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# ETUCE

## European Trade Union Committee for Education EI European Region

### ETUCE Committee Statement for the ETUCE campaign Shape the Future of Europe with Teachers

*Adopted by the ETUCE Committee on 12 March 2019*

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In light of the European Parliament elections in May 2019 and presidential and/or parliamentary elections at national, regional and local levels, ETUCE<sup>1</sup> uses this important moment to highlight and bring to the attention of politicians the continuous distortion and lack of recognition and attractiveness of the teaching profession which have led to **severe shortages of teachers** across Europe.

With growing **nationalist** and **populist** movements, and the tilt of politics in Europe to the **far right, separatism, extremism** and **discrimination** are increasing in our society. More than ever quality education, teachers and academics have a crucial role to counteract this trend and are needed to help young people become independent, creative, critically thinking democratic citizens.

**Privatisation and commercialisation** trends, **austerity** measures, **budget cuts and salary/pension/recruitment freezes** in education, continue putting pressure on teachers, academics and their unions. At the same time, demands on education are rising to respond to the developments of modern society, such as digitalisation, inclusion and migration.

Quality education is a fundamental right and a public good. To make the profession more attractive a focus on teachers' needs is necessary, next to **decent working conditions** and **work-life balance**, there is an increased need for **quality teacher training** and support to teachers to reply to the needs of students and prepare them for lifelong learning in a changing world and to ensure access to quality education for all.

ETUCE puts forward [4 key demands](#) to guarantee the future of education in Europe:

1 – [Enhancing Quality education for all](#)

**ETUCE demands that every child and student have access to free of charge high quality education** adapted to his/her needs and regardless of his/her socio-economic background. Investing into Europe's future through the optimal allocation of public funding enhances economic growth and social cohesion in Europe. **Sustainable funding for professional development in initial training of teachers and throughout their career** are fundamental requirements for a modern innovative education capable to address the needs of students

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<sup>1</sup> *The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) represents 132 Education Trade Unions and 11 million teachers in 51 countries of Europe. ETUCE is a Social Partner in education at 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 education trade unions.*

in a fast changing world. Providing **autonomy for teachers and other education personnel** to manage diversity is essential for a thriving and vibrant society.

#### 2 - [Increasing Public investment and attractiveness of the profession](#)

The attractiveness of the teaching profession and the image of teachers in society have been steadily declining. Increasing demands are placed on teachers and educators in a profession that counts up to 73% of women teachers. **ETUCE requests increased sustainable public funding in education** with a view to recruit and retain the most highly qualified teaching professionals into the profession by offering decent working conditions including continuous professional development adapted to teachers' needs as well as a working environment and infrastructure that support teachers' wellbeing and motivation.

#### 3 - [Strengthening social dialogue and involvement of education trade unions in decision-making](#)

**ETUCE calls on governments and education authorities to recognise education trade unions as social partners in a permanent effective social dialogue with a view to contributing constructively to developing quality education systems and providing an independent professional view.** Education trade unions should have a permanent and central role in national and European decision-making on developing education policies, especially on pedagogical issues and on curricula.

#### 4 - [Promoting democratic citizenship and social inclusion](#)

In recent years, terrorist attacks, violent radicalisation, extremism, nationalism and xenophobia have surged across Europe and are threatening not only the safety of its citizens, but also the EU fundamental values of freedom, democracy, tolerance, equality, non-discrimination, respect for the rule of law, human rights and solidarity. **ETUCE demands sustainable funding and support for teachers and other education personnel in teaching democracy, human-rights, universal values and citizenship skills** to competently address and cater for the needs of their students. In a fast changing world where innovation and digitalisation are major influencers of society, young people need to learn to become critical-thinking and responsible citizens who are aware of their rights and obligations and value mutual respect, equal opportunities and diversity.