

## Education International Europe

### Standing Committee on Higher Education and Research

**Bled (Slovenia) 16-18 November 2000**

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Present:

Gerd Köhler, GEW, Germany

Camille Dieu, CGSP, Belgium

Eric Vandamme CGSP, Belgium

Jens Vraa-Jensen, DM, Denmark

Bjorn Fant, FUURT, Finland

Yves Baunay, SNES, France

Daltun O Ceallaigh, IFUT, Ireland

Pat Burke, IFUT, Ireland

Sigrid Lem, NARW, Norway

Gerard Sipkema, Aob, The Netherlands

Manuel Pereira Dos Santos, FENPROF, Portugal

Brian Everett, AUT, United Kingdom

Paul Bennett, NATFHE, United Kingdom,

President

Janez Stergar, ESWUS, Slovenia

Leyland Conley Barrows, CEPES UNESCO,  
Romania

Alain Mouchoux, General Secretary ETUCE

Monique Fouilhoux, Coordinator EI

Excused: Michel Deyme, SGEN-CFDT, France; Guy Lachenaud, FEN, France; Gabor Szabo, FDSZ, Hungary.

1. The report of the last meeting was approved. The English translation will be amended with the new comments.
2. **Study implemented for GEW by Kassel University: “Pay and Working Conditions of Academic Staff in Europe”**

The study has now been published. Gerd Köhler specified that all organisations of the countries examined in the study would receive a copy. The Committee members were most interested in this report, which provides comparative data very useful especially for trade union work. It was suggested that EI extend this initiative at European and world level. In the future, such database could be periodically revised and would be a wonderful working device for EI and its members. Jens Vraa Jensen presented a short summary of the study and suggested to refer to the Internet site of the “Center for International Higher Education” (<http://www.bc.edu/cibe/>), which proposes similar studies concerning other countries.

The participants asked EI to circulate information on the various sites providing information on these issues.

3. **Follow-up of the Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations and Preparation of the Prague 2001 Conference**

The next Prague Conference will be held on 18 and 19 May. It will be co-organised by the Czech Minister and the European Conference of Ministers with the aim of evaluating how the different countries implemented Bologna and the logic of harmonisation.

Each member of the Committee made a short report on its national situation. The progress, regarding this process, varies considerably in the different countries.

It was indicated that the European Assizes for Students were held in Paris at the Sorbonne. These meetings were supported by the European Union and France. The students are very active on issues such as Access, Registration Fees, as well as Quality of Teaching. They have implemented working groups on certain themes

and are working on developing standpoints for Prague. It is necessary to put the views of academic staff concerning the purpose of higher education and research in a “Europe of Knowledge” as a counter-balance to arguments for a “Market” in higher education. We need to emphasis on access to higher education based on the concept of a right to lifelong learning, and recognising the holistic nature of learning. The expansion of higher education to meet growing demand must not be at the expense of quality, and teachers themselves must be centrally involved in the determination of quality. Teachers and researchers in higher education must be given the right conditions for their work including continuous professional development and, for teachers, access to research and scholarship appropriate to their needs and interests.

Following the discussion, the Committee decided to adopt a draft declaration. This document will be circulated to the organisations for comments (to be returned by 5 January 2001) and the final version will be presented to the EIE Executive board at its January meeting for adoption (final version attached as Annex 1).

The Declaration is intended as an EI(E) statement and to counterbalance the Sorbonne/Bologna Declarations which were exclusively ministerial declarations. The Declaration which has been proposed by the Committee draws on documentation which has already been seen and approved by the European Committee. EIE must be involved in the debate leading up to the Prague Conference and at Prague itself if possible.

An article (Annex 2) was also produced during the course of the meeting. It would be attached to the minutes of the meeting and sent both to members of the committee and to General Secretaries of unions in the sector asking them to publish the article in their periodicals in the period leading up to the Prague Conference. It is suggested that unions may wish to add material to the article reflecting their national debates on the Sorbonne/Bologna Declarations. Unions would also be asked to send copies of the article as published to EI

The Committee agreed to organise its next meeting with the view of furthering the contribution of EIE to the debate and the secretary was asked to plan the meeting for March, bearing in mind also the meetings which would occur in the following months. Offers have been made by GEW and FENPROF to assist in the organisation of such a meeting. The Committee urged national organisations to debate the Sorbonne/Bologna process and its implications for their national systems, and to discuss the resulting issues with policy-makers at the national levels.

**The secretary was asked to put the Declaration and the article, together with the minutes of this meeting on the EI website.**

#### **4. Proactive Trade Union Strategy concerning Professional Development for Academics/University Teachers (paper prepared by Bert Fredriksson and Jens Vraa-Jensen)**

A revised version of the document presented during the last HERSC meeting was submitted for discussion. After discussion and approval of the amendments, the document was adopted and will be submitted to the next Regional Executive Committee in January (Annex 3).

#### **5. Follow-up to ILO/UNESCO activities**

##### **UNESCO: World Conference Follow-up**

The Follow-Up International Committee held its first meeting in June 2000. The Committee adopted a three-step approach:

- Presentation of the activities implemented since the Conference by UNESCO, the states, the NGOs at international, regional and national level
- Functioning and strategies of the International Committee
- Propositions and recommendations

- 1) The Declaration and Framework of Action of the HEWC must be circulated so that they become a term of reference for member states and higher education institutions;
- 2) Several key issues which could be studied more in-depth by the Committee: new technologies and their impact on higher education, citizenship to university, the evolution of the teaching profession...

## **At European level:**

Leyland Conley Barrows, (CEPES UNESCO) made a brief synopsis of the anticipated role of UNESCO-CEPES in the follow up to the World Conference on Higher Education, held in Paris, in October 1998.

The recommendations made at the earlier Palermo European Regional Forum (Palermo, September 1997), and the Framework for Action adopted by the World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, October 1998) represent a general conceptual framework for the planning of certain activities to be undertaken by UNESCO-CEPES.

The principal projects and actions that are in the process of being or will be undertaken by UNESCO-CEPES, foremost those covering the 2000-2001 biennium, which I shall outline below, should be viewed as an integral part of an overall UNESCO strategy for the follow-up in question, coming within the general framework adopted by the 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference of UNESCO. In view of the above, UNESCO-CEPES is focusing its activities along the following four main strands:

- i. Policy and Reform of Higher Education;
- ii. Inter-university Co-operation and Academic Mobility;
- iii. Publications, Studies and, Information Services;
- iv. Status of Teachers and Teaching-and-Learning in the Information Society.

Mr Barrows concluded by evoking the Observations in regard to the follow up to the World Conference made by the UNESCO-CEPES Advisory Committee at its 5<sup>th</sup> Session from 12-14 May 2000 - that was also the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the World Conference on Higher Education Regional Follow-up Committee for the Europe Region - this body recommended, first of all, that the following issues and areas be given priority in terms of UNESCO-CEPES activities, bearing in mind the roles played by Member States and various national and regional organisations in regard to them:

- governance and management of higher education;
- quality evaluation and accreditation (with special emphasis on the “private sector” in higher education;
- the extent to which the net information and communication technologies are influencing the university in regard, particularly, to its teaching function;
- the relationship between higher education and the world of work, including the role of higher education in life-long learning.”

and secondly, “that in the follow-up process, links be drawn to activities undertaken as a follow-up to all other UNESCO World Conferences related to the education sector, including science.”

## **ILO and CEART Meeting**

The ILO joint meeting for education personnel was held in Geneva from 10 to 14 April 2000 on the theme: "Learning throughout life in the 21st century: a new role for education personnel". It was an opportunity for representatives of government, private-sector employers and teachers' unions to focus on changes in the role of the teacher in the context of lifelong learning. At the conclusion of the debates, the meeting adopted the report of its proceedings, some conclusions, and a resolution submitted by the workers' group. All these documents have been adopted at the November meeting of the ILO's Governing Body. The conclusions adopted, clearly reaffirm the right to education as a fundamental human right; they stress that lifelong learning is nowadays vital for everyone, and that, it is a key question for social cohesion and the sustainable development of human societies. With regard to the funding, participants concluded and it was recorded, that, governments are responsible in the first instance for ensuring that an appropriate budget is allocated to education, and that they should use 6% of GDP as a benchmark.

Three studies had been prepared for this meeting. For the first time, higher education personnel was not excluded and a specific study prepared by Thierry Chevaillier, from the IREDU-CNRS / University of Bourgogne (France, dealt with the “The Changing Conditions of the Higher Education Teaching Personnel”.

Furthermore, CEART, whose mandate was extended to the follow-up to the 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel, met in September 2000 in Geneva. For the first time, an audition of the organisations representing teachers was organised, allowing a dialogue with the expert members of the CEART. The Committee made recommendations in order to conduct specific studies focusing on problems and progress made at national and regional level. Three key issues were recommended: academic freedom, job security and tenure, social dialogue and participation in the decision process.

The participants insisted on underlining the importance of the CEART work in the follow-up to the Recommendation implementation and made the following recommendations:

- EI should encourage member organisations to call upon their governments to ensure translation and circulation of the Recommendation in the country's working language.
- EI should request its organisations to prepare reports on certain aspects especially affecting them, in order to develop a report for the next UNESCO General Conference.

## **6. ETUCE activities**

Paul Bennett informed the participants of the decisions taken at ETUCE level regarding the advisory panels, which from now on will be made up only of Executive Board members.

Alain Mouchoux representing ETUCE made a summary of the situation of both organisations. The future remains uncertain and should be clarified for a better functioning. He mentioned various recent developments. The meeting of the Council of Education Ministers, which gathered on 9 November, will influence the evolution of education issues in Europe. New ambitious proposals were made. The debate on the education issues will be re-opened in the coming months. The Council unanimously adopted a draft recommendation on the mobility of students, youth in training, voluntary workers, teachers and trainers. This means that the removal of juridical and administrative obstacles at national level will have to be pursued.

All European authorities should become interested in those questions, which will have a major and multiple impact.

EIE, as ETUCE, is officially recognised at the Council of Europe. It is therefore important to designate someone to ensure the follow-up to the higher education dossiers.

### **Issue of the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme**

Alain Mouchoux recalled the ETUCE claims. Earlier this year, he met Commissioner Busquin and presented our claims. During this meeting with the Commissioner's collaborators, the following points were addressed: necessity to render research more attractive, participation in the preparation of the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme and participation in the evaluation of the 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme.

Furthermore, a meeting with the Head of Cabinet of the French Minister of Research dealt with the issues of intellectual property, promotion of research - especially amongst young people who are losing interest in scientific studies-, mobility of researchers, brain drain were dealt with.

The Council of the Ministers of Research has just taken place. The Ministers have agreed on the need to develop the European space of Research and to revise the Framework Programme which only represents 5%. A first document on the European space was presented in January. It was open to discussion and distributed to the organisations. Suggestions were transmitted on the basis of the answers returned.

On the other hand, a series of indicators (20) is currently being discussed to take into account the current situation of research in Europe: balance between private/public funding, situation of personnels / scientific

and technological productivity (patents, publications), innovative companies, effective impact on competition and employment. It would be interesting to have a global working group on the systems that will develop around the indicators and on the whole problem of evaluation. The 5<sup>th</sup> programme is half-way through and an evaluation group is in place. We have to ask to be associated to this working group.

The framework Programme was presented on 4 October. We have little time to examine it and give our comments. This programme will be simpler; its implementation will be decentralised but more condensed. The focus will be on post-genome activities, nanotechnologies and interoperability.

Concerning the relations and collaboration between EI and ETUCE, after a lengthy discussion, the Committee members decided to adopt the following text to draw the attention of the Regional Committee.

**“The Committee expressed its concern the continuing structural divisions between EI(Europe) and ETUCE in respect of responsibilities for higher education and research, which generate inefficiency, loss of effectiveness and lost opportunities for the unions in the sector. Examples given included access to the developing Quality in Higher Education network at the European level, assistance with which was offered by a Commission representative in autumn 1999, and the absence of an event for the unions on the Sorbonne / Bologna process parallel to those which had been funded by the Commission for the rectors and for the student organisations. The latest example was the observer status accorded to ESIB at the recent Council of Ministers meeting. The Committee urged EI(Europe) and through it, the ETUCE, to ensure that they had access to the Council of Ministers and other EU structures and to the Council of Europe. The Committee said that it was essential that expert representatives of the sector were involved in delegations where specific higher education and research issues were under discussion. The Committee also urged the national unions for higher education and research to take up these European level issues in appropriate ways with national ministers and policymakers.”**

#### **7. Next meeting**

It will held in March 2001.

#### **8. Round Table on Quality**

A text was adopted further to the debates (separate report). See attachment 4.