

RECOMMENDATION No. 64
TO THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION
concerning
EDUCATION FOR INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING
AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CURRICULUM
AND LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
(1968)

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 first of July, nineteen hundred and sixty-eight for its thirty-first session, adopts on the ninth of July, nineteen hundred and sixty-eight, the following Recommendation:

The Conference,

Considering that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that education "shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace," and that the suffering and humiliations that people in many parts of the world are witnessing and experiencing are due to infringement of human rights,

Considering that the United Nations Declaration of the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples affirms that "All means of education, including as of major Importance the guidance given by parents or family, instruction and information intended for the young should foster among them the ideals of peace, humanity, liberty and international solidarity and all other ideals which help to bring peoples closer together, and acquaint them with the role entrusted to the United Nations as a means of preserving and maintaining peace and promoting international understanding and co-operation,"

Considering that one of the main purposes of Unesco and the International Bureau of Education is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education and that, as the Constitution of Unesco states, "ignorance of each others' ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war,"

Noting the Resolutions of the International Conference on Human Rights in Teheran in 1968 concerning: in particular the education of youth,

Considering Recommendation No. 24 concerning the development of international understanding among young people and teaching about international organizations, adopted by the International Conference on Public Education at its eleventh session in 1948,

Considering Recommendation No. 26 concerning the teaching of geography as a means of developing international understanding, adopted by the International Conference on Public Education at its twelfth session in 1949, :

Considering Recommendation No. 48 concerning the preparation selection and use of primary school textbooks, adopted by the International Conference on Public Education at its twenty-second session in 1959,

Considering Recommendation No. 59 concerning the teaching of modern foreign languages in secondary schools, adopted by the International Conference on Public Education at its twenty-eighth session in 1965,

Considering the necessity for teaching all peoples and especially the youth of the world to work for peace, to build an international society conceived in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and to strive for the realization of the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Considering that it is necessary to convert these principles into practical action emphasizing the moral worth of man and his right to strive for a better life founded on respect of human dignity,

Considering that education for international understanding plays a role of primary importance in this field and that most states have not yet taken full measures within their legal powers to ensure its integration in school curricula and school life,

Considering that such education should aim not only at the imparting of knowledge but also the development of attitudes, behaviour and action favourable to international understanding and respect for human rights,

Submits to the Ministries of Education of the different countries the following Recommendation:

**Guiding Principles Relating to Education
for International Understanding**

1) Education at all levels should contribute to international understanding.

2) Education should help to increase a knowledge of the world and its peoples and to engender attitudes which will enable young people to view other cultures, races and ways of life in a spirit of mutual appreciation and respect. It should make clear the relationship of environment to patterns and standards of living. While providing an objective treatment of differences, including differences in political, economic and social systems, it should bring out the common values, aspirations and needs in the life and conscience of the world's peoples.

3) Education should show that the advancement of human knowledge has resulted from the contributions of the various peoples of the world, and that all national cultures have been and continue to be enriched by other cultures.

4) Education should encourage respect for human rights and their observance in daily life. It should stress the conception of the equality of human beings and the spirit of justice embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, emphasizing that this entails equal respect for all human beings without regard to such distinctions as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

5) Education should help to give to every pupil and student the sense of human dignity which combats all domination by man over his fellow-beings. It should do everything possible to arouse in young people a desire to understand the economic and social problems of their country and of their time and, in addition, should show to them objectively the harmful effects of colonialism, neo-colonialism, racialism, apartheid, and slavery and of all forms of aggression.

6) Education should stress the equal right of every nation, great

or small, to direct its own life and to develop fully all its cultural and material possibilities.

7) Education should develop international solidarity and an understanding of the interdependence of all nations and peoples. It should show the necessity for international co-operation in dealing with world problems and should make it clear that all nations whatever the differences in their political systems and ways of life, have a duty to co-operate for this purpose and an interest in so doing. In this connexion the work of the United Nations and its related agencies should be studied in the school.

Legislative and Administrative Provisions

8) Legislative or other official texts setting out the general aims of education should establish as a purpose of education at all levels the development of a spirit of peace and mutual understanding among peoples and respect for human rights. Official regulations instructions and recommendations for teachers should translate this purpose into specific and detailed terms.

9) Curricula and syllabuses should make specific provision for education for international understanding appropriate to the various courses of study at different levels and should allow sufficient time for it. To that end, specialist groups composed mainly of practising teachers might be formed, where they do not already exist, to examine the place of studies which contribute to international understanding in relation to the entire programme of studies and to syllabuses for different subjects. Teachers' organizations should be invited to participate in this work.

10) Questions related to studies undertaken as part of a programme of education for international understanding should be included in examinations at the different levels of education.

11) Educational administrators, supervisors, inspectors and advisers, in the exercise of their functions, should try to ensure that school programmes, activities and teaching contribute to better international understanding and respect for human rights.

Studies and Activities for Primary and Secondary Schools

12) Most of the courses of study ordinarily included in curricula for primary and secondary schools provide opportunities for teaching for international understanding. The resources of each should be

exploited in appropriate ways, with due attention to the age, aptitudes and interests of pupils. Experience indicates that the key ideas can be learned at any age within the range of primary and secondary schooling and by pupils of widely differing abilities, provided they are suitably adapted and presented. The school should provide an atmosphere in which all members of the school community can acquire the qualities of justice, fair-mindedness, tolerance and respect for all sorts and conditions of men.

13) Education for international understanding should be planned and carried out as an integral part of the studies pursued at school, with each discipline contributing effectively and by appropriate means to a co-ordinated, continuous and cumulative programme progressing from year to year.

14) The curricula and syllabuses of the different subjects should be flexible enough to allow the possibility of closely interrelating the various subjects. In certain basic disciplines, such as the mother tongue, national literature, mathematics and sciences and modern languages, the spirit of international understanding can be developed on every propitious occasion, even though there may be no specific provision for it in curricula; certain other disciplines, such as history and geography offer a particularly favourable framework for education for international understanding; and still others, such as moral and civic instruction, and the arts, including music, dance and games, should give many opportunities for studies and activities directly related to international understanding.

15) International problems can be dealt with as appropriate in the context of different subjects or in a separate course. Every educational institution should possess adequate documentation on international affairs and problems.

Literature and languages

16) Literature can be taught with a view to giving insights into the nature of man, humanity's shared ideals and aspirations, man's suffering and struggles and the qualities of national cultures and their distinctive contributions to world culture. The teaching of world literature in secondary schools should be encouraged.

17) Foreign languages should be taught with the aim of providing full access to and understanding of other cultures and ways of life.

Mathematics and sciences

18) In the teaching of mathematics, the contribution of different cultures to the development of the science can be stressed. Certain mathematical skills, such as statistics and interpretation of data, can be exercised on information about matters of international concern such as the growth of population, agricultural and industrial production and expenditure on armaments and on education.

19) In general science, the history of the growth of scientific knowledge and of the contribution of people from many different countries and cultures can be taught. Attention should also be given to the impact of science on society through its application in technology and to the problems as well as the advantages presented to humanity by the rapid progress of modern science and technology.

Biology

20) a) In biology, the study of the transmission and distribution of human characteristics, and of the relationship of hereditary and cultural factors, can be carried out in such a way as to undermine prejudice based on distinctions of race, colour, nationality or cultural differences. Use should be made of the findings expressed in the statement prepared by the International Meeting of Experts on Race and Racial Prejudice organized by Unesco in 1967.

b) To the extent that the teaching of biology moves in the direction of ecology it should be used as a basis, in combination with geography for the study of patterns of life in different regions of the world. In biology or hygiene, attention should be given to world problems of health and disease and to international co-operation for the control of disease.

History and geography

21) The teaching of history should convey a better understanding of national history by relating it to the history of civilizations and giving increased attention to social, economic, cultural and scientific aspects of human development, with less emphasis on the purely military aspects of history. National history and the history of other nations should be presented as objectively as possible, taking account of differing views and interpretations and in accordance with the findings of modern historical scholarship. Particular attention should be given to the history of the struggle for human

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rights, including national liberation and social justice; to the development of institutions for international co-operation to advance human welfare, and to the great men and women of different countries whose work and achievements have benefited humanity.

22) The teaching of geography should lead the child to think about the whole world and its inhabitants, to understand the relations between man and his environment and to appreciate in a balanced way the problems which must be solved in order that the world's resources may be used to improve conditions for human existence.

23) Courses in geography and history should be planned in such a way as to ensure an equitable balance between the treatment of national geography and history and that of other countries.

Civic and moral instruction

24) Civic instruction, in addition to developing knowledge of and loyalty to national institutions, should aim also at acquainting pupils with the role of international institutions in promoting human welfare and at inculcating in pupils a sense of responsibility for the future effectiveness of such institutions. The institutions and the work of the United Nations system should be presented objectively and constructively. Attention should be given to the obstacles encountered by the United Nations and its related agencies in their tasks.

25) In moral or religious instruction, teaching for international understanding should be direct and explicit stressing the ethical foundations for human solidarity. It should aim at developing a sense of moral and social responsibility for others, a desire to act in the common good and the will to peace. Scientific and philosophical instruction should have the same objectives.

Arts, music, dance, games

26) In arts, music, dance and games, knowledge, skill and aesthetic judgement should be nourished on subject matter drawn from all parts of the world; these subjects should be treated with a view to producing an affective as well as an intellectual impact.

Teaching Aids and Materials

27) As wide a range of materials as possible, including films educational broadcasting and television and other audio-visual aids,

should be used in education for international understanding. The new technology in teaching may serve well the cause of international understanding. Instructional technology is creating new dimensions in teaching generally; it should be equally useful in disseminating information and modifying attitudes towards other peoples. Televised programmes should bring both reality and acceptance of different cultures and ways of living. Space communications will make such telecasts increasingly possible.

28) Teaching materials in use should be regularly examined from the point of view of their contribution to international understanding and respect for human rights. In the revision or preparation of teaching materials especially history and geography textbooks, special efforts should be made to ensure that they present a balanced objective, accurate and up-to-date view of other peoples and countries, of different economic and political systems and of world problems. The comparison of various textbooks, particularly for history and geography—which is already done between some countries—may go a long way towards eliminating errors, misunderstandings, and sometimes even the differing points of view that exist between two peoples. To help in achieving this, committees comprising representatives of two or more countries might be set up.

29) It is desirable that, with the collaboration of national scientific and pedagogical institutions and agencies, the different countries should produce, for the use of other countries, studies concerning their history and geography. International co-operation would facilitate this work. Regional and international action to produce, from time to time, recommended lists of books, films and other teaching materials, especially in history and geography, should be encouraged.

30) The production of materials especially designed for use in education for international understanding, including guides and handbooks for teachers, should be promoted. The competent educational authorities should arrange for the publication in a form suitable for use in teacher education institutions of basic documents emanating from the United Nations, Unesco and other international agencies which state accepted principles of human rights and international co-operation.

Teaching Methods and Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Activities

31) As far as possible, activity methods which call upon the individual initiative, creativity, skill and intelligence of pupils themselves should be employed in education for international understanding. Such methods include: active participation in international campaigns in aid of the development of foreign communities, free discussion, debates, critical studies of newspaper articles, films and television documentaries, individual and group study and reports, preparation of albums, books, wall newspapers and exhibitions, exchanges of correspondence and other materials with schools abroad, assembly programmes, excursions, concerts, model United Nations meetings, studies of the community and international camps and youth activities.

32) Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities should be re-organized, where necessary, for the purpose of complementing and reinforcing education for international understanding through the school curriculum. They should present a range and variety sufficient to provide all pupils with opportunities to exercise and develop their particular interests and abilities. It is recommended that they should include the organization of clubs or societies, such as Unesco, United Nations or international relations clubs, which have as their chief aim the promotion of international understanding- and the observance of anniversaries of eminent persons who have contributed to the cultural and scientific development of mankind as well as of days commemorating events of international importance, such as United Nations Day and Human Rights Day. Clubs should organize inter-school activities, and national and regional associations of clubs should be formed. The initiative of pupils and students and of their organizations in developing new activities should be encouraged. School prizes for gifted pupils might, where possible, take the form of facilities enabling them to visit other countries.

33) The practice of sport should aim at providing a means for the discharge of aggressive tendencies in healthy competition and at developing self-confidence, a sense of honour and a spirit of fair play. Exaggerated nationalism should not destroy respect for fellow sportsmen from other countries in international competitions.

34) The action of the school can be supported and reinforced by the home, the community and cultural organizations and institutions. Every appropriate opportunity should therefore be taken to ensure the collaboration of pupils' families, of organizations for children and

young people and of the community as a whole in activities to develop international understanding.

Teacher Preparation

35) In the development of international understanding, the personality and attitudes of the teacher are of critical importance and may largely determine whether such education achieves its purpose. In the training of teachers, full attention should be given to this consideration.

36) Teachers should be prepared as fully as possible, morally, psychologically and professionally, to take part effectively in education for international understanding. Study should be made of suitable methods for orienting teacher-training courses and teaching in general to the purposes of international understanding. The training of teachers should, among other things, aim at minimizing the effect of their own prejudices and at developing qualities of mind and behaviour which will enhance the effectiveness of their work for international understanding. Training should, moreover, have the object of arousing in the students an interest in this aspect of education, a conviction of its importance, and a confidence in their competence to teach for international understanding. Imaginative new procedures in the preparation and continuing in-service education of teachers are needed. Teacher-preparation institutions should be encouraged to devise projects and programmes in education for international understanding appropriate to their circumstances engaging in this task the co-operation of teachers and students.

37) Teacher-preparation programmes in this field should provide both the required resources of knowledge and the professional training in approaches, methods and techniques necessary to make education for international understanding effective in the classroom.

38) Methods and programmes and all teaching aids developed in the course of training should be applied by students in their practice teaching in schools.

39) In seminars and refresher courses for teachers-in-service every appropriate opportunity should be taken to relate the work to the objectives of education for international understanding. Special seminars and training courses on education for international understanding should be conducted regularly for teachers-in-service.

Research and Experimental Activities

40) Research into the part which education for international understanding can play in attitude formation and attitude change, and into the relative effectiveness of different approaches, methods and materials employed in education for international understanding, should be conducted. The findings of such research should be taken into account in the preparation or revision of curricula, syllabuses and teaching materials and in the pre-service and in-service training of teachers. Teachers and their organizations should be associated with research. International co-operation in research on international understanding should be promoted.

41) Experimental programmes and pilot projects of education for international understanding, such as those carried out by primary schools, secondary schools and teacher-training institutions participating in Unesco's Associated Schools Project in Education for International Understanding, should be encouraged and assisted. Appropriate steps should be taken to promote the adoption and use in schools generally of effective approaches, methods and materials developed through such programmes.

42) Research and studies in anthropology and other social sciences should be continued with a view to eradicating racial myths which stand in the way of international understanding.

International Relations and Exchanges

43) Educational authorities should stimulate and facilitate the international exchange and dissemination of information and documentation on education for international understanding.

44) Educational authorities should support and encourage participation in bilateral, multilateral and international programmes and projects for the further development and improvement of education for international understanding.

45) International exchanges of teachers, students and pupils, and of educational administrators and inspectors as well, should be encouraged and assisted. Efforts should also be made to expand on a large scale the opportunities for teachers-in-training and practising teachers to travel abroad to meet students, to visit schools and to become acquainted with people and cultures of other countries. The competent authorities should also make a particular effort to facilitate exchanges organized by youth movements. All curricular and extra-

curricular contacts between pupils and students of different nations and cultures should be encouraged.

46) Working for the common good together with people of other countries is one of the most effective kinds of education for international understanding. Travel abroad by teachers and young people to participate in voluntary service for economic, social, cultural and educational development should be given all possible encouragement and assistance. In this way, they may take a direct part in the struggle against illiteracy, famine and- disease, from which a large part of the world's population suffers and which are a threat to peace.

47) International contacts and exchanges between schools through, for example, such programmes as the Unesco Associated Schools Project in Education for International Understanding, should be encouraged and assisted.

48) Educational authorities might promote the organization of international competitions for pupils and students in such school subjects as mathematics, physics, chemistry and world literature, in the spirit of the Olympic Games. Athletic meetings among schools on a bilateral multilateral and international basis should also be encouraged.

Implementation of the Present Recommendation

49) It is important that the text be given wide publicity by Ministries of Education and education authorities. Educational documentation centres, teachers' and parents' associations, both national and international, and 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 staff, universities and the general public. Ministries of Education should enlist the support of teachers' organizations not only in publicizing the Recommendation but also in participating in its implementation.

50) Unesco and other international organizations are invited to facilitate, with the collaboration of the Ministries of Education of the countries concerned, the examination of the present Recommendation on a national or regional basis with a view to its implementation in accordance with the characteristics of each region.

51) Ministries of Education and other competent authorities are invited to examine forthwith the present Recommendation in relation to the *de jure* and *de facto* situations and the ethnic and cultural

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conditions of their respective countries, for the purpose of implementing in a creative manner its provisions where they are not yet in force, and to adapt them as far as necessary to the various national situations. They are further invited to incorporate in their plans for innovation in this field provisions for continuous evaluation.

52) The financial and technical assistance of international organizations should be sought for countries where the application of this Recommendation requires revision of teaching materials and reorientation of teacher training programmes.

53) In view of the urgency of the matter considered in the present Recommendation, Unesco and the International Bureau of Education are invited to send out a questionnaire, by the end of 1970, requesting Ministries of Education to give the necessary information regarding the measures undertaken for the purpose of implementing the provisions of this Recommendation in their respective countries.