

International Literacy Day 2017

'Literacy in a digital world'

This year, International Literacy Day (8 September) will be celebrated across the world under the theme of 'Literacy in a digital world'. On 8 September, 2017 a global event will be organized at UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris, with the overall aim to look at what kind of literacy skills people need to navigate increasingly digitally-mediated societies, and to explore effective literacy policies and programmes that can leverage the opportunities that the digital world provides.

The 2017 UNESCO International Literacy Prizes awards ceremony will also take place to recognize and reward excellent literacy practices from around the world in connection with this year's theme and as a key target in Sustainable Development Goal 4.

At record speed, digital technologies are fundamentally changing the way people live, work, learn and socialise everywhere. They are giving new possibilities to people to improve all areas of their lives including access to information; knowledge management; networking; social services; industrial production, and mode of work.

However, those who lack access to digital technologies and the knowledge, skills and competencies required to navigate them, can end up marginalised in increasingly digitally driven societies. Literacy is one such essential skill.

Just as knowledge, skills and competencies evolve in the digital world, so does what it means to be literate. In order to close the literacy skills gap and reduce inequalities, this year's International Literacy Day will highlight the challenges and opportunities in promoting literacy in the digital world, a world where, despite progress, at least 750 million adults and 264 million out-of-school children still lack basic literacy skills.

International Literacy Day is celebrated annually worldwide and brings together governments, multi- and bilateral organizations, NGOs, private sectors, communities, teachers, learners and experts in the field. It is an occasion to mark achievements and reflect on ways to counter remaining challenges for the promotion of literacy as an integral part of lifelong learning within and beyond the 2030 Education Agenda.