

Education and Training
Coordination Group
Page 2

ETUCE Council Meeting &
30th anniversary
Page 3

Social Dialogue conference
in Warsaw
Page 3

Survey report on social
dialogue
Page 5

Bologna follow-up Group
Page 6

EU Education Council
Page 7

Malta High Level Meeting
Page 7

Working conditions seminar
in Lisbon
Page 8

ETUC adopts resolution
Page 9

Vote on Services Directive
Page 10

Consultation on EQF
Page 11

Quality Assurance in higher
education
Page 11

A new break-through for ETUCE: Member of the Education & Training 2010 Coordination Group

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ETUCE Council Meeting

This year's forthcoming ETUCE Council Meeting will be held in Luxembourg on 5-6 December. The main theme of the Council is "*Education and Training 2010 – Competences in the Knowledge Society*", focusing on new initiatives at EU level to respond to the challenges of new competences needed in the knowledge-society.

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ETUCE Social Dialogue Conference in Warsaw

On 30 September to 1 October, ETUCE held the conference "Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector" in Warsaw. The conference gathered European teacher trade unionists to two days of dynamic debates on political strategies for reinforcing social dialogue in education in Europe.

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Calendar

21 - 22 November:

2nd European eLearning Forum for Education (ELFE) Conference, Copenhagen

5 - 6 December:

ETUCE Council Meeting, Luxembourg

6 - 7 December:

Pan-European Committee/ETUCE Executive Board Meeting, Luxembourg

A new break-through for ETUCE: Member of the Education & Training 2010 Coordination Group

After several years of pushing for the establishment of an overall coordination group for national ministries and Social Partners to monitor the implementation of the EU educational objectives, ETUCE warmly welcomes the Commission's decision to finally set up such a group. ETUCE appreciates the opportunity to be on board, and is pleased to represent European teachers at the highest level in the Education & Training 2010 process.

Following a consultation in the Council on 9 June 2005, the Commission decided to establish an overall Education & Training 2010 Coordination Group (ETCG) in order to carry on the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 work programme. The Education & Training work programme sets out the road map for fulfilment of the goals of the Lisbon Strategy within the education and training area.

The ETCG is inviting national authorities and Social Partners as well as the Commission, to work together in creating a global overview and coordination of the vast range of diverse activities within education and training. The broad spectrum of this area covers: the general educational systems, vocational education and training, lifelong learning, mobility, higher education and all their related strategies and policies.

As latest reiterated in the ETUCE response to the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy this Spring, ETUCE has for several years strongly recommended the Commission to establish this coordination group. ETUCE has been invited to be a member together with a representative from the ETUC. The first meeting will take place on 13 December.

ETUCE Representation in Comenius Group and Leonardo da Vinci Peer Learning Activities

ETUCE has been invited to participate in two other newly established sub-groups under the Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture. ETUCE will have a representative both in the Comenius Stakeholder Group, which have been put in place to provide the Commission with advice and recommendations regarding the implementation of the new Comenius programme, as well as a representative in the Peer Learning Group regarding Vocational Training and Adult Education Policy. The latter is establishing study visits in 2006 in the Leonardo da Vinci framework, with special focus on social integration of young people with difficulties.

ETUCE Council Meeting 5-6 December 2005



This year's forthcoming ETUCE Council Meeting will be held in Luxembourg on 5-6 December. The main theme of the Council is "*Education and Training 2010 – Competences in the Knowledge Society*", focusing on new initiatives at EU level to respond to the challenges of new competences needed in the knowledge-society. Initiatives to be discussed include a set of *Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications*, a framework on *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*, the overarching *European Qualifications Framework*, as well as the influence of the Bologna Process on teacher education in Europe.

In developing ETUCE policies on the initiatives above, the Council Meeting will at the same time address the increasingly important issue of how national follow-up structures can be set up on the consultation of social partners on EU educational developments.

The ETUCE's 30th Anniversary

Europe has changed considerably over the past 30 years. So has the ETUCE, yet our aim has remained the same – to be a strong representative voice of teachers vis-à-vis the European Union.

To celebrate the ETUCE's 30th anniversary, a history of the organisation is being produced, to be published in the summer of 2006. Many former members of the Executive Board and others will contribute to the book, covering 30 years of very interesting – and in some respects also very turbulent – times for the ETUCE.

At the ETUCE Council meeting in Luxembourg, the ETUCE's 30th anniversary will be marked by a social event. A special commemorative logo has also been designed.

ETUCE Social Dialogue Conference in Warsaw

On 30 September to 1 October, ETUCE held the conference "Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector" in Warsaw. The conference gathered European teacher trade unionists to

two days of dynamic debates on political strategies for reinforcing social dialogue in education in Europe.

The conference was opened by the Polish Minister of National Education and Sport, Mr. Miroslaw Sawicki, followed by Mr. Slawomir Broniarz, President of the Polish teacher union ZNP, who warmly welcomed participants to Warsaw and expressed his joy of hosting an international conference on Social Dialogue in the same year as ZNP celebrates its 100-year anniversary.



The keynote intervention of the first day was delivered by ETUCE Advisor Mr. Riku Matilainen (FUURT, Finland), who presented the report of the survey on the State of Social Dialogue in Education carried out in the first half of 2005. In taking stock of the key challenges as well as the good practices to be found in the social dialogue systems in the 29 European countries covered by the survey, the report represents a very important basis for developing political strategies on social dialogue. On the basis of the findings, Mr. Martin Rømer, ETUCE General Secretary, outlined to participants a draft Action Plan on steps to be taken at both national and European level for strengthening social dialogue in education across the EU and candidate countries.

The second day of the conference set off with a historical perspective on social dialogue in a panel debate on the history of the trade union movement in Poland. Moderated by Mr. Jerzy Baczynski, Chief Editor of 'Polityka' Magazine, the debate among Former Prime Minister of Poland (1989-90) Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Expert in trade union history Mr. Juliusz Gardawski (Tripartite Commission on Social and Economic matters) and Mr. Maciej Manicki, former President of OPZZ, testified to the crucial role the trade union movement has played in the democratisation of Poland.

The second day moreover featured the employers' perspective, presented by Mr. Charles Nolda from CEEP¹, as well as a panel of teacher union representatives providing national examples of social dialogue practices.

The Conference in Warsaw forms part of ETUCE's extensive Social Dialogue projects, which have the overall aim of strengthening social dialogue in education through increased cooperation among teacher unions, exchange of experiences, and preparing for the establishment of a sectoral social dialogue in education at EU level.

ETUCE Report: Survey on the State of Social Dialogue in Education in 29 European Countries



ETUCE has published the report on the survey on the State of Social Dialogue in Education carried out in 2005 among ETUCE affiliates in 29 European countries. The report presents a Euro-level overview of numerous aspects of social dialogue in education, including formal aspects of collective bargaining systems, the agenda of negotiations, and social dialogue practices of both formal and informal nature.

The report builds on a comparative approach, identifying differences and similarities in social dialogue practices between the 'old' EU Member States and the 'new' Member States and candidate countries. A range of good practices in teacher unions' engagement in social dialogue is identified, representing a basis for valuable mutual exchange of experience among teacher unions on this issue.

Among the challenges identified for the new EU Member States for achieving stronger social dialogue mechanisms, the report notably points to the issue of lack of employers' organisations to enter into negotiations with. While the teaching profession is relatively strong organised in the Central and Eastern European countries covered in the survey, the employers' side is in many cases not well organised, leaving the unions with the problem of finding counterparts to negotiate agreements with.

The report moreover provides insight into which countries lack a legal basis for social dialogue, how trade unions who represent civil servants compare to trade unions whose members are not civil servants, how strongly engaged unions are in social dialogue in terms of cooperation with governments as well as with other civil actors, and concludes with identifying 'building blocks' for strengthening the European social

¹ European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and of Enterprises of General Economic Interest (CEEP).

dialogue in education. The future challenge for European teacher unions will be to engage in both national social dialogue as well as in establishing dialogue mechanisms to respond to the increased cooperation on education policies among EU education ministers.

"Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector. An exploratory study on the state of social dialogue in education in different national contexts"

By ETUCE Advisor Riku Matilainen (FUURT, Finland).

Brussels, October 2005. Available in English and French on the ETUCE website: www.etuce-csee.org

Bologna Process follow-up Group in Manchester 12 - 13 October 2005

Hosted by the UK Presidency, the Bologna Process follow-up Group met in Manchester on 12 and 13 October. The Pan-European Structure of Education International, which participated in the Group for the first time since its establishment in Bergen, was represented by Paul Bennett, Monique Fouilhoux and Martin Rømer.

The follow-up group has concentrated its principal work around the work programme for 2005/2007. In particular, the group has decided to put several working groups in place, and to arrange policy development seminars. The seminars will be organised as, and labelled, 'Bologna Seminars'. Among the working groups, Education International indicated interest in notably the groups concerning mobility and the external dimension of the Bologna Process. Furthermore, the proposal of a 'Bologna Seminar' on mobility in early 2007 organised by the Pan-European Structure, have been reserved for the official programme. Besides the meeting itself, it was an opportunity for Education International's delegation to make themselves known and to establish new contacts.

There is a lot of work in prospect for Education International, ETUCE and our affiliated organisations. Even if we are henceforth in the follow-up process, the academic community and its representative organisations should intensify their efforts to become truly recognised as "fully participating partners". The next meeting will be in Vienna on 6 and 7 April 2006, where we hope that the Austrian organizers will get down to work with issues such as: financial assistance, linguistics and the obtaining of visas, so that the representatives from the five new countries admitted in Bergen, will be able to participate (which was not the case in Manchester).

EU Education Council Meeting: Joint 2006 Progress Report on the Agenda

Chaired by the UK Presidency, the Council of Education Ministers held a meeting on 14-15 November in Brussels.

Ministers held the first exchange of views on the 2006 Joint Progress Report on the implementation of the 'Education and Training 2010' work programme. The draft 2006 joint progress report is based on the national progress reports submitted in spring 2005 by the 32 European countries involved in the Education and Training 2010 process. The 2006 joint report highlights that governments must invest more in education and must intensify their efforts, if real progress is to be made towards the common goals set for EU's educational performance. At this early stage, ETUCE welcomes the emphasis placed in the Joint Report on the dual role – economic and social – that education fulfils, signifying a welcomed re-focus of priorities in comparison to the too economical perspective of the Lisbon midterm-review from spring 2005. ETUCE will follow the debate on the joint 2006 report closely up until its foreseen adoption in February 2006, and have launched a new information series of *ETUCE Circulars* on developments within Education & Training 2010.

In addition, Ministers adopted Council Conclusions proposed by the UK Presidency on the role of the development of skills and competences in taking forward the Lisbon goals. Although the conclusions state that 'skills development' must be understood in a broad sense as also contributing to social cohesion and personal fulfilment, ETUCE finds that a focus on the role of skills development in view of employability is dominant in the document, and calls on Education Ministers to maintain the broad outlook on the role of education proposed in the 2006 joint progress report.

Other issues on the agenda included discussion on the integrated action programme for EU funding of activities within lifelong learning, the adoption of the resolution on 'mobilising the brainpower of Europe and enabling higher education to make its full contribution to the Lisbon Strategy', and discussion of the recommendation on quality assurance in higher education.

Social Dialogue on the agenda in Malta at High Level Meeting for Central and Eastern Europe

The reinforcement of Social Dialogue was the main point on the agenda in Malta at ETUCE's high-level seminar on 18-20 September 2005. Twenty-five Presidents and General secretaries of ETUCE member organisations in Central and Eastern Europe gathered for this high-level seminar. The seminar set out to discuss the strengthening of social

dialogue in education in an enlarged EU, providing good opportunities for sharing experiences of social dialogue practices in the different countries.



It is very important for ETUCE to back the development of a strong social dialogue at all levels in education and training, which is why the seminar underlined that social dialogue must be supported at both a sectoral European level and at a national level. It also highlighted the importance of defining good practices in social dialogue and the need for exchange and support of such, amongst member organisations. The presentations from the seminar are available for downloading on ETUCE's web-page: www.csee-etu.org.

The seminar "How to reinforce social dialogue in an enlarged EU" was organised in cooperation with ETUI-REHS².

ETUCE Working Conditions Seminar in Lisbon

Forty members of the ETUCE Working Conditions Network met in Lisbon on 22-24 October for a three-day seminar on Trends in Teachers' Pay and Working Conditions. Organised in the context of the *TRACE* project – *Trade Unions Anticipating Change in Europe* – the seminar set focus on trends in how private sector working methods influence the education sector.

Private sector working methods' influence on teachers' working conditions is increasingly apparent, as teacher unions in an increasing number of European countries are faced with the introduction of performance-related pay, performance management and devolved bargaining in the education sector. Members of the ETUCE Working Conditions Network will undertake a survey in the forthcoming months among ETUCE member organisations in order to obtain a clearer

² European Trade Union Institute for Research, Education and Health and Safety

picture of the extent to which these practices are introduced and what strategies unions have used when faced with these changes.

ETUCE is one of several European federations undertaking activities under the *TRACE* project coordinated by ETUI-REHS.³



ETUC adopts resolution on higher education in a lifelong learning perspective

On 20 October the ETUC Executive Committee adopted a resolution in the area of higher education: 'Higher education in a lifelong learning perspective'. The resolution comes as ETUC's response to the Commission's communication: "Mobilising the brainpower of Europe: enabling universities to make their full contribution to the Lisbon Strategy", which was issued in April 2005.

ETUC welcomes and supports the idea that universities and other higher education institutions should play a stronger role in the Lisbon Strategy. But the resolution calls for a broader understanding of higher education than what is inherent in the Commission's communication, which has its main focus on issues related to universities and the top research they produce. More attention should be given to the challenges facing polytechnical institutions and their role in delivering graduates with technical skills to the labour market. ETUC stresses that a balanced approach to the degree of public and private funding in higher education must be sought, and that higher education institutions should give equal importance to promoting competitiveness, equity and social cohesion in Europe. The challenge in Europe will be to prepare the universities to serve the whole society more broadly than is the case now.

ETUC advocates for a new approach in reforming the education and vocational training systems in order to satisfy the needs of individuals and society, as well as the needs of the economy.

³ European Trade Union Institute – Research, Education, Health and Safety.

European Parliament set to vote on the Services Directive in November and in January

With the EP committee vote scheduled for November and the plenary vote coming up in January 2006, ETUCE calls upon member organisations to continue their advocacy for a complete exclusion of education from the Services Directive.

The European Parliament's Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) decided, in their meeting held 4 October, to postpone their vote on the proposed Services Directive to 20-21 November 2005. The committee's vote was due to take place on the 4th October with the vote in Plenary foreseen for 24-25 October.

The postponement is a result of MEPs' failure to reach compromise on notably two areas of dispute: the controversial country-of-origin-principle and the scope of the Directive. The question of whether Services of General Economic Interest, i.e. some forms of health care, social services and other welfare services, depending on their mode of financing and provision, as well as private education services, should be covered by the Directive, is still very much an area of dispute among the political groups in the EP.

The more than 1200 amendments tabled to the Commission's proposed Directive by members of IMCO, reveal in summary the following positions on education:

The Socialist Group (PSE), the Greens/EFA and the Lefts (GUE/NGL) call for exclusion of Services of General Economic Interest, i.e. exclusion of education funded or guaranteed, partly or in whole, by the State.

The Centre-Right group (EPP-ED) calls for education activities under the national education system to be excluded from the Directive, while certain members of the Liberal Group (ALDE) demand that private education courses should be covered by the Directive.

ETUCE urges all member organisations to continue their advocacy for a complete exclusion of education services from the Services Directive. As reiterated by the ETUCE Executive Board resolution from June 2005, ETUCE firmly demands that education is not subject to trade in the EU internal market.

With the vote in the IMCO committee foreseen for 20-21 November, the vote in Plenary will take place on 16-19 January 2006.

Discussions in the Council of Ministers (Competitiveness) are also moving forward this autumn, as the UK Presidency is intent on tackling some of the more controversial issues in the Directive. The next meeting is going to be on 28-29 November 2005.

All previous campaign material is available for download on the ETUCE website www.csee-etu.org.

Important consultation of ETUCE member organisations on the European Qualifications Framework

The EU's initiative to establish a European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is an ambitious attempt to make qualifications across the EU comparable. The initiative is not unproblematic, however. ETUCE has invited all member organisations to communicate their stance towards the EQF.

The European Commission has published an outline of a EQF. The EQF consists of eight reference levels referring to 'learning outcomes' to which national authorities are to relate their domestic qualifications framework. The EQF will be used on a voluntary basis and will facilitate the transfer and recognition of qualifications held by individual citizens. The overall aim of this so-called 'meta-framework' is to promote lifelong learning and mobility within Europe.

In July 2005 the European Commission launched the consultation process on the EQF. The aim of the Europe-wide consultation is to consult the stakeholders, experts and policy-makers most directly involved in the implementation of the EQF, as well as seeking the views of European educational associations, social partners, networks and NGO's towards the frameworks. The Commission calls for proposals and suggestions as to what the aims, structure and content of the EQF should be, by the end of December 2005. This feedback will inform the final proposal of the content of the EQF, which the Commission expects to present in July 2006.

In order to prepare ETUCE's response to the EQF which is to be discussed in the ETUCE Council Meeting in December, ETUCE has during the autumn consulted all member organisations on their views on the EQF.

EU takes measures to strengthen its cooperation on Quality Assurance in Higher Education

On 14 October 2005, the European Parliament adopted its position on the Commission's proposed recommendation on further European Cooperation on quality assurance in higher education.

In 1998, the Council of Ministers adopted a recommendation on European cooperation on quality assurance in higher education. The recommendation calls upon Member States to establish quality assurance systems and to encourage higher education institutions and competent authorities to cooperate and exchange experiences on quality assurance systems. Building on this recommendation, the Commission proposed a new recommendation in October 2004, contributing more concretely to the aim of mutual recognition of quality assurance systems and assessments across Europe.

The new draft recommendation most importantly encourages the establishment of a European Register of reliable quality assurance agencies. Agencies included in the register should accordingly regularly be checked by appropriate peer review processes. It is envisaged that national authorities, higher education institutions, quality assurance agencies and social partners work jointly in setting up the European Register. In the European Parliament's position on the draft, the MEPs notably stress the importance of bringing this EU recommendation into line with the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area adopted in the Bologna Ministerial Meeting in Bergen on 20 May 2005.

One of the more controversial aspects of the Commission's proposed recommendation from October 2004, was that Member States should base their decisions regarding licensing and financing of higher education institutions on the assessments of independent quality assurance agencies. The European Parliament called for this aspect to be deleted from the recommendation, and in the latest compromise text on the recommendation, this controversial aspect is taken out. The draft recommendation is now awaiting discussion in the Council of Education Ministers.

New Publications

- [Key Data on Education in Europe, 2005 \(Eurydice\)](#)
- [ETUCE Survey Report: Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector, September 2005](#)
- [ETUCE Seminar: Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector, Vilnius, 2 – 3 July 2005](#)