



Education International  
Internationale de l'Éducation  
Internacional de la Educación

## Education International Europe

### Higher Education and Research Standing Committee

Brussels (Belgium), 10 – 11 June 2002

#### Present:

Hugo Deckers, ACOD, Belgium  
George Vansweevelt, ACOD, Belgium  
Camille Dieu, CGSP, Belgium  
Eric Van Damme, CGSP, Belgium  
Jens Vraa-Jensen, DM, Denmark  
Kari Sajavaara, FUUP, Finland  
Björn Fant, FUURT, Finland  
Marjatta Melto, OAJ Finland  
Jean-Hervé Cohen, SNES-FSU, France  
Jean-Pierre Mailles, UNSA Education, France  
Michel Deyme, SGEN/CFDT, France  
Gerd Köhler, GEW, Germany  
Pat Burke, IFUT, Ireland  
Daltun O'Ceallaigh, Ireland  
Ilze Trapenciere, LESTWU, Latvia  
Gerard Sipkema, AOb, Netherlands

Sigrid Lem, NARW, Norway  
Ryszard Mosakowski, Solidarnosc Science, Poland  
Manuel Pereira Dos Santos, FENPROF, Portugal  
Pedro Gonzalez, FECCOO, Spain  
Concha Espinosa, FETE-UGT, Spain  
Isabel Caño, FETE-UGT, Spain  
Janez Stergar, ESWUS, Slovenia  
Göran Blomqvist, SULF, Sweden  
Brian Everett, AUT, United Kingdom  
David Margolies, AUT, United Kingdom  
Terry Bladen, NASUWT, United Kingdom  
Paul Bennett, NATFHE, United Kingdom, President

Jörgen Lindholm, ETUCE  
Monique Fouilhoux, EIE

**Excused :** Nikolay Kolobashkin, ESEUR, Russia  
Véronique Martin, SNCS, France

#### **Point. 1 Adoption of the previous meeting report**

The report of the previous meeting was amended and ratified.

#### **Point. 2 Approval of the agenda**

The agenda is amended to take into account two additional points : Reports on the ETUCE Higher Education and Research Network and the Stockholm Training Seminar on the one hand and on the OECD/US Forum on Trade in Educational Services on the other hand.

### Point. 3      ETUCE Activities

The ETUCE General Secretary, Jörgen Lindholm, gave an overview of the different EU documents and programmes regarding higher education and research.

- Education and Innovation

At the Barcelona Summit Meeting, very important decisions were taken. As far as higher education and research are concerned, the key issue at the top of the agenda is “education and innovation”. Ministers are working together to create indicators to measure how far countries keep the pace to be more dynamic in the global economy. The key for improvement is education and innovation.

- Open Method of Coordination (OMC)

Is a new method of decision-making, which arose from the Lisbon Summit. EU Ministers of Education agreed on common objectives, they exchanged good practices to increase quality and to make education cheaper. The problem is that, when national ministers return home, they do not always refer clearly to EU Agreements. They rather give the impression that the proposals they are making are part of the government national programme, when it is part of a general European scheme. Members at national level have to be aware of this problem. In such context, ETUCE role will be to improve the exchange of information between member organisations.

- Concrete future objectives

This report includes a higher education timetable including concrete measures to achieve. There are indicators on participation in higher education. They are using 2 different coordination systems, which are indicators and benchmarks. This whole method lacks transparency and involvement of social partners and other relevant stakeholders. *(This is an issue for future work by the Committee)*

- Skills and Mobility Action Plan

Another important achievement from Barcelona. There is a proposal of Action Plan to improve mobility. It is a follow up to the French Action Plan, but much more concrete.

- 6<sup>th</sup> Research Framework Programme

This is the most important EU research policy programme, covering areas such as nuclear energy, biotechnology, health care, and pedagogy. A lot of lobbying and consultation is going on in this program. Gerd Köhler insisted on the importance of the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme regarding the implications for employment and working conditions. We have to intensify activities to think about minimum conditions guaranteed in all countries.

- Convention on the Future of Europe

This is a process to examine the model of Europe we want for the future. Members are recruited from national and European parliaments as well as other bodies. ETUCE is represented in cooperation with ETUC. This programme, which will be working for one year, has not much advanced yet. The basic issue is a chart on fundamental rights. They are considering the development of the Treaty.

- Enlargement of the EU

Up to 12 new Member states are expected to join the EU during the years to come. In the ETUCE constitution, all EU member states are regarded as member organisations. All countries have a guaranteed seat but there are not enough seats in the ETUCE constitution. The ETUCE Executive Board met last May and reached an agreement to amend the ETUCE Constitution. During the next ETUCE General Assembly, in Spring 2003, the applicant countries might become ETUCE members regardless of their acceptance into the EU.

Regarding the enlargement, Gerd Köhler asked Jörgen Lindholm whether ETUCE could give an overview of the consequences for the sector of higher education and research, for Erasmus, the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme and other issues.

Jörgen Lindholm announced that he does not wish to renew his mandate of General Secretary. ETUCE member organisations will soon receive an official nomination letter.

#### **Point. 4 ETUCE Higher Education and Research Network**

In the context of a growing need for rapid communication, the idea of electronic networks was launched by ETUCE and supported by ETUCO. Three electronic networks have been launched among which is the Dialog On Network on Higher Education. ETUCE received part of the project funding for the organisation of physical meetings on the development of electronic network activities and on the organisation of animator training. Monique Fouilhoux is the animator of the higher education and research network.

The 1st Piloting course took place in Stockholm last May. Consultants from UK universities were present to develop tools for training and evaluation. The next training courses will be organised from 22 to 24 November 2002 in Florence and in March 2003 in Florence. Invitations to the HERSC member organisations will be sent out soon.

Jeff Bridgford, ETUCO Director, explained that both the use of ICT & computer based electronic activities, and computer distance learning are to be considered in this network. ETUCO set it up technically but the participants control it as specialists of the question.

Daltún O'Ceallaigh and Manuel Dos Santos, who had taken part in the Stockholm Piloting Course, made a presentation of the Network. They explained the use of First Class, a software working like an email but providing the opportunity for discussion among an important group of known people. The objectives of this network are to share data, information and experience. Not only does it encourage debate, but it also enables participants to make working alliances, to support lobbying, and to prepare for international events, such as the Berlin 2003 Conference.

This network has potential because it is cost-effective, easy to use, very clear (at each moment you know who is connected) and enables you to organise chat groups or conferences in real time.

Monique Fouilhoux will be responsible for regularly updating information and promoting debates. She insisted on the fact that this Network is a unique opportunity for the HERSC members. ETUCO provides us with a whole technical support team for 2 years. The software will be free of charge and the training is totally funded by the EU, provided the participants are EU state citizens.

## **Point. 5 Follow-up of the Montreal Conference**

Monique Fouilhoux reminded the recommendations adopted in Montreal and submitted to the World Executive Board meeting in April 2002. The Executive Board considered the proposals stemming from the Montreal Conference acceptable for further in depth discussion but rejected the proposal to have formally structured Higher Education and Research Forums as part of regular EI Regional Conferences (it is suggested to include higher education issues on the agenda of Regional Conferences).

The French and English versions of the Conference Reports will be finalised before the summer holiday. The French version of the General Report by Paul Bennett will be available in the coming days.

## **Point 6.**

- **Code of Research Ethics**

Some comments were expressed after a brief presentation by the authors -Daltún O'Ceallaigh and Jens Vraa-Jensen. An additional written contribution was provided by SNCS, which representative, Véronique Martin, had to cancel her attendance to the meeting. Monique Fouilhoux introduced this paper and it was decided that Véronique Martin, from SNCS, would be invited to join Daltún O'Ceallaigh and Jens Vraa-Jensen to prepare a revised version of the document for the next Committee meeting.

- **Draft guidelines on the provision of transnational of Higher Education**

This text is not strictly European, it can be used as a basis for a general distribution to the OECD group, enlarged to include JTU (Japan). Comments were invited, to be sent to Paul Bennett.

Gerard Sipkema, AOb, raised the issue of the agreements of cooperation between member organisations aimed at helping colleagues coming from abroad. Jörgen Lindholm mentioned an ETUCE document "List of Contact Persons for Members in Mobility Situation", which has to be updated and translated in order to be circulated to HERSC members by Monique Fouilhoux. Brian Everett and Monique Fouilhoux are mandated to prepare a draft agreement.

## **Point. 7 Research in Europe (6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme)**

Martin Grabert, Director of the "European Liaison Office of the German Research Organisations" has made a thorough presentation of the research issues in the European Union. The concept of a European space for research was born at the Lisbon Summit and has been confirmed. The 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme will be the political tool aimed at implementing a European space more competitive with Japan and the United States and at increasing the public and private funding efforts towards research and technological development in order to reach in 2010 the objective of 3% of GDP dedicated to RTD (see the presentation in annex). It is clear that these new processes will have consequences on the research structures in Europe. The participants were particularly concerned about the consequences on research personnel in the context of a European-level resource management.

The Committee noted the implications of 6FP funding being attracted to the less regulated, more “flexible” higher education , employment legal and financial systems at the expense of more regulated systems; also the new management systems which will be needed for a streamlined system based on programmes and networks, with closely monitored outcomes

The Committee also noted the possibility of a programme or network proposal from EI (Europe) or constituent unions on the issue of ‘New Challenges for the Employment and the Working Conditions of the Higher Education and Research Personnel’.

The Committee recommended that a meeting should be sought with Commissioner Busquin and that he should be invited to the Potsdam Conference in April 2003.

Affiliates can visit the web site: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6>

## **Point. 8          Teacher Training**

Paul Bennett introduced the issue of teacher education, pointing out that in a number of countries a shortage of teachers, problems of retention of teachers, and an ageing profession, were leading the authorities to take crisis measures to maintain teacher supply and these were potentially threatening the quality and status of the teaching profession, and the place of teacher education within higher education systems. Jörgen Lindholm referred to the work done by ETUCE on teacher education and teacher shortage since the 1994 “Teacher Education in Europe” Statement, and pointed out that if the warnings made in that document had been heeded by the authorities, the current crisis might have been averted. He referred to the recent updating work which had been done on the 1994 document in order to address the shortage crisis.

Following the discussion, Paul Bennett presented a series of proposals which were adopted by the Committee. The Committee agreed to:

1. Reassert the place of initial and continuing education within higher education and the importance of the links between teacher education and educational research, and express concern at the role of private companies in professional development of teachers
2. Encourage colleagues attending the forthcoming Berlin Round Table on teacher shortage and supply, to put forward the above view.
3. Recommend that EIE takes up the issue within relevant European forums in respect of the teacher shortage debate.
4. Recommend the circulation of the ETUCE papers to HERSC on teacher education and teacher supply for its next meeting.
5. Consider the ways in which distinct teacher education interests can be met within the higher education electronic network.

**Point. 9 Report on the OECD Forum / Debate on GATS**

Gerd Köhler and Marjatta Melto, who were present in Washington, made a report on the meeting which Mary Futrell and Elie Jouen also attended. It was pointed out with regret that the organisation of this forum did not provide EI an opportunity for expressing its views. This meeting clearly showed several governments' willingness to move forward with the commercialisation of the higher education services. It is obvious that EI has to remain extremely vigilant concerning those developments.

Furthermore, Monique Fouilhoux confirmed that UNESCO would organise the first Global Forum for International quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of qualifications in Paris on 21 & 22 October. This meeting will focus its work on globalisation and the GATS impact on the higher education sector on the one hand and on the other hand on the feasibility of a code of Ethics on Quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of qualifications. It was suggested that EI would convene the Task Force on GATS Impact in conjunction with this Paris meeting. A thorough debate among the Committee members led to the following conclusions :

1. The Committee confirmed the importance of work on GATS and higher education and research in its ongoing work, and the linkages with the Potsdam/Berlin Conferences in 2003.
2. The Committee recommended that it should be involved, together with representatives of all EI regions, in the work of the task Force on GATS being set up later this year.
3. The Committee recommended that EI makes use of the Report of the Montreal International Conference on Higher Education and Research to renew its pressure on global bodies, NGOs and national governments concerning the threat to higher education from GATS.
4. The Committee recommended that the work of EI (Europe) and the ETUCE on GATS issues needs to be carefully coordinated.
5. The Committee emphasised the key importance of work at national level, promoting membership debate; debate among the wider public; building alliances; promoting a wide definition of the concept of "public service"; and pressing for education ministries to take an active and informed part in the debate. Unions in the sector are urged to keep EI informed of national developments.
6. The Committee recommended that EI works on a broad definition of "Public Service" in collaboration with the Public Services International, making it clear that the trade union movement supports a positive concept of a globalised society, but rejects a model driven by commercial or market forces.

**Point. 10 Preparation of the Berlin and Potsdam Conferences in 2003**

Gerd Köhler made an excellent summary of a presentation made by Prof. Hans R. Friedrich regarding the Bologna process. After a historical reminder, he stressed the reasons for this process (globalisation, worldwide communication, worldwide education market, compatibility with world

standards as a factor for competitiveness, need for a common European platform, need for quality assurance). In 2002, 33 states are taking part in this process (plus 5 states with an observer status).

From this presentation, the Committee moved to the preparation of the Potsdam 2003 Conference programme.

In conclusion it was recognised that the programme was a package, on the basis of which outside funding has been attracted. However it was agreed to adjust the programme on the following lines:

- The evaluation study should be set in the context of the Sorbonne to Berlin project, and the importance of comparability, transparency and mobility to the project;
- The Conference must make the linkage between the quality of higher education careers and working conditions (including autonomy/academic freedom) and the quality of higher education;
- There should be an element in the opening plenary on GATS (perhaps provided by an invited trade union speaker from Australia).

It was agreed that the letter from EI and GEW should be sent out to constituent unions of higher education and research sector, as quickly as possible, providing information about the programme, finance and timetable for the Conference and the Country studies. The letter should make clear how much unions were expected to contribute to the budget, and what they got for their contribution (participation of three representatives). Committee members were asked to reply quickly indicating whether or not they were willing to participate.

Affiliates can visit the web site: <http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de>

#### **Point. 11      Next Meeting**

It was agreed to explore the possibility of holding the next meeting in early 2003, with the opportunity taken for some members of the Committee to meet when opportunities arose during the autumn, e.g., at the IT network training seminar in November.