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# ETUCE

## European Trade Union Committee for Education EI European Region

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## ETUCE position on *Council Conclusions on effective teacher education*

*Adopted by the ETUCE Bureau on 2 June 2014*

The [Council Conclusions on effective teacher education](#) was adopted by the Education Council of the European Union on 20 May 2014.

ETUCE, which represents 132 teachers' trade unions in 45 countries, strongly welcomes the fact that the EU Education ministers recognise the need to improve teacher education.

The Education Council rightly identifies factors such as requirements of new skills and catching up with technological development, which call for the improvement of teacher education. ETUCE member organisations in Europe have identified further national challenges of teacher education, which obviously derived from the fact that teacher education was affected by the economic and financial crisis<sup>1</sup>. ETUCE surveys<sup>2</sup> proved that there is a destructive effect of the crisis on the teachers' personal and professional well-being, concerning their salary, working conditions, initial education and time allocated to and charge for continuous professional development. Nevertheless, the teaching profession is ageing, and the recruitment and retention of teachers meet numerous challenges.

Therefore, the Ministries of Education with the help of the European Commission, should analyse the factors of the status and working environment of teachers and reasons which lead novice teachers to leave the profession. While building

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<sup>1</sup> ETUCE ACTION AND CAMPAIGN FRAMEWORK ON THE ECONOMIC CRISIS 2012

Analysis of the mini survey:

[http://etuce.homestead.com/crisis/crisis\\_survey/minisurvey\\_-\\_etuce\\_action\\_and\\_campaign\\_framework\\_on\\_the\\_economic\\_crisis\\_final\\_29.3.12.pdf](http://etuce.homestead.com/crisis/crisis_survey/minisurvey_-_etuce_action_and_campaign_framework_on_the_economic_crisis_final_29.3.12.pdf)

ETUCE Analysis of a mini-survey on the impact of the economic crisis on teacher education in the European Union, 2012

[http://etuce.homestead.com/Crisis/Crisis\\_survey/Results\\_of\\_ETUCE\\_Minisurvey\\_on\\_Crisis\\_effecting\\_teacher\\_education\\_.pdf](http://etuce.homestead.com/Crisis/Crisis_survey/Results_of_ETUCE_Minisurvey_on_Crisis_effecting_teacher_education_.pdf)

ETUCE SURVEY: The continued impact of the crisis on teachers in Europe, 2013

[http://etuce.homestead.com/Policies/6.e.EN\\_Survey\\_Analysis\\_CONTINUED\\_IMPACT\\_OF\\_THE\\_CRISIS\\_ON\\_TEACHERS\\_IN\\_EUROPE\\_2\\_-\\_Layouted.pdf](http://etuce.homestead.com/Policies/6.e.EN_Survey_Analysis_CONTINUED_IMPACT_OF_THE_CRISIS_ON_TEACHERS_IN_EUROPE_2_-_Layouted.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> ETUCE Analysis of a mini-survey on the impact of the economic crisis on teacher education in the European Union, 2012

[http://etuce.homestead.com/Crisis/Crisis\\_survey/Results\\_of\\_ETUCE\\_Minisurvey\\_on\\_Crisis\\_effecting\\_teacher\\_education\\_.pdf](http://etuce.homestead.com/Crisis/Crisis_survey/Results_of_ETUCE_Minisurvey_on_Crisis_effecting_teacher_education_.pdf)

communities among teachers and partnership have indeed a role in improving teacher education, we believe that profound changes should be made by effective national strategies on attracting, training, and keeping highly qualified and motivated teachers in the profession, to which sustainable funding in teacher education is essential.

The European Sectoral Social Partners in Education, ETUCE and EFEE, have been working in cooperation to attract the best candidates to the teaching profession since their joint social dialogue project and joint recommendations on this issue.<sup>3</sup> ETUCE projects on ICT use for innovative teaching methods motivated ETUCE guidelines on early school leaving and ICT

ETUCE has had an extensive work on teacher education, for instance on improving ICT use for innovative teaching methods<sup>4</sup>, and on recruitment and retention. Thus, we believe that not only the employers or wider educational stakeholders, but also the teachers' trade unions are able to provide appropriate support to governments and teacher education institutions to improve teacher education. We believe that effective European and national social dialogue is inevitable to achieve high quality teaching in Europe and we would like to urge governments to move towards this direction.

We also recognise the problem of young graduate teachers who leave the profession. As far as we are concerned, the European Commission and the Council should investigate the ways of improving initial education and the induction phase of teachers based on the report of the European Commission: *Developing coherent and system-wide induction programmes for beginning teachers: a handbook for policymakers*<sup>5</sup>.

Acquiring all relevant competences in teachers' education depend on the length, quality, price, and level of initial and continuous professional development of teachers. It also depends on the quality of teacher educators. We think that there is no appropriate European-level statistics available (either by Eurydice or by Eurostat) on these abovementioned factors, and on other issues, like numbers of

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<sup>3</sup> Technical Report of EFEE – ETUCE Survey on Recruitment and Retention in the Education Sector, July 2012

[http://etuce.homestead.com/Social\\_Dialogue/VP-2011-001-0160\\_Technical\\_Report\\_EN.pdf](http://etuce.homestead.com/Social_Dialogue/VP-2011-001-0160_Technical_Report_EN.pdf)

A European Project by ETUCE and EFEE: "Recruitment and retention in the education sector, a matter of social dialogue" - Joint recommendations to the ESSDE, December 2012

[http://etuce.homestead.com/Social\\_Dialogue/VP-2011-001-0160\\_R\\_R\\_recommend\\_engl\\_final\\_Dec\\_2012.pdf](http://etuce.homestead.com/Social_Dialogue/VP-2011-001-0160_R_R_recommend_engl_final_Dec_2012.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> ETUCE guidelines on early school leaving and ICT, 2014

<http://www.elfe-eu.net/>  
[http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news\\_details/2956](http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news_details/2956)

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/publications/handbook0410\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/publications/handbook0410_en.pdf)

hours spent in CDP courses, obligation on CDP, course fees paid by different actors (state, schools, teachers), relevance of course, etc.. ETUCE considers essential that the European Commission should fill in this gap by making in-depth research on initial and continuous development of teachers.

Furthermore, we would like to see a benchmark on teachers' initial and continuous education in the future priorities of the ET2020 Strategic Framework of the European Commission. Accordingly, we would like to see Country Specific Recommendations of the European Semester on spending on teacher education.

Finally, we urge Ministries of Education and Ministries of Finance to maintain investment in education, especially in teachers' initial and continuous training in order to fulfil the goals of a high-quality and effective teacher education.