

**ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL**

**CONSEIL  
ECONOMIQUE  
ET SOCIAL**

UNRESTRICTED

E/CN.6/78

26 January 1949

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Third session

DETAILED COMPARATIVE REPORT SHOWING THE EXISTING  
DISABILITIES OF WOMEN IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATIONAL  
AND PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

(Memorandum prepared by the Secretary-General)

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## INTRODUCTION

1. At its second session the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General (resolution 2/11 of 21 June 1946) "to make arrangements for a complete and detailed study of the legislation concerning the status of women and the practical application of such legislation".
2. In conformity with this resolution, a questionnaire on the legal status and treatment of women was drawn up and circulated to the Governments of all Member States and to non-governmental organizations interested in the status of women. The questionnaire contained, inter alia, a section on educational and professional opportunities (Part I, Section D).
3. The Secretary-General prepared a Preliminary Report on the Political Rights of Women (document E/CN.6/27) for the use of the Commission on the Status of Women at its second session; this Preliminary Report contained the information on educational and professional opportunities for women which had been received from Governments and from non-governmental organizations up to 1 December 1947.
4. The Commission, having noted this information, considered that it was not at that time sufficient to provide a basis for detailed recommendations. Upon its recommendation (document E/615, paragraph 21) the Economic and Social Council, at its sixth session, requested the Secretary-General (resolution 120 (VI) B):

- "(i) To invite Governments that have not already done so to reply to Part I, Section D (Educational Opportunities) of the Questionnaire on the Legal Status and Treatment of Women by 1 June 1948;
- "(ii) To prepare, on the basis of these replies, supplemented where necessary by other available material, and for circulation not later than six weeks before the third session of the Commission, a detailed comparative report, arranged by subjects, showing the existing disabilities of women in the field covered by the said section of the Questionnaire; and

/"(iii)

"(iii) To make these replies available to UNESCO, with the consent of the Governments concerned, in order to facilitate its work in areas where women and girls suffer disabilities in the field of education."

5. Accordingly, the Secretary-General on 7 April 1948 circulated a second copy of the questionnaire to the Governments of those countries from which no replies had been received up to that date. Subsequently, up to 1 December 1948, replies were received from nine additional Governments. The Governments which furnished information are: Afghanistan, Australia<sup>(1)</sup>, Belgium, Burma<sup>(2)</sup>, Canada, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Greece, Guatemala, Iceland, India, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Siam, Sweden, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom<sup>(3)</sup>, United States<sup>(4)</sup>, Uruguay, Yugoslavia and Venezuela.

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- (1) The six states and two territories of the Federation of Australia have independent legislation on education. Each has submitted a reply to this section of the questionnaire, but since their legislation follows a general pattern and is mostly identical, Australia has been treated as a unit in this report, and any exception to the general rule on the part of a State has been indicated under "observations".
- (2) The reply for Burma was submitted on 12 December 1947 by the Government of the United Kingdom.
- (3) The reply of the United Kingdom includes specific information on Scotland and Northern Ireland, "where in the main the statutory provisions and the actual position are substantially the same as in England and Wales".
- (4) The reply from the United States "summarizes the legal situation under the federal government, the 48 States, the District of Columbia and 5 territorial governments - a total of 55 jurisdictions. Since under the Federal State system ... it is within the jurisdiction of the several states and territories legally to establish their own educational standards; such standards are not uniform throughout the sub-divisions and possessions of the United States, but vary in particular from one jurisdiction to another".

6. The information from Afghanistan was obtained only through interview of a representative of that country by a member of the Section on the Status of Women. This information was as follows: Education in Afghanistan is free and equal for boys and girls. There are public elementary and public secondary schools for girls. Separate public schools are provided for boys and girls. There are no public trade or technical schools on a high school level for girls. Public universities and colleges are not open to women.
7. The reply from Venezuela was as follows: "There is no discrimination for reasons of sex in education in general or in university studies, but only in special schools such as those connected with the national militia."
8. Because the information contained in these replies is not easily comparable with that received concerning other countries, it is not included in the present comparative report.
9. In addition to the replies to the questionnaire received from Governments, the Secretary-General received information from non-governmental organizations concerning Chile (5), Egypt (6), and Syria (7). These replies are included in the present report, with an indication as to their source.
10. The Secretary-General also received information from the Governments of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and New Zealand concerning certain colonies and non-self-governing territories under their administration. These replies have been summarized in Annex B of the present report.
11. The information received by the Secretary-General is presented here under the following six chapter headings, each covering one or several of the questions appearing in Section D of the questionnaire:

- I. Compulsory Education
- II. Public Elementary and Secondary Schools
- III. Standards of Girls' Public Schools as Compared with Those of Boys' Public Schools
- IV. Public Trade and Technical Schools on a High School Level

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- (5) The reply for Chile was submitted by the Association of University Women in Chile.
- (6) The reply for Egypt was prepared by E.M. Feiteis of the Assiat College in Egypt, and submitted by the Women's Christian Temperance Union.
- (7) The reply for Syria was prepared by Mrs. Falak Diab, President of the Literary Club of the Women's Association of Syria.

V. Higher (University Level) Educational Opportunities<sup>(8)</sup>

VI. Professional Opportunities<sup>(8)</sup>.

12. The information received by the Secretary-General indicates that in most of the metropolitan territories covered by this report, girls and women have, at least formally, opportunities for elementary, secondary, and higher education substantially equal to those of boys and men; that women enjoy substantially equal professional opportunities with men; and that the present low number of women students and professionals is due to existing customs rather than to discriminatory legislation.

13. However, it should be borne in mind that information from only thirty-five countries is included in this report, that some of this information undoubtedly reflects the formal wording, rather than the practical application, of laws; and that in some cases existing laws may be rendered ineffective by customs or the lack of funds, teachers, or training facilities. It should also be pointed out that information received by the Secretary-General on professional opportunities for women did not in many instances refer to the protective legislation which in some countries limits or prohibits the employment of women in certain dangerous occupations, thereby restricting their professional opportunities.

14. The detailed comparative report prepared by the Secretary-General, showing the existing disabilities of women in the field of educational and professional opportunities follows in Annex A, which contains a summary of information received concerning metropolitan territories, and Annex B which contains information received, on educational opportunities only, from certain colonies and non-self-governing territories.

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(8) Information on access to schools and professions in ecclesiastical and military fields is not included in this report because most Governments omitted such information from their replies to the questionnaire.

DETAILED COMPARATIVE REPORT SHOWING THE EXISTING  
DISABILITIES OF WOMEN IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATIONAL  
AND PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

ANNEX A

Information Concerning Educational and Professional  
Opportunities of Women in Metropolitan Territories

I. COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Country	Is there Com- pulsory Edu- cation for Girls?	Age Range	Observations
Argentina	Yes	6 to 14.	Same for boys.
Australia	Yes	Up to 16 in Aus- tralian Capital territory, New South Wales and Tasmania; up to 14 in Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Wes- tern Australia.	Same for boys.
Belgium	Yes	Up to 14.	Same for boys.
Burma			"Provision has been made in Section 33 of the Constitution for the Union of Burma for free and compulsory educa- tion."
Canada	Yes	Up to 14 in Quebec and rural districts of Nova Scotia; up to 15 in Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan; up to 16 in Manitoba, New Brunswick, Ontario, and in towns and cities in Nova Scotia.	Same for boys.

Country	Is there Compulsory education for Girls?	Age Range	Observations
Chile *	Yes 1)	7 to 15.	Same for boys.
China	Yes 2)	6 to 12.	Same for boys.
Cuba	Yes		
Czechoslovakia	Yes	Up to 14.	Same for boys.
Denmark	Yes	7 to 14.	Same for boys.
Dominican Republic	Yes 3)		
Egypt *	Yes	Up to 12.	"In 1947 there were not enough schools to enforce this."
El Salvador	Yes 4)	7 to 14.	Same for boys.

\* Information obtained from a non-governmental source.

(1) According to the Educational Yearbook of Teachers' College, New York, (1942, p. 70), in 1942, because of lack of funds, there were no schools accessible to the children in places remote from means of communication and in sparsely-populated areas, including the mountains and regions of the southern provinces bordering on Argentina.

(2) According to information furnished by Mrs. Way-sung New, former member of the Commission on the Status of Women, compulsory education has not yet become a reality, and due to lack of funds and teachers the percentage of illiteracy is high, especially among women.

(3) According to Educational Yearbook (1942, p. 362), lower primary education was compulsory in the Dominican Republic for all children from 7 to 14, if official schools were available.

(4) According to Educational Yearbook (1942, p. 201), the enrollment in primary schools in 1939 in El Salvador numbered approximately 1/3 of the children within compulsory school attendance age, and more than 55% were girls.

Country	Is there Com- pulsory Edu- cation for Girls?	Age Range	Observations
France	Yes	Up to 14.	Same for boys.
Greece	Yes	Up to 12.	Same for boys.
Guatemala	Yes <sup>5)</sup>	Up to 14.	Same for boys.
Iceland	Yes	Up to 14.	Same for boys.
India	No		"In Centrally administered areas and most Provinces there is no compulsory education for girls. In C.P. there is legal provision, so far applied only to boys, in three States - Jaipur, Bikaner, and Baroda. Two other States - Kotah and Kolhapur - have introduced compulsory education in their capital cities."
Netherlands	Yes		Same for boys.
New Zealand	Yes	Up to 15.	Same for boys.
Norway	Yes	Up to 15.	Same for boys.
Pakistan	No		
Philippines	No		"There is no compulsory education in the Philippines."

5) The Guatemalan reply indicates that only the white population is fully covered by this legislation.



Country	Is there Com- pulsory Edu- cation for Girls?	Age Range	Observations
Poland	Yes	Up to 15.	Same for boys.
Siam	Yes	Up to 15.	Same for boys.
Sweden	Yes	Up to 14.	Same for boys.
Syria *	Yes	7 to 10.	Same for boys.
Turkey	Yes	Up to 16.	Same for boys.
Union of S.Africa	Yes	Up to 16 in Orange Free State, South- West Africa, Cape and Transwaal. Up to 15 in Natal.	Education up to 16 is compulsory in Orange Free State and South-West Africa for European chil- ren; and in Natal up to 15 for European and coloured children.
United Kingdom	Yes	Up to 15, in England, Wales and Scotland. In Northern Ireland, up to 14.	"For handicapped pupils who are ascertained to be in need of special educa- tional treatment, the upper age limit for com- pulsory school attend- ance is 16."
United States	Yes		"Each of the 48 states requires by law that children of both sexes within specified age limits attend school. The usual provision is that the child attend either the public school or a private or parochial school of equivalent standards of instruction. The minimum and maximum ages for compulsory at- tendance are the same for boys and girls. Minimum ages range from 6 years to 8 years, and maximum ages from 14 to 18 years among the several states."

\* Information obtained from a non-governmental source.

Country	Is there Com- pulsory Edu- cation for Girls?	Age Range	Observations
Uruguay	Yes	Up to 14.	Same for boys.
Yugoslavia	Yes	Up to 15.	"Basic schooling for a period of 7 years is equally obligatory both for boys and girls."

II. PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Name of Country	Are there Elementary schools for Girls?	Are there Secondary schools for Girls?	Are the schools (a) separate institutions for each sex; (b) co-educational; or (c) both? (a),(b) or (c)	Observations
Argentina	Yes	Yes	(c)	The elementary schools (6-10 years) are co-educational. The secondary schools are partly co-educational, partly separate.
Australia	Yes	Yes	(c)	On the primary level schools are mostly co-educational. On the secondary level some schools are co-educational; some are separate.
Belgium	Yes	Yes	(c)	Elementary schools are separate for boys and girls except in small localities (Ardennes). Some "modern" schools (Ecole Decroly) are co-educational. Larger cities have in principle separate secondary schools for boys (Athene) and girls (Lycee).
Burma	Yes	Yes	(c)	
Canada	Yes	Yes	(c)	The schools are generally separate in all provinces. They are separate in the large centers of Quebec and in a few places in Manitoba and Nova Scotia.
Chile *	Yes	Yes	(c)	
China	Yes	Yes	(c)	Public schools are, as a rule, co-educational. There is a small number of separate schools for boys and girls and in some co-educational secondary schools boys and girls are segregated in separate classes.

\* Information obtained from non-governmental sources.

Name of Country	Are there Elementary schools for Girls?	Are there Secondary schools for Girls?	Are the schools (a) separate institutions for each sex; (b) co-educational; or (c) both? (a), (b) or (c)	Observations
Cuba	Yes		(c)	
Czechoslovakia	Yes	Yes	(c)	
Denmark	Yes	Yes	(c)	The public elementary schools are generally co-educational, whereas the secondary schools may be either separate or co-educational.
Dominican Republic	Yes	Yes	(a)	
Egypt *	Yes	Yes	(a)	
El Salvador	Yes	Yes	(c)	The public schools are generally co-educational. However, there are 269 separate public schools for girls, and 333 for boys.
France	Yes	Yes	(c)	Where conditions permit, boys and girls go to separate classes.
Greece	Yes	Yes	(c)	The schools are separate in the capital and the big cities, and co-educational in the small cities and villages.
Guatemala	Yes	Yes	(c)	The schools are generally co-educational in the rural areas and separate in the cities.
Iceland	Yes	Yes	(b)	
India	Yes	Yes	(c)	"Boys' schools are co-educational. There is no co-education in Ajmer-Merwara and Jaipur State."

\* Information obtained from a non-governmental source.

Name of Country	Are there elementary schools for Girls?	Are there Secondary schools for Girls?	Are the schools (a) separate institutions for each sex; (b) co-educational; or (c) both? (a), (b) or (c) /	Observations
Netherlands	Yes	Yes	(c)	The primary schools are co-educational. The public secondary schools and public pre-university schools are also open to boys and girls alike except for a few schools which are for girls only.
New Zealand	Yes	Yes	(c)	The elementary schools are co-educational. Of the secondary schools 16 are for girls, 15 for boys and 1 are co-educational.
Norway	Yes	Yes	(c)	The schools are generally co-educational, but girls and boys often attend classes separately.
Pakistan	Yes	Yes	(c)	Schools are co-educational on the elementary level only. There are some co-educational European schools.
Philippines	Yes	Yes	(b)	
Poland	Yes	Yes	(c)	
Siam	Yes	No	(b)	
Sweden	Yes	Yes	(c)	There are 47 intermediate schools for girls, 13 for boys and 154 co-educational schools. Number of pupils in 1945: 27,825 boys and 18,419 girls. There are 6 State High Schools for girls, 42 for boys and 8 co-educational schools.
Syria *	Yes	Yes	(a)	
Turkey	Yes	Yes	(c)	All elementary schools are co-educational. The secondary schools are of both types.

\* Information obtained from a non-governmental source.

Name of Country	Are there Elementary schools for Girls?	Are there Secondary schools for Girls?	Are the schools (a) separate institutions for each sex; (b) co-educational; or (c) both?  (a), (b) or (c)	Observations
Union of South Africa	Yes	Yes	(c)	
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	(c)	In England and Wales instruction is sometimes given in separate schools, sometimes in mixed schools with separate classes, and sometimes in schools with mixed classes. In Scotland practically all primary and secondary schools are co-educational. The very few which are not are mainly denominational schools.
United States	Yes	Yes	(c)	The elementary and secondary schools are generally co-educational, but there are a few separate ones for girls and boys.
Uruguay	Yes	Yes	(c)	
Yugoslavia	Yes	Yes	(c)	The schools are separate where conditions and possibilities allow. Otherwise co-educational.

III. STANDARDS OF GIRLS' PUBLIC SCHOOLS AS COMPARED WITH THOSE OF BOYS' PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Are there any differences between boys' and girls' schools as to:

- (a) public endowment available?
- (b) remuneration of staff? or
- (c) curricula? <sup>1)</sup>

Country	(a)	(b)	(c)	Observations
Argentina	No	No	No	"Salaries of men and women teachers in all schools and educational institutions throughout the Argentine are equal."
Australia	No	No	Yes	(b) Except in Tasmania, where there is equality women teachers receive generally 80% of men teachers' pay of the same rank, whether in boys' schools or girls' schools.  (c) The curricula are the same for boys and girls in academic subjects, but girls have special subjects like cooking and dressmaking.
Belgium	No	No	Yes	(c) Generally, the curricula are the same, but certain schools for girls have a restricted curriculum in mathematics. In addition, girls are taught special subjects, such as cooking and sewing.
Burma	No	No	No	
Canada	No	No	No	(b) In Quebec women teachers receive less pay than men teachers.
Chile *	No	No	No	
China	No	No	Yes	(c) There is no difference in academic subjects but girl students are taught military nursing, while the boy students are given military training.

\* Information obtained from a non-governmental source.

(1) Normally there is a difference between vocational subjects taught to boys and those taught to girls. Where the answer "No" is given to this question, it may be that the information refers only to academic subjects.

Are there any differences between boys' and girls' schools as to:

- (a) public endowment available?  
(b) remuneration of staff? or  
(c) curricula?

Country	(a)	(b)	(c)	Observations
Algeria	No	No	No	
Czechoslovakia	No	No	No	
Denmark	No	No	Yes	The academic subjects are the same but girls have special subjects such as housekeeping and needlework.
Guinean Public	No	No	No	
Egypt*	No	No	No	
El Salvador	No	No		(c) The reply from El Salvador contains no reference to the curricula.
France	No	No	Yes	(c) Girls have needlework while the boys have military training.
Greece	No	No	No	
Guatemala	No	No	Yes	(c) The curricula are the same in academic subjects for both types of schools with variations as imposed by nature, for example, in physical education, manual training etc. Care of children for girls only.
Iceland				The public schools are co-educational.
India	No	No	Yes	(b) In the Orissa and Bihar States women teachers are paid higher salaries than men teachers.  (c) Generally the curriculum for girls includes domestic science. The exception to this is Jaipur.
Netherlands	No	No	No	In the secondary schools for girls the curriculum is somewhat different from that of co-educational schools. The girls' schools have two divisions. In one division, with a total tuition of six years, the girls gain the same qualifications as are attainable in an ordinary secondary school but in the other division, with a total period of tuition of five years, they cannot attain those qualifications.



Are there any differences between boys' and girls' schools as to:

- (a) public endowment available?
- (b) remuneration of staff? or
- (c) curricula?

Country	(a)	(b)	(c)	Observations
New Zealand	No	No	Yes	(b) Women teachers receive 80% of a man teacher's pay of the same rank.  (c) There is no difference between boys' and girls' schools as to curricula, except that the boys in public elementary schools take woodwork or metalwork, and the girls cookery and needlework during the last two years of their course in those schools. At some of these schools, however, facilities for teaching woodwork, metalwork, and cookery are not available. At the secondary school stage, boys' schools, in addition to the subjects taken by both boys and girls, usually provide courses in woodwork or metalwork, while courses in homecrafts and embroidery are usually provided in girls' schools.
Norway	No	No	Yes	(c) Girls have courses in cooking and needlework.
Pakistan	Yes	Yes	Yes	(a) "Much less in number are available for girls' schools than boys' schools."  (c) Curriculum for girls includes domestic science, home nursing and first aid in higher stages of secondary education.
Philippines			Yes	(c) "Women are given home economics instead of industrial arts, for boys."
Poland	No	No	Yes	(c) There is some difference in the programmes of handwork and gymnastics.
Siam			Yes	(c) Although co-educational, the schools have different curricula between boys and girls for certain subjects.
Sweden	No	No	No	
Syria*	No	No	Yes	(c) There is a difference in the curricula under the regulations of the Ministry of Education.
Turkey	No	No	No	

\* Information obtained from a non-governmental source.

Are there any differences between boys' and girls' schools as to:

- (a) public endowment available?
- (b) remuneration of staff? or
- (c) curricula?

Country	(a)	(b)	(c)	Observations
South Africa	No	No	No	(b) Women teachers receive 80% of a man teacher's pay of the same rank, whether in a boys' school or a girls' school.
United Kingdom	No	No	Yes	(c) There is clearly a proper distinction in the curricula offered in boys' and girls' schools, dependent upon the age, abilities and aptitudes of each individual pupil and the peculiar requirements of each sex. Women teachers receive 80% of a man teacher's pay of the same rank.
United States	No	No	Yes	(c) Generally there are no differences as to academic courses. Occasionally there are variations in the schools set up separately for girls or boys to provide vocational or industrial training, since the purpose of the school will determine the courses of study. However, no law prohibits students from choosing which of the prescribed courses they will take, and their choices are governed mainly by the practical use of the training to them.
Uruguay	No	No	Yes	The curricula of girls' schools include domestic subjects.
Yugoslavia	No	No	No	

IV. PUBLIC TRADE AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS ON A HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Name of Country	1. Are there public trade and technical schools on a high-school level for girls?	2. If these schools are separate for boys and girls, are their standards the same?	Observations
Argentine	Yes	Yes	There are commercial, art, technical and professional training schools for girls. Entrance requirements, curricula, syllabi, fees, attendance, requirements, discipline and examinations are the same for boys and girls.
Australia	Yes	Yes	The technical schools on a high school level are generally open to both sexes and are generally co-educational. In Victoria technical schools are open to both sexes but in organization the girls' department sections are separate.
Belgium	Yes		The trade and technical schools are co-educational and make no distinction between boys and girls.
Burma	Yes		The schools are co-educational.
Canada	Yes		"In Manitoba and Nova Scotia there are no such schools (either for boys or girls), but they are now being established in the province of Manitoba. The schools are co-educational."
Chile *	Yes	Yes	Some schools are co-educational, some are separate.

\* Information obtained from a non-governmental source.

Name of country	1. Are there public trade and technical schools on a high-school level for girls?	2. If these schools are separate for boys and girls, are their standards the same?	Observations
China	Yes	Yes	The schools are mostly separate, but some are co-educational. The government regulations governing these schools make no distinction between boys' schools and girls' schools.
Cuba	Yes		
Czechoslovakia	Yes	Yes	The schools are mostly co-educational, but some are exclusively for girls.
Denmark	Yes		"The schools are co-educational, and there is no difference between boys' and girls'."
Dominican Republic	Yes	Yes	
Egypt *	Yes		The number of girls' schools is much smaller than that of boys' schools.
El Salvador	No		There are no public trade and technical schools for girls, but there are 20 private schools for girls only in this category, as well as 20 private co-educational ones.
France	Yes	Yes	The schools are mostly separate.
Greece	Yes		The schools are co-educational.
Guatemala	Yes	Yes	

\* Information obtained from a non-governmental source.