REPOSITORY OF EDUCATION EXPENDITURE REPORTS

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE[1]

Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations

EC	European Commission
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCWA:	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia
UNPD	United Nations Population Division
WB	World Bank

I.   Introduction

The production and dissemination of quality education statistics is a core activity within the remit of the UIS. As the custodian of the SDG 4 agenda, UIS must monitor progress towards the global education targets. As part of this process, a compilation of national education reports publicly available on the websites of each country has been created and made available to the public.

This article details the most relevant methodological aspects associated with the development of the repository and is structured as follows: Section 2 sets out the objectives of the repository, the purposes for which it can be used and the framework for its development in the context of the UIS. Section 3 contains instructions for use, section 4 describes the type of data to be displayed and section 5 provides a summary of the coverage in terms of countries with available data.

II.   The repository

The repository will provide a compendium of links related to the main sources of education data published by each country. These data correspond to education expenditure and total government expenditure, and are associated with the collection of SDG 1.a.2 and 1.a.GDP.

The UIS collects education data through the annual Survey of Formal Education and uses population data from UNPD and GDP data from the World Bank for the usual calculation of indicators. However, one of the main problems it faces is the existence of several critical gaps.

In response, an alternative data collection mechanism was put in place to fill these gaps, which is illustrated below:

Figure 1: Process of filling data gaps from national sources
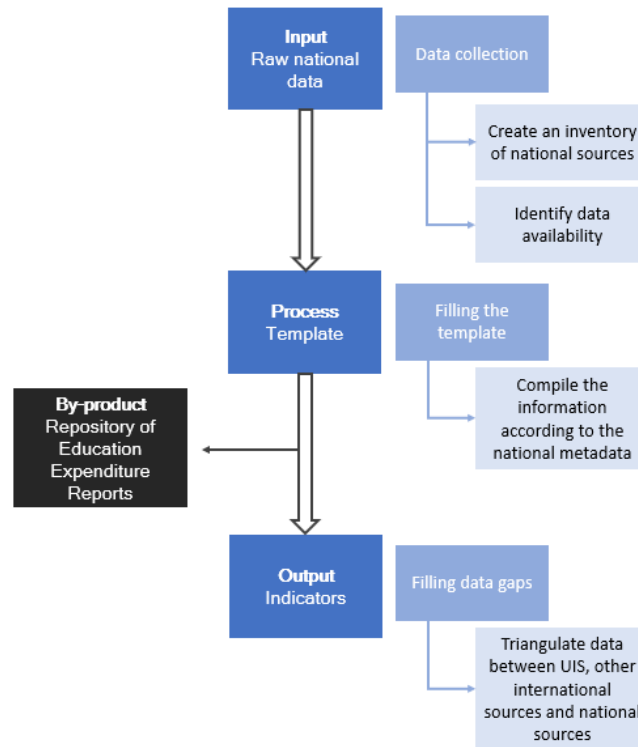
The process starts from the collection of publicly available national raw data (consisting of national data and metadata), which is standardised and compiled in a template developed for this purpose. The ultimate aim is to be able to fill data gaps arising from the Survey of Formal Education.

In this context, as part of the data collection process, an inventory of national sources emerges, which will give rise to a by-product: the Repository of Education Expenditure Reports. It is possible that there are no homogeneous data series because the data are raw, and the reports are frequently loose or discontinued.

Certain criteria on which to focus in order to move from raw data to indicators are presented in Annex I. The aim is not to arrive to precise indicators, but to illustrate the mitigating factors to be faced in order to reach such a goal,

III. Using the repository

To use the repository, you can take two different paths:

a) Browse freely through the repository, without the need to use the regional grouping or date filters. To do this, you will have to scroll vertically until you find the country you are looking for. Once you have found it, locate the year and type of document for which you wish to obtain the link, click on the circle and redirect to the link that will appear in the pop-up window.

b) Use the filters to select a country:

   - In the 'Region' drop-down menu, select the region or type of classification you are interested in: UN Economic and Social Commission, SDG regional group or World Bank income classification. All countries belonging to the selected region will be displayed.

   - In the 'Country' drop-down menu, select the country of interest.

   - In the right-hand panel, select the year of interest.

   - Click on the circle for a link and then click on the link that will appear in the pop-up window.

A step-by-step guide to navigating the dashboard is presented in Annex II with pictures.

IV. Data
a. Dates

The repository includes reports referring to the years 2015 to 2021, i.e. it takes into account seven years. For those countries in which the fiscal year is different from the calendar year, the year that involves more months is taken as the year of the report, for representativeness reasons. If the fiscal year is half of a calendar year, divided into six months of a year t and six months of a year t+1, the year t+1 is taken as the reporting year.

For example, if a country has a fiscal year starting in March and ending in February of the following year, and publishes a report covering the years 2017/2018, the report will be considered in the repository as being from the year 2017. Conversely, if a country has a fiscal year starting in October and ending in September of the following year, and publishes a report covering the years 2017/2018, the report will be considered in the repository as being from the year 2018. Finally, if a country has a fiscal year starting in July and ending in June, and publishes a report covering the years 2017/2018, the report will be considered in the repository as from the year 2018.

b. Sources

Official national sources were used for the repository, either from the Ministry of Economy and/or Finance, the Budget Office, the Parliament or the National Statistical Office. In case no national information was available and only for some countries belonging to the European Commission, the 'draft budgetary plans', which the countries themselves submit to the EC, were used.

Official documents from national agencies providing budget figures for central and/or consolidated government, or reporting budget execution figures, were collected. Examples of such documents are budget laws, budget law elevation messages, citizen budget reports, public expenditure time series, budget execution reports, and citizen transparency portals among others.

c. Types of expenditure

There are essentially two types of data that can be found in the reports: data on education spending (ideally as a government function, but usually at a ministerial level) and data on total government spending. These data are used to calculate two indicators that the UIS is mandated to collect, compile, produce and disseminate internationally:

- Public expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure (SDG 1.a.2)
- Public expenditure on education as a percentage of total GDP (SDG 1.a.GDP)

Within the repository, budget documents are found in the 'Budget' column, while those relating to actual (or executed) expenditure are found in the 'Actual' column.

Reports referring to provisional expenditures have been placed according to the nature of the document. If they are provisional budget numbers, the document will be placed in the 'Budget' column; if they are provisional numbers on executed expenditure, the document will be placed in the 'Actual' column.

It may happen that, for a given country and year, there is more than one link. This may be because the figures are found in different documents in some cases as the interest is in both education spending and total government spending. In other cases, this is due to the compilation of sources published separately by different levels of government.

d. Regions

To assist users, the regional groupings used in the repository are organised in the following order:

- UN Economic and Social Commission (EC Region);
- SDG regional group (SDG Region); or
- the World Bank income classification (WB Region)

In particular, the regional groupings consist of the following classification:

Table 1: Regional groupings

Region Definition	Full name
EC Region	**United Nations Economic and Social Commission**
Africa	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Europe	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
Latin America and the Caribbean	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC)
Asia and the Pacific	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
Western Asia	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (UNESCWA)
SDG Region	**Sustainable Development Goals**
Africa (Sub-Saharan)	
Asia (Central and Southern)	
Asia (Eastern and South-eastern)	
Latin America and the Caribbean	
Northern America and Europe	
Oceania	
Western Asia and Northern Africa	
WB Region	**World Bank country income groups**
Low income	
Lower middle income	
Upper middle income	
High income	

V. Coverage

In total, education expenditure reports were obtained for 171 countries. Below is the distribution of the countries surveyed according to the different regional groupings considered.

Table 2: Countries surveyed by EC Region

EC Region	No. of countries	% of countries
Africa	41	75,9%
Asia and the Pacific	36	62,1%
Europe	50	89,3%
Latin America and the Caribbean	37	80,4%
Western Asia and Northern Africa	4	22,2%
Without classification	3	37,5%

Table 3: Countries surveyed by SDG Region

SDG Region	No. of countries	% of countries
Africa (Sub-Saharan)	40	78,4%
Asia (Central and Southern)	12	85,7%
Asia (Eastern and South-eastern)	14	77,8%
Latin America and the Caribbean	37	75,5%
Northern America and Europe	43	75,4%
Oceania	14	56,0%
Western Asia and Northern Africa	11	42,3%

Table 4: Countries surveyed by WB Region

EC Region	No. of countries	% of countries
Low income	23	78,0%
Lower middle income	39	80,0%
Upper middle income	44	75,6%
High income	62	79,3%
Without classification	3	12,5%

Regarding the type of information obtained on the 171 countries surveyed, 145 of them had reports related to budget information, while 112 had reports related to budget execution. The number of countries with information by year is distributed as follows:

Figure 2: Countries with information by year and type

■ Budget ■ Actual

Year	Budget	Actual
2015	47%	54%
2016	49%	58%
2017	54%	59%
2018	58%	58%
2019	61%	55%
2020	73%	29%
2021	72%	1%
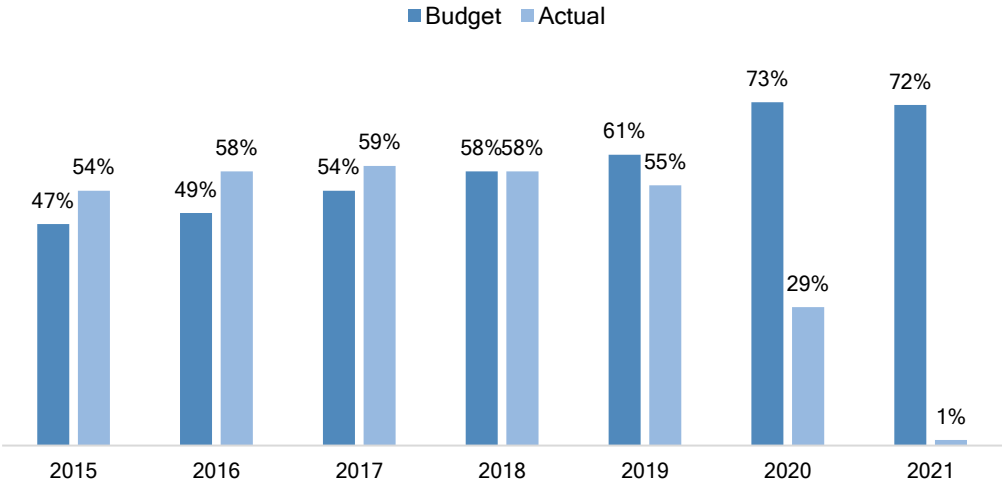
The regional distribution of inquired countries according to the three regional groupings can be visualised in the following figures.

Figure 3: Countries with information by EC Region
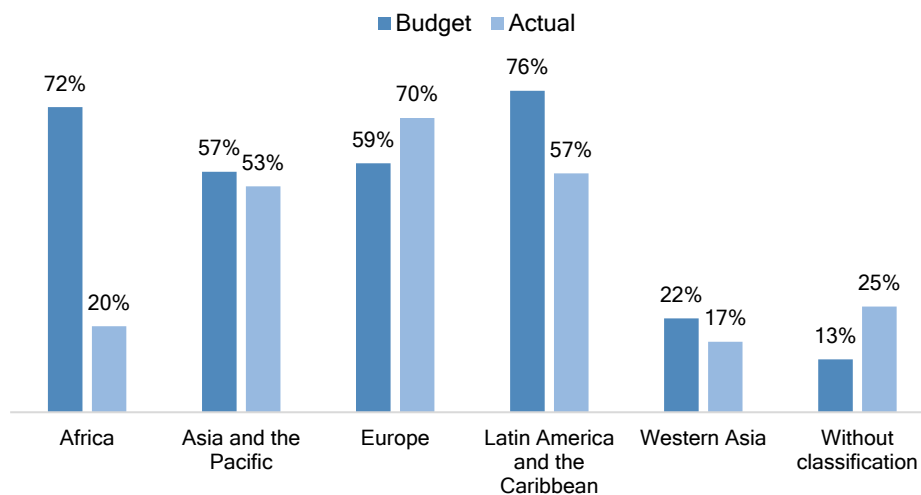
Figure 4: Countries with information by SDG Region
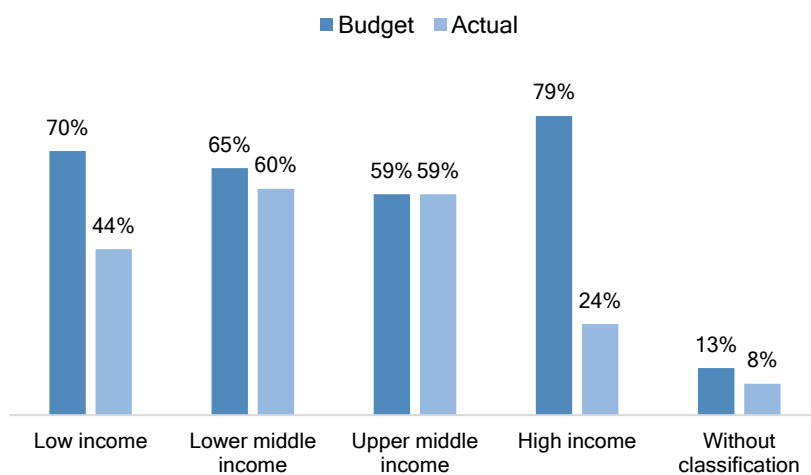
Figure 5: Countries with information by WB Region

Legend: ■ Budget ■ Actual

Region	Budget	Actual
Africa (Sub-Saharan)	75%	22%
Asia (Central and Southern)	86%	79%
Asia (Eastern and South-eastern)	61%	72%
Latin America and the Caribbean	71%	53%
Northern America and Europe	47%	58%
Oceania	56%	44%
Western Asia and Northern Africa	31%	27%
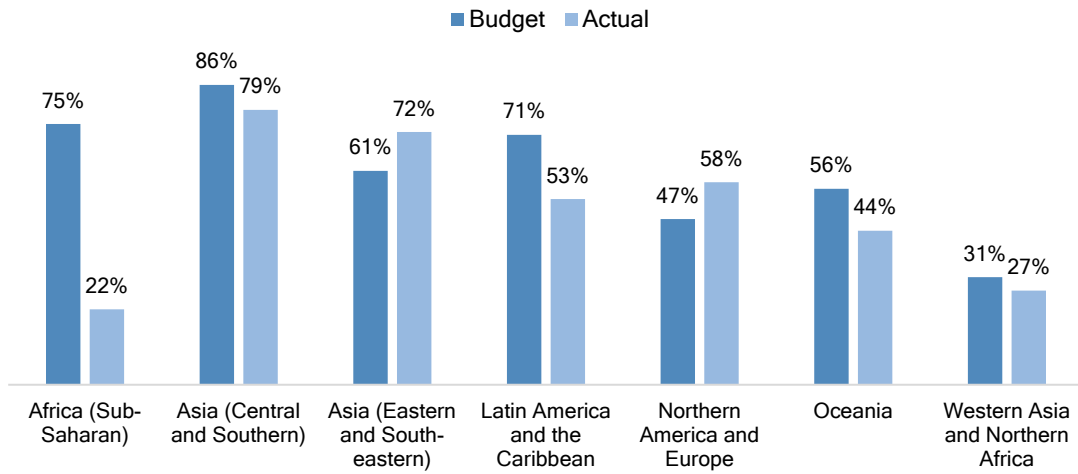
Annex I: Guide to navigating the repository

The dashboard has five filters: three regionals (EC Region, SDG Region, WB Region), one for country and one for year. Then there is the body of the dashboard, where for each country and year, a circle for budget execution reports and/or a circle for budget reports can be obtained.

Figure 6: Repository overview
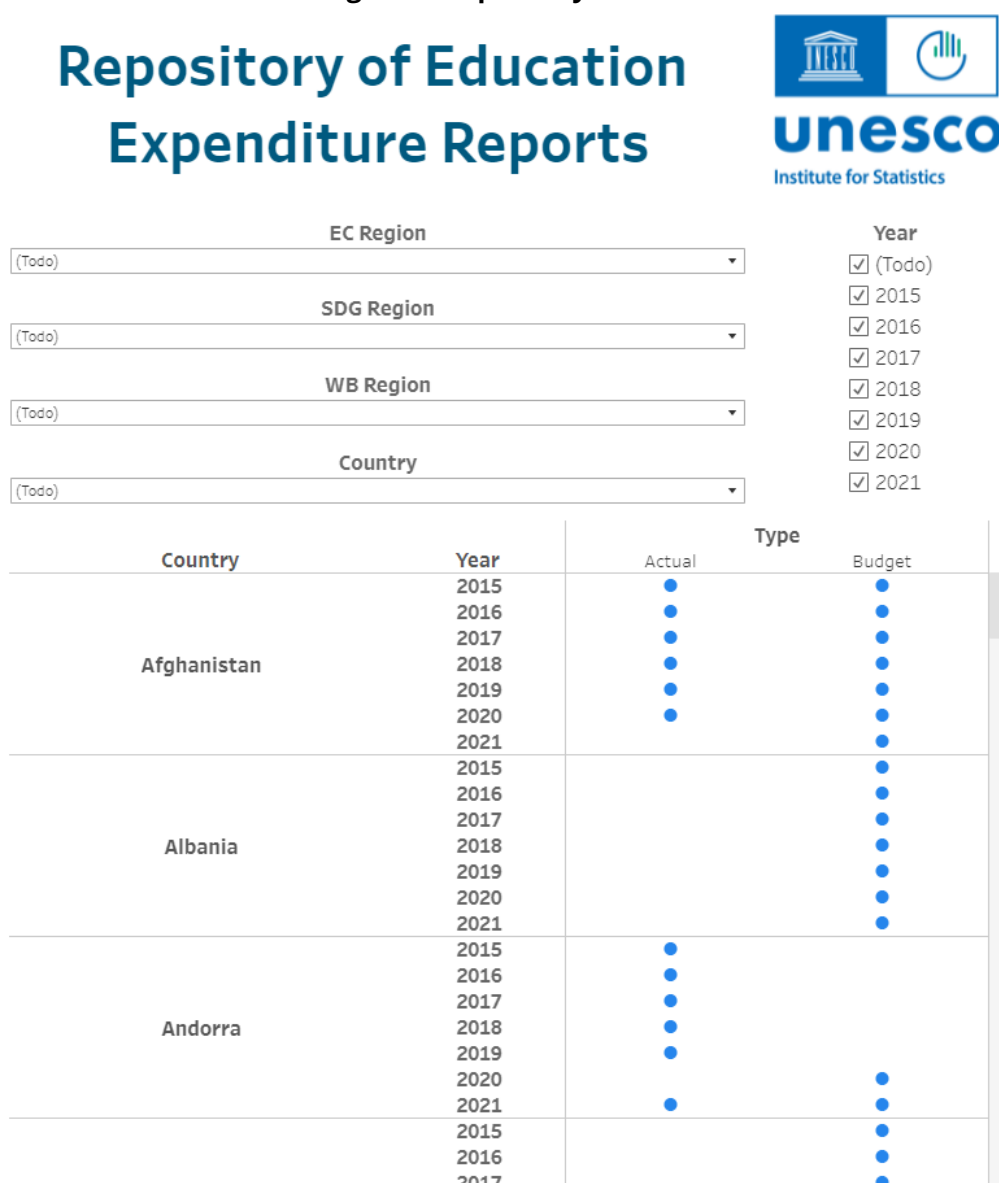
By selecting the region or type of classification you are interested in, all countries belonging to the selected region will be displayed.

Figure 7: Opening the 'EC Region' filter

Repository of Education Expenditure Reports

unesco
Institute for Statistics

EC Region		Year
(Todo) ▼		☑ (Todo)
			☑ 2015
(Todo)		☑ 2016
NULL		☑ 2017
Africa		☑ 2018
Asia and the Pacific		☑ 2019
Europe		☑ 2020
Latin America and the Caribbean		☑ 2021
Western Asia		

Figure 8: Opening the 'SDG Region' filter

SDG Region	☑ 2015
(Todo) ▼	☑ 2016
	☑ 2017
(Todo)	☑ 2018
Africa (Sub-Saharan)	☑ 2019
Asia (Central and Southern)	☑ 2020
Asia (Eastern and South-eastern)	☑ 2021
Latin America and the Caribbean	
Northern America and Europe	**Type**
Oceania	Budget
Western Asia and Northern Africa	●
	●
2017 ●	●

Figure 9: Opening the 'WB Region' filter

WB Region	☑ 2018
(Todo) ▼	☑ 2019
	☑ 2020
(Todo)	☑ 2021
NULL	
High income	**Type**
Low income	Budget
Lower middle income	●
Upper middle income	●
	●
	●

The 'Country' filter shows only the relevant values depending on whether any of the three previous filters were used. Thus, if none of the previous filters were used, all countries for which information is available will be displayed. In case a specific region or commission was chosen in the previous filters, only the countries linked to that choice will be displayed.
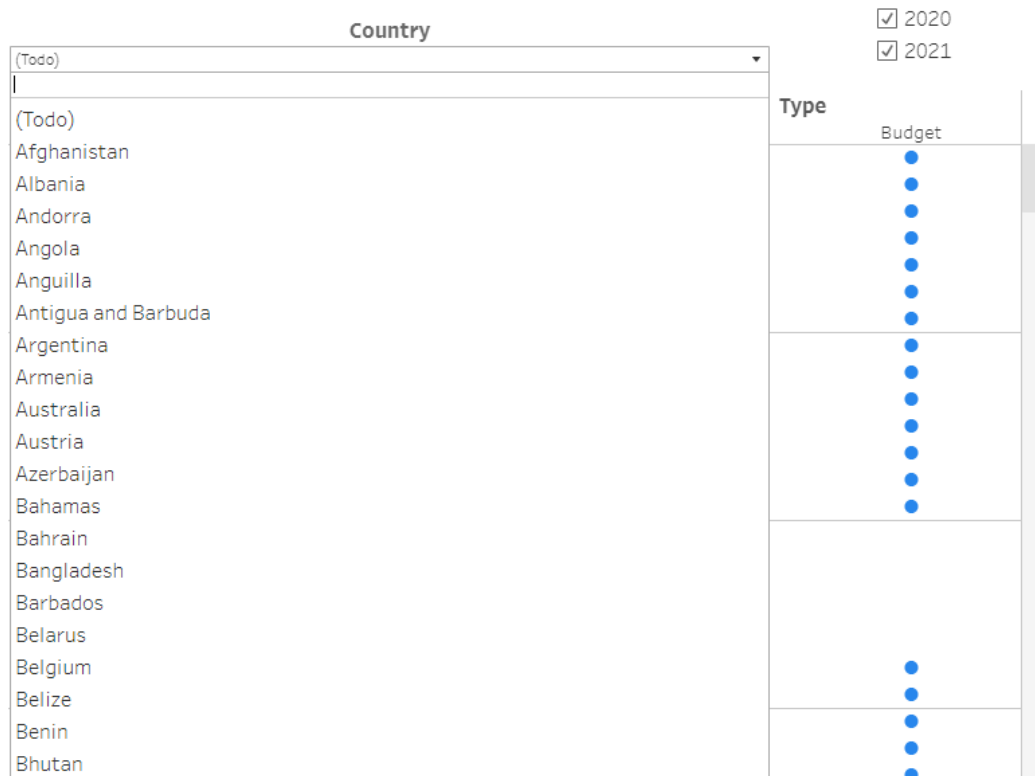
Figure 10: Opening the 'Country' filter

The 'Year' filter is different from the other filters in that it allows to select more than one value at a time. By using this filter, all years, some of them, or only one year can be selected.

Figure 11: Using the 'Year' filter

Year	Year	Year
☑ (Todo)	☐ (Todo)	☐ (Todo)
☑ 2015	☑ 2015	☑ 2015
☑ 2016	☐ 2016	☑ 2016
☑ 2017	☐ 2017	☑ 2017
☑ 2018	☐ 2018	☑ 2018
☑ 2019	☐ 2019	☐ 2019
☑ 2020	☐ 2020	☐ 2020
☑ 2021	☐ 2021	☐ 2021

Figure 12: Click on circle and get link

Annex II: Criteria for harmonising data sources

The objective of this section is to summarise the results of the comparison of different sources. In order to be able to use alternative sources, a useful first step is to understand the differences in the data available for the same country by analysing the methodologies, and to construct a rule for the use of alternative sources for global reporting.

Among the elements necessary to determine whether data from one source is comparable to data from a different source is to ensure consistency with respect to certain parameters:

a) Expenditure reported at functional or ministerial level,
b) Some countries have multiple ministries, which are in charge of publishing information for different ISCED levels,
c) Whether it refers to formal or non-formal education,
d) Educational levels considered: early childhood, primary, secondary and/or tertiary,
e) Interest payments and debt amortisation are considered (or not) in total government expenditure,
f) Levels of government considered: central, regional and/or local,
g) Expenditure coverage in public and/or private institutions.

Only in case these dimensions coincide in time for a country, the SDG indicators can be calculated and annual comparisons of education expenditure levels with respect to the total can be made.

Annex III: Data coverage by region

The summary of data coverage by regional grouping and by year is presented below.

Table 5: Countries with information by region and type

Grouping	Region	Budget	Actual
EC Region	Africa	39	11
	Asia and the Pacific	33	31
	Europe	33	39
	Latin America and the Caribbean	35	26
	Western Asia	4	3
	Without classification	1	2
SDG Region	Africa (Sub-Saharan)	38	11
	Asia (Central and Southern)	12	11
	Asia (Eastern and South-eastern)	11	13
	Latin America and the Caribbean	35	26
	Northern America and Europe	27	33
	Oceania	14	11
	Western Asia and Northern Africa	8	7
WB Region	Low income	23	7
	Lower middle income	35	22
	Upper middle income	36	33
	High income	48	48
	Without classification	3	2

Table 6: Countries with data by region and year

Grouping	Region	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
EC Region	Africa	34	33	36	38	39	38	34
	Asia and the Pacific	29	33	34	34	34	35	30
	Europe	45	45	46	48	45	35	29
	Latin America and the Caribbean	32	34	34	35	35	34	28
	Western Asia	2	3	3	3	3	3	2
	Without classification	2	2	2	3	3	0	0
SDG Region	Africa (Sub-Saharan)	33	33	35	37	38	37	33
	Asia (Central and Southern)	9	10	10	12	12	12	12
	Asia (Eastern and South-eastern)	13	14	14	13	12	13	10
	Latin America and the Caribbean	32	34	34	35	35	34	28
	Northern America and Europe	39	39	39	41	39	28	23
	Oceania	10	12	13	13	14	14	12
	Western Asia and Northern Africa	8	8	10	10	9	7	5
WB Region	Low income	17	15	20	22	22	22	18
	Lower middle income	33	34	34	36	37	36	34
	Upper middle income	41	41	41	41	40	39	32
	High income	50	57	57	59	57	45	37
	Without classification	3	3	3	3	3	3	2

Annex IV: About the survey

The collection was carried out between February 2021 and June 2021, and it was exclusively an online mapping of the official websites of the governments of each country.

It is important to clarify that the national and multilateral agencies (in the case of the EC) from which the reports were obtained were not formally contacted. The objective of the survey was to collect as much information as was publicly available on official websites.

If a country or a year is missing for a country for which information is available, this means that there is no public information available, that the access links are corrupted, or that prior authorisation is required to access the report, and therefore the information is not considered to be publicly available.

Because the links are hosted on official websites of each country and do not depend on UNESCO, it is possible that some of them may be down without prior notice.