawing up such plans, provision be made for close coordination between the Ministry of Education and other Ministries concerned;

6) That such plans pay due regard to existing family, social, economic, and geographical conditions, etc., and the rhythm of development of each country, and be sufficiently elastic to meet the changing needs of both urban and rural areas;

7) That such plans also be widely publicised by all available means, especially through adult education, in order that the public in general and parents in particular may become familiar with them and take an active part in their implementation;

8) That the financing of new schools, the increase of teaching staff and the construction of new buildings involved by such plans, be given special consideration when each country is drawing up its budget, and that under no circumstances should the educational provision for girls be sacrificed to that for boys;

9) That the implementation of such plans be spread over as short a period as each country's economic resources and its development permit;

General measures concerning all types of education

10) That all new educational laws and regulations be based on the principle of women's equality of access to education, and so designed as to remove any existing legislation contravening this principle;

11) That a study be made of the causes of, and the remedies for, girls not attending school or leaving too early;

12) That under no circumstances should the separation of the sexes lead to the exclusion of girls; where only one school exists, it should be either mixed or available alternately to both sexes; in any case teachers should be trained to take account of differences between the sexes and of individual differences, particularly in the rhythm of psycho-physiological development;

13) That under no circumstances should the duration of compulsory education be shorter for girls than for boys;

14) That the compulsory school attendance authorities attach the same importance to school attendance by either sex;

15) That the extension of free education, a factor favourable to the principle of women's equality of access, be envisaged;

16) That women be given the same facilities (scholarships, family allowances, reduction of fees, etc.) as men to pursue and to continue their education at secondary, vocational, technical, and higher levels;

17) That the various subjects in either compulsory or optional curricula be given the same importance and duration for girls as for boys;

18) That practical courses offered as options be open equally to both sexes; on the other hand it will always be useful to provide, at every level and in every type of schooling, courses which prepare girls for their family responsibilities;

19) That moral, civic and social training and education for home and family life be included in curricula at all levels for girls and women, as for boys and men, so that women may be able to understand and shoulder their family, local, national and international tasks and responsibilities; special attention should be paid to the training of social workers;

20) That aesthetic education, essential to the development of personality, be given special attention in the case of girls and women, in order that they may participate fully in the community's artistic activities and that continuity of aesthetic values may be ensured through their influence in the family;

Measures concerning fundamental education

21) That in fundamental education projects great importance be attached to the education of women, so that women may be led to secure education for their children, having experienced its benefits themselves;

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22) That women be associated to the fullest extent possible with the planning, organization and operation of fundamental education projects;

23) That through fundamental education women be enabled to associate themselves closely with the activities and achievements of the community;

24) That fundamental education be so planned as to secure the participation of the community as a whole, and allow women to study the same subjects as men; at the same time, it should give women a practical, affective and moral education which will prepare them better to fulfil their natural role in the family and in society;

25) That for the spread of fundamental education temporary and permanent training centres should be set up; women should participate to a great extent in training, and in coordinating the work of, those engaged in fundamental education projects (teachers, social welfare workers etc.); the centre should thus lead to the enrichment of community life and culture;

26) That in addition to State activity in respect of fundamental education, every necessary opportunity be given to voluntary organizations concerned with vocational, civic, cultural and recreational education, to contribute to the advance of women's education;

27) That all official or voluntary bodies providing fundamental education for girls or women consider the establishment of nursery schools and kindergartens to look after the children of women collaborating with these bodies and to give women instruction in child care, hygiene, etc.;

Measures concerning vocational education

28) That opportunities for vocational training be equal, legally and in practice, for both sexes, account being taken of aptitudes;

29) That information and announcements about occupations trades and careers should not be limited to those traditionally feminine and those employing large numbers of women;

30) That provision be made for educational and vocational guidance services available equally to girls and boys and that they take into account the characteristics of each sex and individual aptitudes, and the conditions of the labour market;

31) That a campaign should be undertaken to show women the advantages of having as advanced a vocational and professional training as possible in fields suited to their individual aptitudes and inclinations;

32) That opportunities for complementary vocational training leading to appointment to responsible executive posts, be available for women as well as men;

Measures concerning higher education

33) That to facilitate women's access to higher education and the use of their abilities for the greatest good of society, university studies permit women to specialise in fields particularly suited to feminine aptitudes and assure them more adequate training for the new careers now being opened up to them;

Measures concerning educational staffs

34) That legally and in practice, teaching, headship, administrative, and inspection appointments at all levels of education, including vocational and higher education, be fully open to women;

35) That the required standard of teacher training for any given level or type of education be the same for both sexes;

36) That conditions of service, particularly those concerning appointment, security of tenure, salaries, and pension rights, be the same for all members of educational staffs (including administrative and inspecting staffs) with equal qualifications;

37) That such conditions of service include provisions enabling women teachers to reconcile their professional with their maternal responsibilities.