

Expert Group Meeting on International Economic and Social Classifications, UNSD

Recommendations on the measurement of educational attainment

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Recommendations on educational attainment

- ✓ Rationale and important issues
 - Eurostat task force, OECD INES Network on Outcomes of Learning, EU Member States
 - Important issues for discussion
- ✓ Draft recommendations
 - Definition
 - Related concepts and borderline cases
 - Data collection, complementary dimensions
 - Metadata
- ✓ Glossary
- ✓ Next steps

Background and rationale

- ✓ Quality and comparability of data
 - Important to understand that we are mainly dealing with collection of data through household surveys
- ✓ Eurostat Task Force ‘education variables in household surveys’
 - 10 countries participating (BE, DE, ES, IT, FIN, HU, NL, PT, RO, UK)
 - Meetings: December 2008, March 2009, October 2009
- ✓ OECD INES Network on Outcomes of Learning
 - Meetings: October 2008, March 2009, October 2009
- ✓ Review of existing frameworks
 - UNECE recommendation on the 2010 population census
 - Resolution of UNESCO General Conference 1978, OECD, EU-LFS
- ✓ Consultation of European countries
 - EU Member States, HR, MK, TR, IS, NO, CH
- ✓ ISCED Technical Advisory Panel: January, July 2009

Background and rationale (cont.)

- ✓ Terminology
 - Main concepts
 - Classification of Learning Activities (formal, non-formal, informal), European Qualifications Framework (skills, competences, qualifications)
- ✓ Criterion of duration to define educational attainment
 - Eurostat: lower vs. upper secondary
 - Tertiary level: Bachelor's, Masters, Doctorate
- ✓ Orientation and field (e.g. EU LFS)
 - Orientation especially for ISCED 3/4 (general or vocational, access to higher education)
 - Field especially for ISCED 5/6 (identification of professional degrees)
- ✓ Compliance with ISCED: comparability of data
 - Networks to build national correspondence tables
 - Quality reporting at international level, sharing of metadata

Recommendations: Definition

✓ Definition of ***educational attainment***

*Highest level of educational programme
successfully completed*

- *Highest level of programme in ISCED*
- *Success validated by a recognised credential*

- *Credential = certificate, diploma, degree*
- *Recognised by the formal education system*
- *Some exceptions (primary, lower secondary without certification): full attendance, giving access to higher education levels*

Recommendations (cont.)

✓ Related concepts

- *Programmes attended (with or without successful completion, issue of drop-outs)*
- *Programmes successfully completed (emphasis on tangible outputs)*
- *Validated skills and competences (human capital)*

✓ Borderline cases

- *Programmes at ISCED levels 1 and 2 without certification or completion of level*
- *Some non-formal education covered (mostly allowing access to higher level in formal education) → credentials recognised by educational authorities (formal system)*

Recommendations (cont.)

✓ Data collection

Characteristics of programme at time of completion (for all age groups)

- *Mapping for old programmes needed*
- *No allocation to 'successor' programmes*
- *Independent of other individual characteristics (e.g. occupation)*

✓ Complementary dimensions

Orientation and fields useful for

- *Educational systems and labour markets*
- *Transition from education to work*
- *Matching skills with jobs*
- *Access to education, inequalities in education*

Recommendations (cont.)

- ✓ Enhanced and structured metadata
 - Make available to ensure monitoring of quality and comparability
- ✓ Metadata for producers
 - Questions used in the surveys to capture the highest educational attainment level (e.g. wording, sequence of questions)
 - Level of detail available from the data collection (number of codes)
 - Mapping used for the translation of national codes to ISCED
 - Information to assess quality and comparability of data on educational attainment (e.g. breaks in series, frequency of non-responses)
 - For main data sources (and other sources, e.g. source of data on income by educational attainment)
- ✓ Metadata for users
 - Less detail than for producers of data
- ✓ Useful for coding of educational attainment of non-nationals living in a country

Glossary

- ✓ Terms relevant for educational attainment
 - (Full) attendance, successful completion, drop-outs
 - Credentials: a proof of successful completion such as certificate, diploma or degree; recognized credentials
- ✓ Validation of learning outcomes (from European Qualifications Framework)
 - Qualifications (achievement of learning outcomes)
 - Learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competences)
 - Knowledge (assimilation of information through learning)
 - Skills (ability to apply knowledge)
 - Competences (proven ability to use knowledge, skills and other personal abilities)
 - Validation (requirement standards, certification)

Glossary (cont.)

✓ Other terms

- To be defined in general ISCED framework
- Educational programme, duration
- General or vocational, field, degree, grade

✓ Classification of Learning Activities

- Some definitions in the ISCED 1997 manual
- Formal education
- Non-formal education and training
- Informal learning: not institutionalized

✓ Annex: Current definitions of educational attainment

Next steps

- ✓ Comments from UNSD Expert Group
 - Definition
 - Related concepts, credential criterion, borderline cases
 - Data collection, complementary dimensions (e.g. fields of orientation)
 - Metadata (quality requirements and monitoring)
- ✓ Regional meetings
 - Asia October 2009, Africa November 2009, Arab States, Latin America
 - Revised version of recommendations
 - UIS to lead consultation process
- ✓ October meetings of Eurostat Task Force and OECD INES Network

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