



28 and 29 October 2024
8:30-17:30
UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

Background and Rationale

Private supplementary tutoring is a global phenomenon with far-reaching implications. In 2023 the global market size of the tutoring industry was estimated at US\$111 billion, with a forecast to reach US\$171 billion by the end of 2028 after a compound annual growth rate of 9.1%. Yet many governments are not adequately aware of such predictions and their implications.

Private tutoring can have a positive impact for some students through increased availability and flexibility of learning options, greater parental choice, and a wide range of curricula and instructional materials. Further, it provides employment for tutors, property managers, textbook publishers, and others. Yet it also has potential negative effects including persistent social inequalities, students' academic burdens, strained household budgets, teachers' misconduct, and skewed learning for high-stakes examinations.

In the academic literature, private supplementary tutoring is often called *shadow education*, on the grounds that it mimics schooling. Mimicry is particularly obvious in the content of tutoring: as the curriculum changes in the schools, so it changes in the shadow. However, some dimensions of supple-



香港大學

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education



International Centre
for UNESCO ASPnet
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mentary tutoring go beyond school curricula. This is particularly the case in enrichment courses that stretch high achievers to greater heights. By contrast, tutoring for lower achievers helps them to keep up with their peers in mainstream schooling.

Although the expansion is leading governments to pay more attention to private tutoring, some Ministries of Education remain *laissez faire* and argue that private tutoring is beyond their principal remit about schooling. More proactive governments, in contrast, have developed regulations. These regulations commonly begin by addressing serving teachers who seek to provide tutoring alongside their regular responsibilities. Additionally, governments may regulate the commercial sector, focusing for example on facilities, advertising, curricula, and the qualifications of tutors.

These matters will be among the themes of the Policy Forum, which will be organized by UNESCO through its Section of Education Policy in collaboration with the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education at the University of Hong Kong and the International Centre for UNESCO ASPnet (ICUA). The forum will recognize the different and sometimes competing perspectives of different stakeholders. It will also note diverse circumstances around the world, identifying lessons for education policies and practices.

Format and Participants

The Forum will provide a platform for knowledge exchange and dialogue, bearing in mind the goal of common good. The two days will include both plenary and breakout sessions, allowing participants to share their perspectives and experiences and to reflect on circumstances in their own contexts.

Participants will represent all world regions and diverse actors including:

- Education policy makers, planners, and other government officials at both national and sub-national levels
- Researchers
- Managers from tutorial companies, tutoring providers' associations, and other related non-state actors
- School principals, educators, and teachers' associations
- Parents
- Students, youth

Predecessors and Benchmarks

In some respects, the event will build on a Policy Forum organised by UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) in 2007. That event resulted in publication of a [book](#) that was subsequently translated into 20 languages. Since then, private tutoring has greatly expanded across the world. Its expansion was facilitated by the development and use of technologies, which played a crucial role during the COVID-19 pandemic by helping students learn during periods of school closures.

The theme was also placed on international agendas by UNESCO's 2015 report entitled [Rethinking Education: Towards a Global Common Good?](#) and by the 2021 edition of UNESCO's Global Education

Monitoring Report entitled [Non-State Actors in Education: Who Chooses? Who Loses?](#). Looking ahead, UNESCO is addressing private tutoring in the contexts of the evolving right to education and concerns about the quality and equity of educational provision.

Regarding international analyses of regulations for private tutoring, [Zhang's 2023 book](#) offers a comprehensive examination. Developed as a background paper for UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report, the book provides a comprehensive overview with case-studies of China, Denmark, Egypt, India, and Japan. A predecessor publication focusing on the Asian region was developed in collaboration with UNESCO's Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok by [Bray and Kwo](#) in 2014.

Time and Place

28 and 29 October 2024, 8:30 – 17:30, Room VII, VIII, IX, UNESCO Headquarters, 7 Place de Fontenoy, Paris 07 SP France.

Outputs

- A forum report summarizing key themes discussed and documenting data and evidence that can be used to raise the awareness about the scale, nature and impact of private supplementary tutoring;
- A policy brief with recommendations that can guide planners and other government officials in their decision-making processes.

Logistics

The working language is English. No interpretation will be provided. Participation will be by invitation only. Given that this is an in-person event, dialogue among participants will be a key element.

Participants should anticipate covering their own travel and accommodation expenses. The International Centre for UNESCO ASPnet (ICUA) will allocate limited resources for participants from the global south, and will solicit input from students and teachers. UNESCO will provide lunches during the event.

Queries may be directed to the Section of Education Policy, UNESCO Education Sector at educationpolicy@unesco.org.

Provisional Agenda

DAY 1 (28 October 2024)
Welcome and Opening / Keynote
Plenary Session 1: Unpacking the phenomenon – Scale and diversity of perspectives
Plenary Session 2: Tutoring provision and impact in practice
Plenary Session 3: Regulating private supplementary tutoring
DAY 2 (29 October 2024)
Plenary Session 4: Summary of Day 1 and introduction of breakout sessions
Breakout Session 5: Deep dive into solutions to address knowledge, policy and action gaps
Plenary Session 6: Reporting, conclusion and next steps

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