



Education International  
Internationale de l'Éducation  
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ETUCE – European Trade Union Committee for Education  
Education International - European Region

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## Statement of the Central East European Round Table Meeting in Prague on 9-11 October 2023

In light of the Resolution *Campaigning to enhance the Teaching Profession for Solidarity, Democracy, Equality and Sustainability* adopted by the ETUCE Conference 2020, the ETUCE Policy Paper *Raising the Status and Improving the Attractiveness of the Teaching Profession*, the ETUCE Campaign *#Make Teaching Attractive!*, as well as the Resolution *Trade union engagement and activity in Europe: Mobilising for quality public education, for the benefit of students, and an improved status of teachers and all education personnel* adopted by the ETUCE Special Conference on 5-6 July 2022 in Liège;

With the aim of supporting and raising the attractiveness and the status of the teaching profession in Central Eastern Europe, **the ETUCE member organisations gathering at this Central Eastern European Round Table meeting support the ETUCE demands on raising the attractiveness of the teaching profession.** In the context of central and eastern Europe, we lay particular emphasis on:

**Fostering and reinforcing social dialogue** at regional, national, European, and international level. Therefore, we commit to:

1. **Advocating for meaningful social dialogue and for the respect of trade unions' role and prerogatives, for collective bargaining and agreements** by the employers and governments in our regions, to secure sustainable quality employment, decent working conditions, fair pay, and promising career prospects for teachers;
2. **Defending the pivotal role of social partners in education** for shaping education policies, ensuring quality education, and preserving democratic principles and workers' rights in our region.
3. **Promoting trade union rights, as essential and inalienable human rights**, including the right to freely organise and strike to the benefit of the teaching profession;

**Protecting the values of our democracies.** Hence, we commit to:

1. **Empowering and mobilising for the protection of teachers' rights and promoting the professional needs of education workers**, ultimately contributing to the improvement of education quality across Central Eastern European countries;



2. **Promoting democratic citizenship and peace education**, by ensuring that teachers are prepared to deliver democratic citizenship and peace education including teaching critical thinking, dealing with controversial and sensitive issues, creating a positive and safe learning environment, and raising awareness about diversity (including diversity of opinions);
3. **Promoting equal opportunities and diversity** within teaching workforces, advocating for recruitment policies, and working conditions that reflect the full spectrum of society and combatting discrimination;
4. **Fostering solidarity and cooperation among education trade unions**, by sharing inspiring practices and challenges as well as providing support with the view of creating fairer societies through combined strength and mutual support.

**Ensuring attractive and sustainable working conditions** for teachers, academics, researchers, and other education personnel. In this regard, we commit to:

1. **Fighting for fair and decent salaries and pensions** for all teachers, academics and researchers, addressing any pay inequalities and advocating for fair compensation that reflects their qualifications and the cost of living;
2. **Enhancing entry pathways and retention**, especially for early-stage teachers, to attract and retain high-quality staff while countering attempts of de-professionalisation of the teaching profession. We will support teachers' initial education and continuous professional development, ensuring they are equipped with the skills needed for the evolving demands of education;
3. **Addressing excessive workload and working hours**: We will actively address excessive workloads and working hours, advocating for a balance that allows teachers to deliver quality education without being overburdened;
4. **Advocating for healthy and safe working conditions**, countering workplace violence and harassment in educational environments, and supporting the positive work-related mental health of teachers, recognising the impact of increasing professional demands and pressure on their performance and work-related health;
5. **Harnessing digital and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies**, exploring further the opportunities and challenges of digital tools and AI systems for the working conditions of the teaching profession, and demanding the participation of education trade unions in the development of digital education policies from their onset to ensure they truly serve the needs of the teaching profession and educational pedagogies.