



Resolution on the Financial and Economic Crisis

Composite resolution proposed by the ETUCE Committee and seconded by NASUWT (UK) to the ETUCE Conference, the Regional Conference of Education International, meeting in Budapest on 26-28 November 2012, adopted on 26 November 2012

The ETUCE Conference, aware of the crossroads at which Europe now stands, mindful of the role as representatives of teachers and education employees, deploring an economic and financial crisis which has taken education budgets hostage, eroding trust in common endeavours and joint solutions among nations,

Recalling:

1. ETUCE statements on national situations in 2009 ([Finland](#), [Hungary](#) and Latvia), and 2011 ([Romania](#), [Greece](#) and [Portugal](#)), which stressed that investment in education cannot be seen as a cost burden but rather as a core investment into their countries' future,
2. [ETUCE Statements to the European Council meeting 17 June 2010](#) and the European Commission in preparation of the June G8/G20 summit in Ontario, which stressed that education "is the smartest investment in sustainable recovery",
3. [ETUCE Statements to the European Council Meeting \(16 September 2010\)](#) and the European Commission in Preparation of the G20 Summit in Seoul, which called for education to be "protected from public sector budget cuts" as "no country can afford a 'lost generation' of children and youth",
4. The [Joint Declaration of 18 January 2011](#) between ETUCE, EFEE, EPSU and CESI, the European Social Partners in Education, which asserted that the way forward for the EU "is through an innovation-driven and knowledge- and competence-based economy",
5. The [Statement from the ETUCE Committee on 10-11 October 2011](#), which expressed a belief in a "policy based on solidarity and fairness," supported the [ETUC Statement to the EU Finance Ministers' meeting in Wroclaw on 16-17 September 2011](#), and recognized education as "an essential investment for the well-being of people, both present and future, especially in the context of an economic crisis",



Promoting Public Sector Education in an Age of Austerity

6. The [Conclusions from the ETUCE Special Meeting on 20 January 2012](#) deploring “austerity plans [which] hit the weakest groups of Europe’s societies,” while expressing concern that “right-wing populist parties could benefit from the despair of citizens who feel let down by their politicians”,
7. The [ETUCE Statement on the European Commission proposals in the framework of the European Semester 2012](#), which asserts that education is a public service whose objective cannot be profit, but the gift of “opportunity to all citizens to receive quality training and to get a chance for better qualification and employment”,
8. The [ETUCE Action and Campaign Framework on the Economic Crisis](#) and the Europe-wide surveys which revealed the detrimental effect of the crisis on the education sector,

Reaffirming:

9. The 6th World Congress of Education International (EI) [Resolution on the Education Policy Paper](#), which promoted education as a human right and a public good and called for "public investment in education of at least 6% of GDP",
10. The [Resolution from the European Region](#), which considers that many national governments are "implementing severe cuts in education funding," recognises that investment in education is a "top priority for the sustainability of a knowledge-based society in post-industrial Europe," and calls on European governments to use "fair and progressive taxation measures to increase their investment in education",
11. The Composite [Resolution on the Sustained Funding of Public Education in the midst of the Economic Crisis](#), which: 1) affirmed a commitment to "campaign for the increased regulation of global financial markets," 2) recognized that large sums of money escape taxation by means of "tax haven" countries, 3) asserted that the "responsibility for the crisis lies firmly with the greed and recklessness of the financial sector," as sovereign debt and fiscal constraints "grew exponentially as a result of the bailout of the financial sector," 4) deplored the adoption of austerity measures by national governments, and 5) urged them to consider education as the "pivotal instrument of social policies",
12. The [Resolution on Recruitment and Organising](#), which affirmed that independent and inclusive unions, and the right to bargain collectively, are essential to perpetuating fundamental rights of each individual in a democratic society,



Promoting Public Sector Education in an Age of Austerity

13. The [Resolution on Trade Union Action Against Neoliberal Policies and Austerity Plans in Europe](#), which noted "negative consequences on teachers' working conditions," and called for "alternative programmes of investment and development that generate sustainable growth and employment",

Considering:

14. Article 3.3 – 3.6 of the [ETUC Strategy and Action Plan 2011-15](#) adopted by the 2011 ETUC Congress, which considers opaque financial products and complex derivatives markets, the absence of governmental intervention, the growing inequality and widening income disparities, and a long-term fixation on short-term shareholder value as the most visible contributing factors to the present crisis,
15. The [Athens Manifesto of 19 May 2011](#), in which ETUC commits itself to “fight for a European New Deal for workers, against austerity governance [...] and for a European economic governance that serves the interests of the European people and not the markets”,
16. The [ETUCE Action Plan on Gender Equality](#), adopted by the ETUCE Executive Board in 2010, and the [ETUC Action Programme on Gender Equality](#) which calls for including the “dimension of equal opportunities and of the gender perspective in all fields of policy planning and activity, and aware of the adverse effects of the financial and economic crisis on equal pay and work-life balance,
17. The [ETUC Declaration](#) of 25 January 2012 condemning the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, which, as a fiscal compact, forces Member States of the European Union to “pursue damaging pro-cyclical fiscal policies, giving absolute priority to rigid economic rules at a time when most economies are still weak and unemployment intolerably high”,

Whereas:

18. The [European Council's agreement to the Commission's proposal to launch Europe 2020](#) on 26 March 2010 – a new strategy for jobs and growth – emphasises education as one of its headline targets,
19. The [Council Recommendation of 13 July 2010 on broad guidelines for the economic policies of the Member States and of the Union](#) provides that "Member States should design national reform programmes consistent with the objectives set out in the 'Europe 2020 integrated guidelines'," the [Council Decision of 21 October 2010](#) sets out guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States, and [Article 145 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#) (TFEU) provides that Member States and the Union shall "work towards developing a coordinated strategy for employment and in particular for promoting skilled, trained and adaptable workforce," and while it is evident that none of the aforementioned is



Promoting Public Sector Education in an Age of Austerity

possible to implement without increased investment in education, especially at times of crisis,

Resolves to:

- I. **Deplore the profound effect this crisis has had on teachers, education employees, and students, and asserts that sovereign debt and deficit reduction through austerity measures is not a viable path towards sustainable economic growth in the present situation across Europe;**
- II. **Strongly urge European-level policymakers and national governments to recognize that it is their moral imperative to seek an exit from the crisis for the sake of future generations, and to advance strong sustainable growth and employment initiatives – which necessitate increased investment in education – to boost the European economy;**
- III. **Reassert the fact that this crisis was made primarily in the private sector, and that it is both immoral and ineffective to seek solutions by cutting investment in public services and infrastructure;**
- IV. **Call on national governments to immediately reverse the policy of deflationary wage cuts as an instrument of fiscal adjustment;**
- V. **Call on European-level policymakers and national governments to work side by side in dismantling tax havens while tackling tax fraud and evasion, and to engage in deeper coordination of tax policies across Europe to strengthen tax revenue and enhance fiscal contributions;**
- VI. **Call on European-level policymakers and national governments to harmonise the corporate tax base across Europe, set a minimum tax rate for businesses, and adopt fair and effective progressive tax systems to obtain additional revenue for education budgets;**
- VII. **Call on the Member States of the European Union to summon the financial industry to pay its fair share in meeting the costs of the crisis by expressing unanimous support in the Council of the European Union to adopt a Europe-wide financial transaction tax. Proposals on this common system should not be relegated to enhanced cooperation between Member States on the basis of [Article 20 of the Treaty on European Union \(TEU\)](#) and Articles 326 to 334 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). They should, rather, be adopted under [Article 113 TFEU](#);**
- VIII. **Call on European-level policymakers and national governments to advance an effective Europe-wide regulatory and supervisory framework which successfully tackles regulatory arbitrage and provides for transparent central clearance of over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives, sound macro-prudential analysis, and the harmonisation of capital and liquidity requirements while curbing excessive risk-taking;**



Promoting Public Sector Education in an Age of Austerity

- IX. Call on the European Central Bank to explore every policy alternative within its mandate to bring down sovereign borrowing costs to a sustainable level;**
- X. Call on European-level policymakers and national governments to support the issuance of jointly-backed Eurobonds within a coordinated and common European financial and economic policy as an instrument of debt solidarity with a view to decreasing interest rates on sovereign debt;**
- XI. Call on European-level policymakers and national governments to adopt a framework for the allocation of unused structural funds to support sustainable investment, including investment in education;**
- XII. Call on European-level policymakers and national governments to enhance their efforts in tackling corruption and to engage more deeply in corporate governance reform which boosts transparency and accountability standards as well as democratic participation;**
- XIII. Call on European-level policymakers and national governments to prevent the privatisation and commercialisation of education services, and to stand firm, shoulder to shoulder, in defending the added value of equal access to all levels of free public education while supporting national social dialogue structures, trade union rights, social cohesion, and solidarity among generations;**
- XIV. Vigorously campaign with Member Organisations, ETUC and European Trade Union Federations to defend the status and working conditions of teachers;**
- XV. Defend the human and trade union rights of teachers by monitoring and campaigning against attempts by governments and employers to undermine and attack the rights of teacher trade unions;**
- XVI. Continue to promote recognition of the contribution made by Teacher Trade Unions in building effective education systems.**
- XVII. Strongly urge all the stakeholders in this crisis in Europe, and beyond, to seize the moral high ground by coming together in solidarity and to preserve – with intensified efforts – the dignity of teachers and education employees through expanded public investment in education and in this way succeed in offering an effective helping hand to present, and future, educated and responsible citizens of Europe.**