

Esperanto and the UN

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Universala Esperanto-Asocio

UEA celebrates the UN's International Day of Hope, 12 July 2026



According to a recent message addressed to the United Nations, “in 2025, for the first time, the United Nations celebrated 12 July as the International Day of Hope. This special day was established to remind the world community that the United Nations was founded in 1945 in a spirit of optimism following the devastation of the Second World War and with the hope that never again would humanity allow itself to be overtaken by such hatred and cruelty and human suffering. That fervent belief in peace lay behind the UN Charter of 1945 and was embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

“In its statutes, the Universal Esperanto Association declares respect for human rights a necessary condition for its work. The International Language carries in its very name the idea of hope. Ludvik Zamenhof, the founder of the language, called himself ‘Esper-anto’ ‘one who hopes’ and went on to

inspire a community of speakers that today has members in most parts of the world. It works to promote mutual understanding based on equity, to encourage community engagement for the common good, and to create a culture of peace in a world increasingly beset by hostility and misunderstanding.

“In these uncertain times, we encourage all people of good will, and particularly the Esperanto community, to come together around dialogue, community action, and engagement with the world, in hope and action for a better, more peaceful, and more understanding world community.”

World Congress of Esperanto about to begin

Final preparations are now underway for the 111th World Congress of Esperanto, to take place in Graz, Austria, from 1 August to 8 August. Over 1000 participants are expected, from 63 countries. See: <https://uk.esperanto.net/2026/kongresalibro> (congress handbook) and <https://uk.esperanto.net/2026/programo> (programme). Next year's congress is scheduled for

Melbourne, Australia, from July 3 to July 10. The 2028 congress will be held in Kaunas, Lithuania.

Zaozhuang University, China, will host this year's conference of World Association of Esperanto-speaking Teachers

July 10-16 are the dates of this year's conference of ILEI, the World Association of Esperanto-Speaking Teachers, taking place at Zaozhuang University (ZZU), China. Zaozhuang University, founded in 1978 and located in the vibrant city of Zaozhuang, China, is a comprehensive institution known for its commitment to quality education and research. As a university that fosters innovation and international collaboration, ZZU offers a diverse range of programs attracting students from around the globe. With a strong focus on practical learning and community engagement, it provides a supportive environment for international students seeking to immerse themselves in Chinese culture while pursuing their academic goals. ZZU's welcoming atmosphere and emphasis on global perspectives make it an appealing choice for aspiring scholars. As of the year 2018, ZZU offers a major in Esperanto and also is home to the only Esperanto museum in a Chinese university.

Esperanto is named part of the intangible cultural heritage of Austria

Under UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Programme, the International language Esperanto has been named part of the intangible cultural heritage of Austria, according to a recent announcement by the Austrian Government. Esperanto, according to the announcement, "is a constructed language developed by Ludwik Zamenhof in 1887, with the aim of offering people around the world a neutral and easy-to-learn means of communication to promote peace. An active community in Austria has been safeguarding this culture for more than 120 years. Its members meet regularly for language courses, study groups, celebrations, and conferences—activities that have given rise to a considerable body of work in literature, music, and the performing arts."

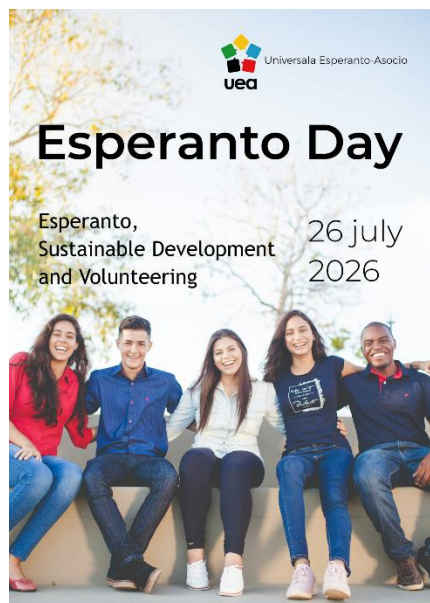
"Esperanto emerged in Austria [in] the late nineteenth century and experienced its heyday in the aftermath of the First World War. Following periods of disruption under National Socialism, the movement was revived in 1945 and continues to be active today. The bearers of Esperanto culture include organisations such as the Austrian Esperanto Association and the Styrian Esperanto Society, complemented by informal groups and communities. Their activities range from club evenings, language courses, and group trips to the publication of magazines and forms of digital networking. The language is increasingly transmitted through online platforms and supported by extensive international contacts....

"Esperanto culture is grounded in the idea that people can interact on an equal footing across language barriers, without linguistic hierarchies, and with respect for linguistic and cultural diversity. Alongside the use of a neutral second language, the culture is characterised by shared practices such as 'Pasporta Servo', a network offering mutual free accommodation, and the 'Gufujo' (Owl's Nest), a traditional meeting place for late-night exchanges at youth events.

“Founded in 1927, the Esperanto Museum at the Austrian National Library in Vienna serves as a key hub for the collection and promotion of international Esperanto culture. International conferences, cultural events, the annual Zamenhof Festival—held every year since 1974—and the World Esperanto Congresses hosted in Austria on several occasions serve to promote this living practice. Participation in Esperanto culture is open to anyone who is interested, as the language was deliberately designed to be neutral and inclusive.”<https://www.unesco.at/en/culture/intangible-cultural-heritage/inventory/element/esperantokultur-in-oesterreich-esperantokulturo-en-austrio>

Esperanto Day 2026: Sustainable development and volunteering

On 26 July, the Universal Esperanto Association will celebrate Esperanto Day, the date of the publication of the International Language Esperanto 139 years ago. Esperanto was born with a



simple but profoundly relevant goal: to bring people together through communication under equal conditions. More than a planned language, it represents an international movement supported by volunteer labour, cooperation and respect among cultures.

Volunteerism is one of the pillars of Esperanto organizations across the world, along with respect for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, today, efforts to contribute to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The work of these organisations advances international networks of solidarity, inclusion, cooperation, reduction of inequalities and the strengthening of international partnerships.

For example, volunteer teaching of the Esperanto language to reduce language barriers and broaden access to learning contributes to goal number 4, on education. Likewise, we contribute to goal number 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) through advancement of intercultural dialogue based on equality among peoples and connecting individuals without linguistic imperialism in the building of a culture of peace.

The building of a better, juster and more sustainable world for all depends not only on public policy but also on the voluntary engagement of citizens who decide to collaborate for the common good. By uniting volunteerism, education and intercultural dialogue, Esperanto continues to demonstrate that such construction is a collective effort. As the President of the UN General Assembly Annalena Baerbock has emphasised, we are “better together”.

We invite the entire international community to experience with us the use of Esperanto as a means to build collaboration based on universal equality and the valuing of difference. We will meet in Graz, Austria, from August 1 to August 8 at the 111th World Congress of Esperanto....

Examining Language and Artificial Intelligence and the UN

The Study Group on Language and the United Nations drew over 500 participants for its annual symposium held virtually on May 8. Under the title “Languages and Technology in an Uncertain World: Threats & Possibilities”, it focused on changing language technologies, particularly in the area of Artificial Intelligence. Participants included academics from across the world, UN staff, representatives of UN missions, and NGO representatives (including members of the Committee on Language and Languages, a substantive committee of the Conference of NGOs: CoNGO).

The virtual conference had four objectives:

1. Provide current empirical and experiential perspectives on the functions and implications of language technologies.
2. Facilitate dialogue among UN stakeholders on the role of technology in mediating multilingual communication.
3. Raise awareness about possibilities and pitfalls in language technologies, particularly related to AI
4. Foster continued momentum among stakeholders for mainstreaming multilingualism in the work of the UN at all levels.

Speakers included Natalia Bondonno, of the UN Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM), Bertrand Frot, of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), and Guolei Cai and Kate Carrara, of the International Telecommunication Union. Featured speaker was Prof. Antonella Sorace, Professor of Developmental Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh.

Concluding remarks were provided by members of the Study Group Carol Benson, Francis M. Hult, Lisa MicEntee-Atalianis, and Rosemary Salomone. The general verdict: an important part of the continuing dialogue between traditional language services and the new possibilities (and risks) provided by AI.

Cooperating with the Study Group on Language and the UN in organizing the symposium were the NGO Committee on Language and Languages, the Esperanto Studies Foundation and the Consortium for Language Policy and Planning. Support was also provided by AIIC (International Association of Conference Interpreters), FIT (International Federation of Translators), and UEA (Universal Esperanto Association).

The annual symposium grew out of a 1982 collaboration between the Universal Esperanto Association and what was then the UN Department of Conference Services. It has been a fixture in the UN calendar for most of the years since then.