



*Press Release – 10 February 2006*

**The European Trade Union Committee for Education,  
representing more than 5 million teachers in the EU, calls on the  
European Parliament to exclude education completely from the  
Services Directive**

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*Martin Rømer*

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In the latest compromise text (9 February) to have come out of the current negotiations between the EPP and the PES groups in the European Parliament in advance of the vote next week in Strasbourg, no agreement has yet been made on the exclusion of education services from the Directive.

**“In the face of the risk of increased commercialisation of the education sector, as a result of the Services Directive, ETUCE and teachers’ unions across the EU are calling for a complete exclusion of education from the Directive”, stated ETUCE General Secretary Martin Rømer.**

In the vote in the Internal Market Committee in November, MEPs agreed that the national education systems should not be affected by the Directive. **“But this is highly insufficient”,** stated Martin Rømer, and added: **“in many countries, parts of the higher education sector and various vocational training courses are not considered part of the national education system, in the cases where universities or training centres are privately funded.”**

EU Heads of State and Government have all agreed within the context of the Lisbon Strategy on the need to make the EU education systems a world class reference for quality and equality. **“But this will not happen if we subject our education systems to competition and the rules of the market, such as the Services Directive would do”,** emphasised Martin Rømer: **“What do the EU decision-makers want from education with this directive? More privatisation? More commercialisation? This is really not the way to improve education.”**

**“We strongly call on governments across the EU to live up to their responsibilities to fund and provide education of high quality and with equal access for all citizens. The inclusion of education in the Services Directive would indeed be a step in the wrong direction.”**

ETUCE finds the inclusion of education in the Directive utterly unacceptable, and calls on Members of the European Parliament to support the proposal put forward by the Socialist Group to exclude all education services from the Directive.

ETUCE and teachers’ trade unions from a number of countries will be joining the big European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) demonstration on 14 February in Strasbourg.