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Successful Hearing on "Europe Needs Teachers"



The long-awaited Hearing on "Europe Needs Teachers" was held in Brussels on 17 January. The Hearing gave all participants the possibility to explore the important role of educators, and it was discussed how collaboration, mobility and the development of a teacher education policy can strengthen the teaching profession.

[>>> Read more](#)

ETUCE: Education should be excluded in the service directive

ETUCE is very concerned about the directive on services in the internal market as the text is very vague and it does not clearly define that education is excepted from the directive. On 15 March, a hearing on the directive will take place in the Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament aiming to understand the full consequences of the directive.

ETUCE welcomes the hearing very much and will launch a campaign on the directive in the nearest future.

[>>> Read more](#)

Ten new policy areas in Lisbon Process

The Commission's Competitiveness Group has drawn up a internal report on the Lisbon Strategy that recommends ten policy areas around three core themes; creating jobs, improving knowledge and innovation and make Europe an attractive location for employment.

[>>> Read more](#)

Calendar

11 - 12 February:
EI/ETUCE Pre Bergen
Conference, Brussels

6 - 8 March:
ETUCE Social
Dialogue – Training
Seminar on Social
Dialogue, Vilnius

8 - 10 March:
ETUCE ROMA
Conference, Budapest

15 – 17 March:
ETUCE TRACE
Project Conference,
Florence

[>>> More events in 2005](#)

European High Level Conference: The Maastricht Communiqué is approved

From 14 – 16 December 2004, at the Maastricht conference “Strengthening European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training. A Europe of Skills, let’s us do the job” ministers from 32 European countries, together with the European Social Partners and the Commission, agreed on the Maastricht Communiqué. A follow-up to the Copenhagen Declaration adopted in 2002, it sets out new priorities and strategies in vocational education and training for the next two years.

From strategy to concrete actions

Jan Figel’, Commissioner for Education, and Maria van der Hoeven, Dutch Minister of Education, emphasised that more actions and cooperation are needed in order to be the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by the year 2010. The objective of the Copenhagen Declaration was to strengthen European cooperation in vocational education and training and the result of the last two years work is a series of concrete products, such as Europass – a single framework for transparency of qualifications and competences – a set of common European principles for the validation of non-formal and informal learning and the Ploteus portal on European learning opportunities.

ETUCE is concerned about the European Qualification Framework

The Joint interim report of the Education Council (February 2004) gives a high priority to the development of a European Qualifications Framework (EQF) which was further discussed at the conference. The framework should stand as a common reference enabling and promoting transparency, transfer and recognition of qualifications and competences. However, ETUCE is concerned that the framework could lead to the standardisation of education systems in a negative and undesirable way and urges member organisations to monitor very closely the work and development at national level very closely.

Action at national level is needed!

During the Maastricht meeting, progress and priorities were reviewed and it was concluded that there is still a lot of room for improvements. The conclusion of Johan van Rens, Director of CEDEFOP, was that even though developments, agreements and frameworks have been made, the question remains however what has been implemented and invested by the individual Member States.

Also Maria van der Hoeven brought up the need to extend the cooperation to national level with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders: *“Subscribing to a document is not an end in itself; it must lead to action. Consequently, all relevant stakeholders in the field – providers, institutions, social partners, businesses, governing bodies at sector, regional, national and European level, national parliaments and*

the European parliament – should take their responsibility in order to contribute to successful and effective implementation of the communiqué. Now, it's time for us all to get to work and do the job”, she said.

After the speeches three workshops focused on the following topics:

- The Challenges of Lisbon: Assessing the Readiness of VET Systems, Institutions and companies
- Towards a European Labour Market: Mobility, Transparency and Recognition
- Innovation in Teaching and Learning

ETUCE participated in the conference and attended the working group dealing with mobility, transparency and recognition.

[Read the Maastricht Communiqué](#)

[Visit the website of the Conference](#)

Successful Hearing on “Europe Needs Teachers”

The long-awaited Hearing on “Europe Needs Teachers” was held in Brussels on 17 January with participants from member organisations, the Commission, the European Parliament, the press and social partners. Jan Figel’, Commissioner for Education, opened the hearing and stressed that qualified and motivated teachers are a must for a knowledge-based society. The hearing gave all participants the possibility to explore the important role of educators, and it was discussed how collaboration, mobility and the development of a teacher education policy can strengthen the teaching profession.



Expert panel: Qualified teachers are needed!

The Expert Panel, represented by Arlette Delhaxhe, Eurydice, Seán Feerick, DG Education and Culture, Ulf Fredriksson, Mid-Sweden University, Graham Lane, Newham Council London and Paulo Santiago, OECD, brought teacher education and the growing need for qualified teachers into focus. The panel stressed that education and training are essential in achieving the Lisbon goal and more investment in human resources was requested. The new role of highly qualified teachers in our knowledge-based society was another important aspect discussed by the experts.

Trained and motivated teachers

How can a sufficient number of competent teachers be trained and stay motivated throughout their careers? The panel agreed that initial training, lifelong learning, quality of competences, and coherence between different stages of teacher education are crucial to keep teachers motivated and qualified until their retirement. Furthermore, it was emphasised that salary and prospects for career growth are important in order to make teaching attractive and coveted.

In the afternoon, the participants continued the debate and raised relevant questions to the experts. ETUCE encourage member organisations to follow up on the hearing by organising national hearings on the same topic; Europe Needs Teachers!

[Read the speech of Jan Figel', Commissioner for Education, pdf.file](#)

[See the presentation of Arlette Delhaxhe, Eurydice, ppt](#)

[See the presentation of Seán Feerick, European Commission DG Education and Culture, ppt](#)

[See the presentation of Paulo Santiago, OECD, ppt](#)

[Read the OECD Executive Summary: "Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers"](#)

Adoption of the Directive on equal treatment between women and men

The existence of particularly visible discrimination between women and men in the area of goods and services has prompted the European Union to take action in this area. On 13 December, the Council adopted the Council Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between women and men in the access to and supply of goods and services.

The Directive establishes the prohibition of all indirect and direct discrimination between women and men, including unfavourable treatment for reasons of pregnancy and maternity. Harassment, sexual

harassment and incitement to discrimination are considered as discrimination based on sex and for this reason are also prohibited. The Directive includes the definitions of these concepts, referring to the definitions used for the same terms in previous directives.

However, the Directive will not apply when men and women are not in a comparable situation, i.e. to differences in goods and services intended exclusively or primarily for the members of one sex or to skills practiced differently for each sex.

Each Member State is to entrust one or more bodies with the promotion of equal treatment between women and men on a national level, in the fields covered by the Directive. These bodies will be encouraged to analyse the problems encountered, put forward recommendations and provide concrete assistance to victims.

A review of the Directive will be carried out in six years' time with the full inclusion of representatives of the insurance industry, consumers and equality bodies.

The Luxembourg Presidency: Mid-term Review of the Lisbon Process

A main issue of the Luxembourg Presidency is the mid-term review of the Lisbon process that the European Council will carry out in March 2005 based on a Commission orientation report due out in early February. As highlighted by the report "Facing the challenge – The Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Employment" chaired by Wim Kok, reforms to modernise the European socio-economic model are essential to achieve the aims of the Lisbon strategy, which the Presidency wishes to preserve. The Luxembourg Presidency will use this mid-term review to take stock of the strategy, refocus priorities, improve the governance of the strategy and implement a specific communication strategy by target groups.

National action programmes to reach Lisbon goal

As regards governance strategy and rationalisation of existing processes, the Presidency wishes to further develop one of the main ideas in the Kok report in order to create national action programmes. These will add value by means of:

- A complete picture of government action in terms of implementing the Lisbon objectives.
- Greater coherence given to the need for each government to reinforce inter-ministerial cooperation between the areas covered by the strategy, which will also bring synergies into sharper focus.

- Increased Governments' responsibility by being committed before their European partners, as well as their national Parliaments, social partners, civil society and public opinion.
- Differentiation between Member States by granting each government flexibility to prioritise objectives.

The Luxembourg Presidency proposes to confirm the target of 2010 as the date by which the Member States as a whole, in each area of the strategy, will have implemented the reforms in a self-sustaining manner demonstrating a notable change of trend.

Furthermore, the Presidency proposes to launch talks on the ways and means of streamlining the Open Coordination Method and on improving its monitoring and to discuss how to take the youth more into account in the Lisbon priorities.

ETUCE has requested a meeting with the Presidency in order to present ETUCE's priorities.

[Read the Trade Union Memorandum to the Luxembourg Presidency of the European Union](#)

“Active Citizenship” should be open for all European trade unions

On behalf of all European Trade Union Federations, Bernadette Ségol has addressed a letter to Jan Figel', Commissioner for Education, concerning the lack of access to the budget line on promotion of active citizenship. At present, only interprofessional trade union organisations have access to this budget line, which is regrettable as trade unions indeed are an important and specific part of civil society, directly representing working people throughout the EU and beyond.

The letter requests the Commissioner to open the budget lines on active citizenship and social dialogue to all European trade unions, as listed in the latest Communication on social dialogue. The European Trade Union Federations expect an answer to the request from Commissioner Jan Figel'.

European Parliament: Working Document on the Working Time Directive

The Employment and Social Affairs Committee has drawn a working document on the most relevant aspects of the working time directive.

The rapporteur Alejandro Cercas strongly regrets that the Commission's proposal has completely failed to take into account the February 2004 European Parliament's report on working time, above all the question regarding the individual opt-out.

Guarantee the health and safety of workers

The document states that workers' health and safety should be the main aim of the revision of the directive, but three other criteria must be taken into account: Giving flexibility to the regulations, allowing greater compatibility between professional and family life, and avoiding imposing unnecessary constraints on companies.

In short, the European Commission proposes:

- To keep the individual opt-out whilst reinforcing the conditions for its application, when there is no (or cannot be a) collective agreement in force.
- To allow Member States to further extend the reference periods to 12 months, subject to consultation with the social partners concerned.
- Correct the definitions of working time, so that the inactive part of on-call time is not considered "working time".

Period of phasing-out of opt-out

The rapporteur proposes that Member States have a period of phasing-out, with some form of regulated opt-out, that would in any case end in 2010. Concerning the cancellation of the reference period, it should preferably be done through collective agreement, but Member States may be permitted to regulate it under certain conditions. Finally, he states that the inactive part of on-call time should continue to be regarded as working time. However, Member States or a collective agreement may introduce pragmatic solutions to solve structural or specific problems.

The revision of the directive is expected to be approved during the Luxembourg Presidency. ETUCE will closely follow developments.

ETUCE Training Seminar in Vilnius: Social Dialogue in Education

From 5 – 8 March, a Training Seminar on Social Dialogue in Education will be held in Vilnius, Lithuania, as part of the ETUCE / EU project "Social Dialogue in Education". Representatives from ETUCE and ETUC will brief on developments in social dialogue focusing on working time, salaries, European directives on working conditions and collective bargaining. Furthermore, representatives from the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and the Commission will contribute with interesting

presentations. As part of the Seminar, a special session on teachers' working time will take place only for the CEE Working Group.

Working groups will discuss the problems and challenges related to the mentioned topics and a report will be published that will include the conclusions from the seminar.

[See the draft programme](#)

Commission launches ten new policy areas in Lisbon Process

The Commission's Competitiveness Group has drawn up an internal report on the Lisbon Strategy that recommends ten policy areas around three core themes; creating jobs, improving knowledge and innovation and make Europe an attractive location for employment.

Increase "ownership" of the Lisbon strategy

One of the key policy proposals in the internal Commission document is to increase the "ownership" of the Lisbon process for Member States. The report states that lack of ambitions at national level and Member States' insufficient involvement in the process is a main reason for the strategy failure. Member States would be asked to set up national Lisbon programmes and the document says that "the appointment in each Member State government of a Mr Lisbon / Mr Jobs and Growth to coordinate the national reform efforts could play an important role in this regard".

New time frame

The document suggests a new cycle for the Lisbon agenda and says that "methods and mechanisms should be clarified and simplified around a new cycle of three years". The relaunch of the process could be summarised as "more and better jobs in an innovative and attractive Europe" but the text can still be changed before the publication of the 2005 spring report on 2 February.

ETUCE: Education should be excluded in the service directive

The draft directive on services is intended to give a legal framework to the service industries and thus facilitate the free movement of services and the right for service providers to set up business in different Member States. ETUCE is very concerned about the directive as the text is very vague and does not clearly define that education is excepted from the directive. ETUCE draws the attention to problems the proposed directive might create concerning the possibility of trade in education!

Much attention must be given to the impact of this proposal for a directive without preliminary consultation and the text has to be rebalanced to ensure the European social model and guarantee that education is a public matter that should never be subject to trade. As the Commission does not seem to be willing to take the concerns into account, it's crucial to draw the attention of national governments and the European Parliament to the directive.

Hearing in Committee on Culture and Education

On 15 March, a hearing on the directive will take place in the Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament with a view to understand the full consequences of the directive. ETUCE welcomes the hearing very much and will launch a campaign on the directive in the nearest future in order to emphasise the need for action at national and European level.

Social Dialogue: News from the Liaison Forum

The Liaison Forum on Social Dialogue met on 1 September 2004. A number of topics were discussed and explained by experts of the European Commission and by experts of both the Social Partners represented in this Committee.

The Commission presented a number of recent developments in the field of social dialogue and social affairs. They referred to the autonomous agreement by the cross-industry Social Partners (SPs) on stress at work, the intention to launch a consultation on violence at the workplace and the minimum wage, the adoption of the Social Agenda scheduled for spring 2005 and the preparation of contributions from the SPs for the tripartite social summit in spring 2005.

Undeclared work in the enlarged union

The Commission representatives presented the study on this subject: description, sectors affected, consequences of undeclared work for public finances, content of recent studies in the field, means for dealing with the problems, action taken by certain sectoral social dialogue committees. They referred to measures taken in some Member States to turn undeclared work into permanent work.

Social Dimension of Globalisation and follow-up to the report by the World Commission on the Social Dialogue of Globalisation established by the ILO

The Commission presented the content of the documents submitted to the members, pointing out that the Commission's approach in the context of globalisation had been to support the debate on an extended basis, not limited exclusively to economic and commercial aspects. The SPs could play an important role in the process, particularly in the social dimension of globalisation. ETUCE will follow up especially on this.

Presentation of the theme “Noise at Work” for the European Health and Safety Week 2005

The Agency representative presented the Agency’s activities (tripartite composition, work, etc.) and set out the 2005 campaign, centred on noise at the workplace. She invites the SPs to take an active part in the campaign in collaboration with the Agency in order to arrive at specific commitments. ETUCE will draw the attention of member organisations to this initiative.

Council of Europe – an important and successful session

375 INGOs¹, which from now on will no longer have a consultative but a participatory status, are accredited at the Council of Europe, among them EI and ETUCE. Their Plenary Assembly was held in Strasbourg on 25 January.

This new status creates new rights and also obligations for all organisations, since they are considered as the fourth pillar of the European institutions with the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. The INGOs make up the INGO Conference, and the Secretary-General, Mr Terry Davis, expressed his support as follows: *“Nowadays, INGOs actively contribute to the Council of Europe’s decision-making process and to the implementation of its programmes!”*

The Conference’s statutes and rules of procedure were consequently adopted, in particular those of the thematic groupings (Education and Culture; Human Rights, Health, etc.).

The third summit of the Heads of State and Government (46 countries) will take place in Warsaw on 15 and 16 May. We exerted pressure to have the education sector taken into consideration from the outset of the preparatory work: and it will be included!

The INGOs have prepared a joint contribution that will be presented during this third summit and which calls for, among other things, to *“reinforce the action of the Council of Europe on the basis of its fundamental values”* for the sake of social cohesion; the protection of the environment and sustainable development; the fight against terrorism; the promotion of reflection as a stepping stone for action in the area of education and culture, in particular for education towards citizenship; the teaching of history and memory; the development of multilingualism.

¹ The INGOs (International Non Governmental Organisations) are trade unions, associations, foundations.

The situation in Turkey was on the agenda of the meeting of the thematic grouping on Human Rights. The current case in court against EGITIM-SEN was intensively discussed.

2005 is the European Year of Citizenship through Education. INGOs are invited to record the action they have already taken in this area, to launch operations, to step up what they do in schools and universities. There will be an INGO Forum on this theme in Warsaw from 21 to 24 April.

Calendar

11 - 12 February:

EI/ETUCE Pre-Bergen Conference, Brussels

6 - 8 March:

ETUCE Training Seminar on Social Dialogue, Vilnius

8 - 10 March:

ETUCE ROMA Conference, Budapest

15 – 17 March:

ETUCE TRACE Project Conference, Florence

22 – 23 March:

EU: European Spring Council, Brussels

27 April:

ETUCE Quality in Education Panel, Brussels

28 April:

EI / ETUCE Bureau, Brussels

19 - 20 May:

Bologna Ministerial Conference, Bergen

6 June:

ETUCE Networks Meeting, Brussels

13 June:

EI / ETUCE Bureau, Brussels

13 – 14 June:

EI Pan-European Committee / ETUCE Executive Board, Brussels

16 – 17 June:

EU: June 2005 Summit of Heads of States, Brussels

2 – 3 July:

ETUCE Social dialogue, regional seminar, Vilnius

New Publications

- [OECD Executive Summary: "Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers"](#)
- [The approved Maastricht Communiqué](#)
- [New Commission report: Restructuring has made industrial relations more important in the EU](#)
- Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences (Europass)
- [EPSU report: "Representativeness of public sector trade unions in Europe. State administration and local government sectors."](#)