

ETUCE PRESS RELEASE

Teachers call to improve quality of teaching and training in all forms of VET and apprenticeship

1 October, 2014

ETUCE, the European-level social partner organisation in the education and training sector, representing 11 million teachers and trainers, strongly welcomes that the important role of the teachers and trainers in initial vocational education and training (IVET), apprenticeship, continuing vocational education and training (CVET) and adult learning in general has recently received high emphasis in the discussions of EU-level events, particularly during the European Commission's [VET-Business Forum](#) (23-24 September 2014, Brussels) and during CEDEFOP's conference [Building European VET](#) (29-30 September 2014, Thessaloniki).

In line with the [ETUCE Policy Paper on VET](#) (2012) and the [ETUCE 10 key messages](#) on 'What is needed to improve the Quality of Education in Europe?' (2013), we underline that improving quality provision of teaching and training in all forms of VET significantly contributes to prepare youngsters and adults to life and to get jobs.

According to ETUCE European Director, Martin Rømer, *'the objective of vocational education and training is to give a solid base to learners to enable them to become active citizens in democratic societies and professionals in the workforce. All kinds of vocational education and training should be a basis for social cohesion, employability and active citizenship'*.

Regrettably, the [ETUCE survey on the impact of the economic crisis on teacher education in the EU](#) (2012) proved that professional development of teachers, including the ones in the VET and adult learning sectors, has been strongly affected by financial constraints since 2008. The European Semester's [Annual Growth Survey](#) (2014) highlights that 19 Member States of the EU have imposed severe cuts on their education and training budgets, which has serious consequences on the European VET systems. Additionally, some studies show that numerous employers deliver training at company level mostly to workers who are already highly qualified¹, which have severe effects on the upskilling the less-qualified work-force.

In line with the mid-term revision of the [Bruges Communiqué](#) (2010), ETUCE calls for the European Union institutions to advocate for enhancing investments on quality professional development of teachers and trainers in the EU member states, in order to improve the quality of IVET, CVET, adult learning and apprenticeship and to combat high unemployment rates, poverty and social exclusion across Europe.

Besides the students, it is the employers both at school and company levels, who benefit the most from quality provision of VET. Thus, employers at school and company levels should support and be primarily concerned about the professional development of teachers and trainers in the VET sector. The professional development courses of teachers and trainers in these sectors should be compulsory to update and improve their pedagogical skills, technological and digital skills, and the use of new teaching methods. Professional development of teachers and trainers in IVET, CVET and apprenticeship, as well as of any other teacher,

¹ Eurofound (2012), [Fifth European Working Conditions Survey](#), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg; McKinsey&Company Report (2014), [Education to Employment: Getting Europe's Youth into Work](#).

needs to be financially supported. No less than 10% of teachers' working time should be devoted to their professional development.

ETUCE welcomes the wide recognition of the fact that improving professional development of educational employees has a significant effect on further reducing early school leaving in the EU. In parallel, we also demand to put special emphasis to quality training of teachers and trainers who deal with adult learning, in order to decrease the rate of low-skilled adults revealed by [PIAAC survey](#) (2013).

At the same time, policy makers at European and national level need to be provided with comprehensive qualitative and quantitative research outcomes on the effect of the crisis on quality provision of VET and on VET teachers and trainers at the European level.

Finally, we call the ministries of finance, ministries of employment and ministries of education across Europe to improve and strengthen social dialogue at any level of VET. Effective social dialogue is essential for designing and implementing the future targets of the Bruges Communiqué and for maintaining and increasing investments, together with companies, in IVET, CVET, apprenticeship and adult learning, and in particular in professional development of teachers and trainers.