

EDUCATION STATISTICS

THEMES

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1. UIS EDUCATION DATA – COLLECTION, PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION

What is the role of the UIS?

The Institute produces internationally accepted methodologies to measure and monitor trends at national and global levels. It delivers comparative data for countries at all stages of development to provide a cross-national perspective on education, science and technology, culture, and communication.

Based in Montreal (Canada), the UIS was established in 1999 to meet the growing need for reliable and policy-relevant data. The Institute serves Member States, UNESCO and the UN system, as well as a range of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, research institutes and universities.

Does the UIS report data for the Millennium Development or Education for All goals?

The UIS is the official United Nations agency responsible for the collection of education data and indicators to monitor the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to universal primary education and gender parity in primary and secondary education, as well as the Education for All (EFA) goals.

Which international organizations use education statistics produced by the UIS?

The UIS is the main source of education data for the EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO), the Millennium Development Goals Report and the related database (UNSD), the World Development Indicators and the World Development Report (World Bank), the Human Development Report (UNDP), State of the World's Children (UNICEF) and many others.

Does the UIS provide the education data used in the calculation of the Human Development Index in UNDP's Human Development Report?

The 2015 [Human Development Report](#) by the UNDP featured two indicators used in the education component of the Human Development Index (HDI): expected years of schooling and mean years of schooling. Data on expected years of schooling are published in the UIS database under the name 'school life expectancy'. Data on mean years of schooling used for the calculation of the HDI are drawn from two sources: the [Barro-Lee dataset](#) on educational attainment and calculations by the UNDP, both based on educational attainment statistics from the UIS and other sources. [More about the HDI and mean years of schooling](#)

Where do UIS data on education come from?

The UIS collects education statistics annually from official national statistical authorities. Each Member State designates the statistical authorities which respond to UIS questionnaires. In many cases, it is the ministry of education or the national statistical office which submits education data to the UIS. The information collected includes data on educational programmes, access, participation, progression, completion, internal efficiency, and human and financial resources by all levels of education.

How does the UIS collect education data?

Each UNESCO Member State submits education data to the UIS through one of three education questionnaires. Most UNESCO Member States respond annually to the UIS education questionnaire. Other countries belong to jointly administered data collection programmes, such as the UNESCO-OECD-Eurostat (UOE) survey and the World Education Indicators (WEI) programme. 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. This survey gathers more detailed education statistics than the UIS survey. The WEI programme provides a platform for middle-income countries to develop a critical mass of policy-relevant education indicators beyond the global core set of education statistics. In essence, the WEI data collection consists of the UOE questionnaire with additional series of items to better reflect the information needs of middle-income countries.

What steps does the UIS take to review national data and produce cross-nationally comparable indicators?

First, data are carefully reviewed to ensure that they are complete and comply with international standards and definitions, such as ISCED. A series of automatic checks are then run to detect errors within the data submission and data are compared to available time series.

Second, the UIS sends a detailed data report to the respondent who submitted the country data, documenting the issues found during data processing and requesting clarification and/or updated figures. Typical issues include the lack of metadata to explain why data are partial or missing and inconsistencies within the data submitted. During this review, the UIS encourages countries to make estimates for missing data so that data are internationally comparable and complete. After this consultation, the UIS considers the data ready for indicator calculation. On average, it takes two months to complete this data review process.

Third, in order to produce complete and internationally comparable datasets, the UIS must sometimes generate estimates and impute missing data. The Institute's estimates are based on information in national publications, official websites and other reliable sources of data (e.g. household surveys). Once the estimates have been generated, indicators are calculated and then standard checks are performed for quality assurance.

Finally, the UIS sends a file with calculated education indicators to national authorities for their review. This file includes indicators from 1999 to the latest year submitted by the country. If no concerns are raised, the indicators are subsequently published by the UIS.

Are data from the UIS available free of charge?

There is no cost to access UIS data in the [UIS database](#).

2. UIS DATA CENTRE

Why is the UIS Data Centre the leading database of cross-nationally comparable statistics on education?

The UIS Data Centre is the only online database which provides internationally comparable statistics in the areas of education, science and technology, culture, and communication. The Data Centre is regularly updated; education data are added or revised three times per year. Because the UIS is the world depository for education data, it provides the most up-to-date statistics to monitor progress towards the education targets of the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All. The UIS employs rigorous standards and methodologies in its indicator calculation to ensure that its data are cross-nationally comparable. In fact, the UIS is the primary data source for education statistics in many other online databases, such as the World Bank EdStats.

How often are the education data updated in the online UIS Data Centre?

The UIS releases education data three times per year – in January, May and October.

Why is there a delay in the release of current education data?

The UIS strives to provide the most recent data available at the time of the UIS data releases, which occur in January, May and October. A combination of factors contributes to the time lag which exists between the current year and the reference year of education data published. First, the timing of the academic year varies across countries: broadly speaking, the school year in countries north of the Equator occurs from September to June, while in countries south of the Equator it occurs from January to December. This affects when national enrolment data are collected and sent to the UIS. In addition, the UIS follows a multi-stage process to produce and publish internationally comparable data series.

Why are certain data or indicators missing in the online UIS Data Centre or in the *Global Education Digest*?

There are a variety of reasons why data appear as missing for a country or indicator. Most commonly, the UIS did not receive all data necessary to calculate the indicator for the country in a particular year. Sometimes, indicators are not published if the UIS or the country identifies inconsistencies in the data. In such cases, the UIS will engage in discussions with the country to resolve the issue.

Where can I find the most recent literacy and educational attainment statistics?

Go to the UIS Data Centre: <http://data.uis.unesco.org>

- Click on “Predefined Tables”.
- Click on “Literacy and Educational Attainment”.

How often are the literacy and educational attainment data updated in the UIS Data Centre?

Literacy data in the UIS database are updated in May. To mark International Literacy Day (8 September) each year, the UIS publishes a fact sheet that features maps, graphs and data analysis.

Educational attainment data in the UIS database are updated annually in October.

What kind of education data (prior to 1999) does the UIS have? Where can I find it?

UIS data on enrolment, repeaters, teachers and all related indicators are available from the reference year 1970.

- Go to the UIS Data Centre: <http://data.uis.unesco.org>
- Click on “Predefined Tables”
- Historical data are found in Table 21-26, depending on level of education

Where can I send questions or requests for UIS data?

Please send your data requests to uis.datarequests@unesco.org

3. EDUCATION INDICATOR METHODOLOGY

Why do national and international education data sometimes differ?

Education statistics produced by the UIS may differ from those in national statistical yearbooks or other national publications. Most discrepancies are due to differences in the underlying data (population or economic data); methodology used to calculate indicators, or the classification of education systems.

National and international education statistics use the same basic education data (e.g. school enrolment). However, the data used for the denominator can vary (e.g. population estimates). Population estimates are used to calculate a wide range of education statistics based on age, such as net enrolment rates. In most cases, national and international population estimates are extracted from the same data source (a recent census or household survey), but they may not use the same methodology. To ensure methodological consistency across all countries, the UIS uses the United Nations Population Division population estimates. These are based on a single, reliable methodology that is internationally accepted. United Nations agencies use these estimates to calculate a variety of socioeconomic and health indicators, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals. These estimates are updated every two years and disaggregated by gender and single year of age.

Similar concerns of international comparability apply to the use of economic data, which are used to calculate education finance statistics. The UIS uses World Bank economic data on national income and output, such as gross domestic product. Differences between education finance statistics from the UIS and other sources may therefore arise due to the source of the economic data.

In addition, education statistics may appear to differ due to differences in the classification of education systems at the national or international level. For example, a country may provide statistics on a basic education programme lasting nine years. However, at the international level, these statistics might be disaggregated into two levels of education: primary (Grades 1 to 6) and lower secondary education (Grades 7 to 9). The UIS uses the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) to ensure its indicators for primary, secondary and tertiary education are internationally comparable.

What kind of disaggregated data does the UIS produce?

In general, UIS education statistics are calculated for the total, male and female populations, in order to measure progress on sex-based disparities. The UIS also prepares averages for countries grouped by geographical region (according to UNESCO, UNICEF and other partner agency regional classifications) and by income group (according to World Bank classifications). Regional averages for country groups linked by another factor, such as religion or language, are not available.

Data submitted by national authorities are generally acquired from administrative sources, which often do not include information on area of residence (urban or rural) or household wealth. However, education statistics based on household surveys generally include several sociodemographic characteristics which make analysis of these and other sub-national groups possible, for example by the educational attainment of the household head, location or household wealth quintile.

What country groupings does the UIS use? Where can I find in which region countries belong?

The UIS uses three main groupings of countries in its Data Centre: i) the UNESCO regions (which are the continents of the world with North and South America available separately); ii) the regional groupings used in the Institute's flagship publication, the *Global Education Digest* (which are very similar to those used in the Education for All *Global Monitoring Report* but contain some additional countries and territories from which education data are collected); and iii) the Millennium Development Goals regions. In addition, the UIS provides data to several partner agencies according to their own country groupings. These groupings may be organized by geographical location, by levels of income or development, or by other characteristics.

The composition of the country groupings used in the UIS database can be viewed in the "Custom Tables" section using the dropdown menu. The countries within each grouping will be listed beneath the name of each region. The Institute can provide data on request by other country groupings by contacting uis.datarequests@unesco.org

Does the UIS collect data on special education and students with disabilities?

UIS education data include students with disabilities and special education needs participating in formal education programmes. However, disaggregated data on this group of students are not currently collected.

Does the UIS collect data on non-formal or adult education?

The main UIS education data collection gathers data on formal education systems and, in general, does not collect data on adult education. The UIS is currently leading a regional survey in Latin America and the Caribbean to collect cross-national data on youth and adult education. The project seeks to collect data on education programmes that develop basic literacy skills and offer primary and secondary education opportunities to those who did not have a chance to enter school or complete these programmes.

Why does the UIS revise certain indicator estimates over time?

Indicators may be revised when the UIS receives updated underlying data, such as population estimates, economic data or information about the education system.

Every two years, the United Nations Population Division releases new population projections and revised estimates for previous years. These population estimates are a key component in the calculation of many UIS education indicators. The UIS systematically revises its data according to the new estimates in order to provide the most accurate information possible and allow comparison of trends over time. For example, revised estimates for high-population countries can have a significant impact on national, regional and global calculations of the number of out-of-school children.

Similarly, indicators based on economic data, such as education finance, are revised in line with biannual data updates from the World Bank.

Revisions to UIS indicators also result from efforts to improve the classification of education systems. The UIS works closely with national statisticians to map their education systems according to the [International Standard Classification of Education](#) (ISCED). Changes in these [mappings](#) can result in revised indicator estimates.

How does the UIS calculate regional averages?***Regional averages for education data***

When calculating regional averages for education indicators, there are generally missing data. In these cases, the regional average is an approximation of the unknown real value.

At the UIS, regional averages are derived from both “publishable” and “imputed” national data. Publishable data are the data submitted to the UIS by Member States or the result of an explicit estimation made by the Institute based on pre-determined standards. In both cases, these data are sent to Member States for review before they are considered publishable by the UIS.

If data are not available for some countries in the region, the UIS “imputes” national data for the sole purpose of calculating regional averages. These imputed data are not published.

There are two basic steps in the calculation of regional figures:

- i) Complete the data series by estimating the values for missing data using imputation methodology.
- ii) Once the data series is complete, the calculation method of regional figures differs depending if the indicator is an absolute number (such as the number of children out of school) or a ratio (such as the net enrolment rate).
 - a) In the case of absolute numbers, the regional or global average is simply the sum of publishable and imputed values of the given indicator for the countries in the given region.

- b) In the case of ratios, the regional average is calculated as the weighted average of the given ratio using its denominator as weight. For example, the regional average of the gross enrolment ratio is weighted according to the country's school-age population with respect to the region.

The UIS assigns a quality rating to regional averages based on two factors: the extent to which it is based on imputed values and (where applicable) the time lag between the year of the publishable value used in the imputation and the reference year of the regional average. In other words, an imputed value for a country based on publishable data which is two years older than the reference year is generally considered of higher quality than an imputed value based on publishable data which is five years older.

Published regional averages are thus assigned one of the following qualifiers:

- i) *Regional averages marked with no asterisk* indicate that at least 60% of the weighted data used are publishable for countries in the region;
- ii) *Regional averages marked with two asterisks (**)* indicate that
 - less than 60% of the weighted data used are publishable for countries in the region, and
 - at least 33% of the weighted data used are publishable, or
 - at least 33% of the weighted data used are imputed based either on:
 - a) publishable data from one year before **or** after the missing year;
 - b) publishable time series data from before **and** after the missing year, where there is no more than four years of time lag between the closest available year and the missing year.

Regional averages for literacy data

The UIS publishes literacy data using the time periods 1975-1984, 1985-1994, 1995-2004 and 2005-2014, which correspond to national census cycles. When calculating a regional average for these time periods, the UIS uses available observed data or [Global Age-Specific Literacy Projections \(GALP\)](#). An average for each census cycle, weighted by the population of the country or territory within the region, is used to calculate the regional or global figure. All countries and territories with UN or national population estimates are included in the regional figure. UIS estimates are used for countries with missing data.

How are missing values imputed to calculate regional averages?

To calculate a robust regional average, all countries in a given region must have data available. However, due to the lack of education data from some countries, the UIS must “impute” or generate a value for the missing data in order to create a complete data set. These imputed national data are produced by the UIS for the purpose of generating regional averages and are not published. The UIS assigns a quality rating to all regional averages to indicate the extent to which the calculation was based on imputed data.

The UIS imputation methodology aims to produce estimates that are as unbiased as possible. The quality of the imputations depends strongly on the quality of available information. The UIS imputation methodology takes into consideration the trend over time of a given indicator. In general, using time series information in the imputation of missing data renders an estimate of higher quality than an imputation without such information.

The UIS uses an automated “single imputation method” which creates a single estimate to replace the missing value and complete the data set. The following methods can be used:

- i) The preferred method is to use statistically correlated indicators to impute the missing value of the given indicator. For example, if the pupil-teacher ratio for total primary education (both public and private sectors) is missing in a given year but data on the public sector are available for another year, the rate of change of the public sector ratio between the two years could be applied to derive the total pupil-teacher ratio for the missing year. This approach assumes that the pupil-teacher ratio in private primary education changes in the same way as in public primary education.

- ii) Missing values are imputed from available data for the closest year(s) for the indicator in question.
- If values of the indicator are only available for years previous to the year of the missing value, the most recent year's value is used as the imputed value for the missing year.
 - If values of the indicator are only available for years more recent than the year of the missing value, the earliest year's value is used as the imputed value for the missing year.
 - If values of the indicator are available for years before and after the year of the missing value, data are imputed using linear interpolation between the two years that are closest to the year of the missing data.
- iii) Where no information is available for a country, the unweighted regional group mean of the given indicator is used as the imputed value. Because this method is sensitive to the weight of countries in the region, the rule is not applied to countries with substantial relative weights with respect to their region (for example, China in East Asia and the Pacific). In such cases, manual imputation is required even if it results in a non-publishable estimate. Currently such estimates are made for less than six countries.

What does it mean if the value is a “national estimation”?

A “national estimation” is a value which is the result of an estimation by the country. These estimates are labeled with one asterisk (*) in the [UIS database](#).

What does it mean if the value is a “UIS estimation”?

When data are not available from the country, the UIS may produce its own estimations for missing data using established standards. The estimation method used depends on the availability of related data, such as time series data. The resulting value is sent to the country for validation. These estimates are called “UIS estimations” which are labeled with two asterisks (**) in the UIS database.

What is the difference between the net enrolment rate, the adjusted net enrolment rate and the gross enrolment ratio?

The primary net enrolment rate (NER) is the percentage of children of primary school age who are enrolled in primary education. Net enrolment rates are a measure of enrolment of children in a level of education intended for their age. The primary adjusted net enrolment rate (ANER) is the percentage of children of primary school age who are enrolled in primary or secondary education. It is always greater than or equal to the NER and is used for the calculation of the out-of-school rate (for example, $100\% - \text{primary ANER} = \text{primary out-of-school rate}$). The gross enrolment ratio (GER) is the number of children enrolled in primary school expressed as a percentage of the number of primary school-age children. It is both a measure of the capacity of the education system (total enrolment relative to the size of the population of official age for a given level of education) and enrolment of children who are over-age or under-age. The NER and ANER have a range from 0% to 100%, whereas the GER can exceed 100% in cases of over-age or under-age enrolment.

Examples:

- NER: The primary school-age range in a country is from 6 to 11 years. Of 100 children aged 6 to 11, 80 are enrolled in primary education. The primary NER is $80/100=80\%$.
- ANER: The primary school-age range in a country is from 6 to 11 years. Of 100 children aged 6 to 11, 80 are enrolled in primary education and 5 are enrolled in secondary education. The primary ANER is $(80+5)/100=85\%$.
- GER: The primary school-age range in a country is from 6 to 11 years. Of 100 children aged 6 to 11, 80 are enrolled in primary education. In addition, 30 children younger than 6 years or older than 11 years are enrolled in primary education. In total, 110 children are enrolled in primary education and the primary GER is $(80+30)/100=110\%$.

Why is the gross enrolment ratio available for more countries than the net enrolment rate?

The gross enrolment ratio (GER) can be calculated without information on the age of children enrolled in school. It is the number of children enrolled in primary school, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the number of children of primary school age. To calculate the net enrolment rate (NER), it is necessary to have information on the ages of all children enrolled in school. The NER is the percentage of children of primary school age who are enrolled in primary education. Because the age of all pupils is not known in all countries, the GER is available for more countries than the NER.

How is the out-of-school rate calculated?

The UIS calculates out-of-school rates for children of primary and lower secondary school age. Children in these age groups who are enrolled in primary or secondary education are counted as in school; children not in primary or secondary education are counted as out of school.

Example: The primary school-age range in a country is from 6 to 11 years. Of 100 children aged 6 to 11, 80 are enrolled in primary education and 5 are enrolled in secondary education. 85 children of primary school age are in school and 15 are out of school. The primary out-of-school rate is then $15/100=15\%$.

Why does the UIS include children participating in pre-primary and non-formal education in its estimates of out-of-school children?

Primary and lower secondary school-age children are considered as being in school if they are enrolled in primary or secondary education.

Children of primary school age who attend pre-primary education are considered to be out of school for several reasons. First, the educational properties of pre-primary education and the pedagogical qualifications of its teaching staff may not meet the standards applied to primary education. Also, enrolment data on pre-primary education are not available for all countries which makes the calculation of global and regional estimates of pre-primary participation difficult.

Nevertheless, participation in any kind of educational activity is different from no exposure to school at all. The [UIS database](#) includes an indicator that measures how many out-of-school children of primary school age are in pre-primary education.

Children participating in non-formal education programmes are considered to be out of school primarily because of the nature of these programmes and limited data availability. In addition, non-formal education programmes are more often targeted at older age groups, including adults. Participation in non-formal education can only be considered as being in school if the programme is recognized as equivalent to formal primary or secondary education.

How does the UIS estimate the global demand for teachers?

The UIS bases its teacher projections on the achievement of universal primary education (UPE) by 2015, which is enshrined in both the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All targets. These projections are therefore calculated based on the assumption of full enrolment in 2015 using population projections from the United Nations Population Division. There is also a quality improvement aspect to the projections, which assumes a reduction in repetition in countries with a high repetition rate and a pupil-teacher ratio no higher than 40:1. Finally, the calculation assumes an overall annual teacher attrition rate of 5% to project the total number of teachers required to achieve UPE. [More about teacher projections](#)

Where can I learn more about how specific indicators are calculated? For example, the survival rate by grade or school life expectancy.

The [UIS Glossary](#) provides detailed information for a wide range of indicators including: definitions, data requirements, calculation methods, data sources and translations of terms. In addition, the glossary provides an explanation of how to interpret the values of a given indicator.

Are cross-nationally comparable statistics on technical and vocational education and training (TVET) available?

It is difficult to provide a comprehensive perspective of the TVET sector given its broad scope and diversity of programmes. Currently, cross-nationally comparable statistics on TVET only comprise vocational education data and indicators for programmes in the formal education system. It is important to note that vocational education in the formal education system may represent a small part of the whole TVET sector and therefore it cannot be used as a proxy of TVET activity. Instead, it would be more appropriate to use it in comparison with general education programmes to analyse the diversity of formal education programmes. The [UIS Document Library](#) features the publication “Participation in Formal Technical and Vocational Education and Training Programmes Worldwide: An Initial Study” which explains these measurement problems and why traditional education indicators cannot be used to analyse TVET.

4. INTERNATIONAL STANDARD CLASSIFICATION OF EDUCATION (ISCED)**What is ISCED?**

[The International Standard Classification of Education](#) (ISCED) is the framework used to compare statistics across education systems of countries worldwide. It is an important tool used to facilitate international comparisons and benchmark progress on international education goals. ISCED covers formal and non-formal education programmes and any resulting recognised formal educational qualifications. ISCED was first developed by UNESCO in 1976. The classification was updated in 1997, and a new revision was adopted in November 2011. According to the International Family of Economic and Social Classifications, ISCED is a reference classification under Employment, Occupation and Education. The UIS is responsible for the maintenance, updating and revision of ISCED.

What are the main differences between ISCED 1997 and the new ISCED 2011?

ISCED 1997 has 7 levels of education, while the newly-adopted ISCED 2011 has 9 levels of education. Two more tertiary education levels take into account the trend towards Bachelor’s-Master’s-Doctorate systems. The lowest level of education (ISCED 0) is now called early childhood education and includes a new category of educational programmes for very young children. Qualifications have been added as a related unit of classification, and coding schemes are now provided for educational programmes as well as educational attainment. Programme orientation no longer includes the pre-vocational category, and a new sub-category related to ISCED level completion has been introduced.

When will ISCED 2011 be implemented?

The UNESCO General Conference adopted ISCED 2011 in November 2011. The UIS and its data collection partners (Eurostat and OECD) have already begun to work with countries to map their education systems to the new classification and revise data collection instruments accordingly. An operational manual and other training materials are also being developed. The first international data collections based on the new ISCED will begin in 2014. However, implementation of the new ISCED in household surveys and censuses may not occur until 2015.

What are the statistical units of ISCED?

The statistical units of ISCED are the educational programmes and, according to the new ISCED 2011, the resulting qualification. These statistical units are classified into a hierarchy of educational levels, based on increasing complexity of educational content.

What are ISCED mappings and where can I find the latest versions?

ISCED mappings are a visual representation of how national programmes of education are classified according to ISCED. All ISCED mappings have been validated by the UIS and the respective country before they are made available on the UIS website. They support the transparency of UIS statistics and also help analysts to better understand and interpret the UIS international education database. The most recent ISCED mappings based on ISCED 1997 can be found [here](#).

Why can't I find ISCED mappings for certain countries on the UIS website?

ISCED 1997 mappings published on the UIS website must be validated by both the UIS and the respective countries. ISCED mappings are typically created based on a country's submission of the UIS questionnaire on national education programmes. The UIS reviews the mapping and, if required, discusses with the country the classification of education programmes to the ISCED standard. Therefore, a country's ISCED mapping may not be on the UIS website either because it is still under review or the relevant information has not been submitted to the Institute.

How can I find the ISCED classification of the degree/qualification that I received from a specific learning institution?

ISCED mappings provide general information about the classification of national education programmes to ISCED 1997 and include information on the qualifications or degrees that are usually obtained upon successful completion of these programmes. However, it is important to note that ISCED was designed to facilitate statistical comparison of national education systems at international levels and is not intended as an instrument to assess the equivalence of specific degrees or qualifications obtained in different learning institutions or across countries.

5. STATISTICS ON INTERNATIONALLY MOBILE STUDENTS**Where can I find data on mobile students?**

The latest UIS data on internationally mobile students can be found in the [UIS database](#).

- Click on "Predefined Tables".
- Tables 17-18b feature the UIS data available on mobile students.

What is an "internationally mobile student"? How are "internationally mobile students" different from "foreign students"? Which definition does the UIS use?

"Internationally mobile students (or mobile students)" are students who have crossed a national border and moved to another country with the objective of studying. Currently, the UIS data collection on internationally mobile students covers the tertiary education level only.

Two operational definitions are widely used to identify mobile students and their countries of origin:

- Students who are not usual residents of their country of study, i.e. those who have recently moved to the destination (host) country from somewhere else; and
- Students who received their prior qualifying education in another country, indicating that they have crossed a border.

The UIS accepts country of citizenship as a proxy in countries/territories where residence or prior education does not yield the country of origin of mobile students.

In comparison, foreign students are students who do not have citizenship in the destination (host) country.

Does the UIS have data on how many students from my country study abroad?

Yes. Host countries send data to the UIS on how many mobile students study in their countries and where these students come from. The UIS uses this information to estimate the number of students from a given country who study abroad.

Does the UIS collect data on the number of universities and number of students in each university and country?

The UIS collects the total number of students enrolled in tertiary-level education programmes in a given country. However, the UIS does not have data on the number of universities or the number of students in a particular university.

Why is the number of international students published by the UIS different from the number published by the Institute of International Education (IIE), the Secretariat for the *Project Atlas*?

The difference in numbers published by the UIS and *Project Atlas* is mainly due to differences in definition and coverage of international student data.

The UIS' internationally mobile student data cover only students who pursue a higher education degree outside their country of usual residence (so called "degree mobility") and exclude students who are under short-term, for-credit study and exchange programmes that last less than a full school year (so called "credit mobility"). In contrast, *Project Atlas* data cover both degree mobility and credit mobility in tertiary education.

The following example illustrates how different definitions and coverage can impact numbers published by the UIS and IIE. In 2010, China reported to the UIS that its universities enrolled 71,673 degree-seeking international students. By contrast, the *Project Atlas* website shows "there were over 265,000 international students in China in 2010"; these 265,000 students include not only degree-seeking students but also students who participate in short-term programmes of less than one year.

6. STATISTICS ON EDUCATION FINANCE

Where can I find data on education finance?

The latest UIS data on educational finance can be found in the [UIS database](#):

– Click on "Predefined Tables".

– Table 19 features the available UIS data on education finance

UIS work on education finance - including statistical capacity building projects - can be found at: [Education Finance](#).

What are the most recent UIS publications on education finance and expenditure? Recent publications on education finance include:

- [Financing Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Meeting the Challenges of Expansion, Equity and Quality](#).
- [Global Education Digest 2007](#) (focus on the financing of education, particularly at the primary level of education).

Why are data on education finance and expenditure important?

Data on education finance and expenditure are essential for effectively addressing critical education policy questions. These data help decisionmakers to determine the financial feasibility of achieving both quantitative and qualitative education goals and decide on how to achieve equity in the provision of educational opportunities. They are also used to determine which particular financial policies and programmes can have the greatest impact on reaching objectives such as improved access, completion and learning, as well as to recognise the trade-offs and implications that can arise from the implementation of any particular set of education financing decisions.

What does the UIS data collection on education expenditure include?

The UIS data collection on finance statistics covers the following topics:

- Direct public, private and international expenditure in educational institutions;
- Private expenditure on educational goods and services purchased outside educational institutions;
- Subsidies to students from government and other private entities;
- Transfers and payments to other private entities; and
- Expenditure other than for educational institutions (expenditure for the general administration of education).

The UIS data collection aims at capturing expenditure on educational goods and services, both inside and outside educational institutions, from three sources of funding: public, private and international. In addition to education expenditure, the UIS collects data on total government expenditure from all sectors (according to the System of National Accounts). Data on public and international education expenditure are derived from administrative records compiled typically by the ministry of finance, ministry of education or national statistical office, whereas data on private household expenditure is derived from household surveys.

For more information on definitions and concepts related to education finance statistics, please refer to the [UOE Data Collection on Formal Education - Manual on Concepts, Definitions and Classifications](#) (2016) and [Instructional Manual: Survey of Formal Education](#) (2016)

Which indicators are traditionally used to measure governmental efforts toward education?

Two of the most common indicators used to measure government investment in education are:

- Public expenditure on education as a share of national wealth as measured by gross domestic product (GDP), which represents - in a broad sense - the availability of resources for education; and
- Public expenditure on education as a share of total public expenditure (all sectors), which represents the commitment of governments to education compared to other public spending priorities.

Which indicators are traditionally used to compare public expenditure per student among countries?

Two of the most common indicators used for international comparison of the allocation of financial resources per student are:

- Public education expenditure per student as a share of the GDP per capita, which allows the analysis of unit costs compared to national income levels; and
- Public education expenditure per student in purchasing power parity dollars (PPP\$), which allows for direct comparison across countries of the relative value of the funding provided annually for education. PPP\$ are calculated using the purchasing power parity rate. This is a rate of currency conversion which eliminates differences in price levels among countries. This means that a given sum of money, when converted into U.S. dollars at PPP rates, will buy the same basket of goods and services in all countries.