



## IFHE World Congress 1913

### Resolution

#### Home Economics in Elementary and Intermediate Schools and for Adults

The second International Congress on Domestic Economy, assembled at Ghent from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 1913, adopted in its plenary meeting, held June the 19<sup>th</sup>, the following definite Votes:

#### **I. The Teaching of Domestic Economy in Primary Schools**

1. The family shall encourage the teaching of domestic economy, by seeing that the pupils attend such courses regularly and by providing them with opportunities for putting into practice at home what they have learned at school. With this object, the teacher shall strive to gain the confidence and awaken the interest of the mothers, by means of meetings held for parents and by practical demonstrations in the teaching of housekeeping.
2. Domestic economy shall be taught throughout all Primary Girls schools. The whole teaching of the school shall be imbued with it. The mistress shall take special care of the domestic education of the pupils, and this may be begun with even in the infant classes.
3. The Congress expresses the desire that, during the last two years of compulsory education (from 11 to 13 years, or from 12 to 14 years), the girls would be divided into groups, each section receiving during the week several lessons in elementary domestic economy, such lessons being both theoretical and practical.

#### **II. The Teaching of Domestic Economy to Adults or in Conjunction with an Average Education**

4. The organisation of training in domestic economy shall be based upon local necessity and upon the particular requirements of each category of pupils, in such a manner as to make the best use of every material and pedagogical means at hand.
5. The teaching of domestic economy can only be founded upon a sufficient primary education of the pupils.
6. Training in domestic economy shall be organised upon pedagogical principles. The development of the syllabus shall be in conformity with the introduction given in physics, chemistry, biology and social economy. Therefore it is necessary to enforce the scientific education of pupil teachers.

7. The training of teachers of domestic economy shall include, in a few lessons, the drawing up of a programme of social economy applied to domestic science, particularly with regard to thrift, providence and general sanitary rules.
8. The schools and classes in domestic economy shall train women for their duties as housewives, mothers and educators. They shall therefore give:
  - a.) Theoretical and practical lessons in infant and female hygiene and in first aid in cases of accident;
  - b.) A concise education in the duties of motherhood, given in a practical manner.
9. According to the age of the pupils, more profound knowledge may be inculcated, but this instruction must always be of a concentrated character.
10. The training in domestic economy for adults shall be open to:
  - a.) Girls, on their leaving the Primary schools;
  - b.) Women engaged in salaried occupations (domestic servants, women working in business houses, factory hands, shop assistants, female clerks, etc.);
  - c.) Girls continuing their studies after Primary education (secondary, higher, special or professional education).
11. It is desirable that the authorities and other persons of influence should take the initiative in organising such instruction, in the most practical manner. They should first make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the subject and then make a judicious choice of teachers; they should endeavor to furnish and ensure a permanent staff of pupils; they should, if possible, visit recommended institutions and conduct thither girls who are not acquainted with such schools of domestic economy.
12. In all the schools where girls are prepared for their future duties in life, such instruction should be given in a serious, complete and attractive manner. Ladies and girls of the higher classes should endeavour to foster instruction in domestic economy, by attending such courses themselves.
13. Everywhere all possible means (Primary schools, patronage, the press etc.) should be employed to call the attention of young girls and their parents to the utility and necessity of training in housewifery. Those who are convinced of it should be urged to spread their convictions in favour of domestic science.
14. Finally, as a principal resolution desired by the majority of the meeting, training in domestic economy should be rendered compulsory, in accordance with the most appropriate customs of each country.
15. It is most desirable that employers should institute classes for the training in housewifery for the benefit of their workwomen in factory or workroom.

16. Where such classes are wanting, employers should give their employees the opportunity for attending the housewifery classes held in the locality. They should allow work to cease in the factory or workroom in time to let such classes begin at a reasonable hour (6 p.m. at the latest).
17. The employers themselves shall promote instruction in domestic economy for adults in such places where it has hitherto not been given.
18. Employers shall not only give their employees facilities for attending classes in domestic economy, but they shall directly encourage the same by using all their influence with their workpeople.
19. In all schools and classes for domestic economy, regular instruction in social economy shall be given in an intuitive and attractive manner, treating especially of the social work the most important for the local requirements.
20. Continual and international propaganda (by means of the press, pamphlets and meetings), shall be made in favour of training in domestic economy.

### **III. Concerning the Teaching Staff in Classes for Domestic Economy**

21. The teacher or matron shall, through the school, occupy the principal place in the family and domestic education of the children from 3 – 14 of age.
22. In all training schools, infant, primary or second-grade, and also in all second-grade and high-schools for girls, plain and simple appliances shall be fitted up, to insure the regular working of:
  - a.) A canteen or kitchen for the use of boarders or day scholars;
  - b.) A sample of a middle-class dwelling.
23. The work shall to a great extent, if possible, exclusively be done by the pupil-teachers, assisted by the scholars of the two highest classes, who shall work in groups under the orders of a senior pupil, or other responsible superintendent and under the immediate direction of the teacher of domestic economy.
24. All the educative work of the school (order and cleanliness, neat and aesthetic arrangement of the furniture, control of the work and of the behaviour of the pupils), shall be entrusted to the girls themselves and carried out by them under the vigilant and regular superintendence of the teaching staff.
25. In every training college for teachers there shall be a vegetable and fruit-garden and, if possible, all requirements for the breeding of poultry, etc. The pupil-teachers shall have the care of the vegetable and fruit-gardens and of the poultry-yard, in order to prepare them for that part of their future mission in life.

26. An examination shall be held for the purpose of awarding special certificates of ability for the teaching of domestic economy and for the superintending of all responsible duties attached thereto.
27. Every training college shall be really a model instruction, both as regards the details of material order and methodic organisation.
28. The teaching staff shall make it their first duty to inculcate the taste for the acquirement of family and domestic virtues.
29. In the interests of the pupils it is most desirable that the same teacher should give instruction in the theoretical and practical work and that she would take the responsibility for both parts of the course.
30. Not only shall the instruction in domestic economy be based on knowledge gained in the courses on natural science, but the practical work of the house shall furnish innumerable pretexts for verifying the laws of science or for the occasional teaching of chemistry and physics.
31. In countries where Primary girls schools are visited by male inspectors, female agents shall be appointed to inspect women's work.
32. The State and the community shall encourage schools and courses of domestic economy by giving them grants and even by taking the initiative in founding such classes at their own expense.
33. In training colleges for teachers in High schools, the pupils shall be trained in general knowledge by mistresses and by specialists in such subjects as puericulture, hygiene for man and beast, etc.
34. Admission to a training college for teachers in domestic economy shall only be granted to girls who can show by an examination or by a certificate, that they possess sufficient general and pedagogical knowledge. The syllabus of this school shall include a connected study of the science of education.
35. Teachers of domestic economy shall be recruited as far as possible in the districts where they will be called upon to teach.

#### **IV. Instruction in Domestic Economy from the social Standpoint**

36. Everywhere, the teaching of domestic economy shall be added to professional training, in order to complete the same.
37. In all countries where instruction in domestic economy is left to private initiative, the different committees shall be united, while at the same time preserving their independence, in order that the work and the good to be done may be increased tenfold by united effort.
38. In every country, courses shall be arranged, where the teachers of domestic economy already engaged in such work may perfect their knowledge. Practical lectures shall be given to enable such teachers constantly to revive their instruction.

39. It is desirable that every possible means should be taken to call more attention to the danger and to the disastrous consequences of giving young girls a mere worldly education and to the necessity for the mothers to prepare their daughters, by their own example, for their duties as future housewives.
40. The school of domestic economy shall in every parish, act as a centre whence the return to a love of family-life shall radiate. It shall inculcate healthy ideas of real life and create a liking for simple home duties. All other feminine work shall tend to complete, to achieve domestic education.
41. All persons engaged in district-visiting, or presenting themselves for certificates as sick-nurses, shall have acquired a sufficient knowledge of domestic work.

## **V. With regard to the International Office for Instruction in Domestic Economy**

The resolutions passed the previous say by the International committee were read to the general assembly.

1. The members of the International Committee of the Congress of Ghent, recognising the need for the International Office for Instruction in Domestic Economy, instituted after the first Congress of Fribourg, are extremely desirous that this office may be developed and express the wish that it may be supported by grants from the different governments and large associations of teachers in domestic schools, as well as by a federation of all persons interested in this teaching. The governments giving a grant and the societies contributing an annual subscription of at least *fr. 100* shall have the right to be represented by a delegate in the Committee of the International Office. The annual subscription of individual members of the International Office is fixed at *fr. 5*, including subscription to the *Bulletin*.
2. In order to assure the continuity of Congresses, the International Office for Instruction in Domestic Economy is instructed to fix the principles to be laid down in the rules of these congresses, in order to obtain the patronage of said Office.



## **Wish for the next Congress**

In the plenary meeting held at the closing of the Congress, a group of members from Holland presented the following wish:

It is recommended to issue before the next congress is in preparation – an exact compendium, provided with notes of explanation, of the systems of education (elementary, secondary and of higher and technical instruction) in the different countries, stating the ages at which the average pupils enter and leave the schools, so that everybody, in drawing up the reports, may know, how educationary matters are arranged abroad, in order that the confusion of denomination and significant – from which at this congress difficulties repeatedly arose may be prevented in the future. The wish had been accepted, and the International Office for Instruction in Domestic Economy will consider it as his duty to work out the question. A report on the matter alluded to will be presented at the next meeting of the International Committee, or, at least, at the meeting of the year 1915.

Ghent, Belgium, 1913

(IFHE History Book “100 Years of the International Federation for Home Economics” 2008, pp. 387 - 391)