

Pre-Congress Event  
Higher Education Caucus

# CAUCUS GUIDE

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## Foreword

*Dear colleagues,*

Over the last four years, the political and economic landscape of the higher education and research sector has shifted dramatically. In late 2008, the world was plunged into the deepest economic recession since the 1930s. A financial meltdown sparked by reckless speculation and greed froze credit markets, dampened demand, and pushed unemployment rates up sharply in many regions. Governments provided massive bailouts to the financial industry, but this in turn raised public sector deficits.

Today, even as the prospects for a sustained recovery remain shaky, many governments egged on by the international financial institutions are now taking aim at public spending, including spending on higher education and research, as a way to cut their deficits. In short, the public sector is now paying the price for what was a private sector fiasco.

The impact of the global recession and public austerity measures on higher education and research has been uneven across the world. A few countries have seen only moderate effects. By contrast, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have been particularly hard hit, along with Ireland, Spain, Portugal and Greece. In North America, several American states have slashed funding, capped enrolments and raised tuition fees. In much of the developing world, reductions in international aid are jeopardizing the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including the goal of Education for All.

As the private sector financial crisis has now given way to public sector retrenchment and austerity, many higher education teachers, researchers and other staff are paying a stiff price. Job losses, reductions in salaries, the increasing use of contingent and fixed-term contracts, and even direct attacks on basic trade union rights – including the right to bargain collectively – have affected colleagues around the world. In this context, international solidarity and networking through EI is more important than ever.

In many ways, the economic crisis has provided governments with a convenient excuse to “reform” higher education. Here, we have seen various attempts to undermine traditional governance models of higher education institutions by weakening the voices of teachers and researchers. Other governments are exploiting the crisis by passing on the responsibility to finance higher education and research to students and their families by introducing or drastically raising tuition fees. These trends put into question the way universities should be run and the ultimate aim of higher education: is higher education a way to train the student for a specific job or to educate the student to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for the betterment of society?



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Some governments and institutions opt for the first answer. Many continue to press for the inclusion of higher education as a tradable commodity in treaties such as the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Higher education institutions in many countries are increasingly run as companies and the culture of managerialism replaces that of collegial governance. Branch and franchise campuses open up, providing cross-border education to profit from a “market” in international students. Academic freedom is compromised as research is increasingly selected based on the marketability of the end product, as non-profitable faculties such as the humanities and social sciences are closed down.

This frantic wave of commercialisation infringes on our human right to education. Entry selection is no longer based on academic results, but on the ability to pay the exorbitant tuition fees. The competition among institutions to maximise branding (and subsequently, profit) leads to a dizzying array of output assessments, rankings and league tables. These measures attempt to present education as objective quantifiable outcomes, against the advice of education professionals who have been working in the sector for decades that the most valuable part of education - the process and the understanding – is immeasurable.

As academics and researchers, we recognize that throughout history the most groundbreaking discoveries were not done for profit, but to make our society and the lives of others better. Our greatest writers did not write with the intention of producing a best-seller. Our greatest inventors did not invent to make as much money as possible; they wanted to create so as to make their vision a reality. Their one resource was the vast wealth of knowledge left behind for free by predecessors upon which they depended and the freedom to explore and employ this wealth.

While crises create setbacks, they also create opportunities. As unions representing higher education and research professionals, it is now the opportunity to develop an effective and co-ordinated response to these attacks on education. The 6th EI World Congress is the time when you can shape this response, through your contributions and debates, and see it through that the sector responds with one powerful voice.

I wish you a productive and enlightening meeting.



Monique Fouilhoux  
Deputy General Secretary



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## Higher Education and Research: *A prime example of EI's sector-based approach*

*Education International's work in the Higher Education and Research stems from the recognition of the sector's unique challenges and needs. A resource-intensive arena, the sector is at the frontline in the battle against attempts to devalue the goals of education and appropriate it as consumer goods to the tides of buying and selling. EI's strategy in higher education and research is two-fold: to continually lobby and monitor trade negotiations where governments sign away the public responsibility to finance higher education and research, and to organise regional networks who work with other stakeholders to put forward the positions of academic and research personnel in all national or regional reforms and developments. Regional networks feed from the work of our international efforts, while our international work is firmly supported by concrete regional and national scenarios. Below is a summary of developments that took place in the sector since the 5th EI World Congress.*



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## 7<sup>th</sup> International Higher Education and Research Conference, Vancouver

EI's 7th International Higher Education and Research Conference was held in Canada, from 10-12 September 2010, and was attended by more than 130 participants from all corners of the globe.

The three-day event took place in the Vancouver Community College, where participants from 49 member organisations in 33 countries deliberated common issues that concern the sector in different regions, such as rankings of higher education institutions, the globalization and commercialization of the sector, and equity and inclusivity.

The conference was opened by the president of Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), Penni Stewart, who referred to the profound global economic crisis and the dramatic shift in the politico-economic landscape since the last conference in Malaga in November 2007, and the impact on higher education institutions and academics.

Following her speech was that by the president of the British Columbia Federation of Labour, Jim Sinclair. He spoke out against moves over the last ten years from "low tuition fees and high minimum wage to high fees and low minimum wage" and called for unions to make the case for society to pay for quality public services.

EI General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, welcomed the presence of two of the nine new member organisations representing the sector since 2007: the *Federación Nacional de Docentes Universitarios* (CONADU) from Argentina, and the *Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Supérieur* (SNESUP-FSU) from France.

He referred to the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel and the need for affiliates to make use of it in calling governments to account. In particular, higher education unions must fight the insidious encroachment of the market in education, a direct challenge to collegiality and academic freedom.

"Against this privatized vision," said van Leeuwen, "we must more forcefully articulate why higher education and research is important as a public service. I would also submit that the way forward lies in reaffirming the role of higher education staff as actors in society, as those on the front-line tackling the major challenges we face today."

The General Secretary also launched EI's latest global online petition calling on the Colombian government to release Miguel Ángel Beltrán Villegas, a university professor and trade unionist, who has been held in prison for more than a year on charges that violate his exercise of academic freedom and the fundamental right to freedom of thought and expression.

The Conference debated, augmented and endorsed the Action Points in a Supplement to the 2004 Policy Package. These Action Points (and the Supplement itself) will go forward to the EI Executive Board in November and to the World Congress in 2011.



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## 6<sup>th</sup> International Higher Education and Research Conference, Málaga

EI's 6th tri-annual International Higher Education and Research Conference took place from 12-14 November 2007 in Málaga, Spain.

More than 260 representatives from 39 higher education and research unions from among EI's membership took part in this event. The higher education and research sector represents 10% of EI's individual members worldwide.

In his keynote address, EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen pointed out the failure by intergovernmental bodies to support the key attributes of the values which underpin the sector. "EI had had to be active in defence of the sector in order to ensure the voice of men and women in the sector has been heard".

In the course of the 3-day conference, the following subjects were debated among the participants.

- *The 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel - 10 years later:* Bill Ratteree of the International Labour Organisation gave an analysis of the ten years of implementation of the Recommendation. He refuted suggestions that it was outdated or needed to be replaced by a Convention. There was broad consensus among the participants that while there may be technical issues regarding its actual application in different countries, the sector needs to make the Recommendation its own and promote it as a core international standard for higher education and research workers.
- *Academic Freedom:* Kari Kjenndalen from Forskerforbundet (Norway) reviewed the main findings of EI's report on academic freedom. The report revealed high levels of both formal and de facto constraints on academic freedom, which is growing in many countries, including those where academic freedom had seemed to be assured.
- *Rights of fixed term staff and early-stage researchers:* Larry Gold from the American Federation of Teachers (United States) outlined the dramatic decline in the proportion of tenured staff in higher education institutions in the US, and the growing dependence on casualised staff or graduate students. This is a trend linked directly to the fall in the proportion of funding from public sources. The unions' response must offer protection to both tenured and contract staff, as well as graduate students.
- *Gender equity:* Vanja Ivosevic (EI consultant) presented an ongoing EI study on gender equity in higher education and research. Apart from the sharp variations in the proportion of female academics in different regions, there is also the persistent feature of a gender pay gap and higher proportion of women in part-time or fixed-term employment in all regions.
- *Commercialisation and privatisation:* The conference also reviewed the wide-ranging challenges from the commercialisation and privatisation of higher education from three aspects - international trade agreements such as GATS, public-private partnerships and tuition fees.
- *OECD initiatives:* ILO Trade Union Advisory Committee's (TUAC) Roland Schneider and David Robinson from the Canadian Association of University Teachers presented the key issues in OECD's Thematic Review of Tertiary Education. It was noted that the instrumentalism of the OECD model stands in sharp contrast to what personnel value in higher education, including those values iterated in the



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1997 UNESCO Recommendation. The participants also debated the possible negative impact of OECD's Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) on the sector.

- *Bologna Process*: Barbara Weitgruber, Chairperson of the Bologna Working Group on European Higher Education Area in a Global Setting, gave a summary of the Bologna Process to date. She underlined the pressing need to make the Process a reality at the institutional level.

The participants also took part actively in workshops organised on the following themes: Public-Private Partnerships; Promoting the rights of fixed-term staff and early stage researchers; Mobility of higher education personnel and researchers; Climate Change.

In its final session, the conference participants amended and endorsed EI's statement to the OECD on its Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO).

## Africa

An African Higher Education Round Table was held within the context of the 7<sup>th</sup> EI Africa Regional Conference in Brazzaville on 29 November 2010. It was the first time that such an event was organised to allow a platform for higher education and research personnel in the region to deliberate common issues and challenges.

## Europe

The Higher Education & Research Standing Committee (HERSC) is composed of representatives from the higher education and research unions in EI's European region, the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE). The Committee is heavily involved in the implementation of the Bologna Process within the European Higher Education Area, so that academics and researchers are adequately represented in the developments. It is also involved in related projects by the European Commission, such as the EU 2020 Education goals and the Thematic Working Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education. The Committee meets twice a year and since the last EI Congress held the following meetings:

- 2007: October (Brussels)
- 2008: February (Dubrovnik), October (Lille)
- 2009: February (Brussels), September (Stockholm)
- 2010: February (Brussels), October (Leuven)
- 2011: March (Copenhagen)

The Committee has 3 working groups, working on Quality Assurance, Doctoral Studies and Supportive Environment. It sends representatives to take part in the official Bologna Working Groups on Mobility, Implementation, International Openness, Modernisation, and the EHEA Information and Promotion Network. For more information about EI's work on the Bologna Process, please refer to the next chapter. Otherwise, visit the Higher Education & Research section of our website: [www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org)



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## Latin America

In September 2009, nine higher education affiliates in Latin America met for the first time in a joint Latin America Higher Education Forum hosted by the *Federación Nacional de Docentes Universitarios* (CONADU) in Argentina. They discussed recent trends in higher education in the region and adopted a declaration outlining their concerns and points for action. In the declaration, they express their worries about the application of neoliberal ideology to the higher education sector in the region. The process of marketisation is fuelled by the GATS negotiations under which a number of Latin American governments have made far-reaching commitments. The declaration therefore called upon affiliates in the region to intensify their co-operation and strengthen information exchange. The affiliates met again at a conference in July 2010 and further discussed strategies to react to recent developments. More information can be found on: [www.ei-ie-al.org](http://www.ei-ie-al.org)

## Asia-Pacific

In 2009, a Higher Education Caucus was held for member organisations in the region.



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## Multi-faceted and ever-expanding: *El's work on Higher Education and Research in the international and regional arenas*

*Mindful of its role in representing the voice of higher education and research personnel around the world, Education International takes measures to ensure it is present at all discussions about the sector by various intergovernmental organisations at both international and regional levels. While the approach towards the sector is different in each scenario and multi-faceted to say the least, EI makes sure that the professional status and concerns of our colleagues working on the ground are well-taken into account. The profession of Higher Education and Research personnel is extremely dynamic, hence EI's work in the area is ever-expanding.*



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## United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Education International's work with UNESCO stretches back to our support for the 1966 UNESCO-ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. After the specific Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel was passed in 1997, EI works with UNESCO to promote both as the international standard on the rights of all teaching personnel.

To that effect, EI organises activities each year together with its member organisations on World Teachers' Day, 5 October, to raise awareness among the higher education sector, the non-tertiary sectors and the public on the 1997 Recommendation. Each year, EI co-signs a declaration together with four United Nations agencies - UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and ILO. For more information about the Recommendations and EI's involvement, please surf to: [www.5oct.org](http://www.5oct.org)

UNESCO also held its Second World Conference on Higher Education from 5-8 July 2009 at its headquarters in Paris, to which EI sent a delegation. Prior to the conference on 3 July, EI organised a one-day side meeting for its higher education affiliates. At this meeting, higher education affiliates adopted a statement entitled "Educators Committed to Quality Higher Education in the Coming Decade", which addressed a number of issues including: the key role of academic staff, the importance of academic freedom, tenure, collegiality, the risks of public-private partnerships in higher education, the importance of access and equity in higher education, the challenges and opportunities of internationalisation and globalisation, and the need for sustainable funding of higher education and research.

EI also contributed extensively to the UNESCO World Conference by co-organising the NGOs' Conference on 4 July, and also the multi-stakeholder panel on higher education institutions and the academic community that took place on the final day of the conference. EI Vice-President Irene Duncan Adanusa delivered a speech at the opening session on the first day of the conference while Penni Stewart, President of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, also delivered a speech during a workshop on the academic profession.

EI was also present by means of an exhibition stand in the foyer of the conference venue for the duration of the conference. EI Deputy General Secretary Monique Fouilhoux was a member of the drafting committee for the final communiqué of the World Conference on Higher Education. The resulting Communiqué referred to a number of key global issues in relation to higher education in the coming decade, namely: the social responsibility of higher education; access, equity and quality; internationalisation, regionalisation and globalisation; learning, research and innovation; and higher education in Africa. EI succeeded in securing references to the respect for academics' rights in various parts of the Communiqué (para. 21, 37, 49k, and 50c).

EI was informed that its statement to the World Conference on Higher Education had an impact beyond the conference, as Ministers were reported to quote from it once they had returned home to respective countries, such as the case of South Africa.

At the last "Global Forum on Rankings and Accountability in Higher Education" organised by UNESCO in Paris in May 2011, EI made the observation that the formal discussions lacked voices by academic staff and the topic of faculty workload was mentioned only briefly by one presenter. It is also clear that low-income countries, with the notable



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exception of those in Latin America, are embracing rankings as a substitute for quality assurance and accreditation mechanisms. EI aims to facilitate further discussions on rankings from a staff perspective at its various discussion fora from 2011 onwards.

## **Joint ILO-UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations on Teachers**

EI made an associated complaint to the complaint introduced by its affiliate Dansk Magisterforening (DM) Denmark, in relation to the implementation of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Higher Education Teaching Personnel in Denmark.

It also published a triennial report to the CEART in September 2009. EI presented its report at the 10th CEART session which took place at UNESCO in Paris, France, from 28 September to 2 October 2009. EI's report was based on a study undertaken in the past years through the collaboration of its 401 member organisations, as well as a number of commissioned reports on the status of teachers in various regions.

The EI report to CEART addressed key issues such as working conditions and remuneration, academic freedom, collegial governance, security of employment and tenure, and HIV/AIDS. Above all, EI's report highlighted three major concerns which require immediate attention:

- *Global teacher shortage:* Education plays a crucial role in the post-economic crisis regeneration. By contrast, we are witnessing cuts to education budgets worldwide, with dire consequences for the education sector and the teaching profession.
- *Global casualisation crisis:* More and more teachers are being employed on fixed-term or part-time contracts, and as a consequence face restricted academic freedom and professional autonomy due to their casualised status.
- *Increasing number of attacks against teachers and higher education teaching personnel:* Such attacks strongly undermine democracy and the well-being of society.

At the 10<sup>th</sup> CEART session, EI stressed that although the Recommendations have been in effect for a long period of time, governments and education institutions worldwide still fail to implement the key provisions made therein. By putting forward these findings, EI strongly urged the CEART, the ILO and UNESCO to take effective action.

## **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development**

From 2007-2011, EI continued to participate in activities related to the OECD through the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC). EI attended the TUAC Working Group on Education, Training and Employment meetings held in Paris, France, in April and November. EI organised two meetings for affiliates in OECD countries. The first one took place in December 2008 in Åre, Sweden and the second one took place in March 2010 in New York.

In April 2008, an EI delegation attended a conference in Lisbon, Portugal where the report of the OECD's thematic review of tertiary education was released. The report contained many troubling recommendations concerning financing, institutional autonomy, accountability, academic freedom, and terms and conditions of employment. The EI delegation produced an analysis of the report and circulated it to higher



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education affiliates. Affiliates have been encouraged to lobby their respective governments about their concerns.

The EI secretariat and representatives of higher education member organisations attended the OECD/IMHE Conference on Outcomes of Higher Education: Quality, Relevance and Impact held in Paris, France, from 8-10 September 2009. The conference focused on debates around measuring the outcomes of higher education, with a particular focus on learning outcomes. Working group discussions related to this topic addressed institutional measures to assess and improve quality, the assessment of learning and employment outcomes, balancing the needs and expectations of society with the autonomy of institutions, the impact of rankings, and ensuring value for money and efficiency in higher education.

In the frame of its project on the future of higher education, the OECD's centre for educational research and innovation (CERI) organised on 8-9 December 2009, in Paris, France, an international conference on "Higher education to 2030: what futures for quality access in the era of globalisation?". This conference, organised in partnership with France during its presidency of the European Union, was the final event held in 2008 marking the 40th anniversary of CERI. It also signalled the end of the analytical work of the CERI project on the future of higher education. In addition, the first volume of a new book series entitled higher education to 2030 was launched. The first volume addresses the impact of demographic changes on higher education. Other volumes also examine technology, globalisation, and future scenarios for higher education.

The OECD is also proceeding with the development of *the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes* (AHELO). EI and its member organisations express serious concerns about the feasibility and desirability of a standardized test for higher education students, particularly in light of the diversity of institutions, missions and programs across OECD countries. EI attended the OECD Stakeholders' meeting in relation to the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Assessment Outcomes (AHELO) held in Paris, France, on 4 February 2009, March 2010 and more recently in March 2011. They were opportunities for EI to reiterate its concerns and to propose some additional comments about the feasibility study in ten OECD countries. Affiliates have been updated in particular through circulars sent to affiliates outlining the challenges posed by AHELO and encouraging them to lobby their governments on the issue. EI has also addressed a letter in February 2009 to the head of the institutional management in higher education in the OECD offering comments about the AHELO project from the academics' perspective. At the latest stakeholders' meeting, the OECD and agencies in charge of developing the AHELO questionnaire agreed to include written comments by EI in the final draft.

## World Trade Organisation

EI was present at the WTO Ministerial meeting from 21-25 July 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland, which included a one-day GATS "signalling conference" during which ministers from about 30 to 35 countries were asked to indicate where they are prepared to make further market access openings. EI was active in lobbying delegations to exclude education services from further commitments.

Other advocacy work in this area included more active participation in this year's WTO Public Forum on 24-25 September 2009. EI, in co-operation with Public Services International, hosted a panel session at the forum and has invited experts to address the impact of GATS on education and other public services.



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The EI secretariat and representatives of affiliated organisations from Canada, Australia and Taiwan attended the 7<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Meeting which took place at the WTO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, from 1-2 December 2009. The meeting brought together trade ministers from 153 countries. Unlike previous ministerial meetings where the focus was squarely on negotiations, the purpose of this meeting was to engage in a "broader evaluation of the functioning of the multilateral trading system." However, this was taken with some degree of caution, as recent developments indicated that there is renewed pressure on negotiators to produce a package to conclude the Doha Round.

EI and its affiliates played a key role in lobbying against the further extension of GATS commitments in education. Prior to the Ministerial Conference EI issued a statement to the Ministerial Conference in English, French and Spanish. EI disseminated this statement via its website and through a circular to affiliates. Reports from IFUT (Ireland) and Lärarförbundet (Sweden) showed use of this statement by affiliates in lobbying with national governments.

At the ministerial meeting, EI co-ordinated daily meetings of affiliates in attendance, widely disseminated its statement, participated in a number of WTO NGO briefings, roundtables and discussions organized by other NGOs and trade unions. EI also participated in the International Trade Union Confederation's *Trade Investment and Labour Standards (TILS)* meeting and public conference held on 29 November 2009, and ongoing TILS meetings throughout the Ministerial conference. EI's participation in the TILS meeting and the Ministerial was important, ensuring that the voices of educators were heard and that relevant issues taken up by other NGOs were given prominence.

Recently in 2010, the University of Amsterdam conducted a study to evaluate EI's work to exclude education from GATS negotiations in the past 10 years. The study considers that EI's lobbying efforts at the World Trade Organisations and its regular meetings with country negotiators raised the level of knowledge and awareness about the issue in many low-income countries. While there are less formal discussions on education and more on related topics such as intellectual property rights, "peripheral" topics do have a lot of impact on education as well. To complicate matters, the focus of the negotiations is shifting from multilateral to bilateral treaties, which are harder to follow.

29 April 2011 was the WTO deadline for a deal on reducing tariffs and subsidies for industrial and agricultural goods, and liberalising the trade in services, including education services. Fortunately, many countries are reluctant to make commitments on education services in the GATS negotiations, reflecting the strong and effective lobbying effort of EI and its affiliates.

In view of its modest successes in the area of the protection of education from trade agreements, EI intensifies its efforts through lobbying at international meetings and alerting member organisations about potential trade deals through its electronic bulletin TradeEducation news. You can sign up to this service on [www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org).

## United Nations World Intellectual Property Organisation

Recently recognised as an official observer at the UN WIPO, EI issued a statement on the occasion of World Intellectual Property Day on 26 April 2010, calling for "fair and balanced copyright rules that strike the appropriate balance between the rights of creators and users, and the needs of industrialising and industrialised economies."



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In 2010, EI also drew the attention of its member organisations to the announcement by governments involved in the negotiation of the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) that the draft treaty would finally be made public. According to leaked documents, proposals made to the draft treaty could drastically limit the free access by academics, teachers and students to the education and research resources they need. For the first time, there will be a resolution on the subject of copyright tabled at the World Congress in Cape Town, which asks that intellectual property rights rules do not restrict the ability of teachers, researchers and students to access the material for education purposes.

## European Higher Education Area and the Bologna Process

The Bologna Process is a political project to establish a European Higher Education Area (EHEA), driven by co-operation between 47 countries, the European Union and eight consultative partners. Since 2005, EI belongs to the latter group, participating in the governing body of the process, known as the Bologna Follow-Up Group or BFUG, and organising several activities to further improve the position of academics.

The group within EI that works on the Bologna Process is the Higher Education and Research Standing Committee (HERSC) of European region, the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) [See above].

EI has continued its participation in the BFUG, in different Bologna seminars and in the different working groups where it is represented. It is also continually strengthening its ongoing co-operation with other BFUG Consultative Members. In this context EI, has strengthened its partnership with the European Students Union (ESU) and adopted a new partnership agreement in April 2010. Both EI and ESU co-organise activities on common issues, such as the 2009 campaign for staff and student mobility (entitled "Let's Go!") and another for student-centred learning (T4SCL – "Time for Student-Centred Learning") in 2010.

A Ministerial Conference under the Bologna Process took place in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, in April 2009 and the agreed communiqué outlined the agenda for the Bologna Process towards 2020, again taking up some of EI's concerns. The agreed agenda includes action lines for mobility, social dimension, lifelong learning and employability of graduates.

In the run-up to the Ministerial Conference, discussions also took place on the future of the Bologna Process, as the initial deadline would be reached in 2010. EI made several contributions in this process, stating that the initial goals, such as those on mobility, have yet to be reached and that the process should be extended towards 2020. Furthermore, EI argued for a more prominent place of academics in the implementation of the action lines on the national level and the inclusion of their conditions of work as a concern for internationalisation. EI has warned about the risk of commercialisation all along.

The following Ministerial Conference in Vienna/Budapest in March 2010 officially launched the European Higher Education Area, although much still remains to be done to make it a reality. In preparation of this conference, EI issued a publication about the views of academics with regard to the Bologna Process, entitled "*Enhancing Quality – Academics' Perceptions of the Bologna Process*".

The next Ministerial Conference is due to take place in April 2012. In the course of 2011, EI is currently conducting its second survey in its European region on academics'



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perception of the Bologna Process, the report of which will be presented in the Ministerial Conference to be held in Bucharest, Romania.



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## Publications

*Below are some publications that EI produced about the Higher Education and Research sector since the last World Congress in Berlin in 2007. All material can be downloaded from our website [www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org) in pdf format.*

### **Enhancing Quality: Academics' Perception of the Bologna Process (2010)**



Enhancing Quality is a report of a survey conducted by Education International among its membership on the perception of Bologna Process by the academic and research personnel on the ground. The report was presented to the Bologna Process Celebration Conference held in March 2010 in Vienna.

The report outlines what the higher education and research personnel perceives as the impact of the Process on their core tasks and responsibilities. It also shows staff's perception of the link between the implementation of the Process and the general deterioration of their remuneration, general teaching

and working conditions as well as employment terms and situation.

The publication also underlines the need to involve more staff participation in the implementation at both national and international levels so that staff members are properly introduced into the reform processes.

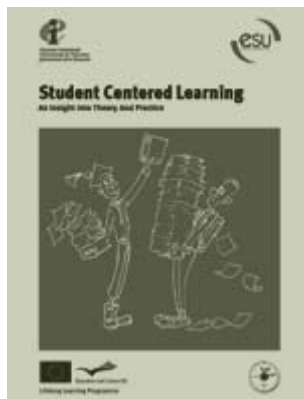
Nevertheless, the report concludes that staff has a generally positive outlook towards the future of the Process and considers it to be a sign of quality and a wealth of future opportunities for both staff and students.



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## An Insight into the Theory and Practice of Student-Centred Learning (2010)



This study was jointly published by Education International and the European Students' Union, as part of their project called "Time for a New Paradigm in Education: Student-Centred Learning", funded by the European Union. The project, which ran throughout the course of 2010, aimed to assist policy-makers in designing sound Student-Centred Learning (SCL) strategies and approaches, appropriate in the national and local context so that there is an effective shift in the learning paradigm which puts the learner at the centre of the learning-teaching process.

The publication first attempts to define the concept of SCL, and then gave an assessment of the conditions needed to implement an SCL approach. Next, it examines the professional development and training needed for academic staff and then looks at students' perception of or experiences with SCL.

## Gender Issues in Employment and Working Conditions of Academic Staff (2010)



The study and its report were done by Vanja Ivosevic. The study aimed to map and compare gender issues in the employment and working conditions of academic staff in various parts of the world. Focusing on the current situation in this area faced by female academic personnel, the work tries to identify the obstacles to gender equity in reality.

A major issue confronted by the author was the scarcity of available data, which resulted in the limited scope of the geography covered in the report. Nevertheless, the work is a huge undertaking that was a valuable contribution to EI's efforts to confront

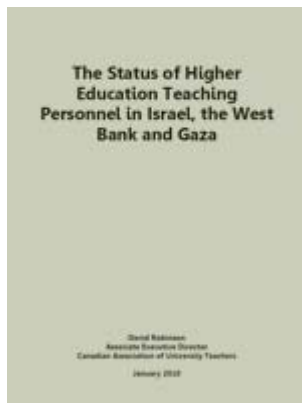
gender inequity in the Higher Education and Research sector.



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## Status of Higher Education Personnel in Israel, West Bank, Gaza (2010)



A joint publication of Education International and the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the study examines the employment conditions and professional and academic rights of higher education academic staff in Israel, West Bank and Gaza. It uses the principles and standards outlined in the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the status of higher education teaching personnel as its reference.

Written by Canadian sociologist Dr David Robinson, the report assesses how the core principles are respected and applied in these three areas, through interviews conducted with academics, students, university administrators and representatives of human rights organisations.

The report highlights the dire situation faced by higher education teaching personnel in the West Bank and Gaza. It also proposes that while the broader political conflict cannot be resolved in the short or medium term, support for the higher education teaching personnel and their unions in Palestine could be further enhanced.

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## Academic Freedom International Study – Burma, Colombia, Palestine, Israel, Zimbabwe (2009)



Authored by James Cemmell and jointly published by Education International and the University and College Union (UCU) in the United Kingdom, the report sets out the range of threats to academic freedom in some of the most difficult environments in the world where to be an academic may literally put your life on the line.

The five countries were chosen so that each provides, due to the specifics of the national situation, a clear illustration of the interplay between society and the academy's ability to operate properly and free from unwarranted interference.

The report puts forward the surveillance of the status of academic freedoms for consideration by the CEART takes on an important function in the nurturing of democratic practices in different societies that has impact beyond the livelihoods of academic personnel.



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## Report to the Expert Committee on the Application of the 1966 ILO-UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Teachers and the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (CEART) (2009)



Every three years, Education International is invited to present a report to the meeting of the Expert Committee on the Application of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Teachers and the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (CEART).

The report assesses the implementation of the mentioned recommendations from the perspective of education personnel represented by teachers' unions worldwide.

This 2009 report addresses key issues pertaining to the teachers and higher-education teaching personnel, such as teacher shortage, working conditions, academic freedom and security of employment.

Albeit the Recommendations being of a long-standing nature, key provisions made therein, in relation to all the major issues addressed in this report, fail to be duly implemented by states and education institutions worldwide.

## Mobility Barometer – An Assessment of the Mobility of Academic Staff and Students in Europe (2008)



Written by Dr Conor Cradden for Education International and the European Students' Union, the publication aims to provide an overview and summative assessment of the efforts that have been made to encourage and promote academic mobility in each Bologna Process member state.

The Barometer draws together the most important available statistics on academic mobility in Europe, information about the implementation of the Bologna Process of higher education convergence and the results of a survey of staff and student unions.

The document is an essential reading for higher education policy makers in Europe and beyond. Published just before the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bologna Process, it was a timely evaluation of how much has been done in the field of mobility and how much remains to be done.

The Barometer was also written in the context of the joint EI-ESU campaign on mobility, "Let's Go!" in 2009, subsidized by the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme.



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## Statement to the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education 2009

### **I. Preamble**

1. Education International, representing 30 million teachers and education workers in 172 countries and territories, welcomes the 2009 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education. This gathering, coming a decade after the first World Conference on Higher Education, takes place against the backdrop of significant global challenges. The economic recession, the most severe in the post-war period, is destroying the jobs and livelihoods of millions, and increasing inequality within and between nations. The crisis also threatens the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including Education for All. The threat of global warming, despite attempts to develop a co-ordinated international strategy to curb greenhouse gas emissions, remains one of the most serious risks for humanity and the planet. Meanwhile, wars, conflicts, and violence continue to disrupt and destroy the lives of too many of the world's peoples.

2. Education International believes higher education and research have a critical role to play in assisting local communities, nations, regions and the global community to confront these challenges. Higher education and research have a proven record in promoting the social, cultural and sustainable economic development of nations, and of building a culture of peace.

3. Education International affirms that higher education and research are vital public goods that contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of communities, regions, and nations. Consequently, higher education institutions should operate according to clearly defined public service principles: equality of access, affordability, high standards of quality, and public responsibility.

### **II. Academic Staff: The Heart of Higher Education and Research**

4. For higher education and research to meet the ambitious social, economic and cultural goals and to promote the public good, it is critical that governments and institutions recognize that academic staff are at the heart of the academic mission. Governments and institutions must make it a priority to provide the appropriate terms and conditions of employment and professional rights that are required to nurture a talented and committed corps of higher education and research personnel.

5. Education International notes that this year marks the 12th Anniversary of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel affirming that:

a. higher education teaching personnel and research staff are entitled to academic freedom which includes the right, without restriction by prescribed doctrine, to freedom of teaching and discussion, freedom in carrying out research and disseminating and publishing the results thereof, freedom to express freely their opinion about the institution or system in

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which they work, freedom from institutional censorship and freedom to participate in professional or representative academic bodies;

b. the right to education, teaching and research can only be fully enjoyed in an atmosphere of academic freedom and autonomy for institutions of higher education;

c. tenure or its functional equivalent, where applicable, constitutes one of the major procedural safeguards of academic freedom;

d. higher education teaching personnel and research staff should enjoy the right to freedom of association, and the right to bargain collectively as promoted in the standards and instruments of the International Labour Organization (ILO); and,

e. working conditions for higher education teaching personnel and research staff should be such as will best promote effective teaching, scholarship, and research. Education International calls on all Member States to fully implement the principles set out in the 1997 Recommendation in order to advance higher education and research that can fulfill its social responsibility and that is equitable, accessible, and of the highest quality.

### **III. Re-Affirming Our Commitment to Quality Higher Education and Research**

6. Education International and its higher education affiliates believe that the quality of higher education and research cannot be reduced solely to quantifiable outcomes or subject to any simple performance-based assessment. Simplistic rankings and assessments of higher education institutions based upon research output or student learning outcomes cannot on their own adequately measure quality. Quality has to do with the conditions and activities of teaching and free enquiry, and higher education is about learning and research that moulds a lifetime and shapes one's future. Education International calls on Member States to ensure that higher education not be reduced to mere measurable outcomes such as simplistic ranking or classification exercises.

7. The quality of higher education and research is best assessed through rigorous and regular reviews by academic peers. What constitutes quality teaching and research should be debated, established, and reassessed at the institutional level through effective academic senates or councils that have meaningful representation from staff and students. It is primarily the responsibility of the academic community to assure the quality of their programs through these collegial processes.

8. The work of all higher education employees contributes to the success of their institutions and the students they serve. To be successful, higher education and research institutions and systems must offer academic staff adequate and assured salaries with the prospect of pursuing a full-time career with tenure or its functional equivalent. Without respect for these basic conditions, no academic institution or system can hope to succeed in providing a high quality education. Education International demands that Member States and higher education institutions improve the attractiveness of academic careers and the remuneration, working conditions and terms of employment for all staff, as a basic component of assuring quality in higher education and research.

9. The quality of higher education is inseparable from the quality of all education sectors, from early childhood education to post-secondary. The ability of students entering higher education is directly dependent upon the quality of the entire education system. The role of higher education institutions in the initial education and continuous professional development of teachers and in educational research to be recognised and sustained. Education International calls on Member States to provide improved resources for the whole education system and increased support for teachers at all levels of education.

### **IV. Academic Freedom as a Basic Requirement of Meaningful Higher Education and Research**

10. Promoting quality higher education and research also requires that institutions and governments guarantee and actively defend the academic freedom of staff. As described in the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel, academic freedom includes the right, without restriction by prescribed doctrine, to freedom of teaching and discussion; freedom in carrying out research and disseminating and publishing the results thereof; freedom in producing and performing creative works; freedom to engage in service to the institution and the community; freedom



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to express freely one's opinion about the institution, its administration, or the system in which one works; freedom from institutional censorship; freedom to acquire, preserve, and provide access to documentary material in all formats; and freedom to participate in professional and representative academic bodies.

11. Academic freedom involves both the pursuit of knowledge and its dissemination and application through activities such as research, teaching, public lectures, conference communications, publications, professional practice, the building of library collections, the provision of mediated access to information, artistic production and performance, and service. All such activities are closely related and involve different aspects of a single job or task. Higher education relies on active engagement in critical enquiry and research, both of which inform the teaching and learning mission of our institutions. The quality of higher education and the experience of students both suffer when critical enquiry and research cannot flourish. The creation of academic positions that do not involve a range of academic activities in the pursuit of knowledge and its dissemination and application, undermines the mission of a higher education institution, which must remain inextricably committed to critical enquiry, learning and service to the community.

12. Academic freedom must not be confused with institutional autonomy. Higher education institutions should be autonomous to the extent that they are able to set policies independent of outside influence. That very autonomy can protect academic freedom from a hostile external environment, but it can also facilitate an internal assault on academic freedom. To undermine or suppress academic freedom is a serious abuse of institutional autonomy.

13. Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of individual academic staff. Academic freedom makes intellectual discourse, critique, and commitment possible. All academic staff must have the right to fulfil their functions without reprisal or repression by the institution, the state, or any other source.

14. Education International notes with concern the continuing violations of academic freedom around the world. In too many countries, higher education staff, in the course of exercising their right to teach and research, risk punishment and retribution from political authorities, other vested interests, and their own institutions. In countries and territories where basic civil liberties such as freedom of speech, association, and movement are restricted, academic freedom cannot be exercised. There remain in all parts of the world serious violations of the basic labour rights of academic staff, including their right to organize trade unions and to engage in collective bargaining. Education International calls on Member States of UNESCO to do more to ensure that these fundamental civil liberties and labour rights are fully respected, and that academic freedom is properly protected and vigorously defended.

15. The erosion of civil liberties in response to concerns about terrorism and extremism has also significantly affected academic freedom, as well as making unacceptable demands on academic staff in some countries to 'police' their students. Restrictions on the movement of higher education staff and the stifling of unpopular opinions have become too commonplace. Education International calls on all Member States to fully assert and follow through on their commitments to respect and defend civil liberties and academic freedom.

## **V. Tenure as a Means of Protecting Academic Freedom and Ensuring the Development of Higher Education and Research**

16. Academic freedom is protected through tenure or its functional equivalent. Tenure or its functional equivalent, awarded after rigorous peer review, ensures secure continued academic employment. It is the means by which academic staff are protected against personal malice, political coercion, and arbitrary actions by their institutions. It is also the means by which to recognise the essential contribution made by academics to their higher education community, the advancement of their discipline, as well as the development of teaching and research within their institution.

17. Education international has serious concerns about the rapid growth in precarious and fixed-term academic labour – academic staff hired on a part-time and/or limited term basis without tenure or its functional equivalent. In many countries, a majority of academic staff are now employed in precarious positions with low pay, few or no benefits, and without procedural protections for academic freedom. Education International stresses that higher education institutions and Member States must increase their efforts to fund and create more permanently and regularly employed staff.

## **VI. Collegiality as a Means for Effective Governance in Higher Education**

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18. Collegial governance of higher education institutions in which academic staff have effective and meaningful representation is a key requirement for the proper functioning of higher education institutions. Academic staff must play the predominant role through the appropriate bodies in determining curriculum, assessment standards, and other academic matters. However, traditional collegial governance structures in higher education are under pressure in many countries and institutions. Many so-called reforms enacted in recent years have weakened the voices of academic staff in governance, and have granted more authority to representatives external to the academic community. Academic senates and councils have seen their authority wane as administrative boards, increasingly detached from the academic community, take more control. In some countries, senates and councils are increasingly dominated by a relatively narrow range of business interests and the place of academic staff in them is marginalised. Education International urges higher education institutions and Member States to enable academic staff to play a decisive role in making educational decisions and setting educational policy, if higher education institutions are to fulfill their public responsibility for the creation and transmission of knowledge and for the education of students.

## **VII. The Risks of Public-Private Partnerships in Higher Education and Research**

19. Academic freedom is facing new pressures as a result of direct links between higher education institutions and the private sector that have been increasingly promoted, particularly in the form of industry sponsored university research. These research partnerships, when managed in a transparent and open manner, can help improve productivity and raise living standards through the discovery and commercialization of new innovations. However, such arrangements, if not adequately regulated, can also raise significant risks to the integrity and independence of academic research. Many high profile cases have shown that industrial sponsors can exert undue pressure on academic researchers and delay publication of research results that are not favourable to a company's financial interests.

20. Conflicts over academic freedom can arise between industrial sponsors and researchers because of differences in research cultures, motives and objectives. Effective commercial research requires non-disclosure to protect industrial secrets. Effective academic research requires sharing and disseminating of knowledge. Education International believes that all academic research should be made publicly available in appropriate ways.

21. Other threats to academic freedom may arise as higher education institutions rely more on private sector research funding. Certain disciplines and fields are favoured, while others receive little or no private sector support. Basic research is funded far less than applied research. Important research into social issues like poverty, the environment, or human rights are of less interest to companies who tend to favour research that will produce commercial outcomes. Alternatively, these research areas may be funded by government departments or agencies with a strong partisan interest in the research outcomes. These tendencies can distort academic research in a way that does not serve the public interest. In the area of medicine, for example, commercial pressures are leading to more research that produces minor modifications to existing medicines and treatments, rather than research into the prevention of diseases or to the study of health problems in the developing world.

22. It is therefore important that research sponsored by industry or other customers not drive the higher education research agenda. In the long-term, this would be counter-productive for industry itself. The value of basic research at the university level -- with its long time horizons, breadth of knowledge, and independent voice -- is that it is far more likely to make ground-breaking discoveries that will lead to unanticipated commercial applications. Education International calls on Member States to provide better funding for independent, basic research in all disciplines, and to carefully assess the potential and actual dangers of public-private partnerships in higher education, in particular with reference to the manner in which they compromise the integrity and independence of higher education and research.

## **VIII. Educators as Advocates for Access and Equity in Higher Education**

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that "everyone has the right to education" and that "higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit," Education International calls on Member States to take immediate action to ensure that quality higher education is more equitably accessible to all qualified individuals.

23. Promoting greater access to higher education must be a priority of all countries. Higher education and research nurtures individual talent and creativity, and is essential to the social, cultural and economic development of all nations.

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Higher education institutions, if fully accessible and adequately funded, can play a vital role in providing lifelong learning, and building a talented workforce and active citizenship.

24. Admission to higher education should be based solely on merit. There must be no discrimination in granting access to higher education based upon a student's ability to pay or on grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, or physical disabilities. Education International calls on Member States to ensure that all financial and non-financial barriers to participation are eliminated, in order to promote more equitable participation in higher education.

25. In many countries, tuition fees have risen dramatically in recent years. Education International is concerned about the impact of this trend on the ability of more and more people and their children to participate in higher education. Member States, through their tax base, have the primary responsibility to fund public higher education. Public funding is the most efficient and equitable model of financing higher education. Tuition fees should be reduced to as low as possible and preferably eliminated.

26. More action is needed to promote equity within the ranks of academic staff. Despite some progress in recent years, women still remain under-represented, particularly at the most senior academic ranks and within certain disciplines such as engineering and applied sciences. In many countries, women academics earn less than their male colleagues and in a number of countries their growth in the labour market has been disproportionately concentrated in the ranks of the low-paid, part-time, fixed-term academic staff. As well, visible minorities, members of equity seeking groups, and indigenous peoples are also under-represented amongst academic staff. Education International stresses that it is the role of higher education institutions and Member States to work tirelessly towards eliminating all discrimination, both overt and systemic, and to ensure that the composition of institutions' staff is reflective of the composition of the general population.

## **IX. The Challenges and Opportunities of Internationalization and Globalization**

27. Higher education has traditionally been international in scope, with students and staff crossing borders to study, teach and conduct research. Today, however, the emergence of a global "market" in higher education poses a number of potential risks for the academic mission of institutions. The international commercialization and privatization of higher education and research threatens higher education as a public service and therefore increases inequality, diminish quality, and undermine the integrity and independence of teaching and research.

28. The economic globalization of higher education is being facilitated by trade and investment agreements like the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) as well as a growing number of bilateral and regional treaties. These agreements have the effect of locking-in and intensifying the pressures of commercialization and privatization. Education International believes strongly that services provided in the public interest, and which sustain national and regional cultures and heritage, like education, must not be subject to the commercial rules of trade treaties. Transnational education is to be governed first and foremost by educational principles, not commercial imperatives.

29. Troubling questions have been raised about the impact of GATS on educational access and quality, on public subsidies and funding, and on domestic authority to regulate education providers. While many of these questions remain unsettled, the risk is that once a country has agreed to cover education services, GATS rules can enforce open education markets and enable offshore institutions and companies to engage freely in education activities. Local authorities, including accreditation and quality control agencies, may have little control. Education International calls on Member States to ensure that their country neither makes nor seeks any additional education or education-related commitments in the current GATS negotiations, and actively resists those made by others. Ministers are urged to assess, in consultation with the academic community, the full impact of GATS coverage of education services.

30. Opportunities for staff mobility remain very low. Academics have little opportunity for mobility, particularly for their teaching duties, due to barriers that exist in terms of visa and language requirements, among other social and cultural barriers. Education International advocates the importance of voluntary mobility in the professional and personal development of academics and urges Member States to help mobility become a real possibility for academic staff – by, among other things, easing visa requirements, offering possibilities for portability of pension schemes, and addressing issues of language learning in schools from a very young age.

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31. While more academic staff need to be able to have the opportunity to take up teaching and research opportunities in a foreign country, Education International is convinced that decisive action is needed now to address the “brain drain” of highly qualified personnel from developing countries to the OECD countries. We strongly support labour mobility rights, but it is also clear that the export of teachers, researchers and other highly skilled labour is crippling to poorer societies, and in particular to the Africa region. Education International asks Member States to consider ways to mitigate the damaging effects of the brain drain, such as providing financial compensation to countries losing skilled people, assisting developing countries in building their domestic higher education and research systems, enhancing student and staff exchanges to promote two-way knowledge transfer, and encouraging collaborative projects and research networks between nations and institutions.

32. Education International welcomes the special attention paid by the WCHE to the needs of Africa. The strengthening of higher education in Africa is essential for the long-term development of the continent and will require, among other things, significantly greater development assistance commitments from the developed world. UNESCO should also facilitate ways to strengthen higher education in the continent. Education International is determined to do its part by strengthening links between staff unions within Africa and internationally, and to assist in establishing employment conditions and professional rights that allow for high quality education and research to flourish.

33. In many parts of the world, higher education and research suffers because of situations of conflicts and war. UNESCO and its Member States have a critical role to play in assisting regions emerging from conflict to revitalize their higher education systems to contribute to building a culture of peace. Education International calls on UNESCO and its Member States to step up efforts of re-building higher education systems in post-conflict situations, with particular attention to be paid to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine.

## **X. Sustainable Funding of Higher Education and Research**

Educational International calls upon Member States and inter-governmental organizations to affirm that higher education and research is a public good and a public service.

34. As higher education and research is a public good and a public service, it is therefore the primary responsibility of States to ensure that institutions are adequately funded.

35. Education International notes with concern that public investment in higher education in most countries has not been sufficient to meet growing enrolment demands. Funding shortfalls are compromising quality and accessibility. In many cases tuition and student fees are rising dramatically or being introduced for the first time, institutions are relying more on contingent academic labour, programs are being cut back or eliminated, infrastructure needs are going unmet, enrolment is being capped, faculty and staff are being laid off, and admission requirements are being raised to levels that are excluding more and more qualified applicants. Education International affirms that funding for higher education and research is a public investment, not a cost.

36. The status of higher education and research as a public good is being threatened not only by reductions in State financial support, but also by policies and pressures that foster its commercialization and privatization. These trends must be reversed, and Member States must guarantee that public institutions of higher education are properly financed so that they can fulfill their mission of contributing to the public good.

37. The current global economic crisis is adversely affecting the finances of many higher education institutions. Endowment and pension funds, many of which were unnecessarily exposed to risky investments, have been hit by the sharp declines in global stock markets. In the face of the downturn and rising budgetary deficits, some governments have reduced spending on higher education and research, leading to staff reductions, caps on enrolment, research funding cuts, and reductions in course offerings. Other governments are using the crisis to justify cuts in funding. Such actions and their consequences threaten to undermine the public service mission of higher education and research, and to impede economic, social and cultural development. Education International calls on Member States to recognize that investments in higher education and research are not costs but critical to building long-term sustainable economic growth, social cohesion, and a culture of peace.

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## **XI. Conclusion**

38. Higher education unions and staff associations recognize the continuing and new challenges in the sector. Academic staff should be included as key players in developing any responses and approaches to meet these challenges.

39. Education international reaffirms that higher education and research is a public good and should be provided as a public service. This means that governments must provide adequate funding to allow higher education institutions to fulfil their missions. It also means that higher education should be operated on a not-for-profit basis and made universally accessible to all qualified individuals. No financial or non-financial barriers to participation should exist. As providers of a public service, higher education institutions have a responsibility to the public to ensure they provide a comprehensive range of educational opportunities.

40. Education International firmly believes that Member States urgently need to give more attention to the status of higher education teaching personnel. To be successful, higher education institutions and systems must offer academic staff adequate salaries, full-time career opportunities with appropriate job security and tenure, an effective voice in academic governance, and firm guarantees of academic freedom. It has been 12 years since UNESCO members expressed their commitment to these in the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel. It is now time that these principles be fully implemented and respected.

## Open letter to the OECD concerning AHELO

To:  
Richard Yelland  
Head,  
Institutional Management in Higher Education Programme  
OECD  
Paris, France

Brussels, 11 February 2009

Dear Richard Yelland,

On behalf of Educational International, I would like to take this opportunity as offered at the recent consultative group meeting to present our views on the AHELO feasibility study.

Since the AHELO project was first proposed as a "PISA" for higher education by OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría at the 2006 Education Ministerial meeting in Athens, EI has expressed concerns about the potential misuse and abuse of the instrument. We consulted widely with our members representing higher education and research staff. They warned of the difficulties of producing a standardized test that could provide reliable, cross-national, comparative data given the diversity of systems, institutions, admission standards, and languages across OECD countries. As well, it was feared that the test could be used by governments and other interests to produce a simplistic ranking of institutions rather than actually helping universities and colleges identify their different strengths and weakness. There is also the danger that AHELO could be used as a crude accountability mechanism by governments to reward good performers and punish the poor ones.

In our view, given the current feasibility study proposal, the contextual strand of AHELO is therefore critical and we support the intention not to pursue this as a stand-alone effort. Without accounting for key contextual variables, the generic and discipline skills outcomes will be of little use and will be open to serious misinterpretation. As such, we remain concerned that participating countries to date have expressed more interest in the two assessment strands of the study, underlining our concerns about the potential for misuse.

With reference to the report (EDU/IMHE/AHELO/GNE(2008)5) of the 24-25 November 2008 meeting of the group of national experts, we recognize the difficulty posed by the overwhelming number of potentially relevant variables that could be included. We do, however, strongly encourage the OECD to include information about important staffing issues in the feasibility study as these have direct bearings on the quality of teaching and learning. We are particularly encouraged to see that national experts have considered it important to include contextual data related to the use of fixed-term or adjunct faculty and student/faculty ratios. We would also encourage you to consider including a measure of faculty's self-assessment of their professional autonomy or academic freedom in developing course materials and pedagogical techniques as this may have a bearing on the dynamics of learning in the classroom.

The group of national experts has also identified teaching load as a potential variable, and we would certainly underline the importance of this. However, we think this needs to be expanded somewhat more to include other faculty duties, such as research requirements and administrative tasks. We have heard from our members that institutional pressures and reward

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structures require faculty to devote increasingly more time to research and administration and less to teaching. At the same time, including the total workload picture of faculty would better help indicate institutional reliance on teaching-only positions as opposed to the more traditional integration of teaching and research in the academic profession.

We are somewhat surprised that faculty-reported student learning outcomes were scored relatively low in the list of priorities identified in Table 2 of the report. We believe that teachers are best placed to judge and assess the cognitive and non-cognitive progress of their students.

Finally, we want to signal a note of caution about the measurement of employment outcomes as currently framed by the group of national experts. Measurements of graduate employment within his or her field of study are problematic as they are more difficult to measure in some subject areas than others. It may be easy to assess whether an engineering or architecture graduate is working in his or her field, but how do you determine whether philosophy or classics graduates are employed in jobs relevant to their fields of study? This may bias results in favour of professional and applied programs.

It may be possible to ask graduates whether they are using skills learned from their higher education in their current work, but this may in some cases reflect more upon over-qualification than upon the quality and relevance of education received. As well, graduates may be more likely to identify the relevance of practical and applied skills over the so-called and harder to identify “soft-skills” they have acquired and utilize in their employment. As such, this too may bias results toward certain disciplines and fields.

Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to offer our comments and criticisms. EI looks forward to continuing to contribute to the debate.

Sincerely,

Monique Fouilhoux  
Deputy General Secretary

## Statement to the 7<sup>th</sup> World Teacher Organisation Conference, 30 November – 2 December 2009, Geneva, Switzerland

1. As the global union federation representing nearly 30 million teachers and education workers worldwide, Education International calls upon Ministers meeting in Geneva for the 7th WTO Ministerial Conference to affirm that education and other public services are basic human rights. Education must not be treated as a commodity or subject to commercial trade rules.
2. Education International believes that the overriding principles and objectives of the GATS are in conflict with educational values. The GATS is a commercial agreement with the aim of expanding business opportunities for investors. By contrast, the goal of education is to serve the public interest: education advances human understanding, preserves and promotes cultures, and strengthens civil society and democratic institutions.
3. There are many unanswered questions about the potential impact of GATS disciplines on education. Once a country has agreed to commitments, GATS rules may enforce open education markets and enable offshore institutions and companies to engage freely in education activities. Local authorities, including accreditation and quality control agencies, may have little control.
4. Questions have also been raised about the impact of GATS disciplines on educational access and quality, on public subsidies and funding, and on domestic authority to regulate education providers. While many of these questions remain unsettled, there appear to be significant risks associated with including education services in the GATS.
5. Developing countries require more flexibility in meeting their educational objectives, including the attainment of Education for All. The rules of the GATS will have the effect of imposing one model of education – a private, commercial and import-oriented one - on developing countries, thereby weakening their own national systems of education.
6. The exception for public services in the GATS is ambiguous and open to conflicting interpretation. Article 1:3 of the GATS prides a very narrow interpretation of “services supplied in the exercise of governmental authority” that, in a strict reading, would not fully exclude education, health care and other mixed public-commercial services from the GATS. Substantive changes are needed to Article 1:3 to ensure that its meaning is clarified and, most importantly, that it is made fully effective as a protection for publicly provided education services. Article 1:3 should be amended so that mixed public-commercial services are explicitly excluded from the GATS.



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7. Members should resist making commitments regarding private education services. Given the mixed public and private nature of many education systems, particularly at the tertiary level, it is extremely difficult to define which education services are supplied strictly on a non-commercial basis. Commitments taken on private education services may expose the public education system to GATS disciplines.
8. The development of new restrictions on non-discriminatory domestic regulations will also adversely affect education. Current proposals would require that technical standards, licensing and qualifications requirements and procedures are pre-determined, objective and not disguised barriers to trade. If applied to education services, domestic regulation rules could affect quality assurance standards, accreditation requirements, and educational qualifications.
9. Other discussions on GATS rules include government procurement and subsidies. The GATS already applies to subsidies (such as through its National Treatment provisions). Introduction of rules on government procurement into the GATS, or changes in the rules on subsidies could further constrain the ability of governments to fund public education and related services without accepting increasing commercialization and private competition.
10. Members need also take account of how other WTO negotiations can affect education. Discussions on Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA), for instance, could result in a lowering of tariffs. For many developing countries, tariffs account for a substantial portion of overall government revenues. Less revenue from tariffs would mean less public funding available for education.
11. Commitments made in other service sectors can also have a significant impact on education. An example is computer related services or commitments in telecommunications that involve cross border transfer of educational content. Also, commitments taken in research and development services can affect tertiary education.
12. There is a need for capacity building initiatives to expand education opportunities in developing countries. This may be achieved through financial assistance to the governments of developing countries to create more student places, or agreements between those governments and education institutions from other countries. Capacity building should be possible at the request and initiative of the government of a developing country without that country reducing its policy options by making binding commitments on education services under GATS.
13. Education International strongly encourages Member States to adopt a precautionary approach in the GATS negotiations by not making or seeking any further commitments in education services, or other service sectors that may affect education. Given that it is extremely difficult to clearly define which education services are provided on a strictly non-commercial basis, Member States should also not make or seek any commitments in private education or other related services.
14. The mandated review of the GATS has not been carried out. Education International calls upon Ministers to ensure that this review occur, and include a review of coverage of education within the GATS with a view to removing it. The review should also focus on ways to improve transparency in negotiations. As part of this review, Member States who have made GATS commitments in education and education-related services should be permitted to withdraw those commitments without compensation.
15. Education International strongly supports increased international cooperation, mobility and exchanges of students and staff. However, international education cooperation and educational values should prevail over commercial ones. Education is not simply a commercial product. Its most important characteristics are cultural, social and developmental, and its benefits accrue for society as a whole. For it to be governed by commercial agreements like GATS is simply inappropriate.

## Statement on World Intellectual Property Day 2010 - Educators stand up for fair and balanced copyright rules

1. On the occasion of World Intellectual Property Day, Education International (EI), the global federation of teacher unions and associations, emphasises the need for fair and balanced global copyright rules.
2. Intellectual property (IP) rules directly affect the lives of all those who work, study and research across the education sector. Despite this, attempts to rewrite the rules governing IP, through avenues such as the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), have been shrouded in unprecedented levels of secrecy. It appears to be the case that ACTA is being negotiated outside the scope of any recognised international body or process, by a handful of mostly industrialised countries.
3. Although EI welcomes the announcement that a draft ACTA treaty will finally be made public, it strongly urges affiliate members and partner organisations to closely follow the negotiations because
4. ACTA raises serious concerns for all educators. According to leaked documents, one of the goals for the proposed treaty is to create new international copyright rules that go far beyond existing treaties agreed by the United Nations' World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).
5. It could establish a new global institution with a secretariat and legally-binding dispute resolution process; while other proposals would increase powers for border guards to search people and personal property, including laptops and other electronic devices. It could also create onerous new criminal provisions that would infringe on commercial copyright, but also impact in those instances where there is no pecuniary benefit, such as educational research, and personal use.
6. Those governments which sign up to the deal might even have to adopt a "three strikes and you're out" rule, which require Internet service providers to cut off subscribers after three alleged – though not necessarily proven – claims of copyright infringement.
7. EI is concerned that the ACTA proposals run contrary to WIPO's development agenda. Industrialising countries have been pressing for a more balanced approach to global IP rules, that recognise their need for increased flexibility, and have broader exemptions for educational and research purposes. ACTA though, could potentially narrow the meaning of 'fair use' and 'fair dealing', making it more difficult for teachers and students to access and use the resources that they need.

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8. EI strongly believes that international copyright rules should be negotiated by the global community within the framework of WIPO. As a recently recognised official observer, EI will continue to press for rules that strike the appropriate balance between the rights of creators and users, and the needs of industrialising and industrialised economies. Educators, as both owners and users of intellectual property, have a unique contribution to play in the development of a fair and sustainable knowledge society.

## Statement to the Bologna Anniversary Ministerial Conference, Budapest- Vienna, 11-12 March 2010

### **I. Preamble**

1. Education International, representing 30 million teachers and education workers in 172 countries and territories, of whom approximately 700 000 live and work in the geographical area now included in the European Higher Education Area, congratulates the ministers, the higher education institutions, the various stakeholders but above all staff and students on the 10th anniversary of the Bologna Process, and the official launch of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

2. Education International (EI) expresses its strong support to the development of the European Higher Education Area, and the development of higher education as a vital public good which contributes to the social, cultural and economic development of communities, regions and states. At this conference, EI is contributing to the discussions by means of this declaration and a study 'Enhancing Quality?' outlining higher education staff unions' perceptions of the implementation of the Bologna Process.

3. Notwithstanding the many developments since the Bologna Declaration of 1999, a number of challenges still remain at a time when we are delineating the course for the EHEA for the next 10 years. All developments point to the fact that we still need to get on track with the reforms. Unrest has arisen throughout a number of countries and this moment in time is as much one of celebration for all actors involved in the Process, as much as it is one in which we should look ahead to the aims still to be achieved.

### **II. Academic Staff: The Heart of Higher Education and Research**

4. Education International underlines the impact of the Bologna Process on academics' core tasks, working conditions and career opportunities. At a time when extra demands are being put on academics - in the form of administrative tasks, pressure to publish, ongoing curricular reform, and paradigm shifts in teaching and learning there is a strong need for the provision for a more supportive environment for academic staff by the institutions and by the states.

5. Academics are often forced to work overtime without adequate remuneration. Tenure or its functional equivalent is under threat, as the number of casual, part-time and fixed-term contracts are on the rise for academic work, often without the right to organize or bargain collectively under such employment terms. Research conditions are deteriorating in a number of countries across Europe and salaries for staff, at a time of global financial and economic crisis, are being frozen or reduced. We cannot ignore the harsh consequences that such conditions have on the quality of teaching and learning and how severely they affect the academic freedom of individual academics.

# Annex V

6. In order to further develop the European Higher Education Area, at a time of high demographic challenge and with the aim of high quality teaching and research, there is an urgent need to attract and retain highly qualified young women and men. Young researchers and doctoral candidates should be perceived as pursuing the first stage in their academic and research careers and need to be employed on doctoral research contracts and paid accordingly, receiving full social security benefits and support in their academic development on an equal basis with other academic staff.

7. Attractive academic staff conditions are a necessary prerequisite for the successful implementation of the Bologna Process, as well as the European Research Area. Current conditions remain unacceptable as long as there is no respect for basic employment and academic rights, namely adequate salaries, full-time career opportunities, appropriate job security, effective representation in academic governance and a firm guarantee of academic freedom.

### **III. Involvement of Academics at All Levels – institutional, national and European**

8. Education International stresses that it is essential for the ownership and success of the reform process to include academic staff as key players in the implementation of the Bologna Process at all levels. Academic staff and their unions must not be perceived only as social partners, but also as professional associations representing the very persons on whom the practical implementation of the Bologna Process relies on a daily basis. EI notes, with great concern, that there are numerous examples of the lack of involvement of higher education staff unions at the institutional and national levels. In turn, this comes at a time when institutional governance structures increasingly involve more externals - e.g. company managers, industry representatives - threatening collegial governance. This has a negative impact on academic freedom for individual academics and thus on the creation of knowledge and the development of science for the benefit of all the higher education community and society at large.

9. Quality Assurance represents a key area in which there is a lack of involvement of academics at all levels – institutional, national and European – particularly in terms of design and decision-making related to quality assurance processes. In order to ensure fitness-for-purpose of all types of quality assurance systems, academic staff must be fully engaged in the design of quality assurance procedures within their institutions, within national quality assurance agencies and accepted fully in European processes, alongside representatives of higher education institutions and students.

### **IV. The Funding Crisis in Higher Education**

10. Education International emphasizes the need for sustainable public financing of higher education at a time of global financial and economic crisis, which has developed into a severe social crisis. While some governments have invested more in higher education in a view to boost skills and employment opportunities, a large number of national governments are yet to recognise that higher education and research are necessary components for the successful development of societies and economies in the future.

11. Education International stresses that while funding shortages compromise quality of, and access to, higher education and research, current solutions which are being devised leading more to privatisation and public-private partnerships in higher education are equally risky. As this trend continues, EI finds, in its 2009 report to CEART1 that while autonomy for higher education institutions increases in order to accommodate such new arrangements, the individual and collegial academic freedom becomes increasingly restricted. EI stresses that independent fundamental research needs to continue receiving appropriate financial support and the integrity and independence of all academic research must not be endangered, with a clear purpose of wide dissemination and sharing of knowledge for a wider public benefit.

12. Education International expresses its concerns over the widespread introduction of tuition fees throughout Europe, categorically opposing high fee regimes, which negatively impact the access to higher education and burden young people with debt while conditioning their choice of studies. The Bologna Process calls for better access to higher education for all students in any part of the EHEA in which they choose to study, which must be matched with corresponding public investment in higher education for an improved social dimension in all three cycles of higher education.

### **V. Mobility as the underlying force of the Bologna Process**

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13. Education International reiterates its support to mobility as a crucial component for the professional and personal development of academics and students. Mobility remains the driving force of the Bologna Process and the underlying notion on which the EHEA was envisaged. As such, it requires special attention from decision-makers in terms of the provision of institutional and financial means for making it a reality.

14. Education International stresses the urgent need for more attention to be paid to balanced mobility and brain drain. The principle of quality cooperation over competition needs to be the basis of the mobility processes, promoting a sharing and understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity, broadening educational opportunities and enriching the experience of students and staff in higher education by enhancing the free flow and exchange of knowledge and ideas. EI calls upon Ministers to implement clearly targeted measures to enhance mobility for both staff and students in a balanced manner, while preventing brain drain of highly qualified individuals particularly from the East to the Western regions of Europe.

## **VI. The Bologna Process in 2020**

15. Education International welcomes the continuous efforts of governments and stakeholders in working towards the fulfilment of all criteria of the European Higher Education Area.

16. Education International calls upon the ministers to take into account the complexities of the creation of such a complex space and to tackle all remaining challenges in cooperation with other relevant ministers within their national governments.

17. Education International stresses that any continued reforms need to be undertaken in a manner that is well planned and applied consistently throughout all higher education institutions within member countries, while taking into account the different realities of the countries and acknowledging the different paces and actions that countries might choose.

18. Education International emphasises the need for the social dimension – as a core aspect of the Bologna Process - to be improved for both students and academic staff. With respect to the latter it is necessary to ensure better access to the academic profession, improved tenure, social security benefits and pensions and the possibility of making these portable, while undertaking additional intensive efforts to make mobility a reality for academic staff.

19. The next ten years will serve to boost the global dimension of the Bologna. While the Process is likely to become more open to the continents outside Europe, this must not, under any circumstances, be based on a market-rationale. Rather, it should encourage improved comparability of degrees and qualifications and should strengthen cooperation for the benefit of all involved in higher education.

20. With a view to achieving the core aims of higher education and of the Bologna Process, Education International calls upon ministers and the EHEA community to work intensely towards the social, cultural and economic development of our communities, through which individual talent and creativity are nurtured for the benefit of all.

## Report of the 6th International Higher Education and Research Conference, Malaga

### **Introduction: from Melbourne 2005 to Malaga 2007**

The VIth International Higher Education and Research Conference of Education International has met in Malaga, Spain, from 12-14 November 2007, shaping its debates around the theme "The Status of Higher Education Personnel - 10 years after the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation". Some 260 delegates, representing 56 member organisations from 39 countries met, the largest such conference in EI to date - reflecting the growing importance of the sector and its place within Education International, almost 10% of whose 31 million individual members work in higher education and research. The conference was warmly welcomed to a city and a region which proudly boasts a cultural continuity from the Phoenicians to Picasso. Our Spanish hosts pointed to the relevance of the conference theme for Spanish higher education, faced with legislative changes to the accreditation of access, the status of teaching personnel, the autonomy of universities and their relations with industry.

In his keynote address, EI General Secretary Fred Van Leeuwen welcomed the scope of the conference with representation from all EI's regions and increased numbers from the non-industrialised countries including new unions from Benin, Mexico and Nicaragua. He paid tribute to the UNESCO participation programme for its assistance, and thanked the EI higher education networks which had facilitated the organisation of the conference. Fred Van Leeuwen said that intergovernmental bodies recognised the value of higher education and research, but failed to support their key attributes which underpin that value, leading to ongoing conflict. EI had had to be active in defence of the sector and had ensured that "the voice of the men and women in the sector has been heard: we have made a real difference". He drew attention to three areas in which EI's campaigns have succeeded:

The 1997 UNESCO recommendation itself, which might not have been promulgated but for years of intense and expert EI lobbying in which the Canadian AUT played a key role;

The battle against GATS and the WTO, in which EI's advocacy and mobilisation, in concert with the Public Services International, alerted the public to the threat of commercialisation of higher education and research;

The long campaign to get into the Pan-European "Bologna Process" was to put higher education personnel in their rightful place alongside governments, university rectors and student organisations.

The General Secretary referred to the close working between EI and the European Students Union, which was strengthened during the Conference by the launch of the International Mobility Campaign for staff and students.

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He said that EI's key principles - peace, democracy, equality and social justice - were under threat or non-existent in many countries as a result of government actions, and the neo-liberal agenda. He drew attention to the approaching crisis in the next decade as the "baby boomer" generation of teachers retires, creating an 18 million shortfall in teacher supply worldwide, and he pledged to use EI as a vehicle to fill the training gap in countries where governments were failing to deliver teachers in the numbers needed or with sufficient training. However, he also called on the higher education affiliates to lend their teacher education expertise at the national level to help address the crisis of teacher shortage, and to sustain the quality of the profession.

Fred Van Leeuwen also welcomed the presence of climate change on the conference agenda, and pointed to the strengths of the university sector in addressing these key issues.

Taking up the themes of the Berlin World Congress, the General Secretary referred to the Task Force on Public Private Partnerships which is being set up. He acknowledged that the issue was controversial with many member organisations, but claimed that it was essential that EI developed its policy to deal with emerging partnerships between governments, the non-government sector and other stakeholders.

In conclusion he said that the higher education sector was in the forefront of many developing trends and should help other education sectors: in turn, the higher education and research sector could "count on EI".

## **The 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel - 10 years later: outcome and perspectives**

The Conference received an analysis from Bill Ratteree of ILO, of the 1997 Recommendation, in which he rehearsed its key themes: academic freedom, tenure or job security, institutional autonomy, the careers and conditions of service of higher education personnel, research, part-time and casual staff rights. He pointed out the role played in the development of the UNESCO recommendation both by the ILO and teachers' representatives, and the opportunities for continued teacher organisation involvement in relation to the work of the CEART.

Bill Ratteree refuted suggestions either that the Recommendation was outdated by developments of the last decade or that it might need to be replaced by a Convention. He pointed to the range of political, collective bargaining and publicity uses to which the Recommendation could be put - but also to the fact that the first allegation of non-compliance was only now being taken through the system, after 10 years: the NTEU case against the Australian government.

Ilze Trapenciere (LIZDA; Latvia) and Carolyn Allport (NTEU, Australia) presented case studies of the potential for and the actual application of the Recommendation in Latvia and in Australia.

It is clear that there is substantial potential for use of the recommendation, but there are a range of technical issues to be addressed, as well as a serious challenge in view of the complex technical process which application of the recommendation may involve. However, as Carolyn Allport said, we need to make the Recommendation our own, and to promote it as the core international standard for higher education and research workers.

## **Protecting and Defending Academic Freedom**

Kari Kjenndalen (NAR, Norway) reviewed the main findings from the EI report on academic freedom, in the light of the key international reference points from the Magna Charta Universitatum onwards. She contrasted those positive assertions of academic freedom with the reality of the challenges from globalisation, "new public management", growing dependence on external funding, privatisations, differentiation of staffing structures, and the sheer lack of time and money to support academic work and academic freedom.

The EI survey had revealed high levels of formal or de facto constraints on academic freedom, and these were growing in many countries, including some where academic freedom had seemed to be assured. The fight back must be multi-dimensional, including work with partner organisations at the international level, the fight for legal guarantees at the national level, and the vigorous defence against individual threats to academic freedom in the universities.



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Leif Sondergaard (DM, Denmark) explored these themes further in the context of national terrorist legislation being passed or contemplated by many national governments in the wake of 9/11. He pointed to the ambiguities in the key UN Security Council resolution 1373 passed immediately after those events, and the parallels which followed in national legislation, imposing radical new regimes in regard to border control and freedom of movement, and the draconian new powers of detention which a number of governments had taken. This had led for example, to a significant fall in the number of foreign students entering the USA. As the "war on terror" continued, the impact on the academic community has widened, not only with restrictions on academics visiting the USA and other countries because of security or overtly ideological considerations, but a sinister culture of constraint on areas of research no longer deemed acceptable across a wide range of disciplines. This in turn was promoting "self censorship" by academics, a step towards an Orwellian vision of a cowed and subservient academy. The stated reason for the arrest of a group of academics in Germany for alleged links to terror groups this summer would have been laughable if the implications of such unreasoning state power were not in fact, terrifying.

James Rice (NEA, USA) described the campaign by the academic unions in the USA, to stem the tide of state legislation aimed at curbing academic freedom. The Free Exchange on Campus alliance between faculty unions and student organisations had met with a high level of success in fighting off neoconservative attempts to legislate away academic freedoms in more than half of the states of the US.

However, in discussion, it was indicated that the neo-con agenda was gaining ground in public opinion, with a wide public acceptance of the idea that "academic imbalance" (towards a liberal agenda) was a problem to be addressed. It was argued forcefully that academic freedom must be defended as the bedrock of higher education and research, and the key issues of private funding and casualised staff must also be fought on the grounds of academic freedom. In particular, EI and its affiliates must take up the fight against self censorship with their members, as a collective trade union issue. We must renew the commitment we made in Melbourne in December 2005, to campaign nationally on these issues. At present, in spite of great and often successful trade union work, still too often we are losing the battle.

## **Careers in Higher Education: Promoting the rights of fixed-term staff and early-stage researchers**

Larry Gold (AFT, USA) outlined the dramatic decline in the proportion of tenured staff in universities and colleges in the United States, and the growing dependence on casualised staff or graduate students - a trend directly linked to the fall in the proportion of funding from public sources. He paid tribute to the quality and commitment of casual staff, but argued both that the system posed intolerable burdens on them, and that in the medium term a quality higher education system so overwhelmingly dependant on contract staff was unsustainable. However, there had been a 30 year ascendancy by right wing ideologues in the US, which had demonised the public sector and the taxes required to sustain it.

The unions' response must offer protection to both tenured and contract staff, as well as graduate students. The FACE campaign aimed at building state-level coalitions to work for state legislation to protect tenure and limit the proportion of contract staff (in general a target of about 75% renewed staff, was the objective). It was recognised that this campaign would be a "long haul" which would require both alliance building with students and other bodies, and the renewal of the unions' own organising base.

Bruno Carapinha (European Student's Union) gave a student perspective, based on the European Student Union publication "Bologna through student eyes", which identified the diversity of forms in which graduate and doctoral students worked across Europe. He set out a powerful case for common rights and status for all graduate students to eradicate disadvantage and to ensure rights of transition from the second (masters) cycle to doctoral studies, as well as addressing mobility and labour market issues.

Denis Jouan (SNCS, France) examined the recruitment and retention of early stage researchers, again pointing to the wide range and diversity of activities under the "research" rubric. He pointed out the growing crisis in research capacity generated by private and project-related funding and casual employment, and called for a shift from a "regulation by despair" for individual researchers to a collective and concerted campaign for researchers, based on clear employment rights. He pointed to the European Union's prescriptions for "contracts of indefinite duration" and the UK concordat for research workers as examples of what could be achieved, although the loopholes and weaknesses in these initiatives remained to be addressed, and in the final analysis, all researchers including at the early stage of their career need non fixed-term employment contracts, and this must be the trade union objective.

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In discussion, it was argued that there need to be a balance between the pursuit of legislative protections and the more vigorous use of collective bargaining tools; which should include routes for contract staff into permanent employment.

## **Advancing Gender Equity**

Vanja Ivosevic (Conducted the study) introduced the ongoing EI study on gender equity in higher education and research, urging more unions in the sector to broaden and deepen the analysis. She noted that the variation in the availability of official data weighted the study towards certain regions rather than others. She also noted that in global terms, while an increasing proportion of women now achieved entry to first degree courses and often had higher completion rates than males, a lower proportion of women than men continued into doctoral studies. This had clear implications for the supply of female academic staff. There were also marked differences in take-up in certain subjects, in particular low numbers of women in science and engineering. There were sharp variations in the proportion of female academics, from over 40% in central and eastern Europe and central Asia, to less than 20% in sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab world. Also, women represent 50% of junior, 30% of middle rank, and only 18% of high level posts in industrialised countries. As David Robinson reported in Melbourne, there was a substantially higher proportion of women in part-time or fixed-term employment, and the gender pay gap was a persistent feature, ranging from 13 to 24%. The increase of women in employment in the sector was ushering in an institutional attitude of "cheap labour".

The trade union response has focused on the gap in pay and conditions, bullying and harassment, and the career progression of women. Most unions have specific structures and mechanisms to address gender issues, but recognised that gender issues are both a women's and a men's responsibility, and must enter the policy and bargaining mainstream.

Carolyn Allport (NTEU, Australia) outlined the work of the NTEU in Australia, to put gender issues on the bargaining and political agenda. This work had its roots in major research commissioned by the union in the 1990's, and at that time led to some advances within the arbitration system which existed at that time. The NTEU is now planning further broad-based collaborative research, which would explore the impact of casualisation and privatisation on gender equality in higher education. It is to be hoped that the forthcoming Australian general election would lead to a restoration of rights and structures, the loss of which was reported to the 2005 Melbourne Conference. Carolyn Allport said that the majority of academic staff in Australia were women, as the profession becomes less attractive as a career. This raised issues of renewal which must be addressed. The fall of female earnings in proportion to those of men could be closely related to the key phases of deregulation by the Howard government. Australia also had a very high casualisation rate, with 50% of teaching done by hourly paid staff.

Gender inequity was also reflected in research funding and promotions where evidence showed that men were more likely to be successful even where there was strong evidence that female competitors were as good or better. The PhD represented a major obstacle, especially for those with family responsibilities.

The union response must include making gender inequity a bargaining issue; working closely with employers; pressing for institutional gender equality audits: the review and improvement of promotion systems, including the use of mentoring; and pursuit of legal protections.

Soledad Ruiz Seguin (Director of the Andalusia Woman Institute) described the range of work on gender issues being undertaken by the Andalusian regional government, in collaboration with Andalusia's 10 universities and the trade unions. Women gained a substantial majority of the degrees awarded; yet only 33% of women academics had tenure. The majority of research funds were allocated to large-scale research projects which favoured men. On the other hand, there were childcare centres for staff in the universities, equality programmes were being developed, together with the enhancement of the status of women's studies, work to promote employability of women, and to involve them more fully in university governance.

Linda Newman (UCU, UK) outlined the provisions of the UK's legal Gender Equality Duty, which came into force in 2005. This included a requirement on public bodies to conduct audits of current and future policies for their equality impact. The UCU was putting a major effort into training and mobilising its activists to push for the implementation of the Duty in universities and colleges.

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## **Combating Commercialisation and Privatisation**

The Conference reviewed the wide ranging challenges from the commercialisation and privatisation of higher education from three aspects - international trade agreements, public/private partnerships and tuition fees.

David Robinson (CAUT, Canada) reminded the conference of the key aspects of the GATS, but pointed out that the challenge of international trade agreements was now multi-faceted, particularly in respect of regional and bilateral agreements which went beyond the requirements of GATS, but which might be even less transparent and open to challenge than the GATS. Through driven by commercial considerations, and by Trade ministers, they were drawing education closer into their net. GATS agreements in sectors other than education, like "recreation" (libraries) or research and development in the business sector, might enable GATS to encroach on the university sector. Both GATS and other agreements between industrialised and developing countries, reflected in an unobvious way the crude power relations between the supposed trade partners.

Regional and bilateral agreements which assumed areas of activity are included unless they are specifically excluded, are particularly pernicious. Another effect of these agreements is to prohibit procedures and structures which might protect quality, standards or local needs. The UN Committee on Trade and Development has expressed its concern about these unequal treaties.

EI needs to work in collaboration with its affiliates, and globally with the wider trade union movement and with NGOs, to raise public awareness and to fight these threats.

Marie Blais (FNEEQ, Canada) described the effect of Public Private Partnerships in Quebec, and the dubious rationale on which the policy was based. While the goal might be to shift public expenditure off the account books, the effects on services and jobs were dramatic and damaging. Claims about protection of quality or efficiency through PPP were particularly specious, the guiding motivation for the private partners being profit. Services decline, public sector management structures and expertise decay.

Koen Geven (European Student's Union) updated the Conference on the continued spread of tuition fees as a means of plugging the funding gap in higher education - and the fight against fees, summarised in the European Student Union's publications. The substantial research undertaken by the GEW in Germany on the effects of tuition fees was also noted. The push towards fees as a means of funding higher education, like PPP and GATS are part of a global neoliberal paradigm. Fees are driving a vision of higher education which is in effect an attempt to undo the increased access which had been achieved and the democratisation of higher education - a return to higher education as a privilege for a socio-economic elite. The rationale for the policy of fees needs to be stripped away to reveal its true nature. Amelioration through forms of financial support for certain categories of student is only a thin disguise for a deeply retrograde policy.

The knock-on consequences for students forced to take jobs, to take "employment-related" courses, to defer major life choices and for institutions and for academics in terms of autonomy and academic freedom, are yet to be fully felt. Tuition fees clearly have a distorting affect on the university mission. Higher education must be asserted as a right, not a privilege.

## **OECD initiatives: Tertiary Review and Assessing Higher Education Learning Outcomes**

David Robinson and Roland Schneider of TUAC presented the key issues in the OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education which is approaching completion. David Robinson (CAUT, Canada) contrasted the neo-liberal prescriptions in the draft recommendations with the positive approach of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation in key areas such as autonomy versus accountability; private versus public funding; tenure versus "flexibility" in academic careers; academic freedom; peer review or external quality assessment; research policy; higher education for human development or for insertion in the labour market; a global higher education community or an international student marketplace. The dreary instrumentalism of the OECD model stands in sharp contrast to everything of value in higher education, and particularly those values iterated in the UNESCO Recommendation which support, academic freedom, autonomy and quality in higher education. The OECD approach must be resisted with all our strength. In the coming months, up to April 2008, when the report is finalised, we must choose the key issues on which to fight, gather evidence, and build alliances at national and global level. OECD must not be allowed to set national education policies.

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Monique Fouilloux (EI) urged affiliates in the countries studied to look at their national governments' responses and comment to governments and to EI: in turn, EI must take up affiliates' concerns as well as the unacceptability of the OECD philosophy of higher education. She went on to outline the proposals for a PISA for higher education, effectively the ranking of institutions by mechanistic but measurable indicators. This remains a highly controversial proposal across the academic community. Any ranking approach will find it difficult to take proper account of the diversity of institutions, their missions, student intakes and other qualitative characteristics. Yet the OECD ministers' meeting in Japan in January will try to drive this agenda forward. It is only one of various models of ranking, from the Shanghai list, to work going on among the testing and assessment industries, who see rich dividends to be gained at the expense of institutional budgets. It was pointed out that the instrumental ranking processes worked against the whole agenda of academic freedom, equality and social justice. For example, use of a limited number of English language journals as peer review benchmarks discriminates against other languages and cultures and the diversity of academic literature. We need to demonstrate the falsity of the claim that there is a "social demand" for rankings. Students' organisations have spoken out against them. EI must again, defend higher education and research from narrowly conceived economic imperatives.

## **The Bologna Process: towards a European Higher Education Area by 2010?**

Barbara Weitgruber (Austrian Federal Ministry for Science and Research, Chair of the Bologna working group on "European Higher Education Area in a global setting") gave a resumé of the Bologna Process to date: built around the two- yearly meetings of higher education ministers from 46 countries, but now crucially involving Education International as a consultative partner, since 2005. Now there is a pressing need to make "Bologna" a reality at the institutional level.

The key elements of Bologna are:

- Mobility: the promotion of incentives, the removal of obstacles between European countries but also between Europe and other regions.
- Portability of grants and loans
- The three level degree structure - which must allow academic progression and entry to the labour market.
- Recognition of qualifications, periods of study and prior learning
- The Qualifications Framework - transparency and comparability
- Lifelong learning - This must have higher priority
- Quality Assurance - including the building of the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies
- Doctoral programmes - to build synergies between the European Higher Education and Research Areas Doctoral programmes must develop as part of institutional strategies, and work must also be done on post-doctoral career patterns
- The Social Dimension - it is especially important to defend and widen access to high education from the diverse populations of Europe including those experiencing social or economic disadvantage. A starting point to this "greatest challenge" must be improved data collection.

We went on to consider Bologna in the global setting, reflecting that while its early phases had gone unnoticed by many countries, there is now growing world- wide interest. The Bologna Follow Up Group is working on improved information; the promotion of the attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education; improved recognition worldwide; and the development of partnership and dialogue. In these processes, the unique place of Education International is acknowledged, as the only body in the Process with a truly global reach. EI has made significant steps to get the trade union agenda recognised, for example through the official "Bologna" seminar organised on mobility in London in February 2007, in collaboration with ESU and UCU (UK). One of the key messages from that seminar is that mobility should move from being an individual responsibility to an official and an institutional responsibility and that mobility is just as important for staff as for students. In general terms, it is also essential that our success in getting into the Bologna Process, is mirrored by national affiliates gaining entry to equivalent national structures, where they have not already done so. Concerns were expressed that staff and students from other countries, particularly in the south, might find it harder to access the Bologna area, and this was recognised as an issue EI might need to take up.

The Bologna Process has highlighted existing tensions between institutional cooperation and competition, higher education as a public good, and the market place, on which EI will need to be vigilant although ministers have recognised that higher

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education is a public good. It was recognised that "Bologna" is an ongoing Process in which all the goals will not necessarily be met by 2010. In fact, from country to country there has been a "pick and mix" approach reflecting national priorities. It was also noted that some governments have used "Bologna" as an excuse for their own unpopular policies.

For the time being, we can be assured that the Quality Register will not lead to a Ranking process.

Spanish colleagues described the implementation of the Bologna Process at the national level, including the struggle to ensure that the staff unions and student voices were adequately heard. While that has been achieved, there is a need to go further to have a real effect on policy by negotiation. There is widespread concern that the Process is being implemented too fast, and the legislation to give effect to the Process nationally is not likely to be completed as quickly as expected. An added factor is the devolved character of higher education in Spain, with responsibility shared between the national government and 17 regional governments. Changes to the degree system in Spain will upset established parities not only with other European degrees, but with those from other regions, for example Latin America. However, the new system was a great improvement on the former one. There is a recognised need for the government and universities to involve the unions, students and social partners more completely.

Jens Vraa Jensen (DM, Denmark), chairing the session, urged that the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Personnel, should form the basis for the implementation of "Bologna".

Monique Fouilhoux (EI) and Koen Geven (European Student's Union) announced the launch of the EI/ESU Mobility campaign, as an official campaign within the Bologna Process, it having recently been announced that the European Commission would give financial support. The campaign's official status would enable EI and ESU to hold ministers to account.

## **Workshops**

The following points, derived from the workshops, were discussed and agreed on:

### **Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)**

Higher education and research is a public service that should be publicly funded: this is a core position of Education International. While private resources and relationships with non-public bodies are useful and often welcome additions to the means available to education, tightly drawn, long-lasting contractual agreements which effectively hand over substantial public assets to private decision-making and profit-taking, are unacceptable. For that reason, we oppose Public/Private Partnerships in higher education and research, just as we oppose tuition fees. Both distort and undermine the mission of higher education. Relations between the public sector and private funding sources or collaborators should be acceptable only if they meet tightly drawn criteria in which the public ethos prevails.

The EI Task Force on PPPs should respect the strong concerns expressed by higher education and research affiliates and ensure that the issues raised by PPPs in the sector are fully considered. The Task Force must be constituted in broad consultation with the membership, and the conference believes that the Executive Board should ensure that all affiliates have the direct opportunity to provide nominees for the Task Force before making decisions on its final composition.

The Task Force must be representative of the different sectors and regions and respect gender balance and a balance of developing and industrialised countries.

### **Careers in Higher Education: Promoting the rights of fixed-term staff and early-stage researchers**

There are two kinds of casualisation (precarity): fixed-term contracts and so-called contingent (or casual) contracts, these with far less working rights, but we must fight for permanent (tenure) contracts or their functional equivalent, and also for better working conditions. Our demands must include the replacement of existing short-term contracts.

In general, unions have increasing difficulties on affiliating people in Higher Education, but the situation is particularly serious on these "casual" teachers and researchers (that sometimes have their own associations): joint work is needed.

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There is a lack of information about the different national realities and contexts, and about good (and bad) practices, and different union strategies to overcome the problem including successful results: EI should gather information and give it to our unions.

Even with important national differences, but with the solidarity generated by facing common problems, our reference point for collective bargaining should be the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation and the decisions of the EI Berlin Congress on this subject: the unions in each country should face the challenge of putting the Recommendation into effect.

## **Mobility of higher education personnel and researchers**

We favour all forms of academic exchange and freely chosen immigration by individual researchers, university teachers and, of course, students.

We agree that the best way for developing countries to avoid "brain drain" is to offer acceptable working conditions at home for researchers and university teachers.

We agree that industrialized countries have responsibility to assist the developing countries in their effort of building non-commercial partnerships between institutions by designing various scholarships. But, above all, the most important for EI is to help our unions to sharpen the argument that mobility and exchange of ideas and knowledge, is crucial to the effective functioning of higher education institutions, which in turn is the key for the ongoing development of society.

## **Climate change: a trade union responsibility in higher education**

It is timely for the unions in the tertiary sector to raise the profile of climate change and the contribution which the institutions and the trade unions in the sector can make to this most fundamental of questions. University research will play a key role in the search for sustainable development solutions. In the universities themselves, which have a massive "global carbon footprint", there is a need to draw on both professional practice and collective bargaining to identify and reduce or even eliminate the negative environmental impact of the sector. The unions and their members can and should take the lead on this issue, and the environment provides an effective area in which to develop the union organising agenda. Given the conservative influence of governments and corporations on environmental issues, it is a key issue of academic freedom that universities and their staff are able to freely explore environmental problems and solutions without constraint.

Education International must seize the initiative on this issue, and should, as soon as possible, organise a round table on sustainable development and the contribution of the universities and their trade unions. The round table and other work on this issue should be as 'carbon-neutral' as possible, including work by e- conferencing or attaching meetings on this issue to other appropriate meetings. In the meantime, affiliated organisations are urged to negotiate with national bodies and institutions to develop means of reducing their carbon footprint and work to raise member awareness of these issues.

## **Conclusion**

In its final session, the conference amended and endorsed this report, including the EI statement on a "PISA for higher education".

## Report of the 7th International Higher Education and Research Conference, Vancouver

This 7th EI global Higher Education Conference has brought together 110 delegates and 23 observers from 49 affiliated unions in 33 countries. When we last met in Canada, in Montreal in 2002, we were confronted with the major challenge of the GATS and of the marketisation of the higher education sector, as well as the aftershocks of 9/11. Marketisation has indeed become a global phenomenon but in a diversity of ways, not the GATS-driven monolith we predicted in Montreal.

The EI Higher Education Conferences have usually had a big theme or title – ‘Universities: Key Partners for Development’, Dakar, 2003; ‘Higher Education and Research staff in the 21st Century’ – Melbourne, 2005; ‘The Status of Higher Education Personnel – 10 years after the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation’, Malaga 2007. All relatively upbeat, asserting the unions’ place in a rational and ordered university system. The theme of this conference, I would suggest, without hyperbole, has been ‘The vandals are at the gates: defending higher education and research in a time of crisis’. We have explored how far the economic crisis is genuine and how far it is a pretext for the barbarians in power to bring their long-held prejudices and their bankrupt policy proposals out of the cupboard and impose them on us and on other public sector workers. We did not cause this crisis. Reckless political and business leaders did that. Higher education and research are part of the solution: you do not have to be a dyed-in-the-wool Keynesian to see the logic of investing in higher education and research at a time of recession, but in the longer term the universities must provide solutions to the big scientific, technological and social problems – many of them seemingly intractable – which confront the global polity. Certainly that makes more sense than the slash-and-burn that many countries are facing, or the discredited panaceas restructuring higher education as private profit centres.

The current crisis cannot altogether mask the underlying seismic shift towards a more globalised higher education and research community, an arena in which models of cooperation and collegiality versus competition and corporatism, vie for hegemony. We know which side we are on and we need to make sure our voice is heard in the global and national struggles for the future of higher education. Canada and our host union the Canadian Association of University Teachers have been in the forefront of this struggle, and over the years we have appreciated the experience and leadership which CAUT has shared with us. One of the lessons of this conference must be that need for us all to work more closely together to meet the unprecedented challenges we as trade unionists and as academics, now face.

The opening session of the Vancouver conference was chaired by Penni Stewart, President of CAUT/ACPPU (Canada), who welcomed delegates. She referred to the profound world economic crisis and the dramatic shift in the economic and political landscape since the 6th Congress in Malaga in Nov 2007. The public sector is being called upon to pay for a disaster inflicted on us all by private sector greed. The need for concrete trade union strategies and solidarity has never been greater.



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Jim Sinclair, President of the British Columbia Federation of Labour - picked up the theme of Solidarity in defence of Education, 'the lungs of democracy'. He described the move in the last 10 years from "low tuition fees and high minimum wage to high fees and low wage minima", with more itinerant workers in North American Higher Education than in agriculture. He condemned the obsession of Governments and society with lowering taxes: for example there have been 57 tax cuts in British Columbia in ten years. The unions must make the case that society has to pay for quality public services.

Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary of Education International welcomed the presence of CONADU (Argentina) and SNESup (France), and noted that unions from Brazil and Peru had also recently joined EI.

He referred to the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation and the need for affiliates to make use of it in calling governments to account. In particular we must fight the insidious encroachment of the market in education, a direct challenge to collegiality and academic freedom. Fred referred to his participation in the business Leaders forum at Davos and the 'schmoozing' of business by university leaders. Education faces huge challenges of sustainable development and tackling the chronic global teacher shortage which is jeopardising attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. He emphasised the leadership role of the higher education sector within EI.

In conclusion he referred to the attacks on the academic freedom of individual teachers and researchers and in particular called on the unions present to campaign on behalf of Dr Miguel Angel Beltran of Colombia, and to publicise the online petition on his behalf.

## **Plenary 1: The view from Here: The State of the Profession 2010**

Penni Stewart, President of CAUT/ACPPU (Canada), chaired the session. Bill Ratteree of the ILO outlined the professional challenges we now face and these include the effects of privatisation, short term and temporary posts and the impact on academic freedom and quality, together with the weakening of assessment, CPD regimes. However, he said, there is some survey evidence of increased job satisfaction! The unions in the sector need to use the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation (as Australian and Denmark have done): it has a number of key clauses which the unions need to invoke, particularly through the complaints procedure.

Mark Thompson, a longstanding member of CEART, pointed out that unlike the 1966 UNESCO/ILO recommendation, the 1997 Recommendation is the formal responsibility of UNESCO only, so it is backed by significantly less resources. EI is a valued partner in this work, and its reports provide authoritative information - but EI needs to provide more evidence. Major issues include the multiplicity of providers, particularly in the private sector, and contingent labour.

Lily Eskelsen, Vice President of the NEA referred to 'the Ebola virus of Reform', the attack on public sector education. President Obama has clearly identified Education and Higher Education as a key part of the solution to the crisis. However, the system is moving costs on to students, driving casualisation of teachers and imposing crude rankings of academics by outcome measures or income generation, with simplistic rewards and punishments. The NEA is robustly fighting these trends and monitoring their effects on education.

Ilze Trapenciere of LIZDA, Latvia, highlighted the gulf between the language of the 1997 Recommendation and the actuality of savage cuts. However even in this environment there have been successes for example, in university autonomy and academic freedom and the promotion of women, although union representatives are now excluded from university senates, part of a more general attack on trade unions.

Carlos Alberto De Feo of CONADU, Argentina, said that a number of Latin American societies have moved from difficult neo-liberal regimes linked to military repression, towards more populist models. There has been a huge increase in the number of universities in the region from 75 in 1950 to 3,000 today with a wide range of ratios of public to private institutions. The EI-affiliated unions in the region met recently in Buenos Aires and are beginning to build a network of support and encourage more unions to join in the near future. In Argentina, there are 140,000 teachers for 1 million students in public universities but many teachers are part time and less than 20% are unionised.

## **Plenary 2: EI activities since the 6th International Higher Education and Research Conference: Update and review**



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Ingrid Stage of DM (Denmark) referred to the Danish experience of using the 1997 Recommendation and the difficulty of achieving a result unless there was already concrete evidence of an infringement of the Recommendation. Ingrid chaired the 2nd plenary session, in which Harold Tor, EI Coordinator, summarised the work EI had undertaken in collaboration with affiliates in the sector on the themes which were identified at the 6th conference in Malaga.

Delegates identified the battles at national level to protect pensions and other conditions, and to resist the threats to academic freedom and the encroachment of business and economic criteria into academic life. Monique Fouilhoux, EI Deputy General Secretary, welcomed the ways in which affiliates had responded to the attacks on our sector and our unions. She referred to the Task Force report adopted by the EI World Congress in Porto Alegre in 2004 and pointed to the supplementary report (Annex II in the papers of this conference) which had been prepared by Task Force members for the consideration of this conference. She hoped that the new actions identified in Annex II, will be endorsed and prioritised taking account of our limited resources, and forwarded to the World Executive and the Cape Town Congress in July 2011.

The global economic crisis is in fact highly differentiated with some regions relatively immune or even robust, while in others the mantra of 'crisis' masks the imposition of neo-liberal prescriptions under the pretence that they are objective responses, without a critical analysis of causation.

Delegates argued for more targeted analysis and survey work in respect of higher education, followed by dedicated campaigning. They identified the need for targeted support for union work on the place of higher education in building infrastructure and investment particularly in middle and low income countries, noting the role of Higher Education as a counter-cyclical investment

The conference was concerned that social consequences of crisis include a xenophobic backlash in a number of forms in different countries: EI needs to fight for equity and for education as a public good.

## **Plenary 3: Responding to regionalisation / globalization**

Manuel Dos Santos of FENPROF, Portugal, chaired the 3rd plenary. Dominique Lassarre, UNSA-education, France, outlined the development of the Bologna Process, leading to the creation of the European Higher Education Area this year. She focussed on the role of EI as a consultative member since 2005. She referred to the opportunities for EI presented by the positive references in the Ministerial Communique of March 2010. There is a need to differentiate policies that derive from 'Bologna' and more general global or regional trends which national governments might relate to Bologna. She concluded by referring to the tendencies in other regions to develop Bologna-style frameworks.

David Robinson, CAUT, Canada, outlined emerging trends regarding international copyright and intellectual property rights agreements including the growing recognition of ideas as well as their physical manifestations through to the WTO TRIPS agreement in 1994, and the challenges to copyright in the digital age. ACTA Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement which is being developed has been made more acceptable as a result of pressure from academics and unions. Academics are well placed as both users and owners of copyright material.

Antonio Tinio, ACT, the Philippines, described the effects of marketisation in the Philippines, which has a largely privatised HE system, defined by the World Bank as a private good. The HE system is seen by government as a servant of business and of export industries. These policies have been resisted by the public sector unions and they have been more and more tightly tied down by repressive legislation and violent extra-judicial attacks. The Chair indicated that such policies could be part of the future for other countries too.

In discussion it was suggested that since 2001 'Bologna' has been increasingly driven by competition, which is against its original spirit. However some US institutions are attracted to the Bologna model believing it protects the role of academics. The presentations regarding Bologna and the Philippines were emblematic of the range of possible futures facing universities and their staffs and the nature of the struggles ahead. It was hoped that the lessons of Bologna could be learned by other regions and core principles protected.

## **Plenary 4 on trade union development cooperation and capacity building**

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Bernard Bérubé, FPPC/CSQ, Canada, chaired the session. Monique Fouilhoux said it was the first time the conference had a dedicated session on this issue and it was important for it to move more centre stage to meet the needs of unions in developing countries - on the principles of equity and sustainability, recognising that this work is long term in character. Support for democratic structures and for effective member services must be developed in parallel. The whole membership including women and young teachers must be engaged. We need to challenge the 'realpolitik' which distributes financial support according to donor interest rather than the actual needs of the countries concerned.

Pedro González López, FECCOO, Spain, referred to the historic links of Spain to Latin America and North Africa. FECCOO have worked with EI and affiliates and other unions in those regions, focussing on Chile and Morocco, as well as a social project in Mali, and spreading experience from those projects. It is essential for the partners to work on the basis of equality and the sharing of ideas. A cooperation with the countries of the Mediterranean rim has also been developed. Such projects can help the union voice be heard in policy debates in the countries concerned, and create enduring supportive union networks in the regions.

Mohammed Derouiche, SNESup, Morocco, welcomed the support of EI for capacity building in North Africa. He referred to a higher education conference for the higher education unions of the Maghreb which led to an association of 65,000 members being set up. He emphasised the scale of the Maghreb region and of Africa and the challenges it faces, for example with Morocco working to restructure its higher education in line with the Bologna Process. Union capacity building and joint action were urgently needed to enable the unions in the region to more effectively confront the actions of international agencies and corporate business. The unions building north/ south and south/ south cooperation are key to a lasting and humane response to the global challenges we face.

In discussion the importance of building common strategies with other workers like university administrative staff was emphasised. Union leaders are under threat in different ways everywhere, and Education is now the target for rampant commercialisation. The unions must make full use of the internet and social networking to engage the younger generation. The quality of development work depends on partnerships. One concrete step which unions in industrialised countries could take, would be sponsorship of delegates from developing countries to HE conferences and to the EI World Congress. In general, more development work must be done in the higher education sector. The success of the regional higher education structures in Europe might provide valuable examples for other regions.

## **Plenary 5, on Equity and Inclusivity**

This session also broke new ground in making a dedicated session on this core area. It was chaired by Alan Whitaker, UCU, United Kingdom, who stressed the centrality of equity to trade union work and values.

Penni Stewart, CAUT, Canada, explored the union work on gender over the last 20 years, and the inclusion of other equity groups into the student and staff body. This reflects a much greater range of issues and demands and calls for a more sophisticated inter-sectional analysis. The debate now goes far beyond access for underrepresented groups. However, disability and indigeneity remain as inadequately acknowledged issues. Members of marginalised groups are still more likely to face disadvantage (e.g. casualisation) or harassment. Governments are using economic crisis as a pretext for cutting programmes supporting and promoting equity. However governments' inaction and wilful ignoring of legislation have been challenged by unions through audits, affirmative action policies and promotion of equity enhancing language. While the male\female pay gap has narrowed it remains high for marginalised racial groups. Class all too often becomes invisible as an issue in the debate of inclusivity.

Karin Amossa, Lärarförbundet, Sweden, reflected on her own experience of gender discrimination starting in the university and facing exploitation. Gender equality carries obligations as well as rights. The Swedish model has high proportion of women high achievers in schools and universities. The gender split is widening affecting HE and the labour market. Men still make traditional study and employment choices. Women predominate in teaching and education - 65% of graduates are women and only 35% are men. Men go on to make up 50% of 3rd cycle students, are strongly represented in research and technologies but dominate the professoriate (only 20 % are women). (The discussion showed that these ratios are reflected in other regions).

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Work on indigeneity or other areas of disadvantage, needs to be addressed within the unions through their own structures and by including indigenous members in them as well as by addressing the issues in broader society. On a practical level, unions can set mandatory elements of their claims to employers, and set inclusivity targets.

In discussion the issues of multiple identities and the rise of xenophobia were flagged. Women are disadvantaged in access to tenure which is the baseline for promotion to senior posts. While there is a need for women to be trained in leadership skills, posts - in universities and in unions - must be genuinely opened up to them. We must recognize that globally, poverty and denial of access to basic education are the issues that confront us. Privatisation of education is a further massive obstacle to Equity. The GEW/ SULF/ UCU work/life balance project referred to in the papers, is an example of how international union strategies can be developed. It was recognized however that structures by themselves will not deliver change. Unions must address the social phenomenon of unpaid work most of which is done by women.

## **Plenary 6, Rankings and accountability**

Chaired by Marie Blais, FNEEQ-CSN, Quebec, this session explored rankings and accountability. Sandra Schroeder, AFT, USA, noted that as public funding is cut back, there is a contrary trend towards greater measurement. This is accompanied by pressure to re-locate higher education as a private good and to move it along the spectrum towards training, together with fragmentation into profit- oriented units. Yet accountability in itself is potentially a key tool we can use. Accountability measures can support quality and inclusiveness. However pressure to take accountability down to the level of the individual teacher which is happening in primary and secondary in some states, is an indicator of future trends. Professional responsibility must be matched by the responsibilities of public authorities, providers and students. We need to be robust in defence of qualitative measurement and come to terms with quantitative measurement in appropriate ways.

Mike Jennings, IFUT, Ireland pointed out that assessment is often invasive or destructive and can lead to an undue emphasis on the measurable. Huge increase in internationalisation of HE raises the demand for rankings but doesn't remove the doubts associated with them. Institutions are learning to 'play the rankings game' which are distorting the structures and policies of the system. In this context OECD is spending €9.3 m on the AHELO project which is predicated on the acceptance of the principle of ranking. The project is funded and supported by a number of governments but there is a chronic lack of transparency - EI should call for a debate on the desirability of AHELO and question its true purpose.

Bert Vandenkendelaere, European Students Union, Belgium, expressed concern that the costs of a system arising from the AHELO project could be passed on to students, and that while it might produce new information, it could add confusion in an already crowded field as well as undermining the role of the existing quality assurance structures. He noted that, hardly surprisingly, rankings tend to favour richer and more prestigious institutions.

Discussion focussed on the need to make measurement more sophisticated and more transparent. Rankings that include fee levels as criteria are clearly taking a highly political stance. A genuine debate would expose the flaws in the logic and practicalities of the systems on offer, but there is a prior question of whether there IS a problem that measurement effectively addresses, or whether rankings are part of an insidious threat to our intellectual life. The sheer cost of performance indicators and the loss of control to universities as public funding is actually being cut all have to be contrasted with the accountability and transparency of the existing university systems. The pursuit of rankings can only be viewed as part of the commodification of higher education. The unions should consider developing their own indicators.

## **Plenaries 7 and 8:**

The Conference debated, augmented and endorsed the Action Points in the Supplement to the 2004 Policy Package. These Action Points will be appended to this report when it goes forward to the world Executive Board next month and to the World Congress in Cape Town in July 2011. It is an ambitious programme which will require a commitment of resources from EI but also for the unions represented here to work together in their own countries and both with one another and with EI in order to make it a reality.