



Declaration on Future Educational Policies in the Changing Social and Economic Context

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Date(s)

Adopted on 20/10/1978

Noted by the Council on 20/10/1978

Background Information

The Declaration on Future Educational Policies in the Changing Social and Economic Context was adopted on 20 October 1978 on the occasion of the Ministerial Meeting of the Education Committee (now called Education Policy Committee). Ministers declared, that in light of the changing economic and social context, that education policy deserved to be considered a priority in signatory countries and set out a series of aims which “deserve priority consideration in the formulation of policies” in the area of educational policy.

MINISTERS OF EDUCATION OF THE OECD MEMBER COUNTRIES, AND OF YUGOSLAVIA, MEETING IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE ORGANISATION.

RECOGNISING that, in response to new economic and social conditions within the OECD area and changing economic relationships with other countries in the world, Member countries are now in a process of adaptation which requires, on the one hand, the restructuring of industry and the creation of more skilled jobs and, on the other, more knowledge, higher intellectual capacities and occupational skills, and greater inventiveness and flexibility throughout the population;

RECOGNISING that there is a common desire to improve the quality of life for all, specifically by increasing individual responsibility in the various walks of life, making intensive efforts to assist disadvantaged social groups and encouraging the participation of individuals in lifelong learning;

RECOGNISING that persisting high unemployment in the OECD area as a whole, which weighs with particular severity upon the young in many countries, calls for a vigorous response from education in collaboration with other social and economic agencies, so as to ensure the full development and use of human resources;

RECOGNISING that the fundamental purposes of education must be upheld and continuously developed for the general good, so as to provide all, young and adults, with:

- The basic knowledge, skills and the capacity to develop attitudes needed for their personal development and in their roles as individuals, family members, workers and citizens;
- The access to culture needed to lead a fuller life in an increasingly complex and interdependent world;
- The capacities to contribute creatively to social and economic change;

RECOGNISING that constitutional or institutional arrangements have implications for decision-making in educational policies that vary from one country to another;

HAVING REGARD to constitutional constraints and/or exclusive jurisdictional powers which apply in certain Member countries, with respect to educational matters;

DECLARE:

A. That, in the light of the changing economic and social context, they agree that the following aims deserve priority consideration in the formulation of policies in the Member countries and Yugoslavia:

- i) To promote the continuous development of educational standards, as conceived within each country, and to ensure that all young people are helped to acquire the basic competencies needed to embark successfully upon adult life;
- ii) To develop schools as active communities which offer a stimulating environment, contributing to the self-reliance, sense of responsibility and co-operative spirit of young people;
- iii) To improve the professional preparation of teachers and to encourage them, in the context of changing needs and tasks, to take an even more active and responsive part in strengthening the links between the school and adult life;
- iv) To adopt positive educational measures which contribute to the achievement of equality between girls and boys, women and men;
- v) To adopt positive measures to enable migrant workers and their children to profit more fully from education and training opportunities, taking into account their special needs as appropriate;

- vi) To adopt positive educational measures to promote equality for under-served groups such as the socially disadvantaged, immigrants and the handicapped;
- vii) To ensure that any necessary procedures related to educational choice, assessment and certification, take place in such a way and at such stages as to allow each pupil to develop his or her full intellectual and personal potential;
- viii) To help the young to prepare more effectively for adult life and work, by working towards the best possible balance between general and vocationally-oriented education and encouraging the provision of opportunities for work experience during schooling;
- viii) To stimulate the development of more "recurrent" educational opportunities for young people and adults to continue education at all levels after periods of work;
- ix) To facilitate the transition of young people to adult life and, in particular, to strengthen the contribution of education to solving the problem of youth unemployment, in co-operation with other authorities and groups concerned, including employer and trade union organisations, by:
 - a) Endeavouring to give all young people an opportunity to obtain a usable vocational qualification;
 - b) Expanding opportunities and providing appropriate means for unemployed young people to gain access to further education and/or specific training;
 - c) Encouraging improvements in the structure of work;

B. That the pursuit of these aims calls for efficient use of the resources made available to the educational sector, for continued improvement in the functioning of educational services, and for maintaining education as one of the most important sectors in public budgets;

C. That the pursuit of these aims calls also for closer co-operation between all those involved in education -- the authorities, teachers and parents and the students themselves -- as well as employer and trade union organisations and other concerned groups in society, in a united effort to sustain a just, broad-based and dynamic education service, and to draw on its potential for building a creative society and prospering economy.

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