



*Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education*

## Resolution

### Enhancing the Status and Recognition of Teaching in Higher Education

Adopted by the ETUCE Conference, the Regional Conference of Education International, meeting in Belgrade on 6 - 8 December 2016

Further to and consistent with the Resolutions adopted by the 7th EI Congress in Ottawa in 2015, the Resolutions adopted at the ETUCE Conference in Budapest in 2012 and at the Special Conference in Vienna in 2014, the ETUCE Conference in Belgrade, on 6 - 8 December 2016

#### Notes the

1. increased focus by the OECD, the European Commission, national governments and university rectors on enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in Europe's higher education institutions, mainly by measuring 'learning outcomes' rather than focussing on a quality enhancement approach that emphasises the scholarship of teaching and learning, the professional development of educators and the full engagement of students;
2. strong push to use inappropriate metrics, such as student satisfaction surveys and graduate employment outcomes, as the means to measure and enhance the quality of teaching and learning;
3. fast growing demand for time-consuming and unnecessary documentation in the quality assurance process;
4. pressure from national governments and university rectors to separate teaching from research and to 'unbundle' and disaggregate traditional academic roles;
5. fact that university promotion procedures, particularly for senior academic jobs, are still largely based on research outputs and the ability to attract external funding;
6. growing number of academics employed on fixed-term and casualised contracts;
7. negative consequences for equality, including for women academics who often do large amounts of teaching in higher education and who are disproportionately employed on fixed-term and 'teaching-only' contracts.



## *Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality Education*

### **Believes that**

8. quality higher education is created in classrooms and laboratories, through interaction between qualified, well-supported educators and engaged students;
9. excessive student-to-staff ratios, insecure employment and unreasonable workloads in higher education undermine the capacity of educators to deliver the best teaching, learning, and student support of which they are capable;
10. teaching an increasing and diverse student population as well as the growth of digital education and/or student-centred learning requires continuous professional development for academic staff;
11. education trade unions should be key actors in determining what constitutes acceptable evidence for evaluating the quality of teaching in higher education;
12. peer review must be central to the process of evaluating the quality of teaching in higher education.

In line with the recommendations of the 2015 EI report *'Creating a supportive working environment in European higher education'* and the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel, the ETUCE conference **calls on** governments and higher education institutions:

13. to ensure that educators are employed on decent, secure contracts;
14. to introduce equality issues and the mainstreaming of equality measures in the framework of higher education policies, social dialogue and collective bargaining
15. to increase investment in activities that support the teaching function;
16. to provide academics with high quality pedagogical training and continuous professional development that focuses directly on their academic practice and makes it possible for them to implement the principles of the scholarship of teaching and learning;
17. to support research-led teaching and the principles of the teaching-research nexus in general as the best way to ensure the delivery of up-to-date knowledge and socially relevant education;
18. to recognise teaching as a legitimate career progression route and ensure a better balance between teaching and research in academic staff progression and promotion decisions;
19. to place peer review at the heart of the process for evaluating the quality of higher education teaching;



*Empowering Education Trade Unions: The Key to Promoting Quality  
Education*

20. to ensure that education trade unions are given consultative status by national quality assurance agencies.

The ETUCE conference **calls on** the ETUCE to develop a policy on enhancing the status and recognition of teaching in higher education, based on the above principles. Given the global nature of the academic profession and criteria for promotion and career progression, we suggest that ETUCE liaises with other EI regions in the development of this work.