

Education trade unions in Europe kick off ambitious priorities for quality education and elect new leadership

8 December 2016

At the ETUCE Regional Conference in Belgrade, Serbia, 6-8 December 2016, the European Education Trade Union movement kicked off new policies for empowering education trade unions as key for quality education. 350 education trade union delegates from 131 national education trade unions at all levels of education from 48 European countries debated and voted on a new [Work Programme 2017-2020](#) and several resolutions, to face the challenges education personnel is confronted with in current times.

Renewing their call for increasing public investment, effective social dialogue and teachers and education personnel professional rights and fair working conditions, delegates adopted the following resolutions and policy papers:

- Resolution on [Empowering Education Trade Unions: the Key to Promoting Quality Education](#)
- Resolution on Education Trade Unions on the [Refugee Situation in Europe: Promoting Education as the Key to Integration and Inclusion](#)
- Resolution on [Refugees and Displaced Children](#)
- Resolution [Against Privatisation and Commercialisation of Education](#)
- Composite Resolution on [Reinforcing Equalities within Education and Education Trade Unions In A Fast Changing World](#)
- Resolution on [Enhancing the Status and Recognition of Teaching in Higher Education](#)
- Resolution on [Solidarity with Turkish education community](#)
- Resolution on [Social Dialogue and Collective Bargaining at European Schools](#)
- Resolution on [Guaranteeing Quality in the Education System Through Renewal of Education Personnel and Working with Other Education Professionals](#)
- Resolution on [Education for Democracy](#)
- ETUCE Policy Paper on [21st Century Teaching Profession and the Use of ICT](#)

The Resolution on [Advocacy on Early Childhood Education](#) is referred to the ETUCE Committee.

“Education in Europe is still facing difficult times, with growing disparities and access inequalities which come at dangerous times when extremisms, intolerance and xenophobia take their stance across Europe”, said ETUCE President Christine Blower, “Teachers and educators bear a big responsibility for bringing individuals up in a democratic society, but their role in society is far from being adequately recognised. Their rights, professional and working conditions must be recognised, respected and promoted and their standard of living improved if we share the belief that education is crucial for the development of democratic, fair and just societies”.

Education trade union leaders in Europe elected a new leadership team for the next four years, confirming Christine Blower (NUT) as ETUCE President and 6 Vice Presidents, leading the work of a new ETUCE Committee.

The new ETUCE Bureau is composed of:

- Christine Blower (NUT, UK), ETUCE President
- Odile Cordelier (SNES-FSU, France), ETUCE Vice president
- Andreas Keller (GEW, Germany), ETUCE Vice president
- Dorte Lange (DLF, Denmark), ETUCE Vice president
- Trudy Kerperien (AOB, the Netherlands), ETUCE Vice president
- Galina Merkulova (ESEUR, Russian Federation), ETUCE Vice president
- Branimir Štrukelj (ESTUS, Slovenia), ETUCE Vice president

The new team has been elected by delegates from 131 ETUCE member organisation across 48 European countries. The new leaders take up their posts immediately following the Conference. The work of Martin Rømer, former ETUCE General Secretary 2002-2010 and ETUCE European Director 2010-2016 has been praised and the ETUCE Regional Conference has applauded Mr Rømer for the many years leading the organisation. Several hallmarks of his leadership were recognised, including the initiation of the European Social Dialogue in Education. Mr Rømer’s achievement in building and preserving unity and solidarity among education workers and their unions across years of deep fragmentation and isolation brought about by the economic crisis were highly valued. Ms Susan Flocken has been appointed as new ETUCE European Director. She takes up her duties as from January 2017.

Documents of the Conference available [here](#).



The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) represents 131 Education Trade Unions and 11 million teachers in all countries of Europe, 4.2 million teachers in the EU, from all levels of the education sector. ETUCE is a Social Partner in education at the EU level and a European Trade Union Federation within ETUC, the European Trade Union Confederation. ETUCE is the European Region of **Education International**, the global federation of teacher unions.

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