

## Teachers demand more support in education of refugees and migrants

20 June 2016

On 7 June, 2016, the European Commission published its Communication to the European Union institutions entitled [Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals](#).

We strongly welcome that the Communication puts emphasis on the importance of education and on the role of teachers in the integration mechanism of migrants and refugees.

Promoting the recruitment of teachers with a migrant background and equipping teachers and school staff with the skills needed to manage diversity in schools and integration of refugees and migrants are indeed essential tasks. However, we regret that the initiative does not suggest sustainable investment and a comprehensive support mechanism for the schools and the teachers to tackle these issues.

Furthermore, we express our concerns that the initiative does not propose sustainable funding but only private and temporary investment solutions to refugees' support. Early childhood education as an excellent tool of integration of families is rightly highlighted, however the sector is under increased privatization in several countries.

Teachers need initial and continuous training on the domain of inclusive education. Furthermore, urgent financial investment is necessary to recruit new teachers, to ensure that they are hired under terms that guarantee a stable, secure and lasting employment, to involve retired teachers, to recognize the qualifications of migrant and refugee teachers, and to guarantee the provision of compensation for teachers for additional individualized teaching and working hours.

*'The unresolved problem of low status of teachers in still too many countries of Europe, related to not appropriate salary and working conditions, impacts teachers' recruitment and retention and will have an enormous impact on integration of migrants and refugees to education and the labour market. – said Martin Rømer, European director of ETUCE. - Improving status of the teachers is of utmost importance in order to attract more high-skilled professionals to the already ageing teaching profession.'* – he added.

The Paris Declaration (2015) was an excellent initiative to engage the education ministers to decrease the segregation and radicalization in education, but the targets of the agreement have hardly or not at all integrated in the national and school curricula.

We welcome that role of social partners is underlined in working together with the Commission and governments on the initiative, but effective social dialogue with the teachers unions should be emphasized. Teacher trade unions have been acting on supporting teaching refugees and migrants, therefore their actions and involvement in the design making should be further supported.

On these views and implementation actions related to the initiative we are open for further discussion with the European Commission.



**The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE)** represents 131 Teacher 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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