



Education International  
Internationale de l'Éducation  
Internacional de la Educación

<http://www.ei-ie.org>

# ETUCE

## European Trade Union Committee for Education EI European Region

Brussels, 18 September 2013

### Statement

#### EUROPEAN REGION- ETUCE

##### President

Christine BLOWER

##### Vice-Presidents

Odile CORDELIER  
Walter DRESSCHER  
Paula ENGWALL  
Andreas KELLER  
Galina MERKULOVA  
Branimir STRUKELJ



5, Bd du Roi Albert II, 9th  
1210 Brussels, Belgium  
Tel +32 2 224 06 91/92  
Fax +32 2 224 06 94  
[secretariat@csee-etuce.org](mailto:secretariat@csee-etuce.org)  
<http://www.csee-etuce.org>

##### European Director

Martin RØMER

##### Treasurer

Mike JENNINGS

## Greek education system on the brink of collapse

The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE)\* expresses grave concern over dramatic developments in Greece. Over 2,500 vocational education teachers are being suspended, 102 vocational schools are closing down and 5,000 teachers are forcefully transferred to primary education or administrative posts. By 2016, education spending will have been cut by 47 per cent.

At present, OLME, the member organisation of ETUCE in Greece, is engaged in a five-day rolling strike. The ETUCE calls on the government of Greece to heed the concerns of Greek teachers and listen to their demands. The destructive policies in the Greek education system are jeopardizing the future of all students and devaluing the teaching profession.

Furthermore, teacher dismissals are undermining the position of elected officers in the trade union, notably Themis Kotsifakis, the president of OLME, and the ETUCE condemns all efforts to threaten the activities of its member organisation. The grave situation in Greece is an example of how far government policies can go. The ETUCE is concerned about the lack of respect for social dialogue in Greece and demands that teachers are protected from unjustified dismissals. The ETUCE is deeply concerned about drastic reductions in the number of teachers. There are 16,000 fewer teachers in secondary education meaning 20% reduction since June 2013.

The ETUCE calls on the government of Greece to improve social dialogue in the education sector in Greece. At present, provisions are passed without proper consultation with social partners. This harsh and authoritarian approach cannot continue.

The ETUCE protests against the surge in privatization in vocational education in Greece and reminds the government of Greece that free, high quality public education with equal access is the most effective path towards a prosperous society.

The ETUCE calls on all member organisations to actively show their solidarity with our Greek colleagues.

*\*The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) represents 132 Teacher Unions and 11 million teachers in all countries of Europe, 4.2 million teachers in the EU, from all levels of the education sector. ETUCE is a Social Partner in education at the EU level and a European Trade Union Federation within ETUC, the European Trade Union Confederation. ETUCE is the European Region of Education International, the global federation of teacher unions.*