



World Teachers' Day 2023

The teachers we need for the education we want:
The global imperative to reverse the teacher shortage

Being a teacher provides the unique opportunity to make a transformative and lasting impact on the lives of others, contributing to shaping sustainable futures and offering personal fulfilment. However, the world faces an unprecedented global teacher shortage exacerbated by a decline in conditions and status. In 2023, World Teachers' Day aims to put the importance of a dignified and valued teaching profession at the top of the global agenda.

Through various activities, it will advocate for teachers' crucial role, analyse their challenges, and showcase inspiring practices to attract, retain and motivate teachers and educators. It will also thoroughly examine the ways in which education systems, societies, communities, and families recognise, appreciate, and actively support teachers.

Info note - 5 October 2023

In line with its mandate as part of the United Nations, and with the concurrence of key partners, UNESCO has been working since its creation to ensure the right to education as a fundamental contribution to human rights and to building and defending international peace.

This vision is articulated in the Sustainable Development Goal 4 which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. However, this vision can only be achieved with teachers that are well supported, highly qualified and motivated, and who can deliver an education that meets the needs of every learner. In the age of knowledge societies and industry 4.0, technology, and artificial intelligence, we must recognise that teachers remain at the heart of education and learning processes as the experts capable of helping everyone navigate through, and make sense of, an ever-growing mass of information, data, and unverified knowledge.

But at a time when education systems are called upon to support every learner in the transformations underway, teachers are in short supply all over the world. Several factors are contributing to this complex situation, in particular the fact that increased workloads and reduced conditions has meant that the teaching profession has lost its appeal.

Global data confirm that, in numerous countries, teaching is no longer an attractive profession for the younger generations and for many teachers currently in-service. Despite having embraced their vocation with passion, teachers often leave the profession as a result of deteriorating working conditions and the increasing demands placed on them by the school administration, families, and learners themselves. Another reason for leaving the profession concerns a lack of recognition and respect, as confirmed, in many countries, by the remuneration offered for their expertise.

This year's World Teachers' Day, celebrated on 5 October, will focus on the theme of reversing the shortage by improving the appeal of the teaching profession. Celebrations will focus on the meaningfulness of being a teacher and the urgency of attracting and retaining qualified teachers into the profession. It will insist on the dual imperative of attracting youth to teaching programmes and the imperatives to make the profession attractive for those in service in order to curb teacher attrition. From a lifelong learning perspective, the commemorations will cover the teaching profession at different level of education, learning spaces and modalities.

The 2023 World Teachers' Day is framed within the wider context of a new social contract and the transformation of education. It will be informed by the work of the United Nations Secretary General's High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession and the follow-up to the Transforming Education Summit. It will highlight recommendations coming out of both initiatives and will greatly benefit from the comprehensive analysis and valuable data gathered in preparation of the Global Report on Teachers to be published by UNESCO and the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (TTF) at the end of 2023.

UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF and Education International, the four co-convening organizations of World Teachers' Day, will encourage decision-makers, (notably Ministers of Education), development cooperation and aid agencies, and representatives of civil society, the teaching profession, youth and the private sector, to take action to make the teaching profession more attractive through local, national and regional policies and programmes. Advocacy events (e.g., meetings, exhibitions, campaigns, awards) will be organized to highlight the pathways that can be followed to ensure the teachers we need for the education that we want.

Initiatives and resources

As is the case every year, a series of international events will be organised, and knowledge resources and advocacy material will be published and disseminated to promote and inspire regional, national, and local level initiatives. The events and resources will have three main objectives:

- Advocate for a prominent role of teachers in the transformation and the future of education based on international normative instruments (the commemoration of the 1966 and 1997 Recommendations concerning the status of teachers).
- Analyse the main challenges faced by teachers and education systems to make teaching an attractive profession and one that delivers equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Present promising practices to ensure that teachers and educators are adequately motivated to remain in the profession and grow professionally.

Below is the list of international initiatives and resources envisaged for the 2023 edition of World Teachers' Day on the theme of imperatives to make the profession more attractive:

Four events open to the public at UNESCO HQ and online

Recognition and appreciation: the role of teacher prizes in enhancing the status of the profession
5 October 11:00 - 1:00 pm (Paris time), Room IX, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France

All over the world, we find a wide variety of prizes aimed at rewarding outstanding practices in the teaching profession, ranging from schools to adult and higher education, and covering different fields of study. There are international, regional and national prizes, such as the UNESCO-Hamdan Prize for Teacher Development, the Global Teacher Prize, the African Union Continental Teacher Prize, the European Innovative Teaching Award, and many National Teacher Prizes. This panel aims to discuss the role of teacher prizes as symbols of recognition of the work undertaken by educators, as an essential form of contribution to the improvement of their status within the community and, ultimately, as a lever to raising the appeal of the profession.

2023 World Teachers' Day Opening Ceremony

5 October 2:30-4:30 pm (Paris time), Room IX, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France

After opening remarks of the co-conveners of World Teachers' Day, the event will present critical data on the appeal of the teaching profession, highlighting teacher voices on what they find attractive and challenging in the profession. An open conversation will be organized with the co-conveners, decision-makers, and experts from the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession, who will present what they see as the priority actions needed to make the profession more appealing in the years ahead.

Teaching in hardship: bringing teachers to every learner

6 October 12:00-1:30 pm (Paris time), online event (link TBC)

A two-hour roundtable convened by the Global Education Coalition (GEC) with the support of UNHCR, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (TBC), and the TTF will explore the unique challenges of maintaining the appeal of the profession in emergency contexts. The session will include a short introduction of the current project being implemented by GEC in Ukraine, and programmes in crisis and emergency contexts to ensure that teachers in hardship situations can continue to teach through a suite of resources and approaches focused on digital, pedagogical, and socio-emotional skills. The roundtable will be followed by a discussion on the support teachers need to realize their commitment and their vocation in the most difficult contexts.

Global pathways to an attractive teaching profession

6 October 3:00-5:00 pm (Paris time), online event (link TBC)

A two-hour workshop co-convened by the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (TTF) and Education International (TBC) will explore national and regional policy responses and programmes to improve the appeal of the teaching profession in response to the global shortage on teachers. There will be a plenary session with presentations by TTF members on initiatives and evidence on improving the attraction and retention of qualified and motivated teachers, followed by regional breakout sessions for participants (policy makers, teacher unions, TTF members, teachers) to explore localised challenges and responses in more depth.

Advocacy materials:

- Dedicated [World Teachers' Day 2023](#) webpage on the UNESCO portal
- Joint statement signed by the Heads of UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF and EI
- Factsheet
- Photo exhibition on the fences of UNESCO HQ profiling teachers and UNESCO's work
- Poster
- Press release
- Social media pack

All resources will be available on UNESCO portal by end-September 2023

UNESCO Field Offices celebrating World Teachers

Celebratory events organized at country and regional levels are encouraged. Share your programme of events with us at worldteachersday@unesco.org.

Contacts

- Visit the official UNESCO World Teachers' Day webpage: <https://www.unesco.org/en/days/teachers>
- Email: worldteachersday@unesco.org