



## Quality education in Africa: EU launches €100 million Regional Teachers' Initiative

Pretoria, 26 January 2023

Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta **Urpilainen** launched today a **Regional Teachers' Initiative in Africa and for Africa**, a €100 million investment from the EU budget in empowering the world's fastest growing youth population through quality education. This flagship initiative under the EU–Africa Global Gateway Investment Package aims to accelerate the training of teachers for Sub-Saharan Africa, responding to the need for 15 million new qualified teachers for Africa by 2030. The initiative will contribute to regional and national objectives by supporting and complementing national education and teacher reforms, offer opportunities for cross-country collaboration, partnerships, and peer learning in the region and with Europe.

At the launch of the initiative in Pretoria, South Africa, in the presence of the Minister of Basic Education from South Africa, the African Union Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ministers of Education from South Africa, Senegal and Botswana and representatives of EU Member States, UNESCO, teachers, and young activists, Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta **Urpilainen** said: *"I am proud to launch today the Regional Teachers' Initiative, a €100 million Global Gateway investment in quality education in Africa. We want to support our partners to have in every classroom a qualified teacher, a valued professional who can empower children and young people to thrive and develop skills for a future professional life. Together we can improve learning outcomes and accelerate progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality education for all. Education is the most powerful investment in our future, and teachers are key to it. We need more teachers and quality teaching."*

### Qualified teachers in greater numbers

The initiative aims to increase the number of qualified teachers by making teaching both an attractive job prospect for promising young professionals and a life-long learning experience. It puts an emphasis on teachers in basic education acquiring and transmitting digital and green skills – skills that will enable students in tomorrow's world to plug into the opportunities of the digital transformation, and engage them in the preservation of our planet. The initiative will also cover teaching in crisis contexts.

The Regional Teachers' Initiative is open to all countries in Sub-Saharan Africa through continental, sub-regional and multi-country actions, and North African countries are able to participate in some activities.

The European Union and EU Member States --Belgium, Germany, Finland, and France-- will work with the African Union and African countries, as well as UNESCO, to build up an inclusive, motivated and competent teacher workforce and harness the demographic dividend.

### Background

Well-trained and motivated teachers are key to improving learning outcomes, transforming education systems, and accelerating progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 4, Quality Education.

Today, Sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to need 15 million new qualified teachers by 2030. One in three teachers in the region's current workforce lack the minimum required qualifications and training.

The European Union and African Union endorsed the Regional Teachers' Initiative and its aim to tackle this crucial shortage in competent teachers at the EU–AU Summit under the EU–Africa Global Gateway Investment Package. The initiative is also a key element of the implementation of the Youth Action Plan for EU external action that aims to engage, empower and connect young people.

The EU and its Member States in a Team Europe approach, are a key partner for quality education worldwide. Investments in education in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific will rise to more than €6 billion by 2027, focusing on quality teachers, 21st century life and work skills, inclusive and equitable education systems, opportunity driven vocational

education and training, and higher education and mobility.

## **For More Information**

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[Speech by Commissioner Urpilainen at the launch of the EU Regional Teachers' Initiative](#)

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## Quotes:

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Jutta Urpilainen, Commissioner for International Partnerships

## Press contacts:

[Ana PISONERO-HERNANDEZ](#) (+32 2 295 43 20)

[Jennifer SANCHEZ DA SILVA](#) (+32 2 295 83 16)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)