

**RECOMMENDATION No. 61**  
**TO THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION**  
**concerning**  
**TEACHERS ABROAD**  
(1966)

The International Conference on Public Education,

Convened in Geneva by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Bureau of Education, having assembled on the seventh of July, nineteen hundred sixty-six for its twenty-ninth session, adopts on the fifteenth of July, nineteen hundred and sixty-six, the following recommendation:

The Conference,

Considering that education constitutes one of the principal long-term means of promoting cultural co-operation between States,

Considering that the international exchange of teachers constitutes one of the most effective means of improving international understanding between peoples and raising educational standards,

Considering that, in the present circumstances, the collaboration of teachers coming from abroad is a basic necessity for the developing countries as a means of helping them to train the specialized personnel who are indispensable for their economic and social progress and that it is the moral responsibility of more favoured countries to put teachers at the disposal of developing countries which need them,

Considering that teachers employed abroad acquire direct knowledge of other countries, which qualifies them to play an important role in developing cultural co-operation between the various States,

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Considering that this experience also constitutes a valuable contribution to educational progress by enabling teachers to become familiar with the methods and techniques of other countries, especially in such subjects as modern languages, geography, history and art,

Considering that opportunities of working abroad are closely linked to the problem of teachers' status and may help to establish more fruitful contacts between professional associations,

Considering that, for these reasons, it is necessary to encourage by appropriate means, teachers at all educational levels to go and work in other countries,

Considering that teaching staff sent abroad should be given the maximum guarantees with regard to prospects and personal and professional security, both in the receiving country and in the home country,

Considering Recommendation No. 29 on the international exchange of teachers, adopted by the XIIIth session of the International Conference on Public Education,

Submits the following recommendation to the Ministries of Education in the various countries:

### I. Definitions and Categories

1) For the purposes of this recommendation the term "teachers abroad" means persons engaged during a certain period in activities of an educational nature in countries other than their own.

2) The term "teachers" refers principally to persons giving instruction in pre-primary, primary, secondary, technical or higher educational institutions. Teachers may also be engaged in the fields of educational planning and administration, teacher training, preparation of education materials, educational and scientific research, or vocational guidance.

3) This recommendation does not apply to teachers partaking in study tours or conferences even if these take place while they are teaching abroad.

4) In order to define the categories and sponsorship of teachers abroad, it may be useful to distinguish between:

a) teachers sent by authorities in a given country which pay their salaries and other expenses either in whole or in part;

b) teachers serving in school established abroad which have structures, syllabuses and methods similar to those in their country of origin;

c) teachers sent abroad by universal or regional inter-governmental organizations which undertake responsibility for them;

d) teachers engaged under contract by the receiving country, either directly or through the representatives of the country in question, or by the diplomatic or academic representatives of the teachers' own country;

e) teachers who go abroad under an exchange agreement between two or more countries;

f) teachers who go abroad under the sponsorship of private organizations such as religious communities and international non-governmental organizations;

g) teachers who go abroad independently of official administration, on the basis of agreements which have been concluded directly between the school and the teacher himself or between two schools;

h) persons going abroad under programmes of civilian voluntary service intended to promote education in developing countries.

## **II. Aims**

5) The activities of teachers abroad can be considered:

a) as the normal performance of teaching duties in schools or universities, as the exercise in receiving countries of particular qualifications in other fields of education mentioned in clause 2 of Chapter I, or as participation in advisory missions under programmes of technical co-operation;

b) as positive contributions towards the development of receiving countries;

c) as a means of broadening teachers' knowledge and experience, thereby strengthening their ability to teach in their own countries and to contribute to international understanding.

6) It is desirable that an ever-increasing number of teachers should be able to perform a period of service abroad, as far as possible after acquiring enough training and experience in their countries of origin. Plans to encourage teaching service abroad should take this aim into account.

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7) Projects relating to teaching abroad should be considered not only in the light of the educational development of the countries concerned but also in that of the individual teachers' further training, and within the broader framework of general cultural relations and that of value to the students, schools and communities of the sending country to which the teacher returns.

### **III. Rights and Duties of Teachers Abroad**

8) A teacher serving abroad should normally enjoy conditions of employment at least equal to those of local teachers with equivalent qualifications and experience. In addition, the teacher should normally receive certain special allowances and grants while living abroad. His travel expenses, and those of his family, between his own country and place of work and back should be paid. When the teaching contract covers several academic years the teacher should be given facilities for returning to his home country, particularly during holidays. He will be expected to perform the duties which accompany the post, and will benefit from rights and privileges which, among others, are: salary, allowances and grants, holidays, social security medical services, insurance and housing facilities.

9) Conditions of teaching abroad should be regulated by contracts setting forth the rights and duties of the parties, as referred to above. These contracts should be denounced unilaterally only in exceptional cases. The receiving countries should ensure for teachers from abroad not only the liberties normally granted to foreigners, especially protection from racial and religious discrimination, but also the academic freedom necessary for teaching. The teacher should respect the cultural values of the receiving country and not involve himself in its political affairs.

10) Teachers serving abroad should be assured by their own countries of the rights and benefits appropriate to their careers. On returning home they should retain such rights as those of status seniority, promotion, pension (provided pension contributions have been maintained), etc. This applies to teachers recruited under international agreement, under contracts to which the responsible education authorities are parties, or sent abroad by private organizations. After working abroad they should be re-integrated into their original services and retain the benefits they would have enjoyed if they had continued to teach in their own countries. Teachers sent abroad by private organizations should retain the same rights which they had

in their countries of origin and enjoy other advantages if arrangements to this effect had been concluded before their departure.

#### IV. National and International Measures

11) In every country educational planning should take into account programmes for teaching abroad, and in so far as possible funds for teaching abroad should be made available. Appropriate measures should also be taken to encourage private associations to send abroad teachers and individuals desiring to teach in another country.

12) In view of the need to develop international educational, scientific and cultural exchanges, it is desirable that a department, office or committee should be established in each country, working in co-operation with other interested bodies, to plan and administer a national programme for sending teachers abroad and receiving them from other countries, bearing in mind the differences between educational systems and the economic and cultural development of countries concerned.

13) Such programmes should take into consideration all aspects of the work and welfare of teachers received in the country, on the one hand, and of teachers sent abroad, on the other, as described in Chapter III.

14) In working out a national programme concerning teachers going abroad consideration should be given to programmes based on private initiative such as those of teachers' associations, as well as of local or regional authorities. Complete information on candidates should be provided to receiving institutions and full information about vacant posts should be provided in advance to candidates wherever possible.

15) It is desirable that teacher training institutions should broaden their traditional range of studies to include the concept of teaching abroad as a means of interesting future teachers in this kind of service.

16) To help them in carrying out their tasks, teachers going abroad should be given special orientation, preferably with the assistance of the receiving country, regarding the country and the area in which they are to work. This should include: initiation in the local language to the degree required by the nature of the teaching to be given; information on the physical environment, the cultural, social and economic conditions, the way of life and the history and educational system of the country. As part of this orientation, teachers should

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be advised against engaging in or lending themselves to any activity that might lead to misunderstanding or be considered as inimical to the interests, prestige or culture of the receiving country.

17) In order to facilitate the adaptation of teachers coming from abroad to their new task, as well as to the social and cultural environment in which they are called upon to live and teach, it is desirable that educational meetings and seminars should be organized for them in receiving countries and that teachers should have access to educational advice.

18) Teachers who are considering entering into a contract with a foreign government or with a foreign institution, or who may be interested in teaching service abroad, should have the opportunity of consulting the national department or office concerned with regard to the conditions to be included in the contract, or to information on positions available. National institutions or other responsible educational authorities engaging foreign teachers should have the same opportunity.

19) The granting of a period of leave with full or partial pay after a certain number of years of service, and in accordance with regulations in each country, is an excellent incentive to teachers to take temporary posts abroad, usually for one year. This practice should therefore be encouraged wherever possible. After the period of leave it is expected that the teacher will return to his home institution.

20) Wide publicity through the press, audio-visual media, professional associations, bulletins and journals, etc., should be given to teaching programmes abroad. Teachers returning home after an educational mission should be encouraged to present to the departments concerned, to their colleagues and to the public, taking care to be objective, and in a spirit of understanding, the results of their experiences and the lessons which may be drawn from them. Such oral and written reports or articles might be used for courses of comparative education in teacher training institutions.

21) Teacher exchange as well as student exchange would be greatly simplified if educational authorities would mutually agree on the equivalence of degrees, diplomas and certificates, where they consider such equivalences do in fact exist. Measures of a bilateral or a multi-lateral nature, such as the study of equivalence by Unesco, should be encouraged in the hope that agreement can be reached on the subject. Meanwhile, the responsible educational authorities in each country should be encouraged to accept teachers from abroad who are qualified to teach or to serve as assistant teachers in their own

countries, providing them with temporary teaching certificates and paying them in accordance with the salary scales suitable to their training and experience.

22) Teacher exchanges should, in so far as possible, be made the object of general or special reciprocal cultural arrangements concluded on a bilateral or multilateral basis.

23) Exchanges based on "twinning" arrangements, mutually agreed between educational institutions, should be encouraged, since they facilitate teacher exchange and teaching experience abroad.

### **V. International Co-operation**

24) It is desirable that interested intergovernmental organizations should establish or further develop such information services as will permit them to follow closely the action taken in the countries concerned, relevant to international co-operation for the exchange of teachers. They should encourage the sending of teachers abroad and make it possible to implement the present recommendation. The role of Unesco in such matters is particularly important, as also is that of regional intergovernmental organizations.

25) The intergovernmental organizations concerned should encourage, and themselves take all possible steps towards, the collection and dissemination of information concerning vacant posts on the one hand, and, on the other, about teachers' offers to serve abroad. Such action is particularly important in specific situations.

26) The part to be played by international non-governmental organizations in promoting teaching abroad and implementing this recommendation should receive due recognition. These organizations may interest themselves either in the teaching profession as such, or in groups of specialists in one or more subjects.

27) International non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to plan and to finance teacher exchange programmes within the framework of their activities.

28) All programmes for sending teachers abroad should take into account the part which the national affiliated branches of international teachers' associations and other interested organizations can play. They can, for instance, help to facilitate the teacher's reception (housing, establishment of contacts, etc.).

**VI. Implementation of the Present Recommendation**

29) It is important that the text of this recommendation be given wide publicity by Ministries of Education, education authorities for the level most immediately concerned, universities and institutes of education, educational documentation centres, teachers' federations, both national and international, teachers' and parents' associations, etc.; the press in general and particularly the educational press, both official and private, should play a large part in making the recommendation known among the services concerned, the administrative and teaching staffs and the general public.

30) Ministries of Education or other responsible educational authorities, are invited to request competent bodies:

*a)* to examine the present recommendation and to compare it with the *de jure* and *de facto* situation in their respective countries;

*b)* to consider the advantages and disadvantages of implementing each of the clauses not yet in effect;

*c)* to adapt each clause to the situation in the country concerned, should its implementation be considered desirable;

*d)* finally, to suggest the regulations and practical measures which should be taken to ensure the implementation of its various clauses.

31) Unesco is invited to facilitate, with the co-operation of the Ministries concerned, the study of this recommendation at the regional level with a view to its adaptation to the special characteristics of each region.