



International  
Labour  
Organization



United Nations  
Educational,  
Scientific and Cultural  
Organization

A large, abstract green graphic in the top right corner, resembling a stylized flag or a piece of fabric with a wavy, marbled texture, attached to a thin pole extending from the left.

# THE 1966 ILO/UNESCO RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE STATUS OF TEACHERS:

What it is?  
Who should use it?



## Where can I find international standards for the teaching profession?

In two standard-setting instruments:

- the 1966 ILO/UNESCO *Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers*
- the 1997 UNESCO *Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel* (to be described in a separate flyer)

## Who is covered by the 1966 Recommendation?

All school-level teachers, from the pre-primary through the secondary level, in all institutions whether public or private, whether providing academic, technical, vocational, or art education.

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## What aspects of the teaching profession are covered?

Virtually all. In its 146 short paragraphs, divided into 13 sections, the 1966 Recommendation sets international standards for dozens of issues, which relate to the most important professional, social, ethical, and material concerns of teachers. These issues include:

- ✓ initial and continuing training
- ✓ recruitment
- ✓ advancement and promotion
- ✓ security of tenure
- ✓ disciplinary procedures
- ✓ part-time service
- ✓ professional freedom
- ✓ supervision and assessment
- ✓ responsibilities and rights
- ✓ participation in educational decision-making
- ✓ negotiation
- ✓ conditions for effective teaching and learning
- ✓ social security

## I am a teacher. How can the 1966 Recommendation help me?

It can give you working definitions of what your responsibilities and rights are, and can give you *guidelines* for engaging in dialogue between educational authorities and teachers and their associations.

In such dialogue, you can use the 1966 Recommendation as an *international frame of reference* for dozens of topics such as crash-course training, class size, teaching aids, work load, merit rating systems, maternity leave, social security.

The Recommendation also can be used as the basis for the development of a *code of ethics* for your profession as it is practiced in your community, province, state, region, or country.

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## I work for an education authority or national government. Why should I read this Recommendation?

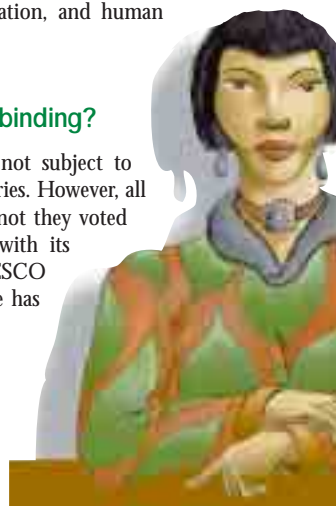
If your work entails policy, planning, or programmatic work which affects teachers, the Recommendation was also intended for you. It was designed to serve as a *basis for national laws or practices* concerning teachers, and is meant to influence the development of those laws and practices.

You can use the provisions of the 1966 Recommendation as an *international frame of reference* in your discussions and negotiations with teachers and their associations.

You can incorporate provisions of the Recommendation in your *national teacher-training programmes*, and in your national guidelines for issues such as teachers' health (including issues of HIV-AIDS), rural education, and human resource development.

## Is the 1966 Recommendation legally binding?

No. Unlike a Convention, a Recommendation is not subject to national ratification nor does it have national signatories. However, all Member States of ILO and UNESCO, whether or not they voted for it or approved it, are obliged to be familiar with its provisions and have been invited by ILO and UNESCO to apply it in their respective countries. It therefore has a strong persuasive effect.



## If this Recommendation is not legally binding how do ILO and UNESCO promote its implementation?

- ✓ through the *Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Recommendations concerning the Status of Teaching Personnel (CEART)*. Its task is to monitor and promote the application of the Recommendation, and to advise ILO and UNESCO on better ways to promote knowledge and use of the standard in Member States.
- ✓ through organizing *sub-regional seminars* in which representatives of government, labour and employers arrive by consensus at strategies for concrete action to improve the condition of teachers. This process is based on “*social dialogue*.” These social dialogue forums have been organized in many regions of the world since 1989, in the Pacific, the Arab States, Central America, and several sub-regions of Africa.
- ✓ through undertaking *case studies* and *statistical studies*
- ✓ through providing information and *technical advice* to educational authorities and teachers’ organizations on changes in laws, regulations, and practices affecting teachers.
- ✓ through promoting the celebration of *World Teachers’ Day* each October 5th. The date commemorates the fact that on 5 October 1966, the Recommendation was adopted by a special conference of UNESCO and ILO.



### Who are the CEART members?

- ✓ twelve independent experts, six appointed by the ILO and six appointed by UNESCO. They are drawn from all regions of the world and serve in their personal capacity.

### What does the CEART do?

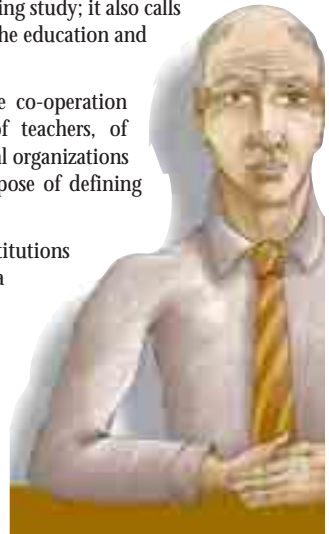
- ✓ *examines reports* and information concerning the application of the 1966 Recommendation which are provided by governments, teachers' organizations, and international organizations with a strong stake in education. Based on this examination, the CEART *issues its own report*, summarizing the status of teachers world-wide and making proposals for concrete actions which ILO and UNESCO could take to improve the condition of teachers. The CEART report is discussed by the ILO Governing Body and the International Labour Conference and the UNESCO Executive Board, and is sent to all Member States.
- ✓ *examines allegations* from teachers' organizations on the non-observance of provisions of the Recommendation in Member States. (The CEART does not examine allegations from individuals.) It issues findings; and makes suggestions for the resolutions of the problem or conflict.

### What are some provisions of the 1966 Recommendation?

**Professionalism:** "Teaching should be regarded as a profession: it is a form of public service which requires of teachers expert knowledge and specialized skills, acquired and maintained through rigorous and continuing study; it also calls for a sense of personal and corporate responsibility for the education and welfare of the pupils in their charge." (III.6)

**Co-operation in policy issues:** "There should be close co-operation between the competent authorities, organizations of teachers, of employers and workers, and of parents as well as cultural organizations and institutions of learning and research, for the purpose of defining educational policy and its precise objectives." (IV.10k)

**Teacher-training:** "The staff of teacher-preparation institutions should be qualified to teach in their own discipline at a level equivalent to that of higher education. The staff teaching pedagogical subjects should have had experience of teaching in schools and wherever possible should have this experience periodically refreshed by secondment to teaching duties in schools. (V.25)



**Professional freedom:** “The teaching profession should enjoy academic freedom in the discharge of professional duties. Since teachers are particularly qualified to judge the teaching aids and methods most suitable for their pupils, they should be given the essential role in the choice and adaptation of teaching material, the selection of textbooks, and the application of teaching methods, within the framework of approved programmes, and with the assistance of the educational authorities.” (VIII.61).

**Responsibilities:** “Professional standards relating to the teacher performance should be defined and maintained with the participation of teachers’ organization[...] Codes of ethics should be established by teachers’ organizations, since such codes greatly contribute to ensuring the prestige of the profession and the exercise of professional duties in accordance with agreed principals.” (VIII.71 & 73)

**Rights:** Both salaries and working conditions for teachers should be determined through a process of negotiation between teachers’ organizations and the employers of teachers.” (VIII.82)

**Hours of work:** “In fixing hours of teaching account should be taken of all factors which are relevant to the teachers work load, such as: (a) the number of pupils with whom the teacher is required to work per day and per week [...]; (e) the desirability of providing time in which the teacher may report to and consult with parents regarding pupil progress.” (IX.90 a & e)



*Salaries*: Teachers' salaries should: (a) reflect the importance to society of the teaching function and hence the importance of teachers as well as the responsibilities of all kinds which fall upon them from the time of their entry into service [...] (d) take account of the fact that certain posts require higher qualifications and experience and carry greater responsibilities." (X.115)

*Teacher shortages*: "It should be a guiding principal that any severe supply problem [viz., teacher shortage] should be dealt with by measures which are recognized as exceptional, which do not detract from or endanger in any way professional standards already established or to be established and which minimize educational loss to pupils" (XII.141)

### Are there other ILO or UNESCO standard-setting instruments which are of relevance to teachers ?

- ✓ Yes. These include ILO conventions such as No. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, No. 98 on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining, and No. 111 on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation); their basic principles are summarized in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. ILO standards are not monitored by the CEART but by such bodies as the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. They can be found through the International Labour Standards Department (Fax +41.22 799.7139 or through the Internet at <http://www.ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/english/index.htm>; or for the Declaration: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/decl/index.htm>
- ✓ These also include UNESCO conventions such as the Convention against Discrimination in Education, and the Convention on Technical and Vocational Education.
- ✓ These are not monitored by the CEART but rather by bodies such as the UNESCO Committee on Conventions and



Recommendations. They can be found through the Internet at:

<http://www.unesco.org/education/information/standards/english/unesco.htm>

As a teacher, You may also wish to familiarize yourself with information regarding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, from the UNESCO Early Childhood and Family Education Unit, Paris: Fax: (+33-1)45.68.56.26); or: Internet: <http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/ecf/index.htm>





**H**ow can I receive copies of the Recommendation and obtain further information?

**From the ILO. Please contact:**

- ↪ the ILO Area Office or Multi-Disciplinary Team nearest you. A list is available from ILO at: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/sitemap.htm>
- ↪ at ILO Headquarters, the Sectoral Activities Department, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland (Fax: +41.22 799-7046); [sector@ilo.org](mailto:sector@ilo.org); Website: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector>

**From UNESCO. Please contact:**

- ↪ the UNESCO National Commission in your country, whose address can be found through the Internet at: <http://www.unesco.org/ncp/natcom/> or fax the Division of Relations with National Commissions and New Partnerships (ERC/NCP), UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France at +33.1 45.68.55.40;
- ↪ the UNESCO Field Office nearest you;
- ↪ UNESCO Headquarters, Section for Teacher Education, Division of Higher Education: UNESCO, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France (Fax: +33.1 45.68.56.26/27/28).

**From the Web:**

- ↪ the full text of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers: [http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/pdf/TEACHE\\_E.PDF](http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/pdf/TEACHE_E.PDF)
- ↪ the full text of the UNESCO 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel: [http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/am/recom\\_e.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/am/recom_e.html)
- ↪ information on the CEART, including the full text of its 2000 and 1997 reports: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/techmeet/ceart/main.htm>

“**I**n order that teachers may discharge their responsibilities, authorities should establish and regularly use recognized means of consultation with teachers' organizations on such matters as educational policy, school organization, and new developments in the education service”.

The 1966 ILO/UNESCO *Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers*  
(Provision VIII.75)

