



Press Release



Empowering education trade unions: opening the ETUCE Regional Conference 2016

29 November 2016

The ETUCE Regional Conference 2016 is opening its doors in Belgrade, Serbia, from 6 to 8 December 2016. Around 320 delegates and observers from 131 education trade unions across 48 European countries, representing more than 11 million teachers and education personnel across Europe, are gathering at the ETUCE Conference with the promise of “Empowering Education Trade Unions to Promote Quality Education”.

The opening ceremony will take place on 6 December. Ms Susan Hopgood, Education International President, Mr Fred Van Leeuwen, Education International General Secretary, Mladen Sarcevic, Minister of Education, Science and Technology Development of the Republic of Serbia, Mr Tibor Navracsics, the European Commissioner for Education and Culture, Ms Montserrat Mir Roca, ETUC Confederal Secretary and Ms Valentina Ilic, TUS President are to welcome education trade unionists from all over Europe before going immediately down to the business of framing a new course for the European education trade union movement in times of radical economic and societal changes and major challenges.

“Unity among teachers and all education personnel is the prerequisite to face successfully the challenges that the economic crisis has inevitably brought about, such as decreasing investment, weakening of social dialogue and increase right-wing radicalism and fundamentalism” said Martin Rømer, former ETUCE General Secretary 2002-2010 and ETUCE European Director 2010-2016 *“The ETUCE Conference will bolster the principle that we, as ETUCE and EI, have been in the front line to ensure solidarity among education workers and to guarantee that education is considered crucial for the future of Europe, to reinforce social justice and tolerance, to build greater respect for human rights and to strengthen and deepen healthier democracies, which do not fall prey of economic, lobbying and business interests”*.

A new ETUCE President and six Vice-presidents, as well as a new ETUCE Committee team will be elected, in charge of leading ETUCE for the period 2016-2020. Together with a new European Director, the elected team will bear a great responsibility for the new course of education trade unionism in Europe, in line with Education International (EI) priorities and policies, adopted by the EI Congress 2015, in Ottawa, Canada.

During the three days, Education International and ETUCE partner organisations such as the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) will provide fruitful contributions to the ETUCE Regional Conference’s work,

A Central and Eastern European Network meeting and a series of workshops to discuss challenges in the teaching profession will take place on 5 December, ahead of the official opening ceremony. The workshops will touch upon crucial issues for quality education and for the teaching profession such as: Equality and Migration, Continuous Professional Development, European Social Dialogue and sector-specific challenges in Early Childhood Education and Higher Education and Research.

Practical information can be found here: www.conference2016.csee-etu.org

For media accreditation please contact: secretariat@csee-etu.org



The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) represents 131 Education Trade Unions and 11 million teachers in all countries of Europe, 4.2 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 European Trade Union Federation within ETUC, the European Trade Union Confederation. ETUCE is the European Region of **Education International**, the global federation of teacher unions.

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