**Thematic report of Special Rapporteur on the right to education:**

***Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression***

***in Educational Institutions***

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| **Name of the country/entity submitting information** | **UNESCO** |

**General framework**

1. How is academic freedom defined and protected in the constitution or laws of your country, and what are possible limitations or restrictions? Please provide the original citation and source, as well as a summary of relevant judicial practice, if any.
2. Are academic staff, teachers, students all entitled to academic freedom? Does this differ by level of education? Please explain.

Academic freedom is an intrinsic part of the right to education, enabling free intellectual inquiry and generating knowledge is essential for quality education for all, without discrimination ([Shaheed, F., 2023](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G23/103/65/PDF/G2310365.pdf?OpenElement) see also; [Kaye, D., 2020](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/197/86/PDF/N2019786.pdf?OpenElement) and [General Comment 13, 1999](https://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=4slQ6QSmlBEDzFEovLCuW%2BKyH%2BnXprasyMzd2e8mx4cYlD1VMUKXaG3Jw9bomilLKS84HB8c9nIHQ9mUemvt0Fbz%2F0SS7kENyDv5%2FbYPWAxMw47K5jTga59puHtt3NZr)). Academic freedom is, also, a core principle that allows teachers/educators, researchers and students/leaners to engage in intellectual inquiry and expression without – internal or external – undue interference, censorship or sanction ([Kaye, D., 2020](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/197/86/PDF/N2019786.pdf?OpenElement)). As stated in the UNESCO 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel, academic freedom can be understood *as* and *includes* the “freedom of teaching and discussion, freedom in carrying out research and disseminating and publishing the results thereof, freedom to express opinion about the institution or system in which one works, freedom from institutional censorship and freedom to participate in professional or representative academic bodies” ([UNESCO, 1997](https://en.unesco.org/about-us/legal-affairs/recommendation-concerning-status-higher-education-teaching-personnel)).

This concept has evolved over time, reflecting changes in societal values, political landscapes, technological advancements and educational needs​​, particularly from a lifelong perspective given the interdependence of all levels of education, and so there is a need to protect and promote academic freedom from early-childhood through higher education, including in technical and vocational education and training (TVET). This is an important gap that needs to be more explicitly addressed within the international legal framework – particularly as it pertains to the right to education – and the ‘[DRAFT[[1]](#footnote-2) Guiding Principles for the implementation of the right to academic freedom](https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/principles/)’ can help us address such gaps, as clear guidance *on* and specific obligations *for* the protection and promotion of academic freedom at all levels of education and for all key stakeholders (including academic staff, teachers/educators and students/leaners) are provided.

# International legal framework

Academic freedom is essential for the pursuit of truth and the advancement of knowledge. Governments have an obligation to create legal frameworks that protect and promote academic freedom in both policy (*de jure*) and practice (*de facto*). These frameworks should be consistent with international human rights law, *inter alia*, the UDHR, ICCPR Article 18 (thought, conscience, and religious belief) and 19 (opinion and expression), and ICESCR Article 13 (right to education), 15(1) (right to participate in cultural life and to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications), and 15(3) (freedom indispensable for scientific research and creative activity), the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (UNESCO RSHETP, 1997), the UNESCO Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers (UNESCO RSSR 1974, 2017) and the newly revised and adopted UNESCO Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development (UNESCO, 2023).

It is important to note that academic freedom is not an absolute right, however, any restrictions placed on this fundamental right must be in line with international human rights law, have a clear legal basis, pursue a legitimate aim, and be necessary and proportionate (ICCPR Article 19 and ICESCR Article 4). Restrictions should not limit academic freedom beyond what is strictly required by national security, *ordre public* (public order), or other specified grounds. Even in times of war, armed conflict, civil unrest or emergency, the principles of international humanitarian law must be adhered, including avoiding disproportionate harm to universities and researchers, strict prohibition on the targeting of civilian objects, including schools, universities, and educational facilities under normal educational uses.

While governments have a duty to protect national security and public order, care must be taken to ensure any limitations on academic inquiry still enable independent, critical research and open debate within academic institutions (). With reasonable safeguards, academic freedom and social stability can coexist, fostering societies where knowledge freely advances for the common good.

Below is a list of key UNESCO normative instruments relevant for the definition and understanding of academic freedom, particularly within the context of the evolving right to education:

* ***UNESCO Conventions on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education***– the [Global Convention](https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/global-convention-recognition-qualifications-concerning-higher-education) explicitly mentions the need to uphold and protect academic freedom and the autonomy of higher education institutions. The [Lisbon](https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-recognition-qualifications-concerning-higher-education-european-region) and [Tokyo](https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/asia-pacific-regional-convention-recognition-qualifications-higher-education) Conventions refer to the importance of the principle of institutional autonomy; whereas the [Addis Ababa](https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/revised-convention-recognition-studies-certificates-diplomas-degrees-and-other-academic), [Buenos Aires](https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/regional-convention-recognition-studies-diplomas-and-degrees-higher-education-latin-america-and-0) and [Arab](https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/revised-convention-recognition-studies-diplomas-and-degrees-higher-education-arab-states) Conventions refer specifically to academic freedom and the need to uphold and protect this principle. The Lisbon Convention is the only with a formal monitoring procedure, however, monitoring reports have not yet touched upon academic freedom.
* [***UNESCO 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education***](https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-against-discrimination-education)– through its commitment to combat discrimination and promote equality, this Convention indirectly supports the protection of academic freedom by ensuring an educational environment free from bias. It mandates State Parties to develop policies promoting equality of opportunity in education at all levels, which is fundamental for academic freedom to thrive. By calling for the elimination of discriminatory practices in education, the Convention ensures that the freedom to teach, learn, and research is accessible to all, setting a foundation for an equitable and inclusive academic setting. This alignment with non-discrimination and equality principles, although not explicitly mentioning academic freedom, is crucial for fostering an environment where academic inquiry and expression can flourish.
* ***UNESCO Recommendations***

	+ [**Recommendation against Discrimination in Education**](https://en.unesco.org/about-us/legal-affairs/recommendation-against-discrimination-education) – General references are made to human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as a strong focus on the principles of equality and non-discrimination which are key for creating environments and conditions for academic freedom to thrive.
	+ **Revised and recently adopted** [**UNESCO Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development**](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark%3A/48223/pf0000386653) – emphasizes freedom of expression and opinion, academic and scientific freedom, professional responsibility and institutional autonomy as central to teaching and learning. Member States should strive to motivate teaching personnel by ensuring such freedom and respecting their intellectual freedom and autonomy. Research and higher education institutions should help to find creative solutions to local and global challenges without infringing on the principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy.
	+ [**Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers**](https://en.unesco.org/about-us/legal-affairs/recommendation-concerning-status-teachers) – applies to school-level teachers, whether at nursery, kindergarten, primary, intermediate or secondary levels of education, including those who provide technical, vocational, or art education, and covers educators in both public and private schools. This Recommendation makes reference to academic freedom under Article 61, where it establishes that teachers should enjoy this right during the “discharge of professional duties”. Moreover, the right to academic freedom is based on the agreement that the teaching workforce is qualified to decide on what are the most suitable teaching methods and material for their students, without discarding the necessity of collaborating with educational authorities. In short, this Recommendations stipulates that the teaching profession should enjoy academic freedom, and systems of inspection or supervision should not negatively impact the freedom of teachers. Regarding monitoring, a 2022 [document which touches on the application of this recommendation](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark%3A/48223/pf0000382555/PDF/382555eng.pdf.multi) notes the importance of addressing the challenges faced by the profession regarding academic freedom and changes in higher education in post-pandemic recovery.
	+ [**Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel**](https://en.unesco.org/about-us/legal-affairs/recommendation-concerning-status-higher-education-teaching-personnel#:~:text=Higher%2Deducation%20teaching%20personnel%20should%20contribute%20to%20the%20public%20accountability,for%20the%20advancement%20of%20k)– the right to education, teaching and research can only be fulfilled when academic freedom is present. Autonomy is a necessary institutional form of academic freedom, and higher education institutions must have codes of ethics consistent with the principles of academic freedom to guide their personnel. Higher education teaching personnel are entitled to maintaining academic freedom and should have the right to fulfil their functions without discrimination. Tenure is one of the major safeguards of academic freedom[[2]](#footnote-3). Academic freedom comes with responsibilities, including the use of such freedom in a way that is consistent with the scholarly obligation to base research on “an honest search for truth”.
	+ [**Recommendation on Open Educational Resources (OER)**](https://en.unesco.org/about-us/legal-affairs/recommendation-open-educational-resources-oer) – ICT development provides an opportunity to improve the flow of ideas while also presenting challenges for ensuring participation of all in knowledge societies. While expanding the scope of available materials for teaching and learning, OER can enhance academic freedom and professional autonomy of teachers.
	+ [**Recommendation on Open Science**](https://en.unesco.org/about-us/legal-affairs/recommendation-open-science) – this Recommendation takes into account academic freedom and should act as a global framework for policy and practice of open science. Open science sets a new paradigm, building on the essential principles of academic freedom, and should be guided by respect of academic freedom and human rights as one of its core values. Regarding monitoring, a [webpage](https://www.unesco.org/en/open-science/implementation#open-science-working-groups) is available with information on working groups, collaborations, and a toolkit to support the implementation of this Recommendation.
	+ **Updated** [**Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers**](https://en.unesco.org/about-us/legal-affairs/recommendation-science-and-scientific-researchers) – academic freedom is at the heart of the scientific process and considering the importance of autonomy and freedom of research for scientific progress, Member States should ensure the necessary degree of autonomy for scientific researchers to complete their tasks and advance science and technology. Scientific researchers have a right and responsibility to work in a spirit of intellectual freedom to pursue and defend scientific truth, a freedom which must be protected. Regarding monitoring, a [consolidated report on the implementation of this recommendation](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark%3A/48223/pf0000379704/PDF/379704eng.pdf.multi) includes a section on scientific freedom and responsibility, which made note of the challenges of public doubt arising in the authority of scientific approaches during the pandemic. The report noted that no new measures to protect scientific freedom have been put into place in line with the Recommendation and recommended that Member States equip themselves to better measure and assess the situation.
	+ [**Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence**](https://en.unesco.org/about-us/legal-affairs/recommendation-ethics-artificial-intelligence) – the operation of AI technologies must consider the principle of freedom of research and innovation, and some of the ethical issues associated with the rise of AI may impact fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression. To this end, it is important for Member States to ensure that AI actors respect and promote freedom of expression. It is essential that the life cycle of AI systems does not undermine freedom and autonomous decision-making; rather, they should improve access to information and knowledge through support to researchers and academia to enhance freedom of expression, and academic and scientific freedoms. Regarding monitoring, in 2023 UNESCO published a [document intended as a tool to support this Recommendation](https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/ethical-impact-assessment-tool-recommendation-ethics-artificial-intelligence), in which “scoping questions are provided to help institutions gage their AI projects”; one of these questions asks whether the AI system and its application impacts fundamental human rights, including freedom of expression.
1. What do you consider to be (a) the main challenges to academic freedom, and (b) gaps in the legal framework for protecting academic freedom?

Political and ideological pressures

One of the most pressing challenges to academic freedom globally is the rise of political and ideological pressures that seek to influence or control academic inquiry and/or expression. Autocratic regimes and even democratically elected governments have been known to restrict academic freedom through censorship, funding cuts, and the imposition of politically motivated curricula (Academic Freedom Index, [2023](https://academic-freedom-index.net/research/Academic_Freedom_Index_Update.pdf); Marginson, [2014](https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/BF03397000.pdf) & [2018](https://www.researchcghe.org/perch/resources/publications/wp422.pdf); see also Lang, [2016](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1474022215613598); Saliba, [2018](https://www.iemed.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Academic-Freedom-in-the-MENA-Region-Universities-under-Siege.pdf) & [2020](https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/228741/1/Full-text-chapter-Saliba-Academic-freedom-in.pdf); Shterin & Dubrovsky, [2019](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332890686_Academic_Expertise_and_Anti-Extremism_Litigation_in_Russia_Focusing_on_Minority_Religions); Dubrovsky, 2022). In such environments, academics often face repercussions, including dismissal, imprisonment, or worse, for engaging in research or pedagogy deemed politically sensitive or dissenting (Robertson, 2013).

**Gap(s) in the international legal framework:** While the ICCPR Article 19(1), recognizes the freedom of opinion and expression i.e. “Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference”, there is a gap in explicitly protecting academic freedom from political and ideological pressures. Current international human rights law instruments lack specific provisions or mechanisms to safeguard academics against censorship, politically motivated curriculum changes, or punitive actions for their scholarly work. The ‘DRAFT Guiding Principles for the implementation of the right to academic freedom’ (mentioned earlier) – albeit soft law – could offer more explicit protections, in this regard.

Cultural and religious limitations

In many parts of the world, cultural norms and religious doctrines further complicate the landscape of academic freedom. In societies where certain topics are taboo or where religious dogma holds significant influence over public life, the scope of permissible academic inquiry can be severely limited. This can result in a chilling effect where academics self-censor to avoid controversy or backlash from community or religious groups (Berdahl, 2010; see also Saliba, [2018](https://www.iemed.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Academic-Freedom-in-the-MENA-Region-Universities-under-Siege.pdf); Shterin & Dubrovsky, [2019](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332890686_Academic_Expertise_and_Anti-Extremism_Litigation_in_Russia_Focusing_on_Minority_Religions);).

**Gap(s) in the international legal framework:** Clearer international standards are needed to address the void where cultural norms and/or religious doctrines override academic freedom without clear recourse for academics.

Marketization and commodification of higher education

The corporatization/marketization/commodification of higher education has also introduced new challenges to academic freedom. As universities increasingly operate under market logic, they may prioritize commercially viable research and programmes that appeal to a broad market over those that are academically robust but less financially rewarding (Slaughter & Rhoades, [2004](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234593995_Academic_Capitalism_and_the_New_Economy_Markets_State_and_Higher_Education); see also Lang, [2016](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1474022215613598); Kamola, [2019](https://www.dukeupress.edu/making-the-world-global)). Such economic imperatives can compromise the integrity of academic work and limit the pursuit of knowledge to areas deemed economically beneficial. Here it is also important to note issues around the commodification of higher education, particularly as it relates to ‘open source access’, as well as issues around competition as it relates to university rankings, which can takeaway focus from local needs.

**Gap(s) in the international legal framework:** Current international human rights law instruments provide no explicit recourse against threats to academic freedom arising from the marketization and commodification of higher education, however, the ‘[Guiding Principles on the human rights obligations of States to provide public education and to regulate private involvement in education](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c2d081daf2096648cc801da/t/61484ef2125d785da37eb98d/1632128758265/ABIDJAN%2BPRINCIPLES_%2BENGLISH_August2021.pdf)’ are able to offer some protection as these Principles – albeit soft law – do apply to all levels of education.

**Autonomy of educational institutions**

1. Please explain the autonomy and self-governance enjoyed by educational institutions at the different tiers of education. Please explain what autonomy and self-governance entail. Are there restrictions on police or military personnel entering educational institutions? If so, please share the rules.

The Higher Education [Roadmap](https://www.whec2022.org/EN/homepage/Roadmap2030) presented at the 2022 UNESCO World Higher Education Conference (hereinafter WHEC2022), indicates the following: “This requires a high degree of institutional autonomy and self-governance and an adequate balance between autonomy and public accountability. Self-governance is important to guarantee a collegial approach to decision-making and academic management” (p. 24). The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997) reiterates the importance of institutional autonomy, adding ‘Member States are under an obligation to protect higher education institutions from threats to their autonomy coming from any source’ (para. 19). In addition, the Higher Education Roadmap understands autonomy and self-governance, as follows: “Governance. Institutional mechanisms that guarantee that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) pay due attention to the public nature of education are crucial. While autonomy is an essential for the free exercise of teaching staff’s professional expertise, and for the free pursuit of knowledge, it should not be synonymous with avoiding accountability to the public ends proper to all educational institutions, including the efficient and effective use of public resources. This issue cannot be solely left to the goodwill of those involved in the provision of educational services. Any well performing system needs checks and balances to ensure that public ends prevail over private interests, and that public resources are invested with transparency and in the best possible way” (p. 29).

The UNESCO publication on the Right to higher education (2022) titled ‘[Right to higher education: unpacking the international normative framework in light of current trends and challenges’](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark%3A/48223/pf0000382335/PDF/382335eng.pdf.multi), found that **many countries have introduced legal provisions** which guarantee both institutional autonomy and self-governance. For example, the report cites Latvia’s law on Institutions of Higher Education of 1995 which protects the autonomy of higher education institutions, specifies that academic freedom is to be ensured and details what freedom of study, freedom of research and freedom of teaching entail. At the regional level, the report refers to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights which states that ‘Academic freedom shall be respected’.

5. Please provide examples of institutional guidelines/codes of conduct developed to ensure respect for academic freedom, including from external public or private actors.

Furthermore, under the Higher Education [Roadmap](https://www.whec2022.org/EN/homepage/Roadmap2030) recognizes that: “Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) must place a strong emphasis on ethical values and behaviours to promote honesty, tolerance, and solidarity. This goes far beyond courses on ethical practice and conduct. Positive values should permeate all academic programmes and be installed inside the DNA of the institutional culture of all HEIs. All graduates should be prepared to become professionals who are agents of social responsibility, champions of sustainability and citizens longing for social justice. Further, the role of HED in promoting the integrity and trustworthiness of Artificial Intelligence (AI) platforms is increasingly important. This view includes a commitment to ensure that AI systems work for the good of individuals, societies, and the environment, and embody fundamental values and ethical principles. Above all, HED leaders, administrators and academics must lead by example, demonstrating ethical behaviours in the management of HEI and the conduct of teaching and research” (p. 24).

**Funding**

1. How is funding, including for research, regulated? Is the process transparent, and are there any guarantees put in place to ensure respect for academic freedom?

CESCR General Comment n°13 sheds light on the need to ensure public accountability especially regarding the substantial funding by the state in higher education, noting that balance needs to be struck between institutional autonomy and accountability. As noted in UNESCO ([2023](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark%3A/48223/pf0000382335/PDF/382335eng.pdf.multi)), the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression recognizes the importance of state grants but that states must avoid ‘use of tools of coercion, such as funding cuts, prosecution or denial of tax benefits, in order to pressure academic institutions to carry out or to avoid certain kinds of research’ (para. 56(b), Doc. A/75/261, [2020](https://www.undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F75%2F261&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop)).

7. Which rules and regulations protect academic freedom from interferences by commercial actors and financial sponsors, at different tiers of education? Please explain how conflicts of interest that may arise are addressed.

**Surveillance**

8. Please explain whether and the extent to which academic staff and students, at all levels of education, are subject to surveillance by public authorities, for example through on-site cameras or online scrutiny. Has this led to undue restrictions to academic freedom and freedom of expression in educational institutions?

Academic freedom is essential for the pursuit of knowledge, critical thinking, and the advancement of society. However, the increasing prevalence of surveillance technologies has raised concerns about its potential impact on academic freedom. The delicate balance between ensuring campus security and respecting the autonomy of educational institutions and scholars becomes challenging. Constant surveillance may create an environment where scholars feel inhibited in expressing controversial ideas or engaging in open discourse. Striking a balance between security measures and safeguarding academic freedom is crucial to preserve the integrity of educational institutions, their autonomy and foster an environment that encourages intellectual exploration and diverse perspectives. Institutions must navigate this challenge thoughtfully, embracing technology without compromising the principles that underpin the free flow of ideas in academia.

An interesting case to note, although not explicitly linked to academic freedom *per se*, is [*Antović and Mirković v. Montenegro*](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/fre#{%22itemid%22:[%22002-11757%22]}) (2017). This case was initiated by two professors who complained about an invasion of privacy, because of the installation of video surveillance in areas where they taught (i.e. university amphitheatres), on which they stated to have no control over the information collected. In the ruling the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) recognised a violation of Article 8 (respect for private life). The court found that *“the camera surveillance had amounted to an interference with the applicants’ right to privacy and that the evidence showed that that surveillance had violated the provisions of domestic law. Indeed, the domestic courts had never even considered any legal justification for the surveillance”* (ECHR, 2017).[[3]](#footnote-4)

**Freedom of expression in teaching and access to books**

9. Do teachers and professors, at all levels of education, enjoy freedom of expression in their own teaching? Are there any limitations imposed, such as remaining “neutral” or forwarding a particular perspective, e.g. on religious and political matters?

Between its 13th and 14th Sessions (i.e. between 2018 and 2021), the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART) received various allegations, among which one came from the University and College Union (UCU), in the United Kingdom (UK), to which Education International supported. In this communication, dated 28 January 2019, the UCU argued that the Government of the United Kingdom did not fulfil its obligations with respect to certain principles set out in the 1997 Recommendation by maintaining low levels of *de jure* and *de facto* protection for academic freedom. The UCU proceeded to expose an alleged lack of legal provisions and designated personnel to ensure the proper implementation of the right to academic freedom among the higher education teaching and researching workforce. According to UCU, existing legislative instruments in the UK, including the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA), were not sufficiently explicit and comprehensive. Moreover, the UCU accused the Government of undermining the rights of freedom to teach, freedom to research, self-governance and security of employment, and, therefore, of non-compliance with paragraphs 20, 28, 29, 31, 45 and 46 of the 1997 Recommendation.

In addition, the CEART was presented with the results of an online survey based on research funded by an EU Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship, as well as the results of another online survey aimed at academic staff working in UK higher education institutions. Both studies concluded that UK respondents felt a lower level of protection concerning the right to academic freedom when compared with their EU peers. As a justification for this observation, the UCU mentioned that the Government’s anti-terrorism legislation contributed to a climate of self-censorship; that the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and the national Research Excellence Framework (REF) did not contribute to safeguarding academic freedom in the country; and that the rapid increase in temporary and precarious academic positions poses an even greater threat to it.

Following a careful analysis of all elements constituting this communication, the Joint Committee published its findings, in which it reasserted the fundamental principles of institutional autonomy and academic freedom in higher education, established by the 1997 Recommendation. Nonetheless, this body of experts clarified that there is no prescribed way of implementing them and that it is not mandatory to specifically enshrine institutional autonomy and academic freedom in the national legal framework, as long as no legislative provision restricts them.

As a result of its findings, the CEART elaborated its recommendations, in which it urged the UK government to engage in dialogue with teacher unions, such as the UCU, in view of promoting the representation of academic personnel in the governing bodies of higher education institutions.

10. Please explain the extent to which teachers and professors at different education levels can chose school manuals and other books/resources for teaching, and the reasons for any restriction in this regard. Have any specific books/materials been banned, including from school libraries, and alternatively is some material mandatory? If so, why?

The former UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression and opinion, explains that in view of restricting certain topics from academic discussion, some governments have gone as far as limiting access to information sources – such as libraries, the Internet and telecommunications services – imposing constraints on the publication of research and hindering the ability of academics to collaborate with colleagues or institutions outside their country. Moreover, he asserts that national security and public order are commonly presented by these States as justifications for the enforcement of the above restrictions, even though they do not hold a legitimate basis (Kaye, 2020).

1. The aforementioned Guiding Principles where still in draft format at the time of writing. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART) expressed concern over the observation of a significant lack of security of employment being experienced among higher-education teaching personnel, through the shape of part-time, fixed-term and temporary contracts. In line with this, the CEART noted that, according to Art. 45 of the 1997 Recommendation, security of employment constitutes a fundamental safeguard against arbitrary decisions. As a result, the Joint Committee argued in favor of the regularization of employment contracts through fair and equitable procedures. Learn more [here](https://www.ilo.org/sector/activities/sectoral-meetings/WCMS_839655/lang--en/index.htm) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. See also: AI report by the European Digital Education Hub’s Squad on artificial intelligence in education: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/9bb60fb1-b42a-11ee-b164-01aa75ed71a1/language-en> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)