

III. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

7. The Conference reaffirms the conviction expressed in the Declaration of Philadelphia that the assurance of equality of educational opportunities is a necessary condition for equality of vocational opportunity.

A. General Education and Vocational Guidance

8. All children and young persons should be provided free of charge with general education which should be of a standard and duration permitting adequate physical, intellectual, and moral development.

9. (1) Pre-school education should be accessible to all children without being compulsory as soon as possible and as far as practicable.

(2) School attendance should be compulsory up to an age not lower than sixteen years in all countries as soon as circumstances permit and should in all cases be compulsory up to the general minimum age for admission to employment; the school-leaving age should be raised progressively at the same rate as the minimum age for admission to employment, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 19 (2) below.

10. Effective access to suitable education should be guaranteed through—

(a) Provisions to make educational facilities universally accessible, especially—

(i) The establishment of a sufficient number of schools of varied types with adequate and qualified teaching staffs;

(ii) Measures to facilitate school attendance by children and young people who live at a distance from centres of population by such means as group transportation and boarding-schools; and

(iii) The assignment of a high priority to public works for the establishment, restoration, or improvement of education facilities:

(b) The provision of instruction designed to meet, among other purposes, the actual needs of children and adolescents and of facilities to enable each child to receive the kind of education best suited to his age and aptitudes, taking into account—

(i) Special circumstances among various elements of the population;

(ii) Special needs of children whose schooling has been retarded or interrupted; and

(iii) Special problems of children with physical and mental handicaps who need rehabilitation for a useful life.

11. The vocational interests of children and young persons should be fostered and their selection of an employment or career guided through—

(a) Programmes for pre-vocational preparation which are destined to develop an idea of, taste for, and esteem for work and are consistent with the purposes of general education, according to the principles laid down in Part III of the Vocational Training Recommendation, 1939:

(b) Free vocational guidance services, offered through the school or the employment service and available to all adolescents during their years of school attendance and at the time when they leave school, the use of such facilities being encouraged as the best means of helping young persons to choose suitable careers, in keeping with the provisions of paragraph 37 (b) of the Unemployment (Young Persons) Recommendation, 1935, and of paragraph 32 (1) of the Employment (Transition from War to Peace) Recommendation, 1944.

12. The continued education of young persons should be required until they reach the age of eighteen; in accordance with the principles laid down