



ETUCE Newsletter

May 2014 Issue 2



2014 European Elections: Bringing priorities on Quality Education at the core of the electoral debate – rounding up campaign activities in Europe

As the final countdown to the European Elections 2014 has started, candidates to the European Parliament (EP) and IE/ETUCE affiliates in Europe join in cooperation to commit for a European Union based on Quality Education. ETUCE's initiative aimed at encouraging candidates to the EP to pledge for the 10 key messages on 'What is needed to improve the Quality of Education in Europe' has been welcomed and supported by ETUCE affiliates throughout national activities in many European countries.

All the candidates to the EP elections have been addressed by ETUCE to commit to improve the Quality of Education in Europe once elected, and to bring the issue of quality education for all to the core of the 2014 election campaign and debate. Almost 80 candidates from many European Member States responded promptly to this request by signing the pledge and engaging for Quality Education in Europe. Among the

candidates who pledged to Quality Education the German Ska Keller, leading candidate for the European Greens, Pervenche Berès (France, PS), former MEP chairing the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, Judith Kirton-Darling (UK, Labour Party) Confederal Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Maria Arminda Braganca from of our Member Organisation FNE (Portugal) and many others from all over Europe.

In order to raise awareness at national level on the fundamental right of access to quality public education for every citizen as the basis for a democratic Europe, IE/ETUCE affiliates have been inspired by the pledge action to organise main national events to address candidates and call for participation to the 2014 European Elections. Finally, EI/ETUCE affiliates from Malta, Finland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Slovakia reported activities deeply in line with the ETUCE campaign, calling their national 2014 MEP candidates to engage for Quality Education.

To see all candidates to EP who pledged for Quality Education and to read their statements [click here](#).

To read about national activities addressing 2014 MEP candidates in view of European Elections [click here](#).



UNITE FOR QUALITY EDUCATION
Better education for a better world

Winds of change for Europe: 25 May 2014 vote for Europe

We are on the doorstep of 25 of May 2014. On that day, European citizens are asked to choose their representatives in the new European Parliament. This means choosing somebody who can decide on their behalf on the legislation that is going to govern everybody in the EU, the new president of the European Commission, and the EU budget. ETUCE is calling on all its affiliates to vote for candidates that can change the course of austerity policies in Europe, to vote for a social and democratic Europe.



Against the background of the persistent effects of the worst financial and economic crisis, without sweeping the dirt under the carpet, or hiding the difficulties that the European Union is facing, ETUCE believes that it is now the time for European citizens to have their say on the Europe they want.

ETUCE joins the call of ETUC to vote for a social Europe: a progressive and inclusive Europe that works for the rights of its people. Only through a democratic legitimacy these objectives can be achieved.

Most notably, the European core values themselves are at stake on 25 May, due to the rise of nationalistic movements raising their voice to opt-out from the European Union. Taking part in the European elections means to revive the highest aims of the European Union since its creation, embedded in the Treaties. It means standing for “the promotion of a high level of employment, the guarantee of adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion, and a high level of education, training and protection of human health” (Article 9 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union - TFEU).

The European Parliament elections will open the way for a series of events having relevant impact on the future of Europe and of its citizens. After the first plenary assembly in July, the new Members of the European Parliament will be called to elect the new President of the European Commission (14-17/07/2014). The new European Commission will take office from autumn this year (1/11/2014). Have a strong say, go to vote.

Latvia: Union mobilises for pay increase

Educators and science employees took to the streets of Riga Monday to demand additional state financing for effective education reforms.

Education International’s national affiliate, the Latvian Trade Union of Education and Science Employees (LIZDA), is seeking extra education financing to secure decent pay for its members.

The union says it is dissatisfied with the current financing model, “Money follows the child,” during the 12 May protest. According to LIZDA, this model does not ensure decent and motivating salaries for educators or provide equal rights for all the children to obtain quality education.

At the same time, in the 2015–2017 national budget, additional funds for the approval and introduction of a new financing model and an increase in educators' salaries have not been planned. This year, there is a shortage of €2.5 million for educators' salaries, according to LIZDA. The trade union is urging public authorities to guarantee remuneration for work undertaken by all educators and academic staff. The latest LIZDA investigation shows that the state currently does not reimburse educators for an average of 18 hours of work per week, owing them €341.28 per month.



Read the full article on EI's website [>>>](#)

Urgent Action appeal for Ukraine

EI called upon all their affiliates to support STESU's rebuilding efforts through the EI Solidarity Fund by sending financial contributions. After their visit in Kiev, EI and ETUCE had agreed to try to help STESU relocate its offices and re-establish communications with its regional and local branches

The Trade Union House in Kiev, where the Federation of Trade Unions in Ukraine and STESU had their offices, was completely destroyed by the fire, leaving several hundred trade union workers without workplaces. All office equipment and supplies and all union documents were lost in the fire. STESU is struggling to resume activities at a time when the union movement should contribute to resolving political tensions in Ukraine peacefully and through dialogue. Restoring operational capability requires significant resources, including the acquisition of new office premises.



Representatives of EI and of the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE), EI's regional organisation in Europe, including, Fred van Leeuwen, the EI General Secretary and Martin Romer, the ETUCE European Director, have visited Kiev to assess the situation on the ground and collect information to prepare coordinated support for our Ukrainian colleagues. STESU is reorganising and re-establishing its administrative structure in temporary office premises but it urgently needs its own permanent office base. Otherwise, it will not be able to play a role in defusing political tensions in the eastern regions of Ukraine and in preserving the unity of the country.

EI and ETUCE have agreed to try to help STESU relocate its offices and re-establish communications with its regional and local branches. They propose to provide a loan of €200,000 from the Solidarity Fund to STESU to assist the organisation with the purchase of new premises. EI will provide half of that loan from existing solidarity funds and the balance from responses from member organisations to this and the earlier Urgent Action Appeal. The Solidarity Fund has received €20,000 thus far in response to the earlier appeal which leaves a balance of €80,000 to be achieved before the full amount of the loan may be made available to STESU.

We call upon you to support STESU's rebuilding efforts through the EI Solidarity Fund by sending financial contributions to:

Education International

ING Bank

Avenue Marnix, 24, B-1000 Brussels - Belgium

IBAN: BE05 3101 0061 7075

Account: 310-1006170-75

SWIFT: BBRUBEBB

with the reference "Solidarity with STESU/Ukraine"

The Presidium of STESU wrote recently to call on "EI, ETUCE and teacher unions from other countries to support the aspirations of the people of Ukraine to live in a democratic and free country." You may send your messages of solidarity with STESU to Mr Georgii Trukhanov, President, and Ms Kateryna Maliuta-Osaulova, International Secretary, at trukhanov.g@gmail.com and kateryna.osv@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Promoting gender equality in Europe: ETUCE Seminar on 7 May 2014

The issue of how to promote gender equality in teacher unions and in the teaching profession was discussed at the ETUCE seminar on 7 May 2014. The seminar took place in Utrecht, where the headquarter of the Dutch education union AOb is located.

Following a warm welcome evening hosted by AOb, the participants viewed the current state of gender equality in teacher unions and in the teaching profession during the seminar's morning session. The ETUCE online survey showed that women are underrepresented at all levels of decision-making in comparison to their growing percentage in membership. Cross-sectoral observations presented by Rosanna Ruscito from ETUC highlighted the important role of teachers and teacher unions to advocate for gender equality in society. Actions are needed to level the negative impact austerity has on gender equality and women's rights.



Three teacher unions presented their good experiences with equality actions: Dorota Obidniak presented the wide spread of ZNP's equality committees and NGOs in Poland, José Muijres introduced the successful AOb Academy for future trade union leaders, and Burcu Yilmaz explained how Eđitim Sen sets up equality networks by implementing train-the-trainer activities in Turkey.

The discussion in the working groups showed that teacher unions need to fight back the deterioration of working conditions and the casualisation of the teaching profession as they directly contribute to the impact of austerity on women. Within teacher unions, women should be supported to be active members and take on union responsibilities.

The seminar was organised in the frame of the one-year ETUCE project "Promoting gender equality within teacher trade unions and in the teaching profession II". To find out more about the project, please visit http://etuce.homestead.com/ETUCE_Equality_Project-2013_2014.html.