

UNESCO asks governments to regulate generative AI in schools, with an age limit of 13

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Press release UNESCO: Governments must quickly regulate Generative AI in schools As pupils in part of the world return to school after the summer break, UNESCO is calling on governments to implement appropriate regulations and teacher training, to ensure a human-centred approach to using Generative AI in education. To this end, UNESCO publishes the first-ever global Guidance on Generative AI in Education and Research, designed to address the disruptions caused by Generative AI technologies.

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Download the Guidance

Generative AI can be a tremendous opportunity for human development, but it can also cause harm and prejudice. It cannot be integrated into education without public engagement, and the necessary safeguards and regulations from governments. This UNESCO Guidance will help policymakers and teachers best navigate the potential of AI for the primary interest of learners.

Audrey Azoulay UNESCO Director-General

The first sections of the UNESCO Guidance explain what Generative AI is and how it works. The following sections elaborate on the controversies around Generative AI and their implications for education, in particular how it is worsening digital data divides. Indeed, current ChatGPT models are trained on data from online users which reflect the values and dominant social norms of the Global North. An age limit of 13 The UNESCO Guidance then sets out seven key steps for governments should take to regulate Generative AI and establish policy frameworks for its ethical use in education and research, including through the adoption of global, regional or national data protection and privacy standards. It also sets an age limit of 13 for the use of AI tools in the classroom and calls for teacher training on this subject. Building on UNESCO's 2021 Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the 2019 Beijing Consensus on Artificial Intelligence in Education, the guidance promotes human agency, inclusion, equity, gender equality and cultural and linguistic diversity. The Guidance also responds to the concerns expressed at the first global ministerial roundtable on generative AI convened by UNESCO in May 2023. Launch on 7 September The guidance will be released at UNESCO headquarters during UNESCO's Digital Learning Week which gathers over 1000 participants to discuss the themes of public digital learning platforms and generative AI in education, among others. Speakers include: Stuart Russel, Professor of Computer Science, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Yoshua Bengio, Professor in the Department of Computer Science and Operations Research at the Université of Montreal and the Founder and Scientific Director of Mila – Québec Artificial Intelligence Institute, 2018 A.M. Turing Award laureate

Yann LeCun, Vice President and Chief AI Scientist at Meta

Daniel Andler, Mathematician and Philosopher, Member of the Académie des sciences morales et politiques and Professor Emeritus, Sorbonne Université, France

Lack of governance of Gen AI in the classroom Generative AI hit public awareness in November 2022 with the launch of ChatGPT, which became the fastest growing app in history. With the power to generate outputs such as text, images, videos, music and software codes, Generative AI tools have far-reaching implications for education and research. Yet the education sector is largely unprepared for the ethical and pedagogical integration of these

rapidly evolving tools. A recent UNESCO global survey of over 450 schools and universities showed that less than 10% of them had institutional policies and/or formal guidance concerning the use of generative AI applications, largely due to the absence of national regulations. In June 2023, UNESCO warned that the use of Generative AI in schools was being rolled out at too a rapid pace, with a worrying lack of public scrutiny, checks, or regulations. The Organization released a paper revealing that publishing a new textbook requires more authorizations than the use of Generative AI tools in the classroom.

Resources

[Guidance for generative AI in education and research](#)

[Digital Learning Week](#)

[UNESCO's 2021 Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence](#)

[UNESCO's work on Digital learning and transformation](#)

[UNESCO's work on Futures of Education](#)

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