



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

ETUCE – European Region of Education International

Work Programme 2017-2020

Adopted by the ETUCE Conference, the Regional Conference of Education International, meeting in Belgrade on 06-08 December 2016

The implementation of the programme follows the 5 priorities established at EI 6th World Congress

Priority 1: Advocate for the sufficient and equitable long-term financing of education and protect (public) education systems, teachers, researchers and education employees, students and children against the negative effects of political and economic crises, trade and investment deals, detrimental market mechanisms, and policies imposed by the international financial institutions

ECONOMY: CRISIS, PRIVATISATION, INFLUENCE OF BUSINESS

- Identify, denounce and fight the effects of the economic crisis, austerity measures and the increasing search for private investment in education on education funding, teachers, researchers and education employees, students and children by supporting the campaigns and other activities of member organisations;
- Promote, together with EI and ETUC, alternatives to austerity including demands for public investment in quality education to be excluded from the calculation of the public deficit and debts, especially in countries experiencing economic downturns;
- Raise awareness, activate and enable an influential presence of member organisations within the European Semester, in partnership with the ETUC and other European Trade Union Federations;
- Continue to analyse European Union and Euro-zone economic policies, the work of EU institutions and developments in relation to the European treaties, the EU budget, privatisation trends and related issues from an education trade union perspective;
- Identify, denounce and fight the use of neo-liberal, market and business driven ideology and approaches in education leading to commodification, privatisation and marketisation of education;
- Mainstream the issue of increasing privatisation in and of education into all activities related to education policy, social dialogue and the teaching profession;



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- Continue planning actions globally within EI and with ETUC on the economic crisis and its impact as well as ensuring that sustainable development goals on education are achieved, taking care to adapt and to adjust actions to developments;
- Seek broad public support for public investment in education, including from members of the European Parliament, other social partners and civil society organisations;
- Continue working on campaigns to denounce and to fight tax fraud, evasion and avoidance and to support legislative measures aimed at setting a common consolidated corporate tax base in Europe.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys

- Connect to and support development of the EI global work on financing education and the global response to privatisation in and of education by linking EI activities with specific European actions;
- Integrate research on investment in education in cooperation with the EI Research Institute, ETUI and Member Organisations;
- Continue monitoring, through surveys, the effects of the economic crisis and privatisation trends on the state of funding in education, teachers' working conditions, social dialogue and trade union rights in Europe;
- Continue to organise training seminars on the European Semester at national and European level; evaluate and if necessary adapt the ETUCE Action Plan on the European Semester to further developments in the framework of a conference;
- Consider applying to the European Commission for a project on enhancing social dialogue within the European Semester on education and training, including a conference with representatives of the European institutions, national decision makers, and other social partners;
- Organise a meeting/hearing in the European Parliament in support of quality public services with a focus on sufficient, sustainable and predictable public investment in education, in cooperation with other trade union organisations and civil society campaigns/platforms.

TRADE AND EDUCATION

- Advocate for carving out education and other public services from the scope of trade and investment agreements;
- Examine the potential adverse effects of the new multilateral and bilateral trade and investment agreements as well as developments in the WTO, in particular in relation to domestic regulation, investment and digital trade;
- Advocate for sustainable trade policies that ensure comprehensive and enforceable labour rights throughout the agreements;
- Advocate for policy coherence between trade and development policies at European level;
- With the aim of preparing appropriate actions, review developments in EU policy as regards the Modernisation of the Treatment of Public Services in the EU Trade and Investment Agreements;



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- Raise awareness and secure an influential presence of member organisations in partnership with the ETUC and other European Trade Union Federations;
- Monitor and seek influence, where necessary, on developments in EU trade agreements and their influence on the education sector in relation to countries such as Canada, US, Colombia, India, China, New Zealand and Australia, among others;
- Continue following up on the related meetings with the DG Trade.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Connect to and support the development of the EI global work on trade and investment agreements;
- Exploit the research results on the potential adverse effects of new trade and investment agreements for the education sector, including the potential consequences of e-commerce for electronic education and e-learning and the inclusion of new restrictive rules on intellectual property;
- Organise workshops on the potential adverse effects of trade and investment agreements with a view to coordinating action;
- Organise coordinated actions to lobby against the ratification of trade and investment agreement by the European Parliament.

Priority 2: Promote the status of the teaching profession, researchers and support personnel; improve professional standards, terms and working conditions, and counter de-professionalisation trends

EDUCATION POLICIES

GENERAL EDUCATION AND QUALITY IN EDUCATION / EU 2020 PROCESS

- Continue to participate in the implementation process of the Europe2020 Strategy and Education and the Training 2020 flagship initiative, with special attention to forthcoming initiatives, such as the New Skills Agenda for Europe (2016);
- Optimise the influence on EU education policy at national level;
- Follow-up on, and advocate the implementation of, positive achievements of the EU policy on education in third countries and keep in touch with the relevant EU institutions and agencies on its implementation (e.g. ETF);
- Study and seek influence on the devising of new indicators and benchmarks and their implementation;
- Monitor EU initiatives on linking education and employment, skills and jobs, learning and job forecasting and on youth employment, in connection with the work of the OECD;



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- Participate in setting up and monitoring the implementation of EU policy on all prioritised areas of education, for instance early school leaving, learning mobility, teaching languages, entrepreneurship education, maths and science education, digital skills, education for sustainable development;
- Continue active membership of the Education and Training 2020 Thematic Working Groups of the European Commission with a view to seeking opportunities to get involved in further thematic working groups of the European Commission;
- Advocate the provision of quality education and monitor the adoption of quality assurance mechanisms at European and national levels; keep in touch with the relevant EU institutions and agencies on their implementation (e.g. CEDEFOP);
- Follow up and seek influence on the education and training programmes/initiatives of the future presidencies of the EU, including on future Council conclusions;
- Seek further opportunities to be represented in EU events, conferences, temporary and permanent working groups and expert groups on education policy;
- Carry forward and seek new opportunities for cooperation with other unions and professional organisations working on education, such as EFEE, ETUC, EPSU, OBESSU, ESU, ATEE, EUCIS-LLL, etc.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Continue informing and raising awareness among Member Organisations concerning the actions of the EU institutions under the Education and Training 2020 process;
- Continue organising meetings with the ETUCE Education Advisory Panel to monitor EU initiatives on education;
- Continue the partnership with ETUC on education, training and skills in accordance with the ETUC Paris Manifesto (2015) and continue active participation in the ETUC Committee on Education and Training.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Examine the work of DG Education and Culture of the European Commission on Early Childhood Education;
- Seek influence in setting up and monitoring the implementation of EU policy on all prioritised areas of Early Childhood Education;
- In this regard, seek further opportunities for active representation in EU events, conferences, temporary and permanent working groups and expert groups in this field;
- Carry forward and strive for cooperation with other unions and professional organisations working in this education area;
- Follow up and monitor the implementation of the ETUCE Policy Paper on Early Childhood Education (2012).



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Continue informing and raising awareness among Member Organisations on the actions of the EU institutions on Early Childhood Education;
- Continue organising activities/events for Member Organisations on Early Childhood Education.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Closely follow up on the development of the Copenhagen Process and the implementation of the Bruges Communiqué in all European countries;
- Examine in detail and follow up on the policy recommendations and studies published by CEDEFOP and ETF;
- Monitor the implementation of referencing national systems via the EQF, EQAVET, ECVET and ECTS;
- Continue active membership of, and seek influence on, the development of EU policies in VET and apprenticeships via active representation at EU events, conferences, temporary and permanent working groups and experts' groups in this field;
- Increase awareness of the role of VET teachers and trainers in quality VET and apprenticeships;
- Engage actively in following up on the EU policy on skills upgrading and skill forecasting;
- Cooperate further with the ETUC on influencing the work of CEDEFOP, the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (ACVT) and other VET-related committees;
- Continue project partnerships with ETUC on VET and apprenticeships;
- Pursue and seek active cooperation with other unions and professional organisations working on this education area;
- Monitor the implementation of the ETUCE Policy Paper on VET (2012).

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Continue organising events/seminars for teachers, trainers and VET experts on VET in cooperation with ETUI;
- Continue informing and raising awareness among Member Organisations of the actions of the EU institutions on VET and apprenticeships;
- Continue seeking opportunities for a project/project partnerships on VET and apprenticeships;
- Continue the partnership with ETUC on the field of VET, apprenticeships and skills in accordance with the ETUC Paris Manifesto (2015) and continue active participation in the ETUC Committee on Education and Training.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- With a view to contributing to the development of EU policy on school leadership, closely follow-up on this policy issue;
- Continue ETUCE's work in the *European Policy Network on School Leadership* (EPNoSL);
- Seek further opportunities to contribute to EU events, conferences, temporary and permanent working groups and experts' groups in this field;
- Extend and engage in new cooperation with other unions, professional organisations and agencies working on this education area, e.g. with ESHA, EFEE;
- With a view to ascertaining the implementation of the recommendations, closely follow up on the implementation of the ETUCE Policy Paper on School Leadership (2012).

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Continue informing and raising awareness among Member Organisations on the actions of the EU institutions in this field;
- Continue including School Leadership as a transversal issue in future activities/events for Member Organisations.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

- Pay special attention to internationalisation and modernisation of higher education, mobility, gender equality, university ranking, etc. when monitoring the implementation of the European Higher Education Area with a view to influencing EU policies on higher education and research in the EU2020 process;
- Further engage in the Bologna Process as active members of the Bologna Follow-Up Group with the aim of influencing the process;
- Further engage with the Council of Europe on higher education;
- Advocate for the improvement of quality in higher education and research with the help of a supportive environment;
- Continue the existing cooperation and seek new ways of cooperation with other unions, professional organisations and agencies working on this education area, e.g. with the E4 group;
- Exert influence in this policy field as a member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) and the European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF);



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- Seek opportunities to become a member of the E4 group;
- Bring ETUCE's influence to bear on the adoption of the EU research policy initiatives, the implementation of the European Research Area Framework, and the adoption of the Horizon 2020 initiative;
- Monitor the work of the European Institute of Technology;
- Continue enhancing social dialogue on higher education and research;
- Aim to enhance influence on the devising of EU policies in this field by active representation in EU events, conferences, temporary and permanent working groups and experts' groups in this field.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Continue with meetings and coordinate actions with HERSC;
- Continue policy work and explore possible future joint activities with the Bologna Follow-Up Group;
- Contribute to a report/study for the 2018 Bologna Ministerial Meeting, (Paris, France);
- Follow up on the implementation of *Fighting the Crisis an Essential Contribution of Higher Education and Research (2012)*, *ETUCE Recommendations on Organising Researchers (2013)*, *ETUCE Policy paper on Doctoral Studies/Early Stage Researchers (2014)* and *ETUCE Policy Paper on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2014)*;
- Explore opportunities to plan a European conference on higher education and research.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND DISTANCE LEARNING

- Follow up on and monitor the implementation of the *Policy Paper on the 21st century Teaching Profession and the Use of ICT* at European level and at national level by member organisations;
- Further support and strengthen the role of education trade unions as professionals in the field of ICT use in education;
- As active members of the European Commission *Thematic Working Group* seek influence on the development of EU policies in this field;
- Further explore and monitor EU initiatives linked to enhancing the potential of ICT as a lifelong learning enabler;
- With a view to preparing appropriate steps for action, continue to monitor development of the Digital Agenda;
- Continue and elaborate ETUCE's and its member organisations' work within the framework of the *Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs*;
- Continue investigating, monitoring and informing on research on how skills and competences are supported by ICT, e.g. through the network on learning analytics;



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- Closely monitor the work carried out by the EU Joint Research Centre and Institute for Prospective Technologies Studies regarding the link to education and education trade unions;
- Further explore opportunities for cooperation and mutual learning with national teacher education institutions on how teachers are prepared for using ICT in their teaching;
- Continue ETUCE's active membership of various stakeholders' and European Commission fora and groups on ICT education, digital competences, etc.;
- Monitor and actively contribute to the ETUC Working group on Digitalisation, in particular where education is concerned.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Explore funding opportunities to assist the implementation of the ETUCE *Policy Paper on the 21st century Teaching Profession and the Use of ICT*;
- Carry out a study to monitor the development of ICT in public education and teacher training and the involvement of education trade unions therein.

TEACHERS' EDUCATION, QUALIFICATION & MOBILITY

- Advocate for the improvement of initial teacher education, induction phase and professional development of teachers;
- Continue influencing the European Commission to take into consideration the importance of sustainable public investment for the teaching profession and teacher education;
- Continue examining and influencing the implementation of the *Directive on Recognition of Professional Qualifications* to ensure free movement of teachers in the EU;
- Continue exerting influence on the development of EU policies in this field by seeking active membership of, and participating in, EU events, conferences, temporary and permanent working groups and experts' groups in this field;
- Continue seeking to provide Member Organisations with a platform for cooperation on teacher education;
- Continue cooperation with other unions, professional organisations and agencies working on this education area, e.g. with ATEE;
- Discuss teachers' professional development within the European Sectoral Social Dialogue for Education according to the work programme of the ESSDE.



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Continue informing and raising awareness among Member Organisations on actions of the EU institutions in this field;
- Continue including teacher education as a transversal issue in future activities/events for Member Organisations;
- Explore new funding opportunities for a project on teacher education and the teaching profession;
- Explore the potential feasibility of establishing a European Teacher Training Institute.

WORKING CONDITIONS, SOCIAL PROTECTION, HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Continue monitoring developments in EU legislation in areas such as:
 - Working time
 - Parental leave
 - Portability of supplementary pensions
 - Equal opportunities for women and men
 - Reconciliation of family and work life
 - Health and Safety
 - Revision of the Social Protection Pillar;
- Continue to discuss the promotion of decent workplaces in education and the prevention of psychosocial hazards such as work-related stress, violence and harassment with EFEE in the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee, as scheduled in the agreed Work Programme for 2016-2017;
- Promote Health and Well-being of education personnel by following up on the ETUCE Action Plan on the Prevention of Work-Related Stress;
- Further expand the partnership with the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work within the present and future campaigns on Healthy Workplaces, such as on Healthy Ageing;
- Monitor developments regarding the European Commission's Strategic Framework on Occupational Health and Safety (2014 – 2020) and its impact on the education sector and on education personnel;
- Propose to the European Commission that Eurydice/Eurostat undertake a special survey on teachers' working conditions and that they develop status indicators;
- Follow up on the revised ETUCE Action Plan on Preventing and Tackling Violence in Schools by promoting the prevention of third-party violence and of cyber-harassment in education;
- Investigate and report on the relationship between career development and performance related pay systems in the EU and prepare an ETUCE policy position thereon;



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- Continue ETUCE's active representation in the ETUC working groups;
- Continue ETUCE's active membership of the steering committee of the European Network on Education and Training in Occupational Safety and Health (ENETOSH) and monitor further developments in the international network on integration of health in education;
- Follow-up the establishment of RESAVER initiative of the European Commission on researchers' European pension fund.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Seek funding possibilities for a project on healthy and safe working places in education with a view to assisting the implementation of the joint ETUCE/EFEE guidelines on Social Partners Promoting Decent Workplaces in Education;
- Continue Joint EI/ETUCE research survey on teachers' pay (with ETUI);
- Explore opportunities to organise a European event on Teachers' Pay;
- Plan to undertake a survey on Social Protection provisions and Member Organisations' supplementary activities / arrangements (e.g. insurance arrangements) for teachers, in cooperation with Member Organisations.

Priority 3: Confront attacks on education unions and their members, particularly with respect to freedom of association, collective bargaining rights and professional freedoms

SOLIDARITY

- Assist member organisations in relation to negotiations / conflicts with governments / employers on request of the member organisations.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Continue supporting Member Organisations, upon request with solidarity letters in cases of conflict;
- Continue supporting Member Organisations, as required, with solidarity letters/protest letters to their respective governments or social partners;
- Continue organising missions to support member organisations in cases of conflict (e.g. fact finding, awareness raising, coordinated and joint conflict solving, etc.);
- Continue organising broader campaigns to bring issues arising from conflicts to the attention of Member Organisations and relevant stakeholders and to increase the support to Member Organisations concerned by ongoing problems;



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- Explore opportunities for new project applications to support Member Organisations in the improvement of national industrial relations in education.

Priority 4: Challenge the erosion of democratic and social values, and address gender inequality, racial intolerance and xenophobia, through the promotion of human rights, equality and trade union rights for sustainable societies.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRADE UNION RIGHTS ISSUES

- Continue promoting human rights and trade union rights for sustainable democratic societies in Europe;
- Continue the work in the Central Eastern European Network with a view to furthering mutual exchanges among ETUCE Member Organisations in the region;
- Assist Member Organisations, upon request, in relation to negotiations / conflicts with governments / employers;
- Continue monitoring and informing Member Organisations on developments concerning European citizenship via the Active European Citizenship group;
- Provide input to the European Commission's work on European citizenship and on the implementation of the Paris Declaration through the Thematic Working Group;
- Continue monitoring the Council of Europe programmes and events where relevant;
- Continue promoting education as a human right for all, especially as regards the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Provide information on activities within the European Active Citizenship Programme and in the Thematic Working Group;
- Provide information on activities and studies carried out and commissioned by the Council of Europe, where relevant;
- Explore opportunities for new project applications to assist Member Organisations in the implementation of the EI Strategy and Action Plan on Migrants and Refugees.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES



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- Continue monitoring and lobbying the European Commission on EU Inclusion policies (migrants, refugees, Roma, socio-economically disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, LGBTI people, etc.) taking into account issues such as women refugees' access to education and health services and seek influence on its work;
- Support Member Organisations and education personnel in dealing with and managing the integration of refugee children, young people and adults in education;
- Closely review future developments regarding the Strategic Engagement for gender equality between women and men 2016-2019 with a view to monitoring its impact on education and the teaching profession and thus following up on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 5;
- Regularly report to the Member Organisations on future developments in relation to the Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment and the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;
- With a view to keeping Member Organisations up-to-date, regularly review future developments in relation to both the Directive on anti-discrimination outside employment and the revision of the Directives on maternity and parental leave and the proposal for paternity leave;
- Closely follow up and inform the ETUCE Member Organisations on developments at EU level on education opportunities for migrant, refugee, socio-economically disadvantaged, vulnerable and ethnic minority children;
- Renew the ETUCE Action Plan on anti-discrimination with a view to promoting further its implementation among Member Organisations;
- Advocate for support to education personnel who are facing more diverse and heterogeneous approaches;
- Promote concrete measures to continue the implementation of the ETUCE Action Plan on gender equality and research into the field of reconciliation of work, private and family life;
- Continue the cooperation with ETUC on gender equality issues and European social dialogue developments in this field (women in unions, women in leadership and decision-making positions, equal pay, and violence against women);
- Continue the active membership of the Fundamental Rights Platform of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency;
- Monitor the impact and the development of the implementation of the EU Disability Strategy 2010 - 2020 and contribute to the evaluation and follow-up of the Strategy;
- Monitor and inform Member Organisations about the work carried out by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education;
- Continue to strengthen co-operation with the European Institute for Gender Equality with a view to enhancing opportunities for further action.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:

- Explore opportunities for new project applications to accompany the implementation of the ETUCE and EI Action Plans on Gender Equality as well as the recommendations from the Standing Committee for Equality;



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- Explore new funding opportunities for developing a new project on non-discriminatory quality education for migrant and refugee children, including a seminar on the EU and minorities;
- Promote opportunities for exchange of good practices regarding anti-discrimination and education;
- Continue exchanging experiences with other EI Regions on issues concerning equal opportunities;
Seek opportunities for a ETUI training seminar on capacity-building for the promotion of gender equality through social dialogue/collective bargaining

Priority 5: Strengthen and mobilise EI and its member organisations in the light of the above challenges and priorities

SOCIAL DIALOGUE

- Continue working towards the strengthening and improvement of the structures within the European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education (ESSDE);
- Continue working towards the improvement of linkages between the national and the European level of the education social dialogue;
- Agree with EFEE to a joint document in form of an agreement, recommendation, declaration or otherwise on the basis of the agreed Work Programme within the ESSDE;
- Implement the EU Social Dialogue on the basis of the agreed Work Programme;
- Develop the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Education work programme for the following years;
- Support the ETUCE Member Organisations to coordinate nationally with a view to appointing one delegate for the ESSDE (new EU member states);
- Continue the national lobbying to improve the employers' representation at national and EU level;
- Continue the national and European lobbying to improve the visibility of the ESSDE;
- Support EFEE in pursuit of the improvement of its Higher Education representation;
- Use the political benefit of the EU Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Education to strengthen social dialogue in countries outside the EU/EFTA;
- Continue representation in cross-sectoral social dialogue meetings together with the ETUC;
- Continue representation in the different ETUC committees related to social dialogue;
- Continue representation in other related working groups or meetings.

Meetings, projects and studies / surveys:



Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education

- Apply for new joint ETUCE/EFEE projects on one of the ESSDE Work Programme topics;
- Complete the project on social dialogue capacity building and promote it further;
- Continue to organise high-level Social Dialogue seminars for Member Organisations in the EU 28;
- Continue to participate in European cross-sectoral social dialogue events such as the Liaison Forum Meeting, different SD working groups, networking meetings for project promoters, etc.
- Continue to exchange information and experience with other sectoral social dialogue committees;
- Continue to work on improved transparency and knowledge on national and European education social dialogue issues;
- Seek opportunities for a joint project to establish a process with a view to reaching an agreement with EFEE on a specific topic.

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

- Carry on developing projects to support the ETUCE action programme when applicable and convenient, in relation to possible EU funding and other relevant funding opportunities;
- Monitor and continue to provide information to Member Organisations concerning the generation of programmes for 2017-2020 and after;
- Provide information to Member Organisations on the extended national possibilities for education projects funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), advising on models of cooperation with national ministries;
- Inform Member Organisations about funding opportunities within the European Union and with other European/international organisations;
- Provide information to strengthen ties between Member Organisations and National Programme Agencies;
- Continue exploring funding opportunities for EU and other funds to support the implementation of the work programme.

GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND INFORMATION

- Continue to publish and update:
 - ETUCE Newsletter and Press Releases
 - ETUCE Reports
 - ETUCE Website
 - ETUCE App
- Continue offering Information Sessions for study delegations.



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2016 Regional Conference*



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