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# ETUCE

## European Trade Union Committee for Education EI European Region

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**“The development of the teaching profession in times of the economic crisis as a key task for social partners in education. Finding joint strategies to tighten the links between education and the labour market.”**

**A European project by ETUCE and EFEE**

### Recommendations from the final project conference Berlin, 14 November 2014



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#### Background:

Social Partners in education have been concerned about the increasing bottlenecks in the education systems in many European countries as a result of demographic changes and reduced financial investment. The European Commission report on education in Europe 2012 warned of the risks of further shortages of specialised teachers. At the same time, the European Commission has rightly identified education as one of the key sectors for economic recovery and growth.

This project has taken into consideration the need for the education systems and the economic development in Europe to address the shortage of workforce in the education sector as the key for the EU member states to meet the EU 2020 Strategy goals. The project overall objective has been to further raise public awareness on the impacts of the dramatic shortage of qualified teachers for core subjects not only on the education sector itself but also on other sectors and the entire labour market. There is a need for the European sectoral social partners in education to raise the question on what could be done to attract and to retain well qualified and motivated people in the teaching profession.

The teaching profession in many European countries suffers from a lack of attractiveness and status which has worsened during the years of the economic crisis. Such a development and the related problem of teacher shortages will have far-reaching impacts on the quality of education and training. It comes at times when youth unemployment in Europe has reached a new peak. Many young people in Europe are neither in employment, education or training. In the light of the Council meeting in February 2012, where the Ministers for Education discussed the relationship between education measures and youth unemployment, this project shall also trigger the concerns of pupils and parents about prospects of the future

of young people in Europe. The project addresses to national and European employment policy makers and emphasize the necessity to invest more into education in order to reach the EU 2020 core targets both in education and employment.

As part of the survey, ETUCE and EFEE member organisations were asked to identify priorities for further action at regional, national and European level with a view to improve the status and attractiveness of the teaching profession and to formulate recommendations.

### **Priorities and recommendations for further action at national and European level**

**1. Three areas of actions were identified through the project as the top priorities for future intervention at national as well as at European level. According to the responding member organisations those are:**

- The general promotion of the image of the profession in society and the media
- Remuneration of teachers/working conditions
- Better continuous professional development

**2. EU social partners in education can play a role by disseminating good practice and elaborating recommendations. According to the responding member organisations:**

- the most relevant activity for EU social partners in education would be to identify and disseminate information on existing initiatives and best practices for the improvement of the status and attractiveness of the teaching profession as reported from the national level. EU social partners could for instance contribute to provide accurate information on initial teacher education, continuous professional development and working conditions of teachers, as well as support the collection of comparable data.
- EU social partners should develop recommendations on new strategies at the EU level within the structures of the European sectoral social dialogue in education (ESSDE).