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# Education International update on developments of Higher Education policies to Bologna Follow-up Group meeting in Dublin, 14 – 15 March, 2013

During the late 2012 and after the previous BFUG meeting in Cyprus, Education International has held three important meetings which debated and further elaborated EI policies in education including those specifically addressing issues of Higher Education in Europe and beyond. Please, find below brief summary excerpts highlighting the main conclusions and links to full record documents.

**EI’s 8th Higher Education and Research Conference, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 25-27 September 2012**

In this conference EI members firmly committed to defending and promoting the professional, academic, trade union, and human rights of the higher education community. Higher education and research is a fundamental right according to EI’s education policy passed at the 6th Congress. Therefore, it is the responsibility of public authorities to guarantee it as a public service accessible for all. Key issues debated at the Conference included the marketization and trade in education and intellectual property, the casualization (precarious work) of employment in the sector, the application of private-sector and for-profit management models on institutions, as well as the privatisation of provision. Other issues discussed included: defending research in the public interest; challenging the politics of accountability such as university rankings; organising student teachers, early-stage teachers and researchers; and respecting equality and diversity within the sector.

The main conclusions included recommendations to both the EI Executive Board and EI Secretariat, such as the adoption of the [***Policy Statement on Tuition Fees***](http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/Tuition%20Fees%205th%20Draft%20Education%20International%20Policy%20Statement%20on%20Tuition%20Fees.en.pdf). This statement asserts that tuition fees should not be charged at all, or be progressively reduced and eliminated.

<http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news_details/2309>

**ETUCE Conference 2012, held from 26-28 November in Budapest**

Held every four years, the ETUCE Conference determines policies, principles of action and the programme of EI’s European branch. One the main conclusions of the conference was that the key for economic recovery has two elements: Combining advocacy work on promoting and defending public education and the teaching profession with work on broader economic issues, such as fair taxation and financial regulation. The 2012 ETUCE Conference in Budapest adopted 10 resolutions, including one on Higher Education and Research. In particular this resolution stipulates that education is an investment for the whole of society as well as a human right. Higher Education should be free. When tuition fees exist, governments should reduce them with the ultimate goal of elimination.

<http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/Resolution%20HER_EN.doc>

**Education in Crisis seminar in Brussels, 18-19 October, 2012**

Education International’s "Education in Crisis" Seminar united over 140 educators from more than 30 different countries in discussions that engaged different approaches aiming to enrich education systems all over the world, both during the current global economic crisis and for the decades that will follow. The seminar highlighted the importance of education within democratic societies, which implies the return of democracy to classrooms, and that the restoration of teacher autonomy to the teaching profession must be the first step in that process. Round table discussions and presentations focused on the devastating impacts that the economic recession has had on education systems worldwide, particularly in Europe and in developing countries, as well as on policies that will address the sustenance of stability, growth and public funding for those education systems.

<http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/Report%20Education%20in%20Crisis%20Seminar%2018%2019%20October%202012.pdf>