



**EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL  
PAN EUROPEAN STRUCTURE  
Standing Committee on Higher Education and Research**

**New developments in the Higher Education and Research  
Sector: Consequences for Academic Staff**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop**  
Sesimbra (Portugal), 16 - 18 March 2006

**REPORT**



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The second workshop for the Standing Committee on Higher Education and Research was held in Sesimbra within the framework of the ETUCE/TRACE project on the "**New developments in the higher education and research: Consequences for the academic staff**". This short report summarises the main points raised at the seminar.

## **Point 1      EI International Conference on Higher Education and Research (Melbourne 7 to 9 December 2005): Outcomes and follow-up**

Paul Bennett and Monique Fouilhoux presented the report of the fifth International Higher Education and Research Conference of Education International, held in Melbourne from 7<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> December. The Higher Education and Research sector has been recognised to be at the forefront of the key trends affecting EI, particularly globalisation and the battle to defend education values in the face of both commodification and the wider attacks on human and trade union rights from the neo-liberal agenda and from the so-called "war on terror".

The conference reflected EI's growing strength in Higher Education and Research, with 90 delegates from 46 organisations in 33 countries. Thanks partly to the support from UNESCO's participation programme, this conference has achieved a significant increase in the proportion of woman delegates, compared with its predecessors. We welcomed the newly strengthened dialogue with students symbolised by the presence of student representatives from Asia and Europe.

Brain drain, academic freedom, the status of the academic, GATS, partnership with the students bodies, challenges to ethics were the main topics discussed through plenary sessions and workshops. Through sharing concerns, ideas and the development of the of common strategies, we demonstrated our capacity to act as the most truly globalised sector within EI, and we have been able to develop strong and authoritative advice for our delegation at the forthcoming inter-ministerial conference in Hong Kong. Finally, we must learn from the assault on trade union and human rights faced by our host organisations here in Australia, and declare to them our ongoing solidarity and support.

## **Point 2      ETUCE matters**

Following detailed presentations from Martin Romer and Annemarie Falktoft, the Committee largely discussed the draft Directive on services, analyzing both the results of the vote of the European Parliament and the project of a European Qualifications Framework .

As far as the Directive on Services is concerned (**Bolkenstein Directive**), the Committee acknowledged the existence of different issues. First and foremost, the key goal is to totally exclude education from the scope of the Directive. But there is a problem of language/definition used in the Directive – it is up to each government to give a definition of what is included or not in the 'national education system', because what is included in the system is excluded from the Directive (for example, Higher Education: if there is an element of remuneration/profit it is included in the Directive, as a service of general economic interest – SGEI). Secondly, the Directive should be translated into a simpler language – maybe it would be useful to produce and distribute a short explanatory article on it. Furthermore, the Committee recognized a general problem of awareness raising on the content of this Directive – an impact assessment, together with legal advice, would probably be helpful for unions to gain both a better understanding of the document itself, and a clearer picture of the actual possibilities they have for influencing its development. Certainly, there is need to take a national approach, because the situation of Higher Education differs widely in the various countries.

At the end of the discussion, the Committee agreed on a short statement of interest, urging national governments to adopt its view that the coverage of the Higher Education and Research sector as proposed by the Directive is far too important to be left to the European Court of

Justice: it is disturbing that the European Parliament approves a Directive, the meaning of which can only be made clear by the courts. Further, the Committee would urge national governments to recognise that it will not be in the interests of the broader objectives for Higher Education represented by the Lisbon objectives as the Bologna project, for the impact of the Services Directive to be left to the interpretation of different national states. This will lead to a patchwork, to a divided European Higher Education and Research system. Therefore, the coverage of Higher Education and Research by the Directive must be minimal – ideally, the sector should be completely excluded from the scope of the Directive.

Concerning the **European Qualification Framework (EQF)**, the Committee acknowledged the need for consistency both between EQF and NQFs (National Qualification Frameworks) and with the Bologna Process, as well. The ETUCE pointed out the relevance of the EQF in relation to the issue of mobility, especially in the actual European context, where the existence of different systems calls for the creation of a framework for comparing and confronting them. The participants, however, denounced two main problems. First, the risk that the EQF will lead to a harmonization of the national curricula; however, the EQF will only concern learning outcomes. Second, there is a problem of definition: skills vs. competencies – no clear definition has been given, so far, by the Commission, but the applied definition states skill as in 'functional competence' and knowledge as in 'cognitive competence'.

The Committee recognized that social partners have to start dealing with emerging issues like this. EI and ETUCE need to strengthen their cooperation on the EQF. And, particularly, ETUCE should allocate more resources towards Higher Education.

The timetable for the EQF foresees a Commission Expert Group in the spring of 2006 and a Commission Proposal in early autumn 2006.

Last but not least, after the issue was raised by some participants, Martin Romer talked shortly about **EUROCADRES**, indicating that a major change in politics is occurring since a new president has been elected. Romer also said that he had had a very positive meeting with the new president. EUROCADRES will continue to deal with Higher Education and Research. Romer also called for ways to improve the relation between the two organizations in the future.

### **Point 3      “The impact of privatisation and casualisation on the functioning of institutions and career development in Higher Education in a context of reform: Towards restructuring Higher Education”**

Dominique Lassarre presented the preliminary results (21 organisations replied) of the questionnaire launched in the autumn 2005, pointing out the following conclusions: it seems that globalisation led to an increase in financing (but by private funding), in flexibility, and a growing number of fixed-term contracts; the Bologna process, instead, impacted Higher Education mainly in terms of administrative work. However, as Lassarre highlighted, it was very difficult to distinguish the different levels of reform. Participants recognised the need of going more in depth on certain key issues that came out from the replies. Please confront the final analysis attached for more details. The important point is that, for the majority of the respondents, all these reforms and changing are seen or “vécu” as a **“restructuring of the sector”**.

### **Point 4      How the European Union works: ECOSOC, an advisory body**

In the effort to bring a better understanding of the European Institutions and of their relation to the organizations members of the HERSC, Mario Soares, former Secretary of the international relations of FENPROF and member of the ECOSOC, presented this European advisory body and its competences.

The presentation focused on the ways in which trade unions can play a role within ECOSOC, Formally, trade unions participate to ECOSOC through: consultations on specific issues,

exploratory opinions, opinions by own initiative from the Committee. The second two procedures are the most important, since the first one usually concerns less relevant matters. The exploratory opinions are more political, and they occur when the EU Presidency, Parliament or Commission want to have the opinion of the civil society on topics like obesity in Europe, for example. The third one (only 15% of all opinions, on matters like, for instance, demography) is by far the most important: it is here that trade unions can take advantage of the ECOSOC.

In practice, trade unions face both dangers and opportunities within ECOSOC. They should take advantage of ECOSOC in specific issues on their own interest; however, this body should not be a priority for trade unions. It should represent an opportunity for trade unions to lobby for their own purposes. At the same time, trade unions must remain vigilant, and control what goes on within ECOSOC to watch against negative developments.

Soares highlighted the fact that ECOSOC needs to link to the bottom if it wants to be effective, increasing the participation at its bottom. As far as unions are concerned, it is a collective responsibility to make efforts to get more influential and to develop their strength within this advisory body.

## **Point 5      TRACE 1                   TRACE 2**

- Martin Romer and Monique Fouilhox glanced through the project **TRACE 1**. They reminded the fact that restructuring represents the key point of this project. This seminar is the second one. However, TRACE I presents a main challenge for the Higher Education sector. The differences between national systems, between Institutions, between legislations, are leading to different interpretations of what is "restructuring" in a sector which is still in majority for the moment "publicly funded". The analysis of the questionnaires shows the difficulty to share experiences and knowledge and to transfer them at European level for a reliable comparable analysis. A detailed report will be produced by June.
- Ulisses Garrido (CGTP-IN, Portugal, and member of the TRACE team) presented the project **TRACE 2**, which, if adopted, will make it possible for the HERSC to continue the work undertaken in the last two years, and to reinforce its network. TRACE 2, if compared to TRACE 1, involves more federations at European level, rather than at national level, and intends to focus more on young people. Furthermore, it has a specific project for the Baltic region, together with key actions for universities. It entails an observatory concerning different institutions and different countries, and the creation of an experimental group of trainers able to work at European level with a key specialisation on the new trends.

How to use this project and the EU funding to support trade unions' activities and plans? A key challenge for trade unions is to be able to link the emerging issues to collective bargaining.

## **Point 6      The international context**

Monique Fouilhox reported on different OECD initiatives pointing out the fact that Higher Education is on the top of the agenda of several intergovernmental agencies that now start to inform each other, or even to work more closely together.

- The **Guidelines for quality provision in Cross-border Higher Education** elaborated jointly by OECD and UNESCO in 2005, have now been adopted officially. The next step is to follow up on their dissemination and implementation across and within the UNESCO countries. It will be important for Academic staff unions to collect information and to participate in mechanisms to support an effective dialogue between countries and all stakeholders.

- **Thematic review on Tertiary education: Second workshop January 2006**

As of January 2006, 24 countries confirmed their participation in the analytical Review (Australia, Belgium (Flemish Community), Chile, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Iceland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom) and 13 of them in the country visit strand.

It was a good opportunity to follow up on the work carried out in the different countries and also on the various initiatives regarding Higher Education undertaken by the OECD as well as by the other international agencies. Five thematic sessions were organised with different presentations. EI was invited as such to make a presentation on the outcomes of the EI Conference in Melbourne (7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> December 2005). Monique Fouilhoux presented the results focusing on: conditions of employment and academic freedom, GATS and trade agreements, brain drain and the "security environment" (presentation available upon request).

The third workshop will be held in November 2006. The final Conference to be held in December 2007 to publicise the results from the project

In conclusion Monique Fouilhoux gave an update on **GATS and the follow-up of the Hong Kong WTO Conference** held in December 2005. At its February meeting, the EI Executive board received a report and agreed that the Declaration adopted by the WTO Ministerial Conference has important consequences for EI's ongoing work on education and the GATS. The controversial section on services in the Declaration – Annex C – is rapidly accelerating GATS negotiations in 2006, and it is putting considerable pressure on Members to deepen commitments across all sectors, including education. Of particular concern is the fact that the Declaration calls on Members to develop new disciplines on domestic regulation before the end of the current round. Both these developments – plurilateral negotiations and domestic regulation – should be the focus of EI's lobbying and advocacy work over 2006 ([for more information, please see \*Tradeducation news\* n°7](#)).

## **Point 7 Bologna Follow-up process**

Paul Bennett, Monique Fouilhoux and Ann Fritzell gave reports of the work of the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) and its different working groups. A Work Plan has been adopted in October 2007 and EI will organise the official seminar on "mobility of staff" to be held in London in February 2007. In particular, Ann Fritzell presented in details the work done in the BFUG WG on "social dimension and data on mobility of staff and students". Participants were asked to report about the situation in their country in relation to the implementation of the Bologna process. After the plenary two working groups were organised on "Qualifications" and "Mobility".

## **Outcomes of the Working Groups**

The WG on **Qualifications** debated on the basis of the presentation made in the plenary (Point 2), stating that the EQF should not be used by national governments to change the national curriculum in an un-acceptable way or to introduce reforms on working conditions that are un-acceptable, but, rather, it should represent a useful tool for comparing the different outcomes of teaching at European level. Unions should argue against harmonization and any attempt to change the national education systems according to EQF. The group reiterated that, in its views, the two frameworks need to be consistent and compatible.

The WG on **Mobility** stated, first and foremost, that mobility should demonstrably promote quality and added value for students and academic staff, but that institutions and national regimes must *develop strategies* to ensure that this is actually achieved. There is no need, right now, to gather more data on mobility; rather, there is necessity of actions to promote mobility

and to remove the obstacles to mobility, such as strategies aiming at short-time mobility periods, or others concerning longer periods as a part of a life long career as teachers/researchers.

Mobility is an issue requiring initiatives at different levels. At European level, within the framework of the Bologna Process, the academic staff should have appropriate working conditions, and governments should take measure to make pension schemes portable; furthermore, they should deal with the practical difficulties of keeping jobs open for people going on even limited period abroad. Introducing modular teaching periods could be a practical way of facilitating student and staff mobility, while the provision of a 'compensation fund' would address the resource imbalances which arise from or contribute to mobility problems. At national level, tax incentives have been shown to work in promoting mobility, while, on the other hand, 'double taxation' obstacles need to be removed. Moreover, teaching and research experiences from abroad must be recognised when it comes to promotion or appointment procedures of academic staff. At institutional level, bi-lateral links between individual staff, departments and faculties, might provide a more effective means of promoting mobility than through the more formalised institutional level. The issue of a 'premium for non-mobility' – for developing one's career in a particular institution - needs to be addressed as well. It is an institutional responsibility to manage mobility of their staff and the practical issues arise from this, and maybe some useful lessons can be learnt by trans-national corporations, which increasingly operate on the basis of large scale staff mobility and have elaborated policies to facilitate mobility.

What can unions do on mobility? They certainly need to deepen their work on both comparable salaries and conditions at the European level, and on the resources and policies which facilitate mobility at national level, together with awareness raising actions amongst members on these issues. Unions should work closely with national students' unions/bodies with the common goal of addressing the disparities of mobility opportunities which exist between teachers, researchers, those on full time contracts and part-time short-term contract staff.

### **Next Meetings**

The next meeting of the HERSC will be organized in Oslo 26 and 27 September 2006, in connection with the third seminar on the "external dimension" of the Bologna Process organized by the Norwegian government.

Subject to the agreement of the EI Pan European Executive committee, a Higher Education (Caucus) should be organized before the European Conference of December 2006.

List of participants:

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Union</u></b>	<b><u>Country</u></b>
<b>Liko Stavri</b>	FSASH	Albania
<b>Deckers Hugo</b>	ACOD	Belgium
<b>Walgraef Claude</b>	ACOD	Belgium
<b>Van Renterghem Rudy</b>	COC	Belgium
<b>Vilim Ribic</b>	IURHEEC	Croatia
<b>Vraa-Jensen Jens</b>	DM	Denmark
<b>Peltonen Kari Juhani</b>	FUUP	Finland
<b>Matilainen Riku</b>	FUURT	Finland
<b>Arra Olavi</b>	OAJ	Finland
<b>Melto Marjatta</b>	OAJ/ETUCE Vice President	Finland
<b>Cohen Jean-Hervé</b>	SNES	France
<b>Brossard Luc</b>	SNCS-FSU	France
<b>Lassarre Dominique</b>	UNSA Education	France
<b>Köhler Gerd</b>	GEW	Germany
<b>O Ceallaigh Dalton</b>	IFUT	Ireland
<b>Healy Paddy</b>	TUI	Ireland
<b>Trapenciere Ilze</b>	LIZDA	Latvia
<b>Stemerding Gerrit</b>	AOB	Netherlands
<b>Telleman Jan</b>	CNV (OCNV)	Netherlands
<b>Kjenndalen Kari</b>	NARW	Norway
<b>Hauge Tove</b>	Utdanningsforbundet	Norway
<b>Mosakowski Ryszard</b>	NSZZ "Solidarnosc"	Poland
<b>Conceição Alves Pinto</b>	FNE	Portugal
<b>Pereira dos Santos Manuel</b>	FENPROF	Portugal
<b>Cunha Serra Joao</b>	FENPROF	Portugal
<b>Carvalho Mario</b>	FENPROF	Portugal
<b>Borzan Marian</b>	ALMA MATER	Romania
<b>Kolobashkin Nikolai</b>	ESEUR	Russia
<b>Milivojcevic Miroljub</b>	TUS	Serbia and Montenegro
<b>Pavlovic Branislav</b>	TUS	Serbia and Montenegro
<b>Pavicevic Ivan</b>	TUS	Serbia and Montenegro
<b>Zivic Miroslav</b>	SSS-Serbia	Serbia and Montenegro
<b>Kubek Alojz</b>	TUWES	Slovakia
<b>Trakovicka Anna</b>	OZ PSaV	Slovakia
<b>Stergar Janez</b>	ESTUS	Slovenia
<b>Gonzalez Lopez Pedro</b>	FE.CC.OO	Spain
<b>Campos Trujillo José</b>	FE.CC.OO	Spain
<b>Jimenez Concha Espinosa</b>	FETE-UGT	Spain
<b>Ares Gomez Enrique</b>	FETE-UGT	Spain
<b>Fritzell Ann</b>	SULF	Sweden
<b>Roger Angela</b>	AUT	UK
<b>Everett Brian</b>	AUT	UK
<b>Bennett Paul Chair</b>	NATFHE	UK

Staff

**Romer Martin**  
**Falktoft Annemarie**  
**Figazzolo Laura**  
**Fouilhoux Monique**

Guests/speakers

**Fenech Justin** ESIB President  
**Garrido Ulisses** ESIB  
**Horig Michael** CGTP-IN Portugal  
**Soares Mario** ECOSOC Portugal