



## EUROPEAN SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN EDUCATION

### Working Group

22 June 2020

### Minutes

Chair: ETUCE

#### 1. Opening of the meeting

The agenda of the meeting was adopted. The minutes of the Steering Group meeting of 20 January 2020 and of the Working Group meeting of 12 February were adopted.

#### 2. The impact of COVID-19 on sustainable education systems in Europe: from crisis management to long-term financial, social and educational sustainability

Gyula Cserey from DG EAC gave a presentation on the impact of COVID-19 on education in Europe. He mentioned the important role digitalisation plays in education, however, there are massive gaps in this area. Digitalisation has also a potential of increasing the attractiveness of the teaching profession and supporting teachers. The Commission will create networks of educational institutions and renewed cooperation framework for cooperation with MS. Communication on the European Education area will be released in the course of September 2020 and it will also face the new realities, including those of COVID.

EFEE and ETUCE members exchanged views on the subject. Issues of inclusion of VET education and funding of education (and possibility of funding in the framework of the European Recovery Plan) were raised. Susan Flocken (ETUCE) mentioned the digitalisation and sustainable approach; equal access to quality education; structural weaknesses that have been amplified by COVID; attractiveness of the teaching profession; immense efforts that teachers and education institutions have made, still, many students have been left behind, among those also students who need extra support; need for more public investment in education including its infrastructure, to training of teachers. The role of social partners is crucial and it is important that they are consulted beforehand. Michael Moriarty (EFEE) noted that every education system needs to have a contingency plan, there needs to be a national strategy in every

country. Training of teachers in digital education and technologies is important too, however, there is a risk attached to digitalisation in increasing the inequalities that already exist and national governments need to address that.

According to Daniel Wisniewski (EFEE) the COVID-19 crisis is also an opportunity to gather all the experiences that education institutions were forced to implement; also opportunity for teachers to change the way of learning.

### **3. Contributing to build resilient education systems for the future through strengthened social dialogue: lessons learnt from the COVID-19 emergency, the role of education social partners and the way forward**

Heikki Holopainen (EFEE) provided an overview of how higher education sector reacted to COVID 19 situation in Finland. Universities conducted remote activities, both in teaching and research, where possible. Temporary changes to University Law to provide flexibility were adopted. The biggest issue to deal with were students' selection exams.

Further presentations and discussion was, due to technical connection issues, not possible during this meeting.

### **4. Education in times of crisis – advantages and disadvantages of innovative teaching methods implemented during COVID-19 pandemic, and their impact on teachers' working conditions and on inclusion**

This agenda item was dropped, due to technical connection issues, not possible during this meeting.

### **5. Discussion on the draft Joint ETUCE-EFEE Statement on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on education and the role of education social partners: can we reach a consensus?**

Susan Flocken (ETUCE) introduced the draft Joint Statement. It deals with impact of COVID crisis on the education sector; urgency and emergency character of how education had to be transferred to remote teaching requirement; joint work on a sustainable forward-looking commitment. The draft covers different topics – social dialogue – the joint commitment of European and national social partners; importance to be informed and consulted in a meaningful way, no unilateral approach to overrule social dialogue. Secondly – employment and working conditions – professionalism, work-life balance, health and safety issues, development of sustainable OSH strategies when back in physical education environment, access to

training. Thirdly equality and inclusion – access to education for all, as a public good; vocational education and training, higher education and training. There are still some open points which need to be agreed between ETUCE and EFEE.

Daniel Wisniewski (EFEE) stressed the importance of sending a message to the Commission and to other decision makers that social partners are committed to work together in order to improve education in the future.

In a discussion the following topics were raised: opportunity for innovation – with a need of a common framework; risk of privatisation and losing jobs; focus on education and research; impact on school buildings and equipment.

Secretariats of both EFEE and ETUCE will continue the discussion in order to finalise the Joint Statement as soon as possible.

## **6. AOB**

Under AOB, Romanian representative (ETUCE) voiced concerns related to the Education sector representativeness study and organisations in Romania. Those issues will be raised towards Eurofound in writing.

List of participants 22/06/2020

<u>Employers</u>	<u>Workers</u>
<p><b>EFEE</b> Mr Mieczyslaw BLONSKI (PL) Mr Stephen COOPER (UK) Mr Dirk DEBROEY (BE) Ms Veronique FEIJEN (NL) Ms Heikki HOLOPAINEN (FI) Ms Carolien HUETING (NL) Mr Johan HUYSSSE (NL) Mr Panagiotis KARAMALIS (GR) Mr Rodrigo MELO (PT) Ms Teija METSÄRANTA (FI) Mr Michael MORIARTY (IE) Ms Hildehauste MYHRE (NO) Ms Barbara NOVINEC (SI) Ms Isaline OSSIEUR (EU) Ms Nives POCKAR (SI) Mr Luigi SEPIACCI (IT) Mr Stefan SONDERMANN (DE) Mr Theodoros THEODOROU (CY) Mr Hein VAN ASSELDONK (NL) Mr Frank VAN HOUT (NL) Mr Mark VANDEN BRANDE (BE) Mr Dirk VANDEWEYER (BE) Mr Jens VERMEERSCH (BE) Mr Carlos VIEIRA (PT) Mr Daniel WISNIEWSKI (EU)</p> <p><b>25 employer representatives (8 women, 17 men)</b></p>	<p><b>ETUCE</b> Ms Kristina AALTONEN (?) Ms Rossella BENEDETTI (IT) Ms Christine BLOWER (UK) Mr Jan BOERSMA (NL) Mr Evangelos BOUNTOULOULIS (?) Ms Camilla BROWN (SE) Ms Paola CAMMILLI (EU) Ms Alexandra CORNEA (RO) Ms Elis CULLEN (EE) Mr Henrik DE MOEL (NL) Ms Susan FLOCKEN (EU) Ms Gitta FRANKE-ZOELLNER (DE) Mr Thibault GIRARDOT (EU) Mr Thomasz GRYZAN (PL) Ms Dorte LANGE (?) Mr Theodore MALAGARIS (?) Mr Sandi MODRIJAN (?) Mr Jon RICHARDS (UK) Mr Claude RIES (LU) Ms Agnes ROMAN (EU) Mr Harald SKULBERG (NO) Mr Juraj STODOLOVSKY (SK) Ms Yanka TAKEVA (BG) Ms María Luisa VICO (?) Mr Bryn WATKINS (EU)</p> <p><b>CESI</b> Ms Marcella MIGLIORI (EU) Mr Salvatore PIROSCIA (EU)</p> <p><b>25 worker representatives (13 women, 12 men)</b></p>
<p><u>European Commission and other organisations</u> Ms Jitka HRUDOVA (EMPL.A.2) Ms Sigried CASPAR (EMPL.A.2) Mr Gyula CSEREY (EAC.A.1)</p>	