



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

## Briefing on Preparing the future: Ensuring quality education for children

### CONCEPT NOTE

Monday, 19 May 2025 – 13:00–15:00 CEST (Geneva time)

Please register [here](#)

As the stewards of tomorrow, children must be equipped today with the quality education they need to shape, lead, and sustain the societies of the future. Education can be central to the formation of identity and the promotion of cohesive societies. Education can end generational cycles of poverty and provide a foundation for sustainable development. A quality education equips girls and boys with the knowledge and skills they need to adopt healthy lifestyles, and take an active role in social, economic and political decision-making as they transition to adolescence and adulthood.

It is important to maintain ensuring access to quality education even in the most difficult circumstances. During conflict, education can offer knowledge and skills that provide protection, while in the longer term, it can help develop values and attitudes that prevent conflict and build peace.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights establish access to quality education as a right and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) make it a priority to be achieved by 2030; yet, despite the obvious advantages of quality education and the international obligations of States to ensure access to quality education it remains a major challenge. Indeed, some children endure difficult conditions like missing or inadequate teaching materials or makeshift sanitation facilities. Others lack competent teachers and appropriate curricula. Still others may be forced to contend with discrimination, harassment and different forms of violence against children.

According to United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) 2024 Global Monitoring Report on Education, there are some 251 million children and young people in need of schooling worldwide. This shortfall is mainly due to a lack of investment, which may seem paradoxical given the many benefits that education offers. Indeed, the lack of political will to invest in education is a key concern. Adequate financing and government commitment have been cited as key obstacles to making adequate progress in achieving global education goals. Although trained and motivated teachers are essential for improving education quality, not enough attention has been given to ensuring quality training of teachers, and of required facilities and materials for them.

Parliamentarians should be in the driving seat to help address these challenges. Based on the *Joint Statement on the Role of Parliaments in the Implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols* beyond their legislative work and policy formulation, parliamentarians must also strengthen mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of education laws and budgets. This includes holding governments accountable through audits, parliamentary questions, independent oversight bodies, and consultations with educators and civil society. Transparency in how education funds are spent is crucial to building public trust and ensuring tangible outcomes.

With this in mind, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), with the support of the members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, is organizing this briefing, which has two main objectives:

- To inform legislators about current trends and gaps in education and highlight the actions they should take to address these gaps.
- To facilitate an exchange of views on what parliaments and their members can do to support progress in terms of several key education indicators. Particular attention will be paid to how parliaments can leverage their law-making, budgeting and oversight powers to boost enrolment and increase the quality of education.

For this purpose, the briefing aims to address the following questions:

1. What concrete steps can parliamentarians take to ensure education policies are effectively implemented at the national and local levels?
2. How can parliaments use their oversight and budgetary powers to address infrastructure deficits in schools, such as lack of sanitation, electricity or basic materials?
3. What successful legislative models or policies exist for addressing discrimination in access to quality education, and how can they be adapted across different national contexts?
4. How can parliaments improve teacher training, support and retention to raise the quality of education and reduce attrition?
5. What mechanisms can ensure that free and compulsory education is not only guaranteed in law but also enforced in practice?
6. How can parliamentarians foster a culture of lifelong learning and adaptability, especially in light of fast-changing job markets and technological advances?
7. In crisis or conflict situations, how can parliaments ensure continuity of education for children and protect education systems from collapsing?
8. What strategies can ensure that early childhood education receives sufficient legislative and financial attention, given its critical importance for long-term outcomes?

# PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Monday, 19 May 2025

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13:00

## Welcome remarks

- Secretary General of the IPU
  - Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
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13:10–13:40

## Session I: Brief overview of the global status of education

According to current trends, regions are unequally placed in terms of education coverage. While children in some parts of the world have access to the latest technology and appropriate educational resources, others rely on the meagre means at their disposal, receive education often in overcrowded classrooms, tents and even in the open air.

This session will give an overview of the status of education worldwide, helping the parliamentary community to further understand existing disparities and to explore appropriate action with a view to bridging gaps.

**Moderator:** Member of the CRC

- Experts from UNESCO and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
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13:40–14:10

## Session II: Providing quality education through coordinated action, including with and by parliaments

Targeted and meaningful action is needed to ensure that children everywhere enjoy the many benefits of quality education, as highlighted above. Addressing the associated challenges requires coordinated efforts involving parliamentarians and other stakeholders including the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

This session will explore how parliaments, through their prerogatives, can promote quality education, as well as how other stakeholders can support parliamentary efforts towards this objective.

**Moderator:** To be identified

- Experts from UNICEF, Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), CRC and parliamentarians
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14:10–15:00

## Session III: Exchange of good practices followed by interactive discussion

During this session, parliamentarians will share good practices in promoting quality education, focusing on both parliamentary actions and cooperation among stakeholders. The discussion will be guided by the questions listed above.

**Moderator:** Member of the CRC

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15:00

## End of briefing

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