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ETUCE Statement on the draft Council resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning

Adopted by the ETUCE Bureau on 24 November 2011

ETUCE would hereby like to highlight its views on the *draft Council resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning*, which will be adopted by the Education Council on 28-29 November 2011.

ETUCE, the European Trade Union Committee for Education, represents 135 Teacher Unions and 12.8 million teachers in Europe, 5.5 million teachers in the EU, from all levels of the education sector. ETUCE is a Social Partner in education at the EU level and a Trade Union Federation within ETUC, the European Trade Union Confederation. ETUCE is the European Region of Education International, the global federation of teacher unions.

ETUCE:

1. welcomes the fact that the European Commission puts forward adult learning while highlighting the need to enhance both personal and professional skills and competences of individuals taking into account the recent economic situation. ETUCE emphasises that adult learning is necessary to reskill individuals for the labour market, to reduce the risk of social exclusion, and to focus on the individual learner's needs with a view to promote personal development.
2. regrets that the European Commission does not raise the benchmark of adult learning participation, although enhanced adult learning participation is essential in the context of labour market instability, which is the result of the crisis. The number of participants in adult learning (25-64 year olds) has dropped from 10.8% to 9.1%, hence moving further away from the ET2020 target of 15%.
3. stresses that high quality adult learning should be maintained and developed in the national lifelong learning systems. ETUCE agrees that the quality of teaching and research in adult learning is crucial to maintain and further develop the capacity to adapt to a changing environment. Therefore, it is imperative to involve the social partners, such as trade unions in developing and improving accreditation systems for the quality assurance in adult learning.
4. agrees with the objective of the European Commission to enhance efficient and effective financing of adult learning. At the same time, ETUCE calls upon the Council to encourage Member States to invest more in adult learning and to maintain a secure public investment for this purpose.
5. welcomes the recommendation of the draft Council conclusions to improve the quality of adult education staff, to put in place effective systems for their initial training and professional development and to facilitate the mobility of teachers, trainers and other adult education staff. ETUCE therefore urges the Council to recommend more investment into the professional development of adult learning teachers.