



ETUCE Newsletter

March 2014 - Issue 1



Greece: Education unionists face down police violence

On 28 February, the Greek Federation of Secondary State School Teachers (OLME), one of EI's national affiliates, organised a demonstration in Athens against the proposed dismissal of 12,500 education workers by 22 March. This demonstration took place at the same time as the Troika's representatives were discussing permanent teachers and other public servants' dismissals with Greek Government Ministers. Demonstrators underwent a violent attack from



the police forces, with 18 demonstrators arrested and four injured and transferred to the hospital.

"We denounce the unprecedented violent incidents caused by the police's continuous attacks wherever we protest against the suspensions and dismissals, and against the policies of the Greek Government, the IMF and the EU," said OLME President Themis Kotsifakis, who was among those arrested. "The Government, scared by the growing reaction of workers struggling for their right to permanent and stable jobs, released the forces of repression to terrify us."

OLME also firmly denounces the autocratic actions of the Greek Government, he highlighted.

Kotsifakis declared that teachers and demonstrators will not be terrified by the attacks and will continue their struggle, so that not a single one of their colleagues or a single worker is fired.

"We are struggling for permanent and stable jobs for everyone," he went on to say. "Terrorism will not be tolerated and our struggle will continue until the final victory."

European elections 2014: Time has come to engage your candidates to pledge to Quality Education

In the framework of the IE/ETUCE initiative "Unite for Quality Education - Better Education for a Better World", ETUCE has launched a new large-scale campaign initiative called "**Candidates pledge to Quality Education**". This initiative aims to seek the support from candidates to the European Parliament elections who share ETUCE's view on what is needed to improve the Quality of Education in Europe.



Education is not only paying the effects of the crisis, it is also bearing the costs of short-term solutions, and of the lack of courage of policy makers. For these reasons, this initiative is meant to give candidates the opportunity to show to citizens their support to the [ETUCE 10 key messages](#) on **“What is needed to improve the Quality of Education in Europe”**, through a simple fill of an on-line form. In order to achieve the greatest success ETUCE Member Organisations are

called to encourage national EP candidates to sign the pledge to “Quality of Education in Europe” through the dedicated electronic form on ETUCE’s website: [Candidates’ pledge](#).

The ETUCE will not stop to denounce the dramatic effects of the on-going financial and economic crisis, severely harming the education sector. Nevertheless, the ETUCE is confident that the 2014 European Parliament elections are the greatest democratic opportunity to change the course of European austerity policies and to say “no” to its dramatic dismantling effects on social rights.

Through this initiative the ETUCE asks candidates to the European elections to pledge to high quality education for all as one of the fundamental pillars of a just and equitable European society. Some MEP candidates have already signed our **electronic pledge** to express their support - [here](#). Be the next!

Higher Education: early stage researchers’ status to be solved

On 6 -7 of March, 38 ETUCE members from 22 different countries, met in the framework of the Higher Education & Research Standing Committee (HERSC) meeting.

The main topics discussed were quality of higher education in the “Unite for Education” campaign, higher education in the European Semester’s Country Specific Recommendations 2014, the influence of the EU trade negotiations on education, national implementation strategies of



[ETUCE Resolution: Fighting the Crisis an Essential Contribution of Higher Education and Research.](#)

All the members agree that it is necessary to pay special attention to the short-term demands of the labour market from the Higher Education, which could be one of the, but not the only, tools to solve youth unemployment.

HERSC members adopted two policy papers: on the status of early stage researchers/PhD candidates and on quality assurance in higher education. Both policy papers will be adopted by ETUCE committee in April and ETUCE Special conference in November 2014.

One in three women experienced violence

33 % of women living in the European Union have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15, and one in 20 women was raped since the age of 15. These insights were revealed by an EU-wide survey on violence against women published by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) last Wednesday. The survey shows the extensive prevalence of physical, sexual and psychological violence against women in the European Union.

Acts of violence against women seem to take place often at home in the form of domestic violence. Out of all women who have stated to have a (current or previous) partner, 22 % have experienced physical and/or sexual partner violence by a partner since the age of 15. Physical violence against women included acts of pushing, slapping, throwing hard objects, pulling of hair, beating, and kicking. The majority of women do not report about violent incidents to the police or any other organisation.



Sexual harassment is an even more widespread experience of women according to the survey. 55% of women have experienced unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing since the age of 15.

Many women became victims of violence already in their childhood: 12 % reported they had experienced some form of sexual abuse before the age of 15, which would correspond to 21 million women in the European Union.

In total, 42,000 women between 18-74 years were interviewed in the course of the study. All participants were selected randomly and were visited in their homes for a face-to-face interview. The participants were interviewed concerning their experience with physical and sexual violence, including incidents of intimate partner violence ('domestic violence'), sexual harassment, stalking, cyber harassment, and violence in the childhood.

Women work 59 days 'for free'

On average, women work 59 days unpaid per year. On occasion of the 4th European Equal Pay Day, the European Commission has released the new brochure Tackling the gender pay gap in the European Union, which explains the gender pay gap, its causes and the benefits of closing it.

Indicating the average difference between women and men's hourly earnings, the gender pay gap still stands at 16.4%. Despite a slight weak downward trend, in recent years, the gender pay gap exists at various levels in all 28 Member States.

A continuous decreasing trend of the gender gap can be found in Denmark, the Czech Republic, Austria, the Netherlands and Cyprus, while other countries (Poland, Lithuania) have reversed their decreasing trend in 2012. In some countries like Hungary, Portugal, Estonia, Bulgaria, Ireland and Spain, the gender pay gap has increased in recent years.

This year, the European Equal Pay Day was commemorated on 28 February 2014. The last day in February marks the date in the new calendar year from which women really begin to be paid for their work as compared to men. In effect, it means that women effectively work the first 2 months of each year for nothing, given the stark difference between women and men's pay.

The gender pay gap shows that women still do not get equal pay for equal work. It contradicts the principle of equal treatment of men and women, one of the founding principles of the European Union.

