



# Revision process of the 1974 Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms

## Comments from observers to the plenary meetings of the International Expert Group (IEG)

Adopted in 1974, the [Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms](#) is considered a landmark legal instrument that brings together for the first time peace, international understanding, human rights, fundamental freedoms and education.

In line with the Resolution adopted at UNESCO's General Conference at its 41<sup>st</sup> Session in November 2021 ([41 C/Resolution 17](#)), UNESCO launched the revision of the Recommendation and convened an International Expert Group (IEG) to advise the Organization on the changes. The work of the IEG took place between May and June 2022. Though the meetings of the IEG were technical in nature (category VI), in order to ensure an open and transparent process, the Permanent Delegations were invited to listen-in to the deliberations of the IEG online, as observers, along with a select number of non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and United Nations entities. At the end of each plenary meeting, observers to the IEG plenary meetings could submit written comments.

This document compiles the comments received from observers during this process and submitted to the IEG members for their consideration.

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# Observer Written Comments

## First meeting 12-13 May 2022

Observers	Agenda Item / Paragraph of the Recommendation	Comments	Other
<b>World Organization of the Scout Movement</b>	<b>1 V. Particular aspects of learning, training and action Ethical and civic aspects</b>	“13. Member States should promote, at every stage of education, an active civic training, <b>non-formal education activities, and programs</b> which will enable every person to gain knowledge of ...”	Measuring Scouting’s Impact on the Development of Young People – Phase II p14: <a href="https://www.scout.org/Scouting-impact-report2">https://www.scout.org/Scouting-impact-report2</a>
	<b>2 V. Particular aspects of learning, training and action Ethical and civic aspects</b>	“16. Student participation in the organization of studies and of the educational establishment they are attending should itself be considered a factor in civic education and an important element in international education. <b>Youth organizations' work should be recognized as a contribution to peace education and as a concrete positive action in local and national communities.”</b>	Report of the Secretary-General on Youth, Peace, and Security  UNSCR2250(2015) UNSCR2282(2018) non-formal education, sustainable development and the Education 2030 Agenda: <a href="https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375308_eng">https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375308_eng</a>
	<b>3 VIII. Educational equipment and materials</b>	“38. .... <b>(e) Learning by doing and simulation activities, documents and other materials illustrating the culture and the way of life of each country, the chief problems with which it is faced, and its participation in activities of worldwide concern should be prepared and communicated to other countries....”</b>	non-formal education, sustainable development and the Education 2030 Agenda: <a href="https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375308_eng">https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375308_eng</a>
	<b>4 VIII. Educational equipment and materials</b>	<b>(g) support of youth organizations and youth-led structures as an essential pillar of peace education and positive community action, especially where such structures are not yet available.”</b>	non-formal education sustainable development and the Education 2030 Agenda: <a href="https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375308_eng">https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375308_eng</a>
	<b>5 VIII. Educational equipment and materials</b>	“40. ... <b>Establish partnerships with youth organizations to develop (peace) educational material by including their expertise and perspective...</b>	non-formal education, sustainable development and the Education 2030 Agenda: <a href="https://unesdoc.unesco.org">https://unesdoc.unesco.org</a>

				<a href="#">/ark:/48223/pf0000375308_eng</a>
	6	<b>VIII. Educational equipment and materials</b>	<b>“41. Member States should meaningfully include diverse young people, non-formal Education Organizations, and youth-led organizations in the co-development of educational material.”</b>	non-formal education, sustainable development and the Education 2030 Agenda: <a href="https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375308_eng">https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375308_eng</a>
Sweden	1	<b>General Comment</b>	<b>Opportunities/challenges with so many additional relevant perspectives added to the recommendation.</b> From the outcomes of the global survey and the first two meeting days unfolds the will to add several important and related perspectives to the new updated recommendation. Topics such as: climate change, covid, MIL, SDG, Health including SRHR, social justice, life-long learning, whole society approach... and so on. The work of the expert group will have to consider advantages and risks in a largely broad approach. A recommendation for every possible challenge must not end up in a too complex roadmap to follow.	(i.e. share useful resources, references and sources if quotes from other instruments or documents, requests...)
	2	<b>General Comment</b>	<b>The importance of ensuring that the recommendation relates to other similar and overlapping policies.</b> According to the first point of view the expert group will have to consider and, in the recommendation, refer to several other policies and recommendations. To visualize overlapping could help partially.	
	3	<b>General Comment</b>	<b>The importance of not forgetting the possibility for monitoring, implement and assess impact of the recommendation.</b> This is to take responsibility for reducing the often widening gap between policy and practice. Policy does not make no difference by itself. The expert group should be aware of the responsibility to make the wording as possible as it could to translate into concrete actions and assessable measurable measures.	

## Second meeting 7-8 June 2022

Observers	Agenda Item / Paragraph of the Recommendation	Comments	Other
Education International	General comments	(i.e. general comments; proposed language; brief explanation for suggesting alternative language; etc. ... ).	(i.e. share useful resources, references and sources if quotes from other instruments or documents, requests...)
	1 Action Areas; National Laws, Policies, Plans and Strategies; paragraph 21	EI supports the call to add in paragraph 21 the issue of allocation of resources to education for human rights and peace education in <b>non-emergency</b> and emergency contexts to the maximum extent and underlining the importance of the human rights based approach in the section.	
	2 Action Areas; Curriculum and Pedagogy	<p>While there is a dedicated section to educator development, adding a line about relevant, timely, teacher-informed and teacher-led training on implementing the curriculum and using new pedagogies can emphasize its importance.</p> <p>In the additional paragraph the IEG suggested adding emphasizing marginalized learners, please be sure to add curriculum that is relevant and reaffirms the identity of migrant and refugee learners, LGBTI+ students, students with disabilities, and Indigenous learners.</p> <p>It was discussed to add a section supporting academic freedom in the higher education section, but academic freedom is also under attack at all levels of schooling. Adding some lines around academic freedom safeguards into this section for teachers is key, since it is typically the curriculum where censorship and attacks on the freedom of speech of teachers come in. This could serve as a recommendation for the non-politization of curriculum and protecting the freedom of speech of teachers.</p>	
	3 Action Areas; Educator Development	Please add “education unions” as a specific civil society actor instead of or in addition to “education associations”.	

	<b>4</b>	<b>Action Areas; Whole Institutional Approach and whole of society approach</b>  <b>Paragraph 58</b>	Please list “education unions” in the sentence “in collaboration with learners, parents ...”	
	<b>5</b>	<b>Action Areas; Governance, accountability and partnerships; paragraph 62</b>	Please add “education unions” as a specific civil society actor	
	<b>6</b>	<b>Follow up and review; paragraph 76</b>	Please add “education unions” as a specific civil society actor	
<b>International Science Council</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>General comment</b>	<p>My comments are general – not linked to any specific paragraph.</p> <p>I was encouraged to hear yesterday discussion about the importance of instilling evidence-based approaches, particularly to overcoming crises. This is one of the major lessons of the COVID pandemic. This has been spelt out clearly in the ISC very recent report on the pandemic: Unprecedented &amp; Unfinished: COVID-19 and Implications for National and Global Policy</p> <p><a href="https://council.science/actionplan/covid-19-scenarios/">https://council.science/actionplan/covid-19-scenarios/</a>.</p> <p>Evidence based approaches rest upon scientific literacy and understanding. It is science – broadly understood – that underpins rational thinking and evidence-based approaches.</p> <p>Scientific literacy and understanding require that learners understand something of science and scientific method. This includes importantly an understanding of why scientific knowledge is so often provisional.</p> <p>In the discussions, thus far, the word science has been almost absent. In relation to the aims and objectives of education in the declaration should there not be something to this effect? <i>An understanding of science and the</i></p>	

		<p><i>scientific method that underpins rational thinking and evidence-based approaches to problem solving.</i></p> <p>There is a second very important element in relation to science. Science knows no boundaries. Scientific collaboration is global, transcending frontiers and, hence promoting cooperation. Even when countries are otherwise in dispute, they may cooperate in science. Science is accordingly a key instrument for peace and for post-conflict reconstruction.</p> <p>The Recommendation and discussion have cooperation and building of peace, understood as active rather than passive peace (merely the absence of inter-country warfare) at the centre. Should the importance of science and hence enhancing scientific capacities as a route or an instrument to enhance cooperation and hence peace across frontiers and between communities feature as an important objective for education? There could perhaps be something to this effect: <i>Science is a global practice resulting in the transcending of frontiers and providing bridges between disparate communities. Hence, the importance of equipping learners, including particularly learners in poorer countries and in disadvantaged communities, with the capacities to engage in science and to assimilate and utilise science-based knowledge.</i></p> <p>Finally, in relation to the impact of the pandemic and the digital divide, the ISC very recent report Unprecedented &amp; Unfinished: COVID-19 and Implications for National and Global Policy may be useful reference:</p> <p><i>“6.2 Recovery of education Most countries experienced severe disruptions to their educational systems. The digital divide was manifest in every country, conferring further disadvantage to children and adolescents who did not have adequate digital access. On top of that, digital-based pedagogy remains</i></p>	
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		<p><i>poorly developed in many areas, even in the third year of the pandemic. Many students in low-income situations had to choose between education and supporting their families in whatever way they could. Students in the later years of schooling and entering tertiary education have been particularly badly affected. Given this level of disruption, there is a need for educational policy to address the disadvantage which could accompany this cohort for many years as they try to enter the workforce.” (p. 63)</i></p>	
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## Third meeting 22-23 June 2022

Observers		Agenda Item / Paragraph of the Recommendation	Comments	Other
Education International	1	Cross cutting issues for discussion (point 1) – non-state actors.	Education is a human right and a public good. The Recommendation should emphasise that it is the duty of member states to ensure the fulfilment of the right to education. Private for profit education can lead to discrimination, exclusion and marginalisation. It is the responsibility of member states to regulate private provision of education.	
	2	Preamble, addition.	Add “professional autonomy” to “Acknowledging that the free flow of information, <b>professional autonomy</b> and freedom of expression are central to the teaching and learning process.”	
	3	Para 5.	Add “and fostering” to the sentence: “For the maintenance <b>and fostering</b> of peace and promotion and observance of human rights”. As discussed in the first meeting, peace should not only be maintained but actively fostered.	
	4	Significance of terms. g.	Add “and the environment” to “and care for other living beings <b>and the environment</b> ”.	<a href="https://www.unesco.org/en/education/sustainable-development/need-know">https://www.unesco.org/en/education/sustainable-development/need-know</a>
	5	Significance of terms	Include definition of term “climate emergency”. Climate change is the defining challenge of our time and a key context for the Recommendation. Whilst part of sustainable development more broadly, it must also be specifically singled out.	
	6	Para 17	Add “in collaboration with educators through their union representatives” to: “Such programmes should be evidence-informed, based on appropriate research and evaluation, created <b>in collaboration with educators through their union representatives</b> , with child and youth participation in mind, and realized through specific educational objectives”.	
	7	Para 18	Add “education unions” to “Recognising the role of Member States as duty bearers, civil society, communities and citizens groups including <b>education unions</b> , youth organisations...”	

	<b>8</b>	<b>Section. 5.1.3. Curriculum and Pedagogy</b>	Rather than or in addition to spelling out particular subjects (the IEG mentioned eg. art, sport, history, geography, languages etc.), the section should call for the recommendation to be implemented across <b>all subjects and grades, as well as through an interdisciplinary and whole school approach.</b>	
	<b>9</b>	<b>Section. 5.1.3. Curriculum and Pedagogy</b>	As part of the section, emphasise the need for pedagogy to go beyond rote learning and teaching to the test. See lesson 10 in the book linked in the next column.	<a href="#">On Education &amp; Democracy - 25 Lessons from the Teaching Profession by Education International - Issuu</a>



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