EMBRACING DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION

REPORT

CLOSING CONFERENCE

4 - 5 OCTOBER 2021

CSEE ETUCE

INTRODUCTION

The Closing Conference of the ETUCE project "Education Trade Unions and Inclusive Schools: Embracing Diversity in Education" took place in Brussels and online on 4 – 5 October 2021.

In Europe's increasingly diverse societies, it is vital to ensure equality and inclusion in education. The need to embrace diversity in education is gaining ever more attention at European level. However, ETUCE research shows that teachers and other education personnel do not feel prepared and supported to teach students from diverse socioeconomic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

In this context, the ETUCE project "Education Trade Unions and Inclusive Schools: Embracing Diversity in Education" aimed at building the capacity of education trade unions in order to prepare their affiliates to address the socioeconomic, cultural, linguistic and other types of diversity in education institutions as well as in society. Education trade unions worked together to ensure that teachers, academics and other education personnel are adequately prepared and supported in dealing with diverse classrooms and implementing inclusive education.

Building on the results of the findings of the ETUCE research report 'Embracing Diversity in Education' and following a series of webinars and training seminar, the Closing Conference discussed the key findings and outcomes of the project, including the Research Report and Catalogue of Good Practices on Inclusive Schools (supported by the ETUCE Online Database of Good Practices), featuring presentations from education experts, trade unions, teachers and policy makers in education. Working group sessions aimed to discuss thoroughly on challenges of inclusive education and develop a practical and concrete Strategy for the implementation of the ETUCE Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to be adapted to the national and local context.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

Build the capacity of education trade unions to prepare their affiliates to **address the diversity** in the classroom and in the society and to support them in **implementing inclusive learning environments** enabling for every student and teacher to achieve their full potential.

1. A **concrete and practical strategy for implementing** ETUCE Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

2. **Ensure** that teachers, academics and other education personnel are **adequately supported** in working with the diverse classroom and implementing inclusive education

3. **Raise awareness on the lack of funding and supportive policy frameworks** for inclusive education

4. **Impact of changes in modern society**

5. **Disseminate successful good practices**

PROJECT OUTCOMES

Research Report with Annex (EN, FR, RU)

Factsheets (EN, FR, RU)

'The many facets of diversity' (EN, FR, RU)

'Key elements and conditions for the implementation and maintenance of inclusive education' (EN, FR, RU)

'Training and professional development of teachers, academics, leaders in educational institutions and other education personnel' (EN, FR, RU)

Webinars
1. Webinar 1 "A whole-school approach for inclusive education" (19 March 2021)
2. Webinar 2 "Safe and healthy learning and working environment" (12 April 2021)
3. Webinar 3 "Using digital technologies and media to foster the inclusion" (29 April 2021)

Catalogue of Good Practices on building and maintaining sustainable inclusive learning environments (EN, FR)

ETUCE Database of Good Practices (EN, FR, RU)

Leaflet 'Manifesto for Inclusive Education' (EN, FR, RU, ES, DE)

PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP

This project was led by an Advisory Group who provided guidance and field knowledge, contributed to the project, training webinars and seminar, assisted in the design of the online survey activity, the closing conference and supported the implementation of the raising-awareness actions 'Every Learner Matters, Every Teacher Matters'. The Advisory Group consists of six representatives from national education trade unions for each level of education;

Alison Gilliland
INTO, Ireland

Alexandra Cornea
FSLI, Romania

Dubravko Tomasović
ITUWEC, Croatia

Lyhykäinen Päivi
OAJ, Finland

Manos Androulakis
DOE, Greece

Conceiçao Nunes
SINDEP, Portugal

OBJECTIVES OF THE CLOSING CONFERENCE

In the opening of the Closing Conference, the **ETUCE President, Larry Flanagan** echoed that diversity continues to be considered in the education systems and the society mostly as a challenge and issue rather than an added value and resource. All too often, human differences become the basis for different forms of discrimination and exclusion. To address this, ore targeted efforts to tackle all types of discrimination and improve equity and equality in our societies by using diversity as a foundation stone, starting point and strength. The Covid-19 pandemic transformed the education to online teaching which brought further challenges to inclusiveness especially to students and teachers who cannot access digital tools. He highlighted that this Conference offered the space to discuss the understanding of inclusive education and develop the practical Strategy to implement ETUCE Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The project provides a clear message that '**Every learner matters and matters equally**'.

Following up on the ETUCE Work Programme 2020-2024, ETUCE reinforces its longstanding commitment to promoting inclusion and diversity in education. The **European Director, Susan Flocken**, highlighted at the Closing Conference, that it was time to shed light on equality, diversity and inclusion in education and discuss what the role of education trade unions is in addressing these issues, including the life-long learning perspective. In 2020, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic inflicted severe consequences especially towards those who are economically disadvantaged and of minority groups who have difficulties accessing education. In light of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the lack of public funding for inclusive education still persists and various challenges still remain to be addressed in order to remove barriers to quality education. The Conference took place during World Teachers' Day (05 October) as a reminder of the importance of inclusive education for all and a tribute to the amazing work accomplished by teachers across Europe. To reflect on the legacy of colleagues and to call for better working conditions for educators everywhere, as well as for vaccine equity around the world, with participants a moment of silence took place. Under the slogan 'Every learner matters, every teacher matters', ETUCE and its member organisations aim to support education personnel in creating inclusive learning environments where every student and teacher can achieve their full potential. In response to these challenges, ETUCE developed an Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion outlining priorities that ETUCE seeks to implement together with its member organisations, supported with a concrete and practical implementation strategy.

ETUCE PROJECT "EDUCATION TRADE UNIONS AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: EMBRACING DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION"

Ekaterina Efimenko, ETUCE, gave an overview of the key activities and outcomes of the ETUCE project "Education Trade Unions and Inclusive Schools: Embracing Diversity in Education".

Everyone should have the opportunity, means and support to realise their full and unique potential in the education system whether as a learner, teacher, academic, researcher or trade unionist. ETUCE has been working in depth on different dimensions of equality and inclusive education and this project brings all policies and findings together to address inclusive education as one big topic. The aim of the project was to build the capacity of education trade unions to prepare their affiliates to address the diversity in the classroom and in the society and to support them in implementing inclusive learning environments enabling for every student and teacher to achieve their full potential. Teachers, academics and trainers don't feel prepared and supported to address the increasingly multi-dimensional diversity in the classrooms.

The ETUCE seminar 'Embracing diversity in education' aims to propose practical strategies to implement the upcoming ETUCE Action Plan on Equality and Diversity as well as share national good practices on creating and maintaining sustainable inclusive learning and teaching environments. The seminar included the following;

- 60 experts on equality and inclusion in education representing 32 countries from across Europe were involved in the activity.

- Three interactive training webinars (EN, FR, RU) were organised in spring 2021 to provide teachers and education personnel with the training they need to implement inclusive education;

1. [Webinar 1 "A whole-school approach for inclusive education" (19 March 2021)](#)
2. [Webinar 2 "Safe and healthy learning and working environment" (12 April 2021)](#)
3. [Webinar 3 "Using digital technologies and media to foster the inclusion" (29 April 2021)](#)

During the webinars, participants had the opportunity to acquire a more in-depth knowledge on inclusive teaching methods and support needed by teachers, academics and other education personnel in addressing and embracing diversity in education, as well as share concrete and transferable good practices from different national contexts. ETUCE member organisations carried out a series of coordinated European and national [awareness-raising-actions](#) about the professional needs of teachers, academic and other education personnel when it comes to addressing diversity in the classroom and society;

- 3rd December 2020 – [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) ,

- 18th December 2020 – [International Migrants Day](#),

- 8th March 2021 – [International Women's Day](#),

- 17th May 2021 – [International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia](#),

- 5th October 2021 - [World Teacher's Day](#).

During the awareness-raising days, education trade unionists provided impressive actions and inspiring [testimonies](#) reflecting on different issues linked to these days. The research [report](#) ' Embracing Diversity in Education' presents the research findings of the project, which are complementary to the results of [project activities](#). The rich data that ETUCE member organisations have provided are made available in separate Fact Sheets on different topics ([introduction on the theme of diversity in education](#), [key elements and conditions for inclusive education](#), [training needs of teachers, academics and other education personnel in relation to diversity in education](#)) as well as the [leaflet](#) with all relevant information.

All trade unions' [national activities](#) together with [testimonies from teachers](#) are published on the [ETUCE website](#).

CLOSING CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

1. Draft and validate a concrete and practical Strategy for the Implementation of the ETUCE Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion that can be transferred and adapted to the national and local level.

2. Discuss the key findings and outcomes of the project.

3. Discuss the concept of inclusive education and challenges of its implementation in different national contexts with European and international experts and stakeholders in education.

4. Share and exchange various good practices on embracing diversity in education and implementing inclusive learning environments.

PANEL OF EXPERTS: THE CHALLENGING PATCHWORK OF IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AROUND EUROPE

Project research expert, **Dominique Danau**, provided the findings of the project research report (EN, FR, RU) based on the results of the online survey carried out among ETUCE member organisations in April – September 2020 and relevant desk research.

The research report focuses on three objectives;

- Challenges and opportunities in society that have an impact in the education sector.
- Training needs to support teachers, academics and other education personnel in working with diverse classrooms and implementing inclusive education.
- Good practices of creating and maintaining sustainable inclusive learning environment.

The research shows that the increasing diversity in European societies represents both challenges and opportunities for the implementation of inclusive education. Other factors such as digitalisation, rising inequalities, marketisation and privatisation of education, the rise of far-right discourse, growing individualism and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic also have an impact on the implementation of inclusive education in Europe. (**Factsheet 'the many facets of diversity in education**' EN, FR, RU).

Insight from the presentation of the research findings by the project expert, Dominique Danau

According to the respondents, social and cultural diversity is considered both as a challenge and opportunity, with 89% of the respondents viewing this as opportunity while, 83% as a challenge.

The research report also revealed a consistent implementation gap of inclusion policies. According to the respondents, there is a lack of strategies and policies to support schools and school leaders on inclusion, as well as the absence of a monitoring system to assess how inclusive education is implemented. This vision needs to underpin policy frameworks and mechanisms, accompanied by sufficient public funding. In order to address these issues, the study proposes a number of recommendations on the successful implementation of inclusive education for national and EU policy makers as presented in the factsheet '**Key elements and conditions for the implementation and maintenance of inclusive education'**, EN, FR, RU).

The research also analyses the training and professional needs of teachers, academics, leaders in educational institutions, and other education personnel. Among the most urgent needs, highlighted by the participants to the survey are (Factsheet **'Training and professional development of teachers, academics, leaders in educational institutions and other education personnel'** (EN, FR, RU);

- How to adequately manage the increasing workload.

- How to teach in multicultural settings and manage and encourage intercultural dialogue (e.g. better understand interactions between learners from different cultures).

- How to recognise and better understand hidden biases and stereotypes in curricula, education and research material. Curricula are full of stereotypes that should be avoided.

- How to create a safe and healthy learning and working environment free from harassment and bullying, including cyber-harassment.

- How to implement participatory and collaborative learning approaches with the view to strengthen the joint work of learners from diverse backgrounds.

- How to provide support on how to manage 'difficult situations' in the classroom (addressing disruptive behaviour, bullying, etc.). Practice shows that teachers are not well equipped to deal with misbehaviour in the classroom and in schools (violence amongst students or against educational personnel, hate speech, fake news, etc.).

- How to implement a whole-school approach for inclusive education.

- How to use ICT tools, digital technologies and media to foster inclusion in education

- How to deliver more inclusive support for students with special needs.

Concerning teachers, in addition to a lack of diversity in the teacher workforce, **90% of the respondents highlight the urgent need to provide training programmes of education personnel in relation to appropriate management of increased workload**.

- Both initial teacher education and continuous professional development are critical to ensure that teachers acquire the competences, skills and knowledge that allow them to respond to diversity in the classrooms and implement inclusive education.

- Public funding to the education sector is of crucial importance to ensure quality and inclusive education, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis.

- Address the gender pay gap in the teaching profession through collective bargaining, lobbying for higher salaries and better working conditions in the education sector, and for the creation of specific tools such as workplace equality plans.

- Maintain stronger social dialogue to facilitate cooperation between education trade unions and stakeholders.

Complementing the research report, a collection of good practices on building and maintaining sustainable inclusive learning environments in various national and local contexts is presented in the Catalogue of Good Practices as well as in the ETUCE Online Database of Good Practices.
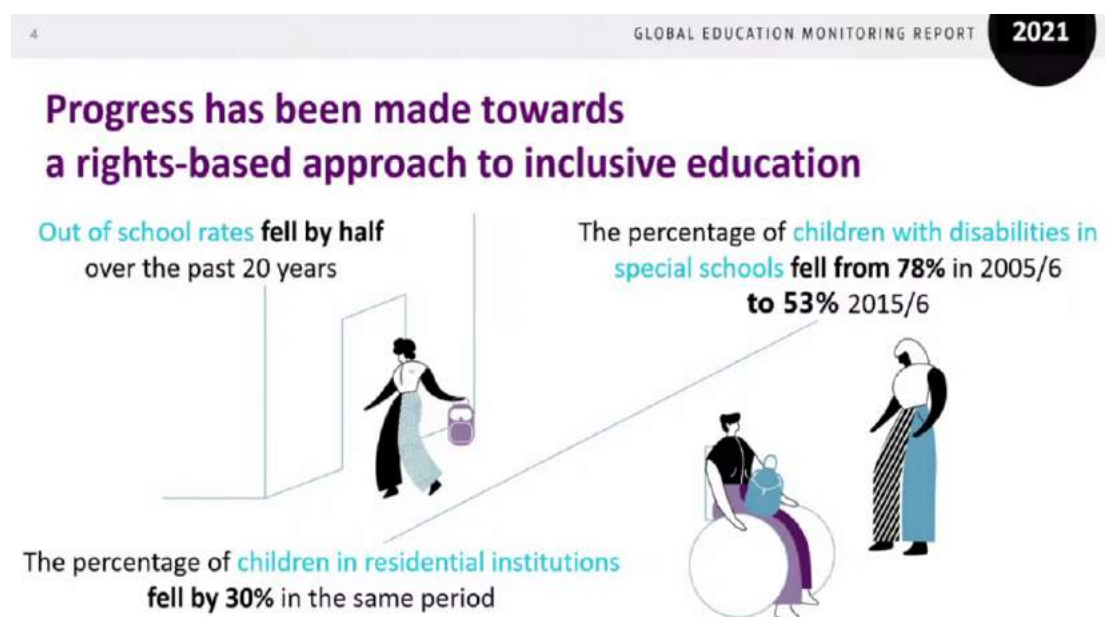
The Catalogue and Database of Good Practices include initiatives in various topics of inclusion and gender equality developed by member organisations. The Catalogue comprises of different chapters that are related to the themes complementary to the Database. Each chapter covers specific sub-sections with practices in the national/regional practices, practices developed by education trade unions and good practices in the European projects. Most practices come from trade unions in education and cover the gender equality topic followed by inclusion of people from refugee, migrant and ethnic-minority groups.

To further enrich the discussion on the Catalogue and Database of Good Practices, a **poster session** was organised as an interactive conversation between representatives of education trade unions where they, visually presented various good practices implemented by the trade unions.

Moving from the research findings and the Catalogue of Good Practices, with the view to have a more-in depth expertise on the challenges to implementation of inclusive education, a panel discussion further addressed the key elements and necessary conditions for the implementation of inclusive education outlined in the ETUCE research report.

In light of the 2021 Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Report - Inclusion and Education: All means all, **GEM Report's Senior Policy Analyst**, Project Officer, Events and Partnership UNESCO, **Anna D'Addio**, highlighted the key findings of the regional report focusing on both inside and outside of classrooms to analyse what are the risks leading to the exclusion from education. According to the report, progress has been made towards a rights-based approach to inclusive education and schools are making the support systems broader and flexible among tertiary education.

Insights from the presentation of the UNESCO, GEM Report's Senior Policy Analyst, Project Officer, Events and Partnership, Anna D'Addio.

GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING REPORT **2021**

Progress has been made towards a rights-based approach to inclusive education

Out of school rates **fell by half** over the past 20 years

The percentage of children with disabilities in special schools **fell from 78%** in 2005/6 **to 53%** 2015/6

The percentage of children in residential institutions **fell by 30%** in the same period

However, education opportunities are still unequally distributed, in Central and Eastern Europe. For example, 1 in 3 students with special educational needs are in special schools while, 60% of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian youth in the Balkans do not attend upper secondary school with only 3% completing it in Montenegro. Among 14 countries in the region, only 1 in 2 teachers feel prepared to teach in mixed-ability and 1 in 3 in multicultural setting whilst, among 30 countries and territories in the region, only 9 include inclusion-related practice and placements in initial teacher education. Therefore, teachers need support and appropriate conditions to teach for inclusion and the role of support personnel is to "supplement, not supplant teachers".

Leadership, the voice of teachers, a clear policy vision on inclusion and adequate monitoring systems to track progress and assess involvement of all stakeholders in education are the four key statements for the implementation of inclusive education as echoed by **the Project manager of the** European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, **Annet De Vroey**. Successful implementation of inclusive education needs the proper involvement and commitment of teachers and involvement of their voices in the education policy. The implementation of policy into local contexts involves reflective dialogue, assessment of strengths and needs, capacity building, flexibility in building inclusive learning environments and support, and monitoring of the process.

The COVID-19 pandemic, particularly affects people who already live in difficult conditions with limited access to hygiene, health care and education services, such as migrants and asylum-seekers, Roma communities, people with low socio-economic income and people in rural areas. The Strength through Diversity Project: Education for Inclusive Societies by OECD, complements the ETUCE project findings and GEM Report findings. **The leader of this OECD project**, **Lucie Cerna**, noted that the project focuses on the integration of migrants and refugees but also expands to other groups by developing a holistic framework to analyse diversity in education across different dimension with rigorous definitions of concepts. The project further allows the examination of the intersectionality across different dimensions of diversity and mobilises already existing knowledge, integrating it within a common framework and addressing knowledge gaps with the goal to analyse and provide policy with the recommendations geared towards helping governments and schools to address diversity and achieve equitable and inclusive education systems.
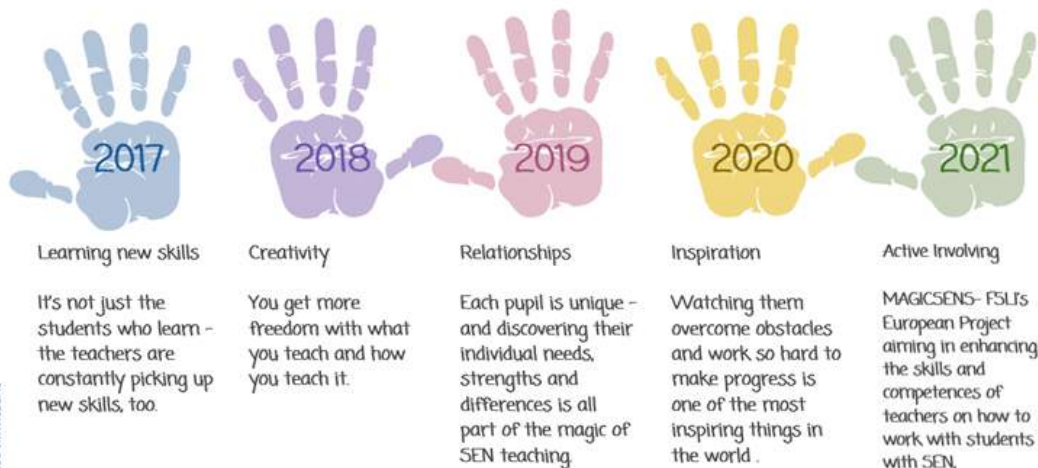
FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE TESTIMONIES: WHAT DOES INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MEAN FOR ME?

Education institutions, teachers, academics, education personnel, students and parents/carers are confronted with a variety of challenges to diversity (e.g., personal identity conflicts; the lack of the sense of belonging; direct and indirect discrimination, etc.). With the threat of COVID-19 itself, people with disabilities faced disrupted health services and social support, lack of information and suffer severely from the absence of regular education. In light of challenges towards special needs teaching (SEN), **teacher and expert in educational management, Lucia Ionescu (FSLE Romania)**, highlighted the lack of supporting staff needed for the integration of students and children with special needs who need additional help in the classrooms.

Further challenges include education staff shortages and lack of resources and tools needed for achieving inclusive education as, highlighted by the **Board Member, OBBESSU, Caridad Alarcón Sanchéz**, schools and their communities must ensure physical accessibility and social inclusion for all students and take a responsibility for making education more inclusive. Moreover, new methods are needed to be implemented in school communities in order to grow and progress. These programmes include peer mentoring, diversity committees and free tutoring.

Insight from the presentation of the teacher and expert in educational management, Lucia Ionescu (FSLE Romania).

WHY SEN IS SO REWARDING?

2017

Learning new skills

It's not just the students who learn – the teachers are constantly picking up new skills, too.

2018

Creativity

You get more freedom with what you teach and how you teach it.

2019

Relationships

Each pupil is unique – and discovering their individual needs, strengths and differences is all part of the magic of SEN teaching.

2020

Inspiration

Watching them overcome obstacles and work so hard to make progress is one of the most inspiring things in the world .

2021

Active Involving

MAGICSENS- FSLI's European Project aiming in enhancing the skills and competences of teachers on how to work with students with SEN.

Developing teacher-parent partnership is key in integration of students with disabilities and special needs in education. The **Vice President of the European Dyslexia Association, Vincent Lochmann**, noted that, parents are the bridge between the different stakeholders however, families do not have the opportunities to coordinate activities to integrate children with special needs. It is important to determine how to possibly develop the cooperation between teachers and families. Teachers and parents are the first stakeholders to be involved in the process therefore, cooperation among educators, parents/carers, speech therapists and school personnel is very important to set up arrangements to involve children with disabilities in education.

EUROPE'S RECOVERY AS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION A REALITY

Achieving inclusive education is a priority at European level focusing on practice through cooperation between institutions and member states to build a clear strategy towards the full implementation of inclusive education. In acknowledging the ETUCE Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, the **Vice-Chair of the Committee on Culture and Education, European Parliament, Victor Negrescu**, highlighted that, adequate resources need to be allocated from national budgets in order to achieve inclusive education. With equality gaps still persistent, lack of access to quality education, infrastructure, digital learning tools and education personnel, more efforts are needed to establish constructive partnerships with stakeholders, promote social dialogue with the social partners and create synergies. Involvement of trade unions to ensure the engagement of teachers and learners in the process through exchange of good practices, webinars, research and actions implemented shows there is a way to achieve inclusive education.

The European Commission welcomed the ETUCE project and activities on "Embracing Diversity in Education". The **Director of Policy Strategy and Evaluation, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission, Stefaan Hermans**, acknowledged the challenges and lack of support for inclusive education. Embracing diversity, allows to address inclusion as an important issue for the 2022 the European Year of Youth proposed by President Von der Leyen . Children from disadvantaged families, migrants and vulnerable minorities participate far less in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). In several of these groups, the European Commission observes that children from very early years, have difficulties in accessing education which impacts on their education success in later life including, people with disabilities who struggle to access proper education and are forced to leave education far too early. The COVID-19 magnified inequalities further where 1 in 5 young people lack basic skills in reading, math and science and 10% of young people do not finish school, 15% do not have a secondary education qualification which is considered a benchmark for being successful and accessing the labour market.

Teachers do their utmost to integrate vulnerable students especially during the COVID-19 crisis. However, with lack of adequate support and training this is challenging. The European Commission is committed to the full implementation of the European Education Area, continuous cooperation with stakeholders and dedication of the necessary resources to help invest in the future of implementing inclusive education.

Victor Negrescu

Vice-Chair of the Committee on Culture and Education, European Parliament

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The **Chair of the ETUCE Standing Committee for Equality, Rosella Benedetti**, presented the ETUCE Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, emphasising that "action is a key word for unions in their defense of workers' rights. Equality and diversity are not opposite terms, equal opportunities for all means we acknowledge diversity as an added value and create conditions for everyone to thrive in schools. We are all diverse however, inhabit the same spaces and share same challenges such as; lack of public funding, spread of nationalism and populism, intensification of poverty and social exclusion. Teachers and unionists are aware that inclusive schools are essential to guarantee social cohesion, but the education personnel need support and adequate resources to achieve inclusive societies. The education trade union movement understands education from a holistic perspective that aims to develop tolerant, open-minded and critically thinking citizens with an inherent respect for human rights."

Education trade unions have a vital role to play in helping address gender stereotypes, influencing education and career choices, as well as in addressing gender disparities within the teaching profession and in education trade unions themselves. They need to mainstream a gender dimension in all aspects of their work, including social dialogue actions and collective bargaining, and promote better implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

The role of social dialogue in the implementation of inclusive education, still remains a challenge, as the **General Secretary, EFEE, Daniel Wisniewski**, echoed, "we live in a world of over-information and ability to critically evaluate and make individual judgement is vital in the process of implementing inclusive education. The role of education social partners is to empower young generations to build their world Teachers, other education personnel and school leaders need to receive the necessary support through professional initial and continuous development schemes in order to continue to be up to date with teaching methods and leadership skills. The core of education is to provide every person with a strong conviction about their self-esteem and embrace diversity. Teacher and school leaders still lack empowerment to be able to discuss about diversity as an important factor of our societies."

ETUCE assesses that despite the overall progress in addressing inequalities in 21st century society, the lack of **public funding** for inclusive education persists and many equality issues and challenges still remain to be addressed in the national and European social dialogue agenda in the education sector. The **European Director, Susan Flocken**, pointed out that it is evident that to ensure inclusive education, social dialogue is a crucial pillar. There are still challenges for education trade unions to constructively engage in dialogue with employers in decision-making processes". Among the continued challenges education trade unions face are the ageing population and teaching force, brain drain, public budget cuts in education, growing privatisation in the education sector, increasing attacks on trade union rights and the declining membership of trade unions.

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the Conference, participants discussed the understanding of inclusive education and challenges of its implementation in different national contexts. Challenges linked to the policy inclusion still need to be addressed however, inclusion is considered and experienced differently in European countries due to social and cultural differences. Progress is seen towards inclusion of children with special needs, however, other dimensions of inclusion e.g., migrants, refugees and LGBT community are not yet properly incorporated. Trade Unions play a crucial role in providing the space for discussion and support to inclusive education. In order to unfold their full potential, progress is needed in strengthening and promoting effective social dialogue. Policy-makers must include teachers and their unions in decision-making processes on inclusive education.

On the second day of the Conference, participants discussed and developed a concrete and practical strategy for the implementation of the ETUCE Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion that can be transferred and adapted to the national and local context. The Action Plan is built on previous ETUCE policies regarding equality and non-discrimination (e.g. ETUCE Action Plan on Gender Equality), recommendations and guidelines of the ETUCE equality structures, and relevant projects' outcomes. It also takes into account the work accomplished on these topics by Education International and the European Trade Union Confederation.

The Action Plan includes the following priorities;

1. Celebrating diversity among children, students, teachers, academics, school leaders and other education personnel

2. Teaching for democratic citizenship and the transmission of fundamental values through education

3. Inclusion of migrants and refugees in the education system, in the labour market and in society as a whole

4. Inclusion of ethnic minorities and indigenous people in the education system, the labour market and in society as a whole

5. Ensuring gender equality in education, the teaching profession and society as a whole

6. Achieving equality for LGBTI students and education personnel with the view to creating safe, secure and inclusive learning and working environments for all

7. Inclusion of students and education personnel with disabilities and special needs in the education system, the labour market and society as a whole

Following the priorities underlined in the Action Plan, the following calls to action were highlighted by participants:

- Disseminate actively and apply/make use of the Action Plan and project's research at various levels of trade union work where relevant (including cross-sectoral dimension) while adapting it to the local needs and respective conditions.

- Cooperate with different education stakeholders in work on inclusion and diversity as agents to foster diversity in societies.

- Enhance the Online Database of Good Practices with relevant initiatives and events organised by their affiliates.

- Organise joint trainings and training programmes through the cross-border cooperation among national education trade unions.

- Organise regular webinars and roundtables on the priorities of the Action Plan relevant to respective national and local contexts of education trade unions and discuss key issues raised through the plan of work. Possible discussion topics can be:

   - The use of inclusive language and terminology
   - Working with local community
   - Dialogue with underrepresented groups
   - Engaging with parents and carers
   - Campaigning for women's health (such as period poverty, endometriosis, menopause, domestic violence, etc.)
   - Intersectional approaches
   - Developing reporting mechanisms for gender-based violence

- Celebrate virtually and physically various equality anniversaries/celebrations.

- Work towards building a network of community groups among their affiliates willing to work on the cross-border implementation of the Action Plan.

- Regularly inform ETUCE Secretariat about the implementation of the Action Plan and activities carried out where the Action Plan is being used for the negotiations with education employers.

- Translate the Action Plan and the Catalogue of Good Practices on Inclusive Schools into the national and local languages.

ABBREVIATIONS

COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DOE	Greek Primary Teachers Federation
ETUCE	Education Trade Union Committee for Education
EFEE	European Federation of Education Employers
ITUWEC	The Independent Trade Union of Employees in the Secondary Schools of Croatia
INTO	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
FSLE	Federation of Free Trade Unions of Education
OAJ	Opetusalan Ammattijärjestö (The Trade Union of Education in Finland)
SINDEP	Sindicato Nacional e Democrático dos Professores (National and Democratic Union of Teachers)