



ETUCE Newsletter

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Demonstration for a more social Europe

ETUCE will take part in the European trade union demonstration on 4 April 2014 organised by the European Trade Union Confederation, ETUC. It will be a major demonstration where unions across sectors will stand together and call on the European political leaders to take action and to take a new path towards a more social Europe.

The demonstration is part of ETUC's newly launched campaign "A New Path for Europe", which goes well with Education International's running campaign "Unite for Quality Education". The campaign aims at rejecting austerity and asking for more investment in education, sustainable growth and quality jobs. The demonstration will enable unions to draw the attention of MEPs and election candidates before the European 2014 elections will take place. Participants will urge them to uphold the social dimension of the EU.



ETUCE encourages all its member organisations to participate in the demonstration on 4th of April 2014 and to send strong and representative delegations to Brussels. It is time for the European political decision makers to listen and to take to citizens' concerns and expectations serious.

Demonstration to support women in Spain and the abortion right in Europe

On 29 January 2014, a demonstration is planned to show solidarity with Spanish women and to fight for the right of abortion in Europe. The protest is a reaction towards a draft bill recently approved by



the Spanish Council of Ministers, which aims at reforming the current law on sexual and reproductive health and rights. The draft bill foresees to ban women from opting freely for abortions, which would mean a 30 years step backwards in the rights of Spanish women.

In order to support the women in Spain and, in general, the right to abortion in Europe, the European Women's Lobby

together with NGOs, political parties, and the Spanish trade unions CCOO and UGT are organising a protest march. Meeting point will be the Spanish embassy in Brussels (19 Rue de la Science, 1040 Brussels). The rally will start from there at 17:30 and will proceed to the European Parliament at Place de Luxembourg.

To find out more about the event, please go the European Women's Lobby Website.

<http://www.womenlobby.org/news/ewl-news/article/european-week-of-action-to-support?lang=en>.

Priorities of the Greek Presidency in education and training

On 1 January 2014, Greece took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The key priorities of the Greek presidency on education are high quality, efficient and equitable education and training systems to enhance employability in Europe.

Two Council meetings will take place for Education Ministers during the Greek Presidency. On 24 February 2014, the Ministers will adopt Council Conclusions on Efficient and Innovative Education and Training to Invest in Skills.

At the Council meeting on 20-21 May 2014, the Ministers will adopt Council conclusions on Quality Assurance at all levels of Education and Training and Council Conclusions on Quality Teachers' Education. These Council Conclusions will highlight the need for high quality teaching through the provision of adequate initial education and continuous professional development for teachers and trainers and by making teaching an attractive career choice. At the same Council meeting, the European benchmark in the field of language learning will be discussed.

The Greek Presidency will end its term on 1 July 2014, when the Italian Presidency will follow.

Further information on the Presidency is available [here](#).

The six-month Programme of the Presidency can be found [here](#).



Gender Equality Surveys Open to Participation

On 1 February 2014, ETUCE will start a survey that focuses particularly on gender equality in teacher unions and in the teaching profession. The survey looks at how the economic crisis and austerity politics have influenced gender equality in the education sector in the past five years.



The survey is part of the on-going ETUCE project [*Promoting gender equality within teacher trade unions and in the teaching profession II – Implementing and reinforcing teacher trade union actions on gender equality in times of austerity.*](#)

The survey results will serve as the working basis for a seminar on 7 May 2014 in Utrecht. An invitation concerning the survey will go out to ETUCE member organisations this week.

Participation is also kindly requested in two surveys on gender equality this spring. The annual ETUC 8th March survey is already running and focuses on trade union strategies to address violence against women this year. The survey is an important benchmark in trade unions' work to achieve gender equality.

We would like to invite all member organisations to participate in the surveys!

New court hearings against trade unionists in Turkey

In March 2012 the Turkish confederation KESK organised a demonstration to protest against the draft Public Services Trade Union law and against proposed changes in the education system.



According to ETUCE Turkish member, Egitim Sen, the suggested reform would have a significantly negative impact on education and teaching. The peaceful protests in the streets of Ankara were dispersed by the police who used violence to break up the demonstration. There were harsh police attacks towards people with chemical water and gas bombs that injured several protestors and damaged public property.

Following those clashes the public prosecutor filed complaints against 502 trade union leaders, members and other demonstrators supporting the strike. The first hearing within the trial took place from 13 to 17 January 2014. During these five days 100 people came to the judgment hall in Ankara in order to make their defences. More than about 150 people appeared at local courts to answer the summons of the judges. Due to the fact that all of the 502 people could not make their defences during those days, the court has delayed the hearings to 8-9 April 2014 despite union lawyers' and defendants' demand to drop the charges. In solidarity, ETUCE has helped again to organise a strong delegation of international observers to the first hearings in Ankara.

This situation is unreal and the Turkish government's judicial harassment against trade unionists in Turkey has to stop. The government must not convict people for practicing their legal trade union rights including organising and engaging in peaceful union activities.

Health& Safety - Project Results Published

The results of the latest ETUCE Health and Safety project *Teacher trade unions in solidarity for healthy and safe workplaces in the economic crisis* were disseminated last week. ETUCE member organisations will receive USB Flash Drives to disseminate the project results among their members and affiliates. The USB keys contain all project publications.

Among these can be found:

- a comprehensive project brochure in English, French, German, and Spanish,
- the practical recommendations that were developed in the project,
- the research report with all the data collected in the survey and in interviews
- activity reports on the main events : two peer learning activities and a final conference.

Member organisations and stakeholders in education are invited to use these materials and disseminate them amongst their affiliates.

This one year EU funded project had the main objective to strengthen solidarity between teacher unions in Europe in support of maintaining and promoting healthy and safe working conditions. The aim was to promote the well-being and safety of teachers and other education employees as prerequisites for quality education.

This project focused on the implications of the economic crisis on occupational health and safety in the education sector. It followed an empirical approach and collected data in an online survey and interviews. From this evidence base, practical guidelines were developed to promote health and safety in the education sector in times of crisis.



To find out more about the project and its results, please visit:

http://teachersosh.homestead.com/Health_and_Safety_in_Crisis/Health-and-Safety-in-Crisis.html