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## EU Summit: Unclear future of the Constitution and the EU budget



Luxembourg Presidency  
of the Council of the European Union

On 16 – 17 June, Heads of State and Government from the European Union member states met in Brussels for the European Council. On 16 June, the future of the Constitution was discussed. Luxembourg Prime Minister, and current head of the EU, Jean-Claude Juncker announced that the ministers have agreed to a "period of reflection" on the constitution. On Friday 17 June, the work of the European Council focused on the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013.

[>>> Read more](#)

## New ETUCE Project:

The European Commission has approved ETUCE's proposal for the project *Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector II*. This project will continue the training seminars on Social Dialogue in Education which have been carried out in 2004/2005.

[>>> Read more](#)



## Safeguard education from trade in the EU internal market

On 13-14 June, the ETUCE Executive Board adopted a resolution calling for education to be safeguarded from trade in the EU internal market. The resolution is a response to the neo-liberal agenda and the lack of social concerns evident in the European Commission's proposed Services Directive.

[>>> Read more](#)

## Calendar

2 July:  
CEE Working Group, Vilnius

3 July:  
ETUCE Social Dialogue,  
Regional Seminar, Vilnius

8 July:  
ROMA Legal Seminar, Sofia

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

## EU Summit: Unclear future of the Constitution and the EU budget

On 16 – 17 June, Heads of State and Government from the European Union member states met in Brussels for the European Council under the Luxembourg Presidency.



On 16 June, the future of the Constitution was discussed. Luxembourg Prime Minister, and current head of the EU, Jean-Claude Juncker announced that the ministers have agreed to a "period of reflection" on the Constitution. Governments are to reconvene in 2006, under the Austrian EU presidency, to take stock of the situation. However, it was stressed that the Constitution itself will not be renegotiated and that ratification will continue. Legally, the Constitution can only come into force if all 25 member states have ratified it - meaning that France and the Netherlands would have to put the document to their people once more. European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso emphasised that "Europe is not going to stop" adding that "the EU has to meet citizens' expectations in Europe".

During discussions at the ETUCE Executive Board Meeting (13-14 June) the secretariat was asked to follow developments and bring proposals to the bureau on how ETUCE will react to the new situation for the Treaty. The secretariat will bring up this discussion in September.

On Friday 17 June, the work of the European Council focused on the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013. Despite around 15 hours of negotiations, numerous proposals, counter-proposals, bilaterals and "tour de tables", EU leaders failed to agree on the EU budget. Politically, it was crucial to find a compromise in order to send a positive message about the EU's capability to bridge differences and national interests.

With no agreement at the summit, the budget question is set to be dropped from the agenda for the next half year under the UK presidency. It will be dealt with under Austria's presidency in the first half of next year at the earliest.

## **Integrated guidelines for growth and jobs**

The “Integrated guidelines for growth and jobs” were presented by the Commission on 12 April 2005, and discussed by Ministers of Education at the Council meeting 23 – 24 May. This first set of integrated guidelines for growth and jobs covers the period 2005 -2008, and represents the Commission’s attempt to refocus the priorities of the Lisbon Strategy, as called for in the mid-term review of the Strategy in the early spring of 2005. The Ministers of Education strongly stated that education and training serve wider goals than those concerning the economy and employment - for example in the areas of culture, social inclusion, citizenship and personal development. This statement might be the result of Ministers of Education not being properly involved in the process of developing the integrated guidelines for growth and jobs.

As recognised since the launching of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, these new guidelines underline once again the quintessential role of education and training for achieving the Lisbon goals on boosting the EU’s economic growth, securing more and better jobs and achieving greater social cohesion. The communication defines a strategy that addresses a relatively weak growth performance and insufficient job creation. The integrated guidelines should represent a concrete step in the process of refocusing and embracing the Lisbon strategy.

In its responses to the EU’s Lisbon agenda, ETUCE has previously stressed the fact that education is not only an instrument to enhance economic growth. In addition to the important role education plays in this respect, education and training have a crucial cultural and social function that must not be neglected. ETUCE is pleased to note that this position also was voiced by Ministers of Education at the Council meeting.

[Read the Commission’s Communication “Integrated guidelines for growth and jobs”](#)

## **Safeguard education from trade in the EU internal market**

On 13-14 June, the ETUCE Executive Board adopted a resolution calling for education to be safeguarded from trade in the EU internal market. It demands EU Governments to fully live up to their responsibility of securing high quality public education at all educational levels and to promote the multidimensional role education serves in society through well-founded public regulation of national education systems.

The resolution is a response to the neo-liberal agenda and the lack of social concerns evident in the European Commission’s proposed Services Directive.

### **Request for urgent action**

The European Parliament's examination of the draft Services Directive is currently being carried out in the main committee responsible for the EP's report, the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO). Much debate and controversy is characterising this first reading, and almost 1000 amendments have now been tabled to the draft report of German Socialist Evelyne Gebhardt - the EP's rapporteur on the Directive.



Ms Gebhardt and other MEPs are advocating for a complete exclusion of education, health care, social services and other core public services but a massive opposition to this view is present in the committee. In order to put maximum focus on the importance of excluding education from the Services Directive, ETUCE calls on all member organisations to lobby their national MEPs as well as national governments and to take action against the Services Directive.

### **ETUCE Factsheet on the draft Services Directive**

A new ETUCE publication - *ETUCE Factsheet on the draft Services Directive* - brings together the campaign material produced so far in the ETUCE campaign to exclude education from the proposed Directive.

ETUCE hopes that the *ETUCE Factsheet on the draft Services Directive* can be useful to member organisations in their own advocacy at national level on this crucial matter. The Directive is currently being examined in both the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, but the main focus in the coming months is on the discussions in the Parliament, due to hold the plenary vote on their amendments to the Commission's proposal in October this year.

Read the ETUCE Factsheet on the draft Services Directive

Read the ETUCE Resolution "Education should be safeguarded from trade in the EU internal market"

### **ETUCE takes action to protest against the decision of the Supreme Court to close down Egitim Sen**

On 25 May in Ankara, the Supreme Court ruled in favour of closing down the Turkish teachers' union Egitim Sen. The union had been sued by the Attorney General of Ankara, accused of breaching the Turkish Constitution because an article in its Statutes supports the right to education in one's mother tongue. The ruling represents a serious disrespect of the democratic right to organise.

Just after the ruling, ETUCE sent urgent appeal letters to José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission and to Josep Borrell Fontelles, President of the European Parliament asking them to take immediate action.

Already in February, EI / ETUCE and the President of Egitim Sen, Alaaddin Dincer, took action by meeting with Cem Özdemir, German MEP from Group of the Greens / European Free Alliance, who gave his full support to Egitim Sen. Furthermore, EI / ETUCE and Mr Dincer held a meeting with representatives from the European Commission DG Enlargement (Turkey Team), and DG Employment (International Affairs Unit).

ETUCE has still not seen the written decision of the Supreme Court but will follow further developments closely, fighting for democracy and human rights. The issue and the way of progressing will be discussed at the Egitim Sen congress on 25 June.

### **New ETUCE Project: Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector II"**

The European Commission has approved ETUCE's proposal for the project *Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector II*. This project will continue the training seminars on Social Dialogue in Education and the project *Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector I* which have been carried out in 2004/2005.



The general aims of the project are to identify employers for a national social dialogue in the education sector in all EU and candidate countries, and to implement the ETUCE action plan to be developed during the project titled *Strengthening the European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector I*. Furthermore, the project aims to involve the employers' organisations CEEP / CEMR in the process.

An expert study will be carried out in order to properly identify the national employers in all Member States and candidate countries. The study will include identification and mapping of national employers at all levels of education - primary, secondary, vocational and university - in the EU 25 and candidate countries.

There is a close link between the two projects *Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector I & II* because the identification of the national employers is a prerequisite for establishing a European

sectoral social dialogue in education. The first project has focused on the state of the social dialogue in all EU Member States with analyses of strengths and weaknesses of the social dialogue in the education sector. In the second project, ETUCE has put even more emphasis on the employers' side and the next step that inevitably follows is to identify the employers.

ETUCE will continue developing actions in order to achieve a real European sectoral social dialogue in education

[Read more about the project \*Strengthening European Social Dialogue in the Education Sector II\* and other ETUCE Social Dialogue projects on ETUCE's project site](#)

### **eLearning for growth, jobs and an inclusive society**

At the conference "Towards a learning society", Ján Figel', Commissioner for Education, and Viviane Reding, Commissioner for Information Society and Media, welcomed a multi-stakeholder drive to improve research, innovation and lifelong learning in a "knowledge triangle", through the effective use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The conference launched a joint initiative by the two Commissioners to continue the dialogue, build upon the results so far and to help set strategic priorities for further work in the field of ICT.

Ján Figel' emphasised the importance of ICT: "We need lifelong learning for lifelong learning. But equally we need lifelong learning for personal development, self-esteem and to support a multilingual and multicultural society. ICT is an important tool in our efforts to improve quality, provide better access to learning and open-up our systems to the world", he stated.

The conference conclusions will provide direction for the schedule of work outlined by the Commissioners:

- Reinforce multi-stakeholder dialogue to provide policy guidance and identify key actions for consideration on eLearning-related themes in 2005.
- Consolidate and share best practices across eLearning policy areas and evaluate eLearning results in all these areas in 2006.
- Launch EU-funded projects to provide digital competence and other key skills under the Integrated Lifelong Learning Programme, the Seventh R&D Framework Programme and the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme in 2007.

- Launch a major European initiative to promote social inclusion by digital means in 2008.

On behalf of ETUCE, Hans Laugesen, Project Coordinator of the European eLearning Forum for Education (ELFE), participated in the conference presenting the experiences from the ELFE project.

[Read the Commissioners' Joint Statement](#)

[Read more about ICT at the ELFE website: The European eLearning Forum for Education \(ELFE\)](#)



### **New indicators on education and training**

On 23 - 24 May in Brussels, EU Ministers of Education adopted conclusions on education and training indicators. The conclusions are a result of work to establish a framework of indicators and benchmarks for evaluating progress towards the Lisbon Strategy's educational objectives. Currently, 29 indicators are in use but, in acknowledgement of the inadequacy of these, the Council Conclusions stress the necessity of developing both short and long term strategies for improving the indicators used.

In particular, the Council invites the Commission to develop new indicators in the fields of language skills and learning-to-learn competences - areas where no comparable data exists. Furthermore, the Council stresses that full use should be made of existing data, and further efforts should be made to improve their comparability, relevance and timeliness. Data collection already occurs in the following areas, but should be further developed and improved:

- Efficiency of investment
- ICT
- Mobility
- Adult education
- Teachers and trainers
- Vocational education and training
- Active citizenship
- Social inclusion

The Council stressed that the Commission should develop the indicators with a regard to areas where international organisations (e.g. OECD, UNESCO) are planning surveys, and to cooperate with those organisations in order to satisfy the information needs of EU.

The Commission will report back to the Council, no later than the end of 2006, on the progress made towards establishing a coherent framework of indicators.

[See the full list of the 29 indicators within education and training currently in use by the European Commission](#)

## Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications

On 20-21 June, ETUCE was invited to participate in the European Commission "testing" conference on accessing the work done so far to develop "Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications".

The proposed common European principles have been developed over the past year by one of the European Commission expert groups. Instigated as part of the follow-up of the Lisbon Strategy, the principles are intended to provide general recommendations for policy-makers at national level. The results are four core principles for the teaching profession on which EU level consensus is expected:

- **a graduate profession**, i.e. teachers should be graduates from higher education institutions or their equivalents;
- **a profession placed within the context of lifelong learning**, emphasising the importance of continuous professional development throughout the career;
- **a mobile profession**, promoting geographical as well as occupational mobility;
- **a profession based on partnerships**, stressing the importance of close collaboration between teacher education institutions and schools, industry and work-based training providers in order to encourage teachers' engagement with research and exchanges of 'best practices', as well as stressing collaboration with a broad range of community groups and stakeholders.

At the conference, ETUCE gave a workshop presentation on the policy issues involved in drafting recommendations for teacher competences to the national policy-makers and education researchers gathered in Brussels.

The Commission will now further develop these draft principles and prepare a proposal for recommendations by the end of 2005. This will be submitted for examination by the Council and the European Parliament during 2006. ETUCE will continue to follow the work closely, and are preparing for in-depth discussions as the *Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications* will form part of the theme for the ETUCE council meeting on 5-6 December 2005.

[Read "Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications"](#)

## **Calendar**

2 July:

CEE Working Group, Vilnius

3 July:

ETUCE Social Dialogue, Regional Seminar, Vilnius

8 July:

ROMA Legal Seminar, Sofia

18 – 20 September:

ETUCO / ETUCE Social Dialogue Seminar, Malta

## **Summer break**

ETUCE Secretariat will be closed between 8 August and 28 August 2005 inclusive.

## New Publications

- [ETUCE Factsheet on the draft Services Directive](#)
- [Joint Statement by European Commissioners Viviane Reding, Information Society and Media, and Ján Figel, Education, Training, Culture and Multilingualism](#)
- [Commission recommendation on the European charter for researchers and on a code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers](#)
- [Bologna Process Stocktaking: Report from a working group appointed by the Bologna Follow-up Group to the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19-20 May 2005](#)
- [Revue Elargissement: "Student mobility – a positive factor for the EU"](#)
- [Eurydice: "Focus on the Structure of Higher Education in Europe \(2004/05\). National Trends in the Bologna Process"](#)
- [Access to social Europe - 4<sup>th</sup> Edition](#)
- [Access to European Union - New 14th revised edition](#)
- [The European Commission: "Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications"](#)