Background Information on Education Statistics in the UIS Database

The following symbols are used:

..   Data not available

(a)   C a t e g o r y not applicable

(n)   Magnitude nil or negligible

(+)   National estimation

(‡)   UIS estimation (For regional averages: partial imputation due to incomplete country coverage ranging from 33% to 60% of population depending on the indicator)

Data releases

As of September 2018, the UIS has moved to one education data release in September of each year. This release includes national data and regional averages for the school or reference year ending in the previous year and includes data collected from administrative and household surveys, including educational attainment and literacy statistics (every two years).

Following this release, national data are updated in February of the following year, completing the UIS publication of educational data for the round of surveys conducted in the previous reference year.

Stay informed of the latest data releases by signing up for the UIS email alert service at http://uis.unesco.org.

Data sources

The UIS collects education statistics in aggregate form from official administrative sources at the national level. Collected information encompasses data on educational programmes, access, participation, progression, completion, literacy, educational attainment and human and financial resources. These statistics cover formal education in public (or state) and private institutions (early childhood education, primary and secondary schools, and colleges, universities and other tertiary education institutions), and special needs education (both in regular and special schools).

These data are gathered annually by the UIS and its partner agencies through the following three major surveys that can be downloaded from the UIS website at http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-questionnaires

i)   UIS Survey of Formal Education

The UIS education questionnaires are sent to UNESCO Member States annually. The questionnaires are based on international standards, classifications and measures that are regularly reviewed and modified by the UIS in order to address emerging statistical issues and improve the quality of data.

ii) UOE Survey of Formal Education

UNESCO-UIS, the OECD and Eurostat (UOE) have jointly administered this annual data collection since 1993. The UOE questionnaire compiles data from high- and middle-income countries that are generally members or partner countries of the OECD or Eurostat. The UOE survey gathers more detailed education statistics.

iii) UIS Survey on Literacy and Educational Attainment

The UIS gathers attainment data through its biennial literacy and educational attainment survey, which is sent to all UNESCO Member States. The questionnaires collect internationally comparable data used to calculate literacy and attainment rates as well as mean years of schooling. The data are derived from national population censuses, household surveys and labour force surveys.

The UIS supplements literacy and educational attainment data provided by countries by calculating indicators based on information obtained from the United Nations Statistics Division and international survey programmes such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). The UIS also applies methodologies such as the Global Age-specific Literacy Projections Model (GALP) to produce literacy estimates for years with missing data and to produce regional and global averages.

In addition to the three surveys described above, the UIS compiles data for some Sustainable Development Goal 4 indicators directly from partner organizations, such as OECD and UNICEF.

Population estimates

The main source of population estimates is: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects: The 2019 Revision, (https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/). Where UN Population Division (UNPD) estimates are not available or where population issues have arisen, national data or UIS estimates are used. Please see the last section of this document for further details.

Economic statistics

Data on economic indicators such as Gross domestic product (GDP) and Purchasing power parity (PPP) are World Bank estimates as of April 2019. For countries where GDP estimates are not published by the World Bank, data are obtained from the December 2018 release by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). Data on total general government expenditure (all sectors) come from the April 2019 release of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s World Economic Outlook database.

Technical notes

A.   Education data and indicators

Education data and indicators are based on the revised International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011). ISCED 2011 was implemented in the 2014 education data collection and covers the entire formal education system, including both formal initial education programmes and formal adult education programmes.

SDG indicator 4.3.3 - Participation rate in technical and vocational programmes (15- to 24-year-olds), by sex: Prior to 2018, data do not include enrolment in technical and vocational short-cycle tertiary programmes (ISCED 5). As of 2018, the UIS started collecting and incorporated enrolment at ISCED 5 in the calculation of this indicator. Caution is required when comparing this indicator over time.

The education regional averages are based on both publishable data and on non-publishable estimated or imputed data. They are calculated based on data as of September 2019.

The literacy regional averages are based on the September 2019 release.

There are cases where an indicator should not exceed a maximum theoretical value (for example the adjusted net enrolment rate), but inconsistencies between demographic and school data may have resulted in the indicator exceeding the theoretical limit. In these cases, "capping" has been applied, while maintaining the same gender ratio. For more details, please refer to the definition of capping in the UIS Glossary.

For enrolment, the percentage of females (% F) is included to provide information on the proportion of girls enrolled with respect to the total enrolment. For gender parity in enrolment, a more relevant measure is the gender parity index (GPI) or the adjusted gender parity index (GPIA).

B.   Education finance

Expenditure on early childhood education or from international sources – both of which are often comparatively small – have been treated as negligible in cases where data were in fact missing. In these cases, the totals may be underestimated.

Country notes

Azerbaijan: Education data do not cover Nagorno-Karabakh, whereas the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects data do. The population data used for the calculation of indicators were provided by national authorities and exclude Nagorno-Karabakh.

Bolivia, Plurinational State of: Population-based indicators should be interpreted with caution due to concerns regarding the coherence between national enrolment data and population estimates from the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects.

The rate of out-of-school adolescents of lower secondary (ISCED 2) and upper secondary (ISCED 3) age does not include data on students enrolled in tertiary education (ISCED 5 to 8).

Brazil: Due to concerns regarding the coherence between national enrolment data and the population estimates from the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects, population data were provided by the Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira (INEP).

A break in the time series of pre-primary and primary indicators occurs in 2013 due to the following changes in the national education system:

- The duration of pre-primary education changed from 3 years to 2 years.

- The entry age to primary education changed from 7 years to 6 years and the duration from 4 years to 5 years.

China: Two Special Administrative Regions – Hong Kong and Macao – are reported separately from data for China.

Cyprus: Education data for Cyprus do not cover areas that are not under control of the national government, whereas the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects data do. The population data used for the calculation of indicators were provided by national authorities and only cover the population living in government-controlled areas.

Dominican Republic: The National Statistical Office has revised the population estimates and projections that are not yet reflected into the Revision of the World Population Prospects.

Ecuador: The source of the data used is the *Archivo Maestro de Instituciones Educativas* (AMIE), calculated with a capping factor and with national population estimates. Therefore, indicators for Ecuador are not comparable with the data officially published by the country.

Estonia: The country has an integrated pre-primary education programme. Pupil's age is used as a proxy to disaggregate data for early childhood educational programmes between ISCED level 010 and ISCED level 020: enrolment of 2 years old children and younger is mapped as ISCED level 010 and enrolment of 3-years old children and older is mapped as ISCED level 020.

France: There is a change in methodology in 2006 and 2013 that limits the comparability of time series of SDG indicator 4.3.3 on participation rate in technical and vocational programmes (15- to 24-year-olds).

Germany: Starting from year 2009, there is no concept of repeaters in grades 1-2 of primary education. That explains decrease in 2009 in time series «Percentage of repeaters in primary education»

Mexico: A break in the time series of pre-primary indicators occurs in 2014 due to the following changes in the national education system:

- The entry age to pre-primary education changed from 4 years to 3 years.

- The duration of pre-primary education changed from 2 to 3 years.

Palestine: Education data do not cover East Jerusalem, whereas the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects data do. Population-based indicators may be underestimated and therefore should be interpreted with caution.

Republic of Moldova: Education data do not cover Transnistria, whereas the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects data do. The population data used to calculate indicators were provided by national authorities and exclude Transnistria.

Russian Federation: Starting from 2015, information provided by the Russian Federation includes statistical data for the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation.

Serbia: Education data do not cover Kosovo, whereas the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects do. The population data used for the calculation of indicators were provided by Eurostat and exclude Kosovo.

Singapore: Education data starting in 2016 refer to residents (citizens and permanent residents) with local addresses and who were away from Singapore for a cumulative period of below 6 months in the past 12 months prior to the reference date (end-June each year). The data should only be used for the purpose of computing education indicators and should not be compared against other sets of population data published by the Singapore Government.

Ukraine: Education data do not cover Crimea and the part of Donbass that is not under government control from 2015 onwards, whereas the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects do. Population data excluding these areas are not available for the moment. Consequently, the UIS is not able to produce indicators from 2015 onwards.

 United Republic of Tanzania: Education data do not cover Zanzibar, whereas the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects data do. The population of Zanzibar is approximately 3 per cent of the total population of the United Republic of Tanzania. Population-based indicators are underestimated and therefore should be interpreted with caution.

Additional population data sources:

Due to concerns regarding the coherence between national enrolment data and the population estimates from the 2019 Revision of the World Population Prospects, the national population data for the countries listed below are provided by the following organisations:

Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, provides data for the following countries: France, Ireland, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provides the national population data for Brazil and the United States of America collected via the UOE data collection.

Data for countries with population under 90,000 inhabitants, provided by the UN Population Division (UNPD), should be used with caution because the annually interpolated population by age and sex based on 5-year periods and 5-year age groups can only provide crude approximations – especially since all demographic components of population change are often unavailable.