

# SDG indicator metadata

(Harmonized metadata template - format version 1.1)

## 0. Indicator information (SDG\_INDICATOR\_INFO)

### 0.a. Goal (SDG\_GOAL)

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

### 0.b. Target (SDG\_TARGET)

Target 1.a: Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions

### 0.c. Indicator (SDG\_INDICATOR)

Indicator 1.a.2: Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)

### 0.d. Series (SDG\_SERIES\_DESCR)

SD\_XPD\_ESED - Proportion of total government spending on essential services, education [UIS methodology] [1.a.2]

### 0.e. Metadata update (META\_LAST\_UPDATE)

2024-06-28

### 0.f. Related indicators (SDG\_RELATED\_INDICATORS)

4.5.3, 4.5.4, 4.5.5, 4.5.6, 4.b.1

### 0.g. International organisations(s) responsible for global monitoring

(SDG\_CUSTODIAN\_AGENCIES)

UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UNESCO-UIS)

## 1. Data reporter (CONTACT)

### 1.a. Organisation (CONTACT\_ORGANISATION)

UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UNESCO-UIS)

## 2. Definition, concepts, and classifications (IND\_DEF\_CON\_CLASS)

### 2.a. Definition and concepts (STAT\_CONC\_DEF)

As agreed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), data for the **education component only** of indicator 1.a.2 are provided by two custodian agencies (co-custodians IMF and UNESCO-UIS) to provide maximum country coverage. Therefore, the Global SDG Indicators Database includes two distinct data series for the education component, supplied by these different data providers (the co-custodians). Each provider employs unique data collection and calculation methods. Consequently, variations may arise when comparing the datasets: SG\_XPD\_EDUC (provided by IMF as part of a set that contains all components of indicator 1.a.2 and the total) and SD\_XPD\_ESED (provided by UNESCO-UIS for the education component only). To gain insight into the

methodologies used by each provider, please review the additional metadata file associated with indicator 1.a.2.

**Definition:**

Total general (local, regional and central) government expenditure on education (current, capital, and transfers), expressed as a percentage of total general government expenditure on all sectors (including health, education, social services, etc.). It includes expenditure funded by transfers from international sources to the government.

**Concepts:**

Government expenditure on education covers educational expenditure by all levels of government (local, regional, central) on the formal education system, from early childhood to tertiary education, in both public and private instructional and non-instructional institutions within the borders of a country.

Expenditure on education includes expenditure on core educational goods and services, such as teaching staff, school buildings, or school books and teaching materials, and peripheral educational goods and services such as ancillary services, general administration and other activities.

**2.b. Unit of measure** (UNIT\_MEASURE)

Percentage. This indicator is the total general government expenditure on education, expressed as a percentage of total general government expenditure on all sectors.

**2.c. Classifications** (CLASS\_SYSTEM)

The formal education system comprises the levels of education defined in the 2011 revision of the *International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011)*.

**3. Data source type and data collection method** (SRC\_TYPE\_COLL\_METHOD)**3.a. Data sources** (SOURCE\_TYPE)

Data on government spending come from government budgetary documents, financial reports, and official statistics provided by government agencies responsible for finance and budgeting.

**3.b. Data collection method** (COLL\_METHOD)

The UIS compiles government spending data through:

- UIS Formal Education Survey:
  - Numerator: data provided by countries responding to the annual UIS survey on formal education including the UNESCO-OECD-Eurostat (UOE) data collection.
  - Denominator: data on total general government expenditure (all sectors) are extracted from the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook database and are updated annually.
- UIS Dynamic Template (numerator and denominator): data provided by countries or data obtained from the national official documents.

**3.c. Data collection calendar** (FREQ\_COLL)

- a. Annual UIS (usually launched the 4th quarter every year) and UOE survey (usually launched in June every year).
- b. Data mining is conducted periodically to correspond to the UIS data release schedule

### 3.d. Data release calendar (REL\_CAL\_POLICY)

---

Biannual UIS data release (February and September).

### 3.e. Data providers (DATA\_SOURCE)

---

Ministries of Finance, Ministries of Education, National Statistical Offices.

### 3.f. Data compilers (COMPILING\_ORG)

---

UNESCO Institute for Statistics, OECD, Eurostat.

### 3.g. Institutional mandate (INST\_MANDATE)

---

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is the statistical branch of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Institute produces internationally comparable data and methodologies in the fields of education, science, culture and communication for countries at all stages of development.

The [Education 2030 Framework for Action §100](#) has clearly stated that: *“In recognition of the importance of harmonization of monitoring and reporting, the UIS will remain the official source of cross-nationally comparable data on education. It will continue to produce international monitoring indicators based on its annual education survey and on other data sources that guarantee international comparability for more than 200 countries and territories. In addition to collecting data, the UIS will work with partners to develop new indicators, statistical approaches and monitoring tools to better assess progress across the targets related to UNESCO’s mandate, working in coordination with the SDG-Education 2030 SC”.*

## 4. Other methodological considerations (OTHER\_METHOD)

### 4.a. Rationale (RATIONALE)

---

The indicator is used to assess a government's emphasis on education relative to other sectors. The indicator shows how much of a priority education is for a given government, over time or in comparison with other countries.

### 4.b. Comment and limitations (REC\_USE\_LIM)

---

A high proportion of government expenditure on education demonstrates a high government priority for education relative to other public investments. The Education 2030 Framework for Action has endorsed a benchmark for this indicator, which encourages countries to allocate at least 15% to 20% of their public expenditure to education.

While the indicator allows for cross-country comparisons, differences in government structures, budgeting practices, and definitions may limit the comparability of data between countries. Variations in how countries categorize and report spending on education can introduce biases into comparative analyses.

The indicator does not consider the demographic profile of a country's population, such as age distribution or socioeconomic status. Countries with younger populations may naturally allocate a higher proportion of spending to education, regardless of government priorities, while countries with aging populations may prioritize other essential services, such as healthcare or social security.

#### 4.c. Method of computation (DATA\_COMP)

---

Total government expenditure for all levels of education combined expressed as a percentage of total general government expenditure (all sectors).

$$PXE_t = \frac{TXE_t}{TPX_t}$$

$PXE_t$  = total general government expenditure on education (all levels of education combined) as a percentage of total government expenditure in financial year  $t$

$TXE_t$  = total general government expenditure on education (all levels of education combined) in financial year  $t$

$TPX_t$  = total general government expenditure in financial year  $t$

#### 4.d. Validation (DATA\_VALIDATION)

---

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics shares all indicator values and notes on methodology with National Statistical Offices, Ministries of Education, or other relevant agencies in individual countries for their review, feedback and validation before the publication of the data.

#### 4.e. Adjustments (ADJUSTMENT)

---

Data should cover formal education only and should follow common definitions.

#### 4.f. Treatment of missing values (i) at country level and (ii) at regional level (IMPUTATION)

---

- **At country level**  
No imputations are made by data compiler.
- **At regional and global levels**  
Data gaps are filled with latest available value.

#### 4.g. Regional aggregations (REG\_AGG)

---

Median with coverage equal or higher to 50% of countries.

#### 4.h. Methods and guidance available to countries for the compilation of the data at the national level (DOC\_METHOD)

---

The UIS has elaborated guidance for the countries on the methodology that should be used to calculate this indicator based on the Survey of Formal Education and its manual. The standardized Dynamic template contains instructions for its completion.

#### 4.i. Quality management (QUALITY\_MGMNT)

---

The UIS maintains a global database used to produce this indicator and defines the protocols and standards for data reporting by countries. For transparency purposes, the inclusion of a data point in the database is completed by following a protocol and is reviewed by UIS technical focal points to ensure consistency and overall data quality, based on objective criteria to ensure that only the most recent and reliable information are included in the database.

#### 4.j Quality assurance (QUALITY\_ASSURE)

---

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) prioritizes the accuracy and reliability of its government spending data on education. The UIS validates with countries the indicator values compiled through the UIS Formal Education Survey and Dynamic Template. These tools allow countries to contribute data directly, while the UIS cross-references it with total government expenditure figures obtained from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) World Economic Outlook database.

#### 4.k Quality assessment (QUALITY\_ASSMNT)

---

The indicator should be produced based on consistent and actual data on total government expenditures on education and total government expenditures on all sectors combined. Criteria for quality assessment include: data sources must include proper documentation; data values must be representative at the national population level and, if not, should be footnoted; data are plausible and based on trends and consistency with previously published/reported values for the indicator.

### 5. Data availability and disaggregation (COVERAGE)

---

**Data availability:**

125 countries with at least one data point for the period 2000-2023.

**Time series:**

2000-2023 in the SDG Global database.

**Disaggregation:**

None.

### 6. Comparability / deviation from international standards (COMPARABILITY)

---

**Sources of discrepancies**

The data is derived from different sources and may be subject to differences in national definitions of expenditure types.

### 7. References and Documentation (OTHER\_DOC)

---

**URL:**

<http://sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org/>

**References:**

UIS Instructional Manual: Survey of Formal Education

[https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/questionnaires/UIS\\_ED\\_M\\_2024\\_EN.pdf](https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/questionnaires/UIS_ED_M_2024_EN.pdf)

UOE data collection on formal education: Manual on concepts, definitions and classifications

<https://www.oecd.org/statistics/data-collection/UOE-Manual.pdf>

UIS Questionnaire on Educational Expenditure (ISCED 0-8)

<http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-questionnaires>

UIS dynamic templates :

[https://tcg.uis.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2022/11/WG\\_EMIS\\_2\\_Dynamic-Templates.pdf](https://tcg.uis.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2022/11/WG_EMIS_2_Dynamic-Templates.pdf)

IMF World Economic Outlook

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO>