



Education International

Update to BFUG 28-29 September 2009

1. EI's participation in the UNESCO Forum in Higher Education in the Europe Region

Education International contributed to the UNESCO Forum on High Education in the Europe Region, jointly organised by UNESCO CEPES and the Romanian Ministry for Education in Bucharest, from 21-24 May 2009. Deputy General Secretary Monique Fouilhoux participated in the initial stakeholder panel on the first day of the conference, whilst the Vice-Chair of EI's Pan-European Higher Education and Research Standing Committee made a presentation during the workshop on values.

2. EI's participation in the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education

Education International contributed extensively to the World Conference on Higher Education that took place at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 5-8 July 2009.

EI organised a one-day meeting for a number of its higher education affiliates on 3 July, co-organised the NGO's conference on 4 July, and also co-organised the multi-stakeholder panel on higher education institutions and the academic community that took place on the final day of the conference. EI Vice President Irene Duncan Adanusa also delivered a speech at one of the opening sessions on the first day of the conference, while Penni Stuart, President of one of EI's affiliate higher education unions in Canada – the Canadian Association of University Teachers – also delivered a speech during a workshop on the academic profession.

EI was also present by means of an exhibition stand in the foyer of the conference venue for the duration of the conference, and EI Deputy General Secretary Monique Fouilhoux was a member of the drafting committee for the final communiqué of the World Conference on Higher Education. EI secured references in the World Conference Communiqué regarding respect for rights of higher education staff.

3. EI's Reaction to the OECD report *Education at a Glance*

In reaction to the *Education at a Glance* report for 2009 Education International issues a press release and an analysis which underlines that public investment in education must be significantly increased to meet growing enrolment demands and to confront the worldwide economic crisis. EI agrees with the findings of the report that investment in education is a smart strategy in the face of economic downturn. However, EI stresses the emphasis should be on public investment in education as a public good, not as a private profit. The report reveals a disturbing trend away from public funding and towards private investment in education, especially at early childhood and university levels.

EI considers the report to be a valuable reference for policy makers and a useful snapshot of overall trends. However, its policies are based on an individualistic and opportunistic paradigm, which is at odds with EI's view on education and its broader mission to promote social justice through universal access to quality public education.



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For the first time ever, *Education at a Glance 2009* goes slightly beyond economic outcomes and tries to assess the impact of education attainment on social outcomes such as health, political interest and interpersonal trust. In its analysis of *Education at a Glance 2009* calling on the OECD governments to acknowledge this finding and take it into consideration when assessing benefits of a high level of education for their whole populations.

4. Hands up for Education! – EI’s Campaign on the Global Financial and Economic Crisis

EI is undertaking some special work in relation to the global financial crisis in order to emphasise the importance to Governments of avoiding short-term actions with long-term negative consequences and of adopting strategies which prepare students and education systems for the future.

EI wants to emphasise that education gives people the tools to build their own future and is a cornerstone of social and economic development.

In relation to this work EI has created a new part of its website fully dedicated to these topics. <http://www.ei-ie.org/handsup/en>

EI has, in the frame of this work, also held one High Level Seminar on the Impact of the Economic Crisis on Education in Central and Eastern Europe (Warsaw, 2-4 September 2009). The main outcome of that seminar was *A Strategy for Education Unions in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia*. Please find the all the documents related to this event at

<http://www.ei-ie.org/en/calendar/show.php?id=218&theme=policy>

5. EI’s Higher Education and Research Standing Committee (HERSC) Meeting

The EI HERSC will be meeting between the 24-25 September in Stockholm. The Committee will discuss the plan of work proposed to the BFUG by the Bologna Secretariat.

The Committee will also discuss more in detail quality assurance (QA) and how the national unions of higher education staff can engage more meaningfully this process. The QA session will be led by Dáire Keogh, who is one of the members of the EQAR Register Committee and a representative of the Irish Federation of University Teachers.

6. EI, ESU and EUA cooperation to Increase Student and Staff mobility

EI would like to inform the BFUG about its part in a stakeholder initiative regarding mobility, following on the mobility campaign EI undertook with ESU (‘Let’s GO’) over the past two years. Given the importance that ministers attached to mobility in the Leuven Communiqué and the central role mobility plays for higher education institutions, students and staff, EUA, ESU and EI decided to join forces in order to move this topic forward from a stakeholder perspective.

This joint initiative will provide input to the discussion in the Bologna Follow-Up Group on the indicators for measuring mobility; develop a set of commonly agreed mobility principles; and prepare a project to test these principles.



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7. EI's Work Towards the 2010 Celebration Conference

EI is currently compiling a report on academics' views on the Bologna Process, its implementation in the home institutions, and their involvement therein. This will be presented to Ministers at the Bologna Celebration Conference in Budapest and Vienna from 11-12 March 2010.

8. CEART

The joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART), meets every third years to assess how well the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (1966) and the Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997) are being fulfilled by signatory states. The next meeting of the CEART committee will take place on the 28 September 2009. EI is invited to the meetings of the Committee to present its view and assessment of the situation.

EI submitted its report for the 2009 session on the 10th of September. In that report the main issues of concern are:

1. Worldwide teacher shortage
2. Teacher salaries are decreasing
3. Teachers and their representative organizations are not consulted on education reform and in some parts of the world teachers are prevented from forming unions
4. There is a lack of teacher training and professional preparation
5. Academic freedom is at risk due to budgetary or political constraints
6. There is a casualisation crisis and teachers are increasingly in precarious employment conditions
7. Collegial governance in higher education institutions is deteriorating
8. There is increasing violence against teachers at all levels
9. More needs to be done to prevent HIV/AIDS – the epidemic has an impact on demand and supply of education as well as on the quality of education provided.

9. EI Latin American regional conference discusses Bologna

EI organised a regional conference on higher education through its Latin America regional office, for its higher education EI affiliates in Latin America. In the Conference one session was devoted to the Bologna Process and Monique Fouilhoux had the opportunity to present the Bologna Process and the latest developments to the Latin American affiliates. The discussion led to two clear outcomes – the first that colleagues in Latin America are wary of the Bologna Process as they are concerned that the aim of Bologna is to spread to, and be replicated in, other regions; second, it is clear that there is little cooperation and discussion between higher education staff unions and other stakeholders such as rectors and rectors' conferences.