

The UNESCO 1997 Recommendation concerns status of **higher education teaching personnel**. EI would like to highlight, in particular, the following aspects of the Recommendation:



CEART

The joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (CEART) was created to monitor the implementation of the 1966 general Recommendation on Teaching Personnel. In 1999, its mandate was extended to the 1997 Recommendation.

CEART is composed of 12 independent members appointed by UNESCO and ILO, and meets every three years to examine reports submitted by governments, by national organisations representing teachers and their employers, by the ILO and UNESCO, and by relevant intergovernmental or non-governmental organisations. Education International presents reports on the themes included in the agenda of each meeting.

CEART's work is also to examine allegations from teachers organisations on the non-observance of the Recommendation's provisions by member States.

Academic freedom

Academic freedom is not an outdated privilege but an essential criterion for the development and circulation of knowledge. Both the State and the society must ensure that academic staff enjoys the conditions which allow them to exercise their mission without fear of repression and risk for their independence, their career and their life. Such conditions necessarily require the existence of a democratic environment.

The EI Barometer of Human and Trade Union Rights in the Education Sector 2004 contains a specific section on academic freedom which confirms the existence of self-censorship.

Collegiality

Higher education teaching personnel should have the right and opportunity, without discrimination of any kind, according to their abilities, to take part in the governing bodies and to criticize the functioning of higher education institutions, including their own, while respecting the right of other sections of the academic community to participate, and they should also have the right to elect a majority of representatives to academic bodies within the higher education institution. [Art. 31]

EI believes that the system of collegiality should be maintained even if opening up to the economic world is essential. EI opposes the general belief that universities can no longer be run by a collegial system of governance and regrets the direct appointment of rectors, deans and heads of department.



UNESCO

We, at UNESCO, view the application of the provisions of the 1997 Recommendation – as regards both rights and responsibilities – as a development issue impacting on an institution's or a Member State's being able to deliver quality research and development in teacher-training, Education For All best-practice, poverty-reduction schemes, sustainable development – the gamut of a nation's development goals. We already know that non-application of the Articles can only exacerbate brain-drain or notch-down quality where it counts: in the staffing and management of higher education institutions, which live or die on the high-quality.

Security of employment

EI is concerned about the proliferation of short-term contracts and supports the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada which ruled that "academic staff should have a strong security of employment in order to enjoy the freedom required to maintain academic excellence, which is or should be distinctive of the university."



Security of employment in the profession, including tenure or its functional equivalent, where applicable, should be safeguarded as it is essential to the interests of higher education as well as those of higher education teaching personnel. [...] Tenure or its functional equivalent, where applicable, should be safeguarded as far as possible even when changes in the organization of or within a higher education institution or system are made, and should be granted, after a reasonable period of probation, to those who meet stated objective criteria in teaching, and/or scholarship, and/or research to the satisfaction of an academic body, and/or extension work to the satisfaction of the institution of higher education. [Art. 46]

Collective bargaining and social dialogue

EI considers the lack of consultation with teachers organisations is an evident violation of Article 8 of the Recommendation. It is essential that academic staff is able to bargain their conditions of employment based on existing provisions.

Organizations which represent higher education teaching personnel should be considered and recognized as a force which can contribute greatly to educational advancement and which should, therefore, be involved, together with other stakeholders and interested parties, in the determination of higher education policy. [Art. 8]

Higher education teaching personnel should enjoy the right to freedom of association, and this right should be effectively promoted. Collective bargaining or an equivalent procedure should be promoted in accordance with the standards of the International Labour Organization. [Art. 52]



ILO

Social dialogue is the "glue" of successful education reform as the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts said in 2003. Without its widespread use in higher education to give professors and researchers a voice in fixing salaries and employment, concepts such as collegiality and a quality education will be severely tested, if not ignored altogether, stresses the International Labour Organization.

The UNESCO 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel

- is the only international norm that applies to higher education teaching personnel, defined as "all those persons in institutions or programmes of higher education who are engaged to teach and/or to undertake scholarship and/or to undertake research and/or to provide educational services to students or to the community at large" (Article 1, paragraph f)
- was adopted on consensus by the UNESCO General Conference on the 11th November 1997
- includes 77 articles, in 10 chapters, that cover the following areas:

• Rights and freedoms:

- Individual rights and freedoms: civil rights, academic freedom
- Self-governance and collegiality

• Duties and responsibilities of personnel

• Conditions of employment:

- Entry into the profession
- Security of employment
- Evaluation and discipline
- Negotiation of conditions of employment
- Salaries, workload, social security benefits, health and safety

For a complete online version of the Recommendation, please go to:
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001132/113234mb.pdf>
<http://www.ei-ie.org/ressourc/english/eedhiedrec.html>

CEART
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/techmeet/ceart>



www.ei-ie.org

[1997] Recommendation

5th October is World Teachers' Day. Created by UNESCO in 1994, this day was intended to better promote the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation adopted in 1966 for primary and secondary teaching staff. It is also the day for teachers working in the higher education sector, and a great opportunity to promote the Recommendation adopted for this sector by the UNESCO General Conference in 1997.

Higher education, more than ever, is challenged by rapid changes of the working life. Thus, a more unstable work situation is identified for higher education teaching personnel in all parts of the world. Commercialization and trading of higher education services combined with short-term and part-time contracts contribute to weaken the security of tenure and to lower the status of the teaching personnel, as well as it constitute a threat to academic freedom - of expression and to publish research results, and of the participation in governance of the institutions. Therefore, information activities about CEART's work, provided by EI and other international teacher organizations, and disseminated through their networks, directly to the higher education teaching staff, is of utmost importance.

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The 1997 UNESCO Recommendation is a blue print for sound educational policy for all regions of the world. In a period of expansion and renewal of post-secondary education, promotion of the Recommendation can be an effective means for improving higher education.

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[1997] Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel



The [1997] Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel represents the formal acknowledgement by UNESCO's Member States of the need to address common issues with regard to the status of **higher education teaching personnel** in all countries, through the application of common regulations without exceptions, despite the diversity of laws, regulations and traditions.

The fact that higher education sector is presently susceptible to market pressures and threats of commercialisation brought forth by the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and other trade agreements, calls for the **urgent widespread distribution, publicity and application of the Recommendation.**

Education International strongly suggests that the 1997 Recommendation be implemented in all countries.