

# **Education International and NASUWT work on migration and the Sustainable Development Goals**

## **Key issues for the NASUWT and Education International**

There are many issues arising from the NASUWT's work with migrant teachers and its work on the sustainable development goals. In the context of the UN Meeting on International Migration, Education International and the NASUWT stress the following points:

1. Unions have a key role to play in implementing and measuring performance towards the SDGs. It is vital that unions are actively engaged in decision-making at all levels, including UN strategic decision-making processes.
2. Unions operate at different levels, including the individual workplace, locally, nationally and internationally. They can provide critical information about the experiences and needs of migrants. This further reinforces the importance of involving unions in all UN decision making processes, relating to migrants and the implementation of the SDGs. It also highlights the importance of ensuring that unions are equal partners within this process.
3. Teachers have a central role to play in promoting equality, respect for diversity and social cohesion. It is essential, therefore, that the UN establishes how teachers can be supported to fulfil this role and stresses the need for Governments to establish how teachers can be supported to do this within their systems.
4. The UN should advocate the benefit of mainstreaming policies to support migrant teachers and to implement the SDGs. Alongside this, there is a need to emphasise the importance of policy coherence. For example, it is vital that other domestic policies do not undermine or conflict with the implementation of the SDGs.
5. The indicators to measure the goal that every child should complete free, equitable high quality education need to be broadened. Whilst literacy and numeracy are important measures, they are not sufficient. There is a need to measure the breadth and balance of the curriculum and the extent to which that empowers children, allows them to contribute to their communities, and enables them to progress to high-quality further education and work.

## **Education International**

Education International represents education unions in 172 countries and territories across the world. Human rights, democracy and social justice are core Education International principles and the right to education for refugees and stateless children, the rights of refugees and migrant teachers, and education for equality, inclusion and tolerance are key priorities for the organisation.

Education International has established a web portal for migrant and refugee teachers. This provides migrant and refugee teachers with practical information and advice. It also provides examples of good practice in protecting and supporting migrant teachers and students.

Education International seeks to influence both international and national policy and practice in respect of migration and the implementation of the SDGs. Education International is actively engaged in discussions about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including the development of indicators to measure progress towards the SDGs. It is working closely with member unions to try and ensure that Governments implement the SDGs appropriately and effectively.

## **NASUWT action**

The NASUWT is committed to challenging discrimination and to campaigning for and promoting equality and social justice. The Union undertakes a range of work to support migrant teachers, campaign for migrant teachers' rights and the rights of migrants more generally, and help all teachers fight discrimination, inequality and injustice. This includes providing guidance and resources that teachers can use in the classroom.

As well as providing teachers with information, advice and support, the NASUWT represents teachers at local, regional, national and international levels. This includes expressing teachers' views on matters that affect them and pressing for their needs to be met through changes of policies and practice at all levels. The Union pays particular attention to representing the needs of teachers who are most likely to experience discrimination and disadvantage, including migrant teachers.

The NASUWT believes in international solidarity, meaning that it is also committed to working with other education unions and partners to secure equality and social justice across the world.

The following provides some examples of NASUWT work to support and secure the rights of migrant teachers, and its work to promote equality and social justice for all.

### **Overseas Trained Teacher (Migrant Teacher) Project**

In 2009 the NASUWT undertook a project designed to explore new approaches to working with migrant teachers. This provided opportunities for migrant teachers to come together to share their experiences with the Union. It also enabled the NASUWT to establish how they could best support migrant teachers.

As part of the project, the NASUWT developed a dedicated website for migrant teachers. The website contained information about the professional challenges that migrant teachers faced. This included challenges relating to their professional practice as a teacher, such as familiarisation with the curriculum and expectations in relation to behaviour. It also information about the challenges faced by migrants more generally, such as housing, health, transport and personal security.

The project enabled the NASUWT to establish a network to support migrant teachers in London and the South East, where most migrant teachers were based. Whilst high costs of maintaining the website meant that it was not possible to continue running

the website, the NASUWT continues to provide support to migrant teachers in London and the South East.

The NASUWT has since worked with Education International to launch an EI web portal for migrant teachers.

### **Equality Consultation Conferences and Briefings**

The NASUWT organises annual equality consultation conferences for teacher and school leader members who share a protected characteristic under UK equalities legislation. The Union also organises regular events for supply teachers (teachers who may be employed to work in a school for a short period of time (e.g. one day, a week or one school term) to cover for teacher absences). Migrant teachers are over-represented in the supply teacher population and also attend other equality conferences, particularly the conference for Black and minority ethnic teachers.

The equality consultation conferences are extremely successful and attract more than 300 delegates to each event. They enable teachers to tell the NASUWT about their needs and experiences. The Union uses this information in its policy work nationally and locally. The consultation conferences and briefings also enable participants to obtain support, and undertake professional development.

The NASUWT uses the consultation conferences and briefings to encourage teachers from under-represented groups to become more involved in the work of the Union.

### **Advice and guidance for teachers and school leaders**

The NASUWT produces a wide range of advice and guidance on equality matters for teachers and school leaders. This includes advice and guidance that relates to migrant teachers.

Currently the NASUWT is producing advice for teachers and school leaders on the Government's 'Prevent Duty'. The duty forms part of the Government's strategy to tackle and prevent radicalisation and extremism. The NASUWT advice explains the duty and the steps that schools should take to avoid interpreting the duty in ways that could discriminate against some groups of teachers and pupils, most notably those from a Muslim background. This is due to be published shortly.

Linked to the above, the NASUWT has commissioned a resource for schools on promoting universal values. The resource is also due to be published shortly.

The NASUWT commissions independent research on a wide range of equality matters and use the findings from these studies to challenge policies and practices at national, local and school levels. One current example is research into the equality impact of pay reforms in England which have removed national pay scales, giving schools freedom to determine teachers' pay and pay progression. This is a longitudinal study which includes analysis of national data, an online survey and qualitative studies of groups of teachers, and which intends to identify whether particular groups of teachers are experiencing discrimination and disadvantages as a

result of the reforms and how this is happening. Reports of the first phase of the project will be published on the NASUWT website in the next few weeks.

Details of NASUWT research and publications can be found at: [www.nasuwt.org.uk](http://www.nasuwt.org.uk).

### **International Solidarity**

The NASUWT works with Education International, the European Trade Union Council (Education) (ETUCE) and other international partners to promote free, high quality education for all and to protect teachers' rights across the world. The Union works closely with unions in countries where teachers and union activists are at risk of violence and death. It is also working with EI and other partners to secure effective measurement and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Information about the NASUWT's international work can be found at: [www.nasuwt.org.uk/international](http://www.nasuwt.org.uk/international).

### **Sustainable Development Goals**

The NASUWT is working with Education International to ensure that effective indicators are established to measure progress towards implementation of the SDGs. The Union is also seeking to ensure that the UK Government takes its responsibilities in respect of the SDGs seriously. The NASUWT has met with officials at the Department for International Development (DFID) to discuss how the SDGs will be picked up through DFID projects. As part of this work, the Union has published a report, *Education, Privatisation, Equality and Social Justice: An Initial Review of the Work of DFID (UK)* which includes an examination of DFID's international development strategy, particularly in respect of education, and considers how the SDGs will impact on DFID's education work. The report also highlights the relationship between the UK Government's domestic and international education policy work. A copy of the report is available from: [http://www.nasuwt.org.uk/consum/groups/public/@journalist/documents/nas\\_download/nasuwt\\_014989.pdf](http://www.nasuwt.org.uk/consum/groups/public/@journalist/documents/nas_download/nasuwt_014989.pdf).