



Promoting and protecting teacher agency in the age of artificial intelligence

A quick guide to the Teacher Task Force Position Paper

How AI is reshaping education — and what it means for teachers

A collective vision:

Co-created with the Teacher Task Force's global community, the paper calls for AI to strengthen teacher agency and uphold the human dimension of education.

A catalyst for action:

It offers practical recommendations to help policymakers, educators, and partners shape ethical, inclusive, and teacher-centred approaches to AI.

For Teachers and School Leaders

AI HOLDS COMPLEX OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR EDUCATION

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming schools, promising to create new ways to support learning, reduce workload, and spark creativity among teachers and school leaders. Yet it also raises vital questions about privacy, fairness, and the human essence of education. As AI becomes part of daily practice, teachers' and school leaders' voices must remain at the centre. Education is built on empathy, care, and professional judgment, strengths that technology should enhance, not replace. By leading these conversations, educators can ensure AI supports inclusion and strengthens the human art of teaching.

1 The role of teachers and school leaders in the age of AI

- Teachers and school leaders must be central in shaping how AI enters classrooms, not passive users of preset tools.
- Teachers and school leaders remain irreplaceable: human empathy, creativity, and teaching's relational aspect cannot be automated.
- AI should enhance teaching, not redefine or diminish it.



4 The opportunities of AI for teachers

- Support for lesson planning and identification of student needs.
- Real-time feedback for students and teachers to improve learning quality.
- Enhanced assessment and grading processes.
- Reduction of administrative workloads.
- Creation of adaptive and inclusive resources, and enrichment of STEM teaching.



2 AI's implications for teachers

- There are three key domains: teaching with AI, teaching about AI, and adapting teaching for a world where AI is ubiquitous.
- Teaching with AI means combining technological tools with human judgment to strengthen learning outcomes.



5 The risks and challenges to address

- De-professionalisation and loss of core skills.
- Cognitive offloading that weakens reflection and creativity.
- Loss of human connection and empathy in classrooms.
- Reduced teacher and school leader autonomy through standardised AI use.
- Data misuse and increased surveillance risks.
- Harmful standardisation that sidelines local diversity.
- Deepening digital divides and unequal access.
- Bias and unfairness embedded in training data.
- Underfunded "teacherless" models that widen inequalities.
- Growing workload and burnout from rapid adoption.



3 Building teachers' AI competencies

- Teachers and school leaders need the skills and confidence to use AI critically, ethically, and creatively.
- Professional learning should go beyond technical training to include reflection on when and why to use AI – or not.
- Schools should create collaborative learning spaces where teachers and school leaders can safely explore and innovate with AI.



For Policy-Makers

SHAPING POLICY FOR AN EQUITABLE AI-DRIVEN FUTURE WHERE AI IS UBIQUITOUS

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping education, offering new opportunities to improve learning and support teachers, but it also risks deepening inequalities and eroding human agency if poorly governed. Policymakers have a decisive role in ensuring AI serves education's human purpose by investing in teacher competencies, upholding ethics and inclusion, and engaging teachers and their representatives in dialogue. Placing teachers at the centre of AI integration is not just good policy, it's essential for equitable, sustainable, and human-centred education.

1 Reaffirm the irreplaceable role of teachers in education

Governments and education stakeholders must commit unequivocally to the irreplaceability of teachers, emphasizing that AI systems must support, not substitute, core teacher responsibilities.



2 Promote and protect teachers' professional competencies

Policies must encourage models of AI implementation that promote and protect teachers' professional competencies while supporting teacher collaboration and innovation through professional networks and communities of practice.



3 Evaluate AI's impact and promote human-centred pedagogies

AI integration should uphold human-centred pedagogies and be based on an evidence-based assessment of its impact on pedagogical quality, teacher workload and wellbeing, and learner outcomes.



4 Safeguard diversity and prevent AI from standardising education

Education standards must require AI tools to be culturally responsive and adaptable while supporting diverse education needs.



5 Promote transparent, sustainable and ethical AI governance

Policymakers should enforce clear ethical standards and transparency including evaluating and correcting for biases and unintended consequences, to ensure that teachers fully understand AI decision-making processes and implications.



6 Ensure equitable access and prevent AI-driven educational inequality

To avoid exacerbating existing disparities, policies must aim to bridge the digital divide by investing in technological infrastructure, tailored digital literacy programmes, and equitable resource distribution across the globe.



7 Promote international cooperation and solidarity

Leveraging AI in education and filling the digital divide requires cooperation from global networks, including the Education 2030 SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee, the Teacher Task Force (TTF), the Global Education Coalition, and the Broadband Commission.



Want to know more?

Scan the QR code to read the full position paper.

The Teacher Task Force position paper, authored by Mutlu Cukurova, reflects the collective expertise and insights gathered through extensive consultations across the Teacher Task Force network, coordinated by the Thematic Group on Digital Education and AI, co-led by MESHGuides and Digital Promise.



Other relevant sources on AI:

- The UNESCO AI competency framework for teachers
- Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research (UNESCO, 2023)
- World Bank report Artificial Intelligence Revolution in Education: What you need to know
- The European Commission's Digital Competence Framework for Educators (DigCompEdu)

The International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (also known as Teacher Task Force) is a global independent alliance. Members are national governments, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, international development agencies, civil society organizations, private sector organizations and UN agencies that work together to promote teacher-related issues.

The Teacher Task Force Secretariat is hosted by UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris.

For more information, see:
www.teachertaskforce.org

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