Education International
Internationale de l'Education
Internacional de la Educación

# Higher Education and Research Caucus

## Warsaw 23 November 2009

## Related Background Information

## Table of Contents



## Note:

This background information is meant to serve as a tool to provide essential information regarding the current debates on higher education in relation to EI's work.

# Section 1: The Bologna Process in Europe

## 1.1 The Bologna Process Ministerial Meeting and further EI Work

A Ministerial meeting of the Bologna Process was held in April this year. This 6th Bologna Process Ministerial Meeting marked the passage of ten years since the signing of the original Bologna Declaration in 1999 with the goal of setting up the European Higher Education Area. EI has been a consultative member of the Bologna Process since the Ministerial meeting in Bergen in 2005.

The five-person EI delegation that attended this year's conference in Leuven and Louvaine-La-Neuve, which took place from 28-29 April 2009, was headed by Deputy Secretary General Monique Fouilhoux, who delivered a speech expressing the concerns of higher education staff across Europe in relation to the Bologna Process. Monique Fouilhoux referred to the principles of the Bologna Process and encouraged Ministers and institutions to work on comprehensive implementation of the Bologna action lines at the national and institutional levels, with meaningful inclusion of academic staff at both levels. She referred to the need for sustainable public funding of the Bologna reforms, particularly in the context of the global financial crisis and the need to offer support to academics in carrying out the reforms.

The principles of the Bologna Process have helped countries re-think their higher education systems. These principles require proper implementation, adequate funding, and support for staff, institutions and students. We must stand by these ongoing principles if we consider education to be the key tool for real sustainable recovery. In the context of the sustainability of higher education systems, she also referred to the danger of precarious employment of staff and spoke about the need to uphold the rights of academic staff as guaranteed by the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on Higher Education Teaching Personnel, in particular with reference to academic freedom.

Monique Fouilhoux also reminded the Ministers of the work done by EI and the European Students' Union on mobility of academic staff and students. She challenged Ministers to stand by their commitment to this key pillar of the Bologna Process and to agree to reach the target that, by 2020, 20 percent of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad.

The 46 ministers responsible for higher education in the European Higher Education Area concluded the meeting by adopting a Communiqué entitled The Bologna Process 2020 – the European Higher Education Area in the New Decade. In their Communiqué Ministers identify the following priorities for higher education in the next decade – the social dimension, lifelong learning, employability, the teaching mission of higher education and student-centred learning, research and innovation, international openness and mobility, adopting the 20 percent mobility target and calling for increased staff mobility. In their Communiqué, Ministers also refer to the need for proper data collection to help monitor the implementation of Bologna objectives and the use of multidimensional transparency tools for providing information about higher education institutions. Ministers also confirm that public funding remains the main priority to guarantee further sustainable development of higher education.

At the end of their meeting, Ministers also held a discussion with representatives from 16 non-European governments at the first Bologna Policy Forum. The purpose of this forum was to start a dialogue on how worldwide cooperation in higher education can be enhanced and on how Bologna countries can develop closer links with higher education systems around the world.

Following this Ministerial meeting, EI has continued its work on the Bologna Process:

- EI has set up a collaboration with the European Students' Union and the European University Association on the issue of mobility;
- EI has contributed to the work plan of the Bologna Follow-Up Group for the period 2009-2012;
- EI attended the Bologna Follow-Up Group meeting held in Stockholm form 28-29 September 2009;
- EI is participating in the following working groups under the Bologna Follow Up Group – implementation working group; mobility working group; working group on the external dimension of the Bologna Process; and working group on multi-dimensional transparency tools.
- EI will also work to produce an analysis of academics' experience of the implementation of the Bologna Process to be presented at the Bologna Anniversary Conference to be held in Budapest and Vienna in March 2010.

## 1.2 Project on Student Centred Learning

The European Students' Union (ESU) has applied for funding from the European Commission Lifelong learning programme for a project on Student Centred Learning called "Time for a New Paradigm in Education: Student Centered Learning".

The aim of this project is to increase the understanding of student centred learning tools and elements among the policy makers and student representatives at both the national and the European level, while opening the debate to stakeholders through sharing good practices and research.

The project will produce a student centred learning toolkit aimed at increasing the European awareness and understanding on changing the learning paradigm from teacher centred to student centred. The good practice examples and the innovative approaches will create a better European approach on student centred learning as a fundamental pre-condition to an European area for lifelong learning.

Also the project will empower students and staff representatives to be active partners in changing the learning paradigm from teacher to student centred, by organising trainers for a better understanding of the student centred learning tools, methods and mechanisms.

The project will run between November 2009 and October 2010 and EI will act as ESU's partners in this project. The aim of ESU is to include the results of the project as possible in the work of the Bologna Follow-up Group on matters related to student centred learning.

## 1.3 Education International, European Students' Union and European University Association mobility working group

Education International and the European Students' Union have also decided to continue our joint work on improving student and staff mobility across the European Higher Education Area.

EI and ESU has therefore also invited EUA to work with us on these matters to achieve a true institutional approach to mobility. Ministers decided in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve to reach the goal that in 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad. Ministers also mentioned that framework conditions for increasing staff mobility has to been improved and has somewhat linked the issue of mobility with the discussions on the EHEA in relation to the wider world. Academic mobility also needs to be dealt with in the view of developments of the European Research Area.

In response to this EI, ESU and EUA have decided to create an internal working group that should:

- Contribute to the BFUG discussion on indicators used for measuring and monitoring mobility, by proposing a set of jointly agreed indicators, also with regards to the Global Dimension of the EHEA and conditions for in- and outgoing international mobility
- Elaborate theme and content for a joint mobility conference under the Spanish/Belgian EU Presidency
- Explore areas of common interest for the three organisations, with the aim of drafting a 'common set of mobility principles', which could have a structure similar to the European Standards and Guidelines on QA.

Furthermore the three organisations have agreed to carry out the following concreter work:

- Development of an input paper on mobility indicators for the BFUG meeting in Stockholm, end of September 2009;
- Organising a conference on mobility and internationalisation under the Spanish or Belgian EU Presidency in 2010;
- Publication of a 'common set of mobility principles' by early 2012.

In relation to the first point for concrete action, the three organisations have proposed a definition of student and staff mobility respectively, identified the challenges related to measuring staff mobility and proposed an agenda for how to improve mobility. **The following is the text of an input paper that will be presented by the three organisations to the Bologna Follow-Up Group meeting in Stockholm on 28-29 September 2009.**


**I. Introduction**

N.B.: This present document, which has been drafted jointly by EUA, EI and ESU, is intended as a discussion input for the Stockholm BFUG meeting.

Improving transnational student and staff mobility is one of the key objectives of the Bologna process and a core principle of European integration in general. Although significant reforms have taken place with the introduction of the three-cycle degree structure and other Bologna tools, the impression prevails that mobility has not significantly improved. However, currently this assumption can neither be supported nor refuted by statistical evidence.

In order to further enhance mobility, European Ministers in charge of higher education set out a concrete benchmark:
*"In 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad"* (Leuven Communiqué). The BFUG has been invited: *"To define the indicators used for measuring and monitoring mobility..."*
In addition, on 8 July 2009, the European Commission launched the Green Paper 'Promoting the learning mobility of young people', which contains useful food for thought on this topic.

Improving mobility is particularly important to universities and their students and staff, as they are the immediate beneficiaries, and also the actors who turn mobility into reality. Therefore the European University Association (EUA), Education International (EI) and the European Students' Union (ESU) have decided to join forces in order to move this agenda forward, in order to ensure that the perspectives of universities, staff and students is taken into consideration in the discussions on the mobility benchmark and mobility indictors, but also in order to deliver a concrete and tangible contribution to the enhancement of transnational student and staff mobility in Europe.

In this paper:

- A working definition for student and staff mobility is proposed, to clarify of what has to be considered when measuring mobility;
- The challenges of measuring mobility are addressed, in order to develop strategies for a better methodology and improved indicators;
- Further, an agenda for action is proposed, with a clear role for universities and students for mapping and promoting mobility at institutional level.

The three organisations will follow up with their constituencies on the proposed approach in 2010 and the following years, and simultaneously contribute to the discussions at the level of the BFUG.

**Definitions**

If mobility is to be measured, there should be a clear definition of what is considered mobility. The report from the Bologna Process Working Group on Social Dimension and Data on Mobility of staff and Students (2007) provided the following definitions:

- *Mobility of students:* Refers to a study period in a country other than that of prior permanent residence or prior education (completed or ongoing) for a period of study or a full degree.

- *Mobility of staff:* Refers to a working period in a country other than that of prior permanent residence or prior employment (terminated or ongoing) for a limited or extended period.

The definitions given below are an attempt to further refine the topic of mobility for the purposes of the Bologna process. Although 'virtual mobility' plays an important role in the internationalisation of universities, it is not included in the definitions.

**A. Student mobility:**

**Student mobility** in European higher education can be characterised as follows:

- It refers to mobility periods of students, who are enrolled at universities part or full-time, during the period of their studies;
- It is **transnational**: crossing geographical and national borders is essential in strengthening and deepening intercultural awareness;
- It is **physical;**
- It serves a **learning purpose**: no matter whether it's an exchange programme, a language course or work placement, PhD research carried out in a lab a library or a company, the mobility period should serve a learning purpose and this purpose should be recognised and agreed by the parties concerned;
- It is either **organised** on a formal or takes place on an **individual** basis: student mobility can take place in the framework of a programme (e.g. Erasmus), but also upon the initiative by the student or institution;
- It can have **various durations**; the time spent should be meaningful in the context of the objectives set.

**B. Staff mobility:**

**Staff Mobility** in European higher education can be characterised as follows:

- It refers to mobility periods undertaken by **employees** of higher education institutions, thus including teaching, research and administrative staff;
- It is **transnational**;
- It is **physical** and not virtual;
- It is either **structured** or takes place on an **individual** basis, for a **defined duration** and undertaken with the **intention to return**, therefore excluding migration;
- It is a period during which **teaching**, **research or training** takes place, either as a one-time activity or recurrent in the framework of a partnership.

**The challenges of measuring mobility**

Following the political aspiration, the intention is to be able to identify by 2020 how many bachelor, master and doctoral graduates have been mobile at some point in their period of study. A cumulative sum should then add up to 20% of the total student population. Currently some aspects of mobility are already measured on a regular basis (e.g.):

- Student and staff mobility taking place within the Erasmus programme;
- Eurostat data on the number of foreign students in a country;
- Eurostudent data on mobility periods.

However, it is also known that these measurements have considerable **flaws.** To provide some examples:

- Although the Erasmus programme is an important pillar of student and staff mobility, data on Erasmus do not cover all mobility activities that take place at institutional level and in many cases may only cover a minority of mobility activities;
- Measuring international mobility by counting the number of foreign students enrolled in higher education does not adequately reflect the number of foreign students, as the figure also includes domestic students with a foreign passport. Changing the indicator to 'previous degree obtained in another country' would be more precise;

- Surveying student samples does provide useful data on student mobility activities, student needs and aspirations, but it cannot demonstrate the activities that take place at institutional level.
- It is impossible to distinguish between individual student mobility and a student who: took part in Erasmus, studied a master degree in another country and gained work experience through an internship. Such a person would be counted three times and thus distort the number.

Defining indicators that adequately reflect the extent to which student and staff mobility take place in higher education is a complicated task. Following the definitions of mobility proposed above, it becomes quite evident that not all data can be collected by statistical agencies. Shorter mobility periods (e.g. for work placements), can be as important to the learning experience as obtaining a degree in another country. If such experience is widespread among a given student cohort then the overall impact may be considerable, but might not be recorded. The same is true for short teaching assignments abroad for professors.

A way to complement the data currently raised by statistical agencies is that higher education institutions would map existing mobility activities and identify areas for improvement according to a clearly defined scheme. This can be seen as a strategic opportunity as it enhances knowledge of institutional practice and can thus be translated into improved institutional governance. It is also a way of strengthening an institution's international profile.

**An agenda for improving student and staff mobility**

The aspirations set out by the Bologna ministers should be achievable if the following items are addressed:

- **Understanding** mobility: agreeing on definitions for student and staff mobility is necessary. A new input to this discussion was provided in this paper.
- **Measuring** mobility: better European level data is needed to measure more precisely the mobility patterns at European and at country level. A further refinement of the indicators used is therefore crucial. Universities need to map existing mobility activities, in order to better understand and demonstrate the amount of mobility taking place within the institution, which simultaneously can promote further growth in these initiatives.
- Increased **promotion** of mobility: national and institutional policy should promote and facilitate the mobility of students and staff, with a view to achieve balanced mobility.

Reaching the political aspiration should be seen as the driver to improve mobility activities in the next decade and the collection of data as a tool to demonstrate progress. The search for the right indicators can never replace the advocacy work that is needed to promote student and staff mobility. Achieving progress is only possible when all parties are convinced of the benefits and the right support mechanisms at all levels are in place to support this aim.

## Section 2. OECD Updates

## 2.1 Education at a Glance

EI has reacted to the OECD report Education at a Glance. Some of the main comments are:

Data lack

A major limitation of this year's edition of *Education at a Glance* is that the data it presents is applicable only up to 2007 and therefore does not adequately reflect the situation since the onset of the global financial and economic crisis.

Current data collected by Education International however show how education, and in particular teachers' salaries, are suffering from budget cuts in a number of OECD member states, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe.

Access and funding

The report welcomes a further expansion of access to tertiary education as well as a worldwide increase in graduation rates. However, the OECD once again ranks countries, and presents their relative positions on the country list not as progress or regress in terms of objective enrolment and graduation rates, but as if the competition for the top rank were the main purpose of the comparison.

One of the report's key policy messages is that countries which devote a high proportion of public funding to education should allow for more private funding, while where private funding dominates, the opposite should occur.

With reference to the current economic downturn, the OECD makes a very clear point, as in the previous reports, that it is inevitable that spending on education will be scrutinized more and more rigorously. OECD countries as a whole spend 6.1 percent of their collective GDP on education, all levels combined. As a share of total public expenditure, the OECD average in 2006 for education stood at 13.3 percent. Expressed on a per-student basis, OECD countries spend on average USD 93,775 per student over the duration of primary and secondary studies. At tertiary level (excluding R&D activities and ancillary services) expenditure is on average USD 8,418 per student per year. The United States with expenditure of USD 19,476 per student ranks first. However, this combines all sources of funding – private and public.

At tertiary level spending per student has fallen in one third of OECD and partner countries. In these countries, expenditure has not kept up with the expansion in student numbers. Nonetheless, at tertiary level, average expenditure on educational institutions per student increased by 11 percentage points between 2000 and 2006 on average in OECD countries.

However, among the 18 OECD countries for which trend data is available, the share of public funding in tertiary institutions on average decreased slightly from 78% in 1995 to 76% in 2000 and to 72% in 2005 and 2006. This trend is mainly influenced by non-European countries in which tuition fees are generally higher and corporations participate more actively by providing grants to finance tertiary institutions.

In tertiary education, households account for most private expenditure in most countries for which data are available. Exceptions are Austria, Canada and Sweden where private expenditure from entities other than households is more significant.

As a consequence, the OECD makes a strong case in favour of tuition fees in tertiary level education. While the report does admit that tuition fees must not be high and can be combined with equity measures, it is noteworthy that Finland, Norway and Sweden - which do not charge tuition fees - are among the seven countries with the highest entry rate to university-level education, thus reiterating the benefit that can come about from public investment in tertiary education as a public good.

Early childhood education

*Education at a Glance* finds that there has also been a significant expansion of enrolment in early childhood education. EI welcomes this development and stresses how important it is that countries make provision for a sufficient number of well-educated pedagogical staff to meet the demands of this increase in enrolment in early-childhood education.

Not only economic and individual benefits of education

For the first time *Education at a Glance* 2009 goes slightly beyond economic outcomes and tries to assess the impact of education attainment on social outcomes such as health, political interest and interpersonal trust (Indicator A9).

EI calls on the OECD governments to acknowledge this finding and take it into consideration when assessing benefits of a high level of education for their whole populations, and the wider social and economic benefits that this implies.

Education has to prove its value as a solution to the economic crisis

In *Education at a Glance*, the OECD makes a controversial argument (forgetting about social outcomes): in times of crisis, education must prove that it provides "value for money" in order to justify ever-increasing expenditure. To measure if education provides "value for money" the OECD uses the new indicator "salary cost per student". The indicator is rather dubious, as it doesn't take into account some major determinants of teachers' salaries, such as types of qualifications, career structures, teacher shortages and regional disparities.

Please find the whole EI analysis attached as an Annex to this document.

## 2.2 Teaching quality

This section aims at updating and reminding the HERSC about the OECD/IMHE project on Quality Teaching in Higher Education, which is running in two phases from December 2007 – June 2009 and July 2009 – December 2010. The project aims at, according to the OECD, highlighting the *"effective quality initiatives and mechanisms and to push forward reflection or practices that may in turn help other institutions to improve the quality of their teaching and thereby, the quality of their graduates.",* furthermore, the projected aims "*to identify long-term improvement factors for staff, decision-making bodies and institutions, and to contribute to reflection on outcomes indicators for higher education."*

The two different phases serve different needs in the project, phase one is focused on gaining an overview of institutional initiatives and policies aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching. The second phase will be directed at exploring these initiatives more in detail.

29 higher education institutions from 20 countries have been part of the study.[1]

The outcomes of the first phase will be presented and discussed at a conference held on the 12-13 of October 2009 in Istanbul. For more information, please visit the conference website: http://www.oecdistanbul2009.com/ For the full report go to: http://www.oecd.org/document/31/0,3343,en_2649_35961291_40172831_1_1_1_1,00.html

The study presents a number of findings, which are presented as short bullet points and then further developed in text. These findings, in short, are the following:

- Higher education is becoming a major driver of economic competitiveness in an increasingly knowledge-driven global economy.

- The response to students' demand for a valuable teaching: students want to ensure that their education will lead to job insertion or will prepare them to develop adaptable and personal skills in the society of today and tomorrow. Mobility of students and growth of fees increase the consideration given by students to the quality of the teaching.

[1] The participating higher education institutions are: UNNE – Universidad Nacional del Nordeste (Argentina), Macquarie University (Australia), UCL- Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium), McGill University (Canada), Université de Montréal (Canada), Université de Sherebrook (Canada), CBS - Copenhagen Business School (Denmark), Arcada - University of Applied Sciences (Finland), Laurea - University of Applied Sciences (Finland), Université de Lille 2 Droit et Santé (France), Université de Pau et des pays de l'Adour (France), Freie Universität Berlin (Germany), Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz (Germany), Dublin Institute of Technology (Ireland), Tohoku Fukushi University (Japan), Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania), UADY – Universidad Autònoma De Yucatàn (Mexico), VU University - Amsterdam (The Netherlands), State University, Higher School of Economics (Russia), UOC-Open University of Catalunia (Spain), ULL - Universidad de La Laguna (spain), University of Geneva (Switzerland), Istanbul Technical University (Turkey), The Institute of Education – University of London (UK), University of Teesside (UK), Alverno College (USA), City University of Seattle (USA), University of Arizona (USA), U21 Global (Online University)

- The initiatives supporting quality initiatives have been grouped under these three major headings:
  - Institution-wide and Quality Assurance policies
  - Programme monitoring
  - Teaching and Learning support

- The value of the institutional commitment to quality teaching - at top leadership level and at departmental level – is to detect benchmarks, promote good practices scaling them up across departments, and think up effective support matching teachers' expectations with the students'.

- The institutions recognised that initiating an institutional policy to support quality teaching remains an adventurous, lengthy but potentially rewarding project.

- In many cases, institutions tend to multiply programme evaluation or training sessions for faculty though the notion of quality remains vague and unshared internally. A better approach is to first explore the kind of education students should gain once graduated and the types of learning outcomes the programmes should provide to ensure economic and social inclusion of students.

- After the initial stage, an institution willing to pursue an effective quality teaching policy often sets up a specific organization, supported by a technical staff for the design of the appropriate instruments.

- The success of quality initiatives supported by the institution depends mainly on the commitment of the heads of departments who help the quality teaching spirit to spread and allow operational implementation.

- Even if accepted in principle, the evaluation of quality teaching is often challenged in reality. All the institutions have implemented evaluation instruments in order to monitor their action. But teaching is primarily appraised through activity and input indicators and the institutions struggle to create reliable evaluation instruments of the impact of quality teaching.

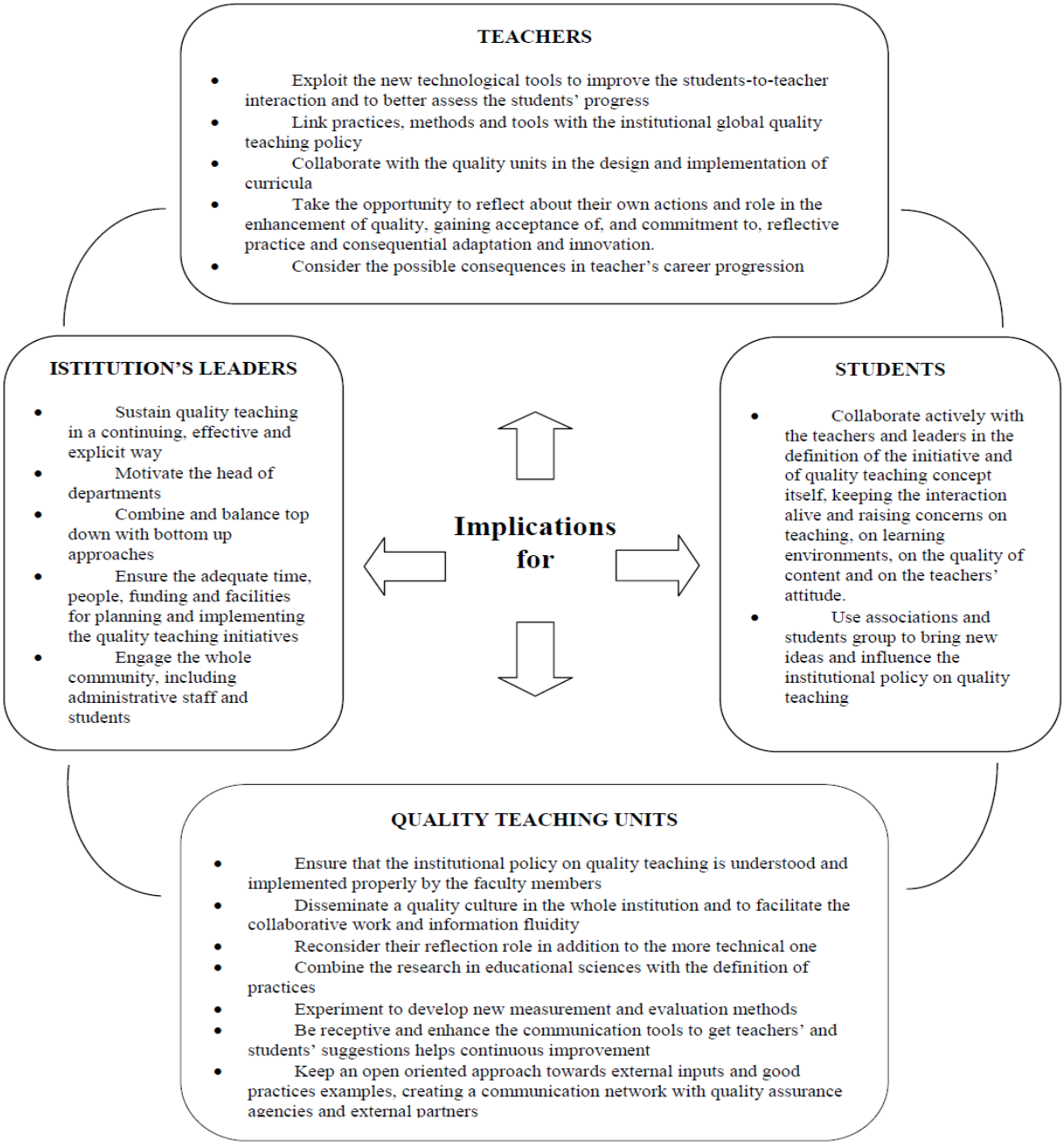
- Quality teaching initiatives have a tangible impact in three major areas: on teaching, on research and on the quality culture:

- In order to attain the expectations on quality teaching initiatives, institutions need to foster synergies between institution-wide policies. A vast majority of the institutions sampled link their commitment to quality teaching with IT policies, as the possibilities offered by intranets and discussion forums are seen as a powerful communication tool within the academic community and with the students.

- The institutions that are better able to disseminate quality-teaching initiatives are the small or medium-sized institutions, because of the information fluidity and straightforward decision-making process that characterize them.

The implications for the different groups of actors in higher education institutions is illustrated by the following figure:

**Implications for institutional actors of an engagement in quality teaching**



# Section 3. UNESCO and higher education

## 3.1 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education

In Europe the preparations for the World Conference took place in Bucharest on the 21-24 of May. The regional conference was organised by UNESCO-Cepes and had the themes Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness. EI attended this meeting. The recommendations from that meeting can be found at: http://www.cepes.ro/forum/pdf/Bucharest%20Message.pdf

Education International contributed extensively to the World Conference on Higher Education that took place at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 5-8 July 2009.

EI organised a one-day meeting for a number of its higher education affiliates on 3 July, co-organised the NGO's conference on 4 July, and also co-organised 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 also delivered a speech at one of the opening sessions on the first day of the conference while Penni Stuart, President of one of EI's affiliate higher education unions in Canada – 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, and 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 Communiqué refers 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. The Communiqué ends with a call for action for both Member States and UNESCO.

EI succeeded in securing references to respect for academics' rights in various parts of the Communiqué, which states:

Ensuring quality in higher education requires recognition of the importance of attracting and retaining qualified, talented and committed teaching and research staff (para. 21).

It is important for the quality and integrity of higher education that academic staff has opportunities for research and scholarship. Academic freedom is a fundamental value which must be protected in today's evolving and volatile global environment (para. 37).

In particular, in the call for action for Member States, EI succeeded in having included a clause stating that "Member States, working in collaboration with all stakeholders, should develop policies and strategies at system and institutional levels to enhance the attractiveness of the academic career by ensuring respect for the rights and adequate working conditions of academic staff in accordance with the 1997 Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel" (para. 49k).

Finally, the Communiqué also calls on UNESCO to "help governments and institutions implement its standard setting instruments, in particular the 1997 Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel" (para 50c).

Please find the various statements and presentations as Annexes to this document. Please also find the official World Conference Statement on the UNESCO website: http://www.unesco.org/en/wche2009/

# Section 4. ILO/CEART

The joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART), meets every third years to assess how well the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (1966) and the Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997) are being fulfilled by signatory states. The next meeting of the CEART committee will take place on the 28 September 2009. EI submitted its report on the 10th of September. Included below are the Executive Summary and the Key recommendations of the report.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Teacher Shortages and the Recruitment of Unqualified Teachers**
   Teacher shortages continue to increase worldwide, particularly in developing countries, where there is a clear danger that *Education For All* goals for universal primary education by 2015 will not be reached. Due to the financial and economic crisis the situation has worsened as more budgetary constraints have arisen in developing and donor countries.
2. **Teachers' Working Conditions and Salaries**
   While more pressures are being put on teachers in the form of increased workload and growing class sizes, there is a general downward trend in teachers' salaries, which continue to compare unfavourably to salaries paid to professionals in other sectors, notwithstanding the same level of qualifications required of them.
3. **Consultations with Teacher Organisations**
   At a time when education is going through a number of changes due to additional pressures placed on governments by the financial and economic crisis, teachers are often not consulted on educational reforms. Worse still, in a number of countries, teachers are not allowed to form unions. Unions have been submitted to searches or targeted for attack.
4. **Preparation for the Profession and Further Education for Teachers**
   Particularly where teachers are un- or under-qualified, pre-service teacher training is often lacking. This is exacerbated by the lack of in-service training due to financial constraints in developing countries. In developed countries while opportunities for professional development may be freely available, this may not always meet teachers' needs, and becomes more of a burden than an opportunity when it is linked to teachers' performance, without any clear vision as to the pedagogical improvement of such exercise.
5. **Academic Freedom and Professional Autonomy**
   Professional autonomy for teachers is largely constrained through requirements of set curricula and availability and resources for textbooks and teaching material. In higher education, academic freedom is also at risk due to budgetary or political constraints, measures of force or the application of liberal criteria to higher education systems.
6. **Security of Employment and Tenure**
   Teachers at all levels of education are facing a *casualisation crisis* as trends across the globe consistently subject teachers to precarious employment in the form of fix-term contracts, part-time employment and even self-employment in some cases.
7. **Collegial Governance**
   As more managerial-type mechanisms of governance work their way into higher education institutions, academics find that they have less influence on governance aspects of higher education institutions particularly in the appointment of key administrative staff with managerial functions.
8. **Safe school environment and violence against teachers**
   In their daily work, teachers at educational institutions of all levels are suffering from an increasing trend of violent attacks which take the form of arrest, bullying, torture, kidnapping, injury or even murder of teachers, academics and education unionists. Today, more than ever before, teachers and students are increasingly vulnerable to attack.

## 9. HIV/AIDS

Despite significant progress made at country level to control the AIDS epidemic, much remains to be done to ensure universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, particularly in Africa. This in turn has severe impacts on the demand and supply of education, as well as the quality of education provided.

# X. RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the considerations and findings made in the preceding sections of this report, this concluding section serves to put forward key EI recommendations for the consideration of the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNESCO.

### Key Recommendation

**X.1** In the context of the global financial and economic crisis that the world is facing, EI recommends that CEART stress, together with ILO and UNESCO, the fundamental right to quality education and the need for qualified, talented and motivated teachers as a key component in education for post-crisis regeneration. The recent G8 Declaration specifically addresses education as a solution to the crisis, stating:

> ... [I]*nvesting in education and skills development is crucial for a sustainable recovery from the current economic crisis and for long term development* (Group of 8, 2009).

In this respect, it is important that where governments have proposed cuts to education budgets, that these be reversed, and that they foster an ongoing commitment to investment in education and in teachers. World Teacher's Day on 5 October 2009 will carry the slogan *Invest in Teachers Now!* During this difficult time of global financial and economic crisis, it is therefore critical to seek mechanisms to protect teachers' security of employment and to ensure that investment in the teaching profession is sufficient and proportionate to the demands made of teachers.

### In addition, EI recommends that:

**X.2** Teacher shortages be tackled in such a way that existing gaps be filled with employment of qualified teachers, rather than voluntary, un- or under-qualified teachers.

**X.3** Adequate in-service training programmes be developed for unqualified teachers to bring them up to agreed national standards, which standards and training programmes are to be elaborated in consultation with teachers' unions.

**X.4** Current budget cuts in education not attack or deteriorate teachers' salaries, working conditions, requirements for qualifications and access to professional development. These are the key conditions for maintaining quality of education.

**X.5** CEART, together with ILO and UNESCO, work with governments to allow teachers to form unions in order to be able to safeguard their rights as teachers and to bargain collectively, where they are currently prohibited by their governments from doing so.

**X.6** Teachers' unions and teachers' organisations be fully engaged as relevant partners in consultations with national, regional and local governments on education reforms as relevant partners, particularly in view of developments and structural adjustments currently underway as an effect of the global financial and economic crisis. Their contribution to, and ownership of, any change is a key factor for sustainability of educational policies.

**X.7** Academic freedom and professional autonomy for teachers be rigorously maintained and, or reinforced, and that CEART insist upon this as a precondition for quality education in its work on the application of the 1966 *Recommendation on the Status of Teachers* (ILO/UNESCO, 1966). This is the only way to ensure effective methods of teaching and the development of education and societies in long term.

**X.8** That CEART, together with ILO and UNESCO, work tirelessly to reverse for restrictions of academic freedom of higher education teaching personnel, and that academics be allowed to carry out their teaching and research duties in environments that do not hinder their professional activities, whether by means of political pressure, force or commercial interests. This is the only way to ensure the intellectual development of society and to foster genuine scientific discovery.

**X.9** Stability of employment and security of tenure at all levels of education be safeguarded against increasing policy trends to rely on short-term contracts. EI recommends that CEART, together with ILO and UNESCO, make concrete efforts to reverse the casualisation crisis for all teachers at all levels of education. Tenure or its equivalent in higher education should be particularly secured as the precondition for academic freedom. Teaching needs to be treated as lifelong career in order for it to benefit from its status as a profession.

**X.10** The status and role of both schools and higher education institutions be maintained as institutions of learning and cultural and democratic development, and that they not be treated as economic enterprises. The necessity for proper collegial governance systems is crucial in this respect.

**X.11** Safety in schools and universities be reinforced as a paramount condition of learning. EI recommends that CEART work with ILO and UNESCO to step up efforts via international and collective measures to reverse the growing trend of violent attacks against teachers at all levels of education and teacher trade union activists worldwide.

**X.12** International efforts in terms of *Education for All* and the *Millennium Development Goals* continue to be reinforced - despite the current global financial and economic crisis - as the main priorities of committed governments and donor agencies, and especially when it comes to providing help and education to teachers affected by HIV/AIDS.

**X.13** That UNESCO, together with Education International, dedicate World Teacher's Day on 5 October each year to teachers at all levels of education, including higher education teaching personnel, with a view to promoting academic freedom and combating the casualisation crisis faced by them, as well as reversing increasing trends of violence against teachers at all levels of education.

# Section 5. WTO and GATS

## 5.1 7th WTO Ministerial meeting

The World Trade Organization will be holding its 7th Ministerial Meeting in **Geneva, November 30 to December 2, 2009**. The meeting will bring together trade ministers from 153 countries. Unlike previous ministerial meetings where the focus was squarely on negotiations, the WTO Secretariat has announced that the purpose of this meeting will be to engage in a "broader evaluation of the functioning of the multilateral trading system". However, this should be taken with some degree of caution, as recent developments indicate that there is renewed pressure on negotiators to produce a package for consideration at the Ministerial.

**State of Play in the Doha Development Round**

The 7th Ministerial comes amidst an ongoing deadlock in negotiations aimed at further liberalizing the global trade in goods and services. The so-called "Doha Development Round" of talks, initiated in 2001 in the Qatari capital, has continually stalled over deep divisions between developing and developed countries.

The negotiations have three key planks: agriculture, industrial tariffs or non-agricultural market access (NAMA), and services. The first two planks have occupied much of the discussions to date, with negotiators seeking to resolve fundamental differences over the treatment of agricultural products and industrial tariffs. Many developing countries have been reluctant to engage in services negotiations until there is a satisfactory resolution in agriculture and NAMA.

Nevertheless, there has been some progress in services negotiations with some elements well advanced. Of particular concern to EI is the possibility of more countries making commitments in education services under the GATS, as well as the development of new rules on domestic regulation that will directly and indirectly affect the ability of public authorities to regulate their education systems. More recently, there are reports showing that progress was made at an informal meeting of ministers in India on September 3 and 4 that could pave the way for a framework agreement being discussed at the formal Ministerial in Geneva. Full blown negotiations, which have been in a deep freeze since last July, are now scheduled to recommence in mid-September. There will be intense pressure on negotiators to develop a framework agreement for Ministers to approve in December.

**EI's Role in the Ministerial Meeting**

As in the past, NGOs can seek accreditation to attend the ministerial, although it appears that participation will be limited. Participation is important as it allows access to official briefings and also facilitates lobbying and networking. At ministerial meetings in Cancun and Hong Kong, EI coordinated daily meetings of affiliates in attendance, organized media briefings and participated in a number of roundtables and discussions organized by other NGOs and trade unions. In addition, the ITUC TILS group (Trade Investment and Labour Standards) will as in the past meet one day prior to the ministerial and coordinate briefings and activities throughout the meeting. EI has in the past been an active participant in TILS events.

EI's participation in the TILS meeting and the Ministerial will be important, ensuring that the voices of educators are heard and that issues not taken up by other NGOs are given prominence. For instance, EI has a unique role to play in pressing for the exclusion of education from the GATS as well as underlining the dangers of proposed rules on domestic regulation.

In preparation for the Ministerial, EI may wish to consider the following:

- Issuing a circular to affiliates informing them of the Ministerial, information about accreditation, and EI's plans to coordinate activities amongst affiliates planning to attend;
- Updating information materials (e.g. briefing notes on education and GATS, domestic regulation, etc.) for distribution at the Ministerial;
- Developing a media strategy, including preparing and issuing a media statement, and possibly holding a media briefing during the Ministerial;
- Working with trade unions, such as PSI, and other NGOs and to coordinate activities and lobbying during the Ministerial.

## Annex 1. Speech by Irene Duncan Adanusa EI Vice-President UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education

**Paris, 5 July 2009**

On behalf of Education International, the largest global union federation, representing 30 million teachers and education workers worldwide, with 406 affiliate unions in 172 countries and territories, I am pleased to address the 2009 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education.

This gathering comes a decade after the first World Conference on Higher Education. This is also the 12th anniversary of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel that sets out the basic employment and academic rights of staff necessary to ensure the provision of quality education.

However, in too many places around the world these basic rights have been ignored. And yet, academic staff are at the heart of the public mission of higher education. No institution or system can be successful without a talented and committed professoriate. 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 is an absolute scandal that in many countries today a growing share of academic staff are employed in precarious fixed-term and part-time positions with low pay, few or no benefits, and without protection for academic freedom. This is not only unfair to them, but will have long-term implications for the integrity of the higher education mission.

It is time that you, member states of UNESCO, fully respect and implement the principles in the 1997 Recommendation.

We are meeting today against the backdrop of a number of global challenges. In particular, the world is now confronting a serious economic recession, the most severe in the post-war period. It is an economic crisis that is truly global in scope and one that is destroying the jobs and livelihoods of millions, and increasing inequality within and between nations.

The crisis we now face must not however be used as a pretext for reducing investments in higher education. It must not be an excuse for delaying the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including Education for All. It must not be used to implement failed neo-liberal policies. Public funding of education is not a cost. It is a sound and proven investment that will stimulate a recovery and build long-term sustainable growth.

Unfortunately, we increasingly see higher education systems suffering from inadequate public investment. Many governments are reducing spending on higher education and research, leading to faculty and staff lay-offs, caps on enrolment, research funding cuts, and reductions in course offerings.

Let us be absolutely clear: such short-sighted actions threaten to undermine the public mission of higher education and research, and to impede the economic, social and cultural development of our nations.

The economic crisis is having most effects in developing countries. We therefore welcome the special attention paid by this Conference 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 has a critical role to play in facilitating ways to strengthen higher education in the continent. As Education International, we are determined to do out 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.

Delegates, higher education and research is a public service that contributes 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.

We urge member states to use the occasion of the next few days to affirm that higher education and research is a public good and a public service. It is your responsibility as States to ensure that institutions receive adequate public funding and to work in partnership with the academic community to make sure that institutions meet key criteria on quality, access, and the conditions of staff and students.

Let me conclude by saying that the higher education sector needs and values UNESCO. We as educators are ready to work with UNESCO and other partners to assure that higher education and research is prepared to meet the challenges before us. But we can only do so if our basic employment and academic rights are respected. Only then we will be able to ensure that higher education and research can fulfill its mandate of building sustainable economic growth, social cohesion, and a culture of peace.

Thank you.

## Annex 2. UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education Workshop Session II.1 Penni Stewart, President, Canadian Association of University Teachers

**Paris, 7 July 2009**

I want to address the state of the academic profession, both by looking back at developments and progress made since the last World Conference, but also by looking forward to where we might be going. Of course, the overriding issue today is how the current global economic recession may affect higher education teaching personnel.
To begin, I think it is absolutely vital to highlight the central importance of academic staff in the higher education sector globally. Events such as this Conference underline the crucial contribution of higher education to the well-being of our nations. Yet too often such events are framed primarily or exclusively from the perspective of government policy makers and senior administrators. Overlooked is the significance of academic staff to the vitality of educational systems and institutions. Across the world academic staff are at the forefront of the struggle to protect and foster public education. Without a talented and committed academic staff no higher education institution or system can achieve its goals.

This was partly recognized by UNESCO member states just over ten years ago with the adoption of the Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel. The Recommendation set out for the first time basic international standards governing the employment and academic rights of staff. It recognizes the importance of academic freedom, security of employment, collegial governance, professional responsibilities and the right of academic to join trade unions and to bargain collectively.

Today, the economic recession that is gripping the world is intensifying certain trends and putting renewed pressures on these rights and terms and conditions of employment. I want to highlight 4 trends and issues, and their implications: 1) the growth of fixed-term and casual employment in the sector; 2) the general decline in the terms and conditions of employment at the same time we need to recruit and retain high quality staff; 3) the weakening of collegial governance; and 4) continuing and new threats to academic freedom. How governments, institutions and academic staff respond will have enormous consequences for the future of higher education.

Institutions and systems around the world are directly and indirectly affected by the financial crisis. In many countries, rising unemployment and a loss in tax revenues are putting new fiscal constraints on government. Eastern Europe and most of the developing world have been hit particularly hard and have in turn slashed funding for higher education. In other countries, endowment and pension funds have been hammered by the collapse in the global equity markets. Some countries such as the Canada, Germany, New Zealand and Norway have increased funding for higher education, but much of this has been focused on capital infrastructure projects -- yes, this helps to create jobs in the short term, but long-term investment in the human infrastructure of our universities and colleges is also needed if we want to ensure the long-term growth and sustainability of higher education.

But on the contrary, around the world today it is academic staff who are paying the price for the crisis and the financial mistakes made by others. Hiring freezes and lay-offs are common at the same moment that enrolments are rising. And we see already the increasing use of part-time and fixed-term academic staff --- colleagues who are hired at low pay, few if any benefits and with no job security. This is a trend that pre-dates the economic crisis, but the current problems our institutions face are being used to justify the further casualization of the profession.

In fact, higher education is quickly becoming one of the most casualized professions, perhaps second only to retail services. In many counties, fixed-term academic staff comprise the majority of those teaching in post-secondary systems. In the United States, the figure is closer to three-quarters. In Central America, our colleagues have reported a doubling in the past ten years of the share of professors now employed on a casual basis. At my own university more than 50 percent of teaching is carried out by contract academic staff or graduate students. The government of Uganda floated a proposal a few years ago to eliminate tenure and convert all professors in the country onto fixed-term contracts.

Let's consider for a moment the situation of those who graduate with doctoral degrees and don't have any prospects for permanent employment and steady personal advancement. Instead they have long-term part-time or non permanent full-time employment. After a few years of heavy teaching, with no opportunities to pursue research and isolated from the academic environment of permanent faculty, individuals are increasingly unable to move into a

"standard" academic career. Thus, we are seeing nothing less than the creation of a permanent two-tier workforce where knowledge creation becomes the privilege of a shrinking group of full-time academic staff.

The conditions of work for contingent faculty are generally poor -- especially in contrast with their full time peers. Many teach multiple courses-sometimes at several institutions (Roads scholars). Typically contingent staff are given few opportunities to participate in governance, wages are low relative to full time academic staff, and access to research and conference funds, libraries and office space is limited.

And perhaps most importantly, fixed-term staff do not have academic freedom. As the 1997 Recommendation notes, it is tenure or its functional equivalent that provides the formal protection of academic freedom. Let's be perfectly clear: staff employed on fixed-term contracts do not need to be fired if they offend powerful interests. Instead, their contracts are simply not renewed. In this sense, I believe that the casualization of academic labour is perhaps the most significant threat to academic freedom today.

Now, the casualization of academic labour is also mirrored by a general decline in the terms and conditions of employment globally. One of the key trends in higher education that we've already noted during the Conference has been the increase in the size of institutions and the growth in participation rates. A recent article in the *Economist*, for example, noted that in the "rich" world, the proportion of adults with some higher education almost doubled between 1975 and 2000. Similarly, China was described as having doubled its student population through the 1990s and India was said to be on the same track.

At the same time that demand for education has been increasing, public funding per student has stagnated and fallen in real terms. Funding generally has been insufficient to maintain and grow high quality programs and to hire enough academic staff to match rising enrolments. Many countries and institutions have responded by raising or introducing tuition fees, in effect privatizing their funding. And that's led many to aggressively recruit more and more students – particularly international students who are often charged exorbitant fees – and turning undergraduates into cash cows.

The result? Larger and larger classes are becoming the norm and student faculty ratios are ballooning. Students are paying more and more, but often getting less in return. Academic staff are reporting greater workloads and greater stress levels. Separate studies recently undertaken in the UK, Canada and Australia confirm that a rising share of academic staff are reporting levels of stress that are causing significant physical and mental health problems.

As well, academic staff salaries are being eroded, and are falling behind those of other professionals. The share of institutional expenditures on academic rank salaries has fallen sharply in most OECD countries, for instance. Put it all together --- the casualization of the profession, rising workloads, increased pressures to produce, and declining remuneration and you get a picture of how difficult it is going to be to recruit and retain academic staff.

And of course, the challenge for developing countries is even more pronounced. Despite years of debate, the international community has failed to address the growing problem of the brain drain. As academics, 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. The time has come for us to consider concrete ways to mitigate and reverse 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. Academic staff unions such as mine are more than willing to contribute to this work.

It is also important to note that there is an equity and gender dimension to the issue of working conditions. Around the world, the academic labour force, particularly at the most senior ranks, remains male dominated. Indigenous people and minorities continue to be seriously underrepresented from the ranks of academic staff. And persons with disabilities have made at best minimal gains.

The status of women academic staff has been improving over time – this unfortunately is partly a result of the casualization of academic work: women are more likely to be employed on fixed-term contracts. Amongst the full-time and permanent ranks, disciplinary imbalances continue. Women tend to be all but absent from science and engineering, and concentrated in traditional "soft" disciplines. As well, women's career progress continues to lag

behind their male peers. They are under represented in senior ranks and move through the ranks more slowly and earn less than their male peers.

I want to turn now to the issue of governance. Under- funding, wage stagnation, casusalization have all arisen in a context where collegial governance is eroding. In more and more countries from Canada to France, Israel to Denmark, institutional structures have been or are being changed to strengthen the power of the Administration at the expense of the academic staff.

Participation in decision making, long recognized as a hallmark of peer governance is under attack from those who believe that autonomy must be curtailed, that academic staff should be more subject to bureaucratic oversight, that higher education management should become more centralized, and that academic managers should be professionals not drawn from the ranks of the academy. More and more authority for academic decision making is being shifted from the collegial institutions like Senates to the offices of the President/or Central Administration.

The loss of autonomy in decision making is also reflected in the trend for governments to downplay the importance of curiosity driven research and peer review and to direct research funding toward political priorities and to restructure granting bodies so as to increase the influence of non academics over research funding decisions.

Finally, I want to conclude with some comments about academic freedom. Despite some progress since the last WCHE, it remains true that in too many countries academic staff face harassment, violence and intimidation in attempting to carry out their role as educators. As we have observed only recently, when political and social crises break out, academic staff and students are among the first to be targeted -- often for exercising their basic civil liberties and their academic freedom. 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.

But academic freedom isn't only a casualty of unrest and war. We must recognize that threats to academic freedom come from systemic practices. The casualization of academic labour, as I've noted, raises some of the most serious concerns for academic freedom -for without job security there can be no freedom. Privatization also raises Academic freedom concerns as academics become more dependent on private donors for research funds.

Academic freedom has also been compromised by the rise of anti-terrorism laws -- academics have been deported or threatened with deportation, arrested and denied rights to travel to academic events. . In my own country, Bill Ayers a well known US academic with a famous activist anti-war history from the Vietnam war era was denied the right to enter the country to give an academic talk. Academics in the UK have found themselves liable to prosecution for downloading certain materials. But threats don't have to be tangible to suppress academic freedom. Fears of what might happen lead to self censorship in research and teaching.

It is time that all member states of UNESCO adopt and implement the principles of academic freedom as articulated in the 1997 Recommendation concerning the status of higher education teaching personnel. No higher education system and no university can fulfill its mission to contribute to the advance of knowledge when academic staff do not have academic freedom.

On a final note: Our generation of academics faces formidable challenges and the way forward is not always clear. We must continue to raise awareness among our colleagues and in the public more generally about the issues and barriers we face. And academic staff must continue to promote high quality public education, advocate for collegial governance and be absolutely militant in our defense of academic freedom.

## Annex 3. EI Statement to the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, *Educators Committed to Quality Higher Education in the Coming Decade*. Paris, 5-8 July 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 coordinated 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 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 it 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 measureable 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 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

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. 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, parttime, 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.

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 Members 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.

## 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.

## Annex 4. Education at a Glance 2009 Education International summary of key findings

*In its new Education at a Glance Report 2009, the OECD argues using retrospective data for a balance between private and public investment in education because of high private returns. The question remains: will this pre-crisis data still count?*

*Education at a Glance* is an important annual publication which enables countries to see themselves in the light of other countries' performance in education. The indicators of *Education at a Glance* look at who participates in education, what is spent on it, how education systems operate and the results they achieve.

A major limitation of this year's edition of *Education at a Glance* is that the data it presents is applicable only up to 2007 and therefore does not adequately reflect the situation since the onset of the global financial and economic crisis. While the OECD argues that investment in education and innovation is a way for societies out of the economic crisis, it continues to view education primarily as a matter of individual benefit – especially in terms of the increase in personal income that it generates. The OECD argues that it can demonstrate how education can help economies to recover via trite data showing how much individuals (particularly males) benefit over their lives from tertiary graduation, because they are still in high demand in the labour market and are paid significantly better than those with only secondary or with non-tertiary post-secondary education. This view of education is rather limited as it fails to grasp the full complexity of the benefits that investment in education and innovation brings about, which is key to viewing investment in education as the path to post-crisis recovery.

Current data collected by Education International however show how education, and in particular teachers' salaries, are suffering from budget cuts in a number of OECD member states, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe. They range from the most severe cuts of up to 50.9% in teachers' salaries in Latvia to cuts of a less drastic nature in the Czech Republic, where government spending on education is planned to be reduced by 5 percent in 2010. In Poland, as a consequence of the crisis, overdue increases in teachers' salaries have not been paid in full as promised. Teacher redundancies in some part of the United States also point to reduced investment in education at a time when it is needed the most.

***High Returns and Benefits from Tertiary Education remain a Key Point!***

As with the 2008 version of *Education at a Glance*, the analysis in the report points to high returns from tertiary education. Yet, due to the nature of the data used, it is not clear from the report whether young graduates can still benefit from higher individual returns in current times of dramatic recession and economic downturn. Indeed, there is growing evidence that the labour market is suffering badly at all levels and highly skilled graduates may be filling the ranks of short-term, specific- or project-type employment. Furthermore, the focus on individual benefit is of little help when trying to understand the full range of contributions education brings to society as a whole. EI underlines how important it is to complement the individual perspective with a broader analysis of the impact of these developments on the whole society.

Job prospects for low-skilled and less-qualified workers with only secondary or even primary education are already bleak and will remain so, the report warns. Across OECD countries, 42% of adults with less than upper secondary qualifications are not even employed, and those who become unemployed are also more likely to spend a long time out of work: in most countries, over half of low-qualified unemployed 25-34 year-olds are long-term unemployed. By contrast, those who are employed enjoy high wage premiums for completing tertiary education.

Consequently, the report welcomes a further expansion of access to tertiary education as well as a worldwide increase in graduation rates. However, the OECD once again ranks countries and presents their relative positions on the country list not as progress or regress in terms of objective enrolment and graduation rates, but as if the competition for the top rank were the main purpose of the comparison. This indicates that the OECD does not value equal access to tertiary education for all regardless of socio-economic background as such, but sees access to tertiary education as a means of economic competitiveness between its member states. EI asserts that this is not solid ground upon which to build equal and fair long-term education policy. Instead equal access to, and graduation from, tertiary education should be viewed as a societal goal in its own right.

One of the report's key policy messages is that countries which devote a high proportion of public funding to education should allow for more private funding, while where private funding dominates, the opposite should occur. EI 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. 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 governments must guarantee that public institutions of higher education are properly financed so that they can fulfil their mission of contributing to the public good.

EI is strong in its position is that education should remain publicly-funded and evidence showing an increase in private funding should be interpreted as a deficit of public funds, not as an excuse to limit them.

***Equity is a Growing Policy Concern in Continuing Education and Training***

The report admits that adult training programmes are often designed to counter the deficiencies of initial education and training; however, in practice, it often means that those with a higher level of attainment in education already tend to use more opportunities for continuing professional education than those without. So, in reality, these programmes do not reach those who are most in need, while those who are already have a relatively high level of education have opportunities to continue to improve. The OECD warns that, if the current trend of higher competitiveness of highly qualified tertiary graduates continues, the already existing wage gap between young highly educated professionals and older lower skilled workers will only increase.

In contrast with much higher levels of participation in continuing education and training among those in their twenties, less than 6% of the 30-39 year-old population across OECD countries are enrolled full- or part-time. While in some countries the percentage is significantly higher than this, at more than 10% (Australia, Finland, Iceland, New Zealand and Sweden), in others participation is less than 3% of 30-39 year-olds (France, Germany, Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Turkey and partner country the Russian Federation), with even lower levels for over the age of 40 in Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Turkey, and the partner countries Chile, the Russian Federation and Slovenia. This finding further underlines the immediate need for better opportunities for lifelong learning, especially for the low-skilled and middle-aged.

*Education at a Glance* gives particular attention to on-the-job-training, which constitutes an important segment of adult education in OECD countries. In Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Switzerland and the partner country Estonia, around 75% of upper secondary students are in vocational programmes that combine school and work-based elements. In Australia, Denmark, Iceland (in the case of women only), the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (women only), more than half of the time spent in vocational education between ages 15 and 29 is combined with employment. On-the-job training is particularly at risk in the current financial and economic crisis, as companies struggle to survive by introducing cost-cutting measures.

The report concludes that, with lifelong learning being now more essential than ever, public policy needs to ask how well education and training systems are addressing the learning needs of older adults who need new skills. This may be an indirect message: policy makers or learning institutions should explore new opportunities to offer services in adult education. EI fully supports such exploration but points to the need to support and offer further training for teaching personnel to be effective in such new lifelong learning systems.

***PISA: Differences Between Countries in Overcoming Socio-Economic Obstacles***

*Education at a Glance* uses findings from PISA 2006 about top performers in science, mathematics and reading to analyze factors behind their success and to suggest policy directions to increase countries' share of high performing students.

Among countries with similar mean scores in PISA there is a remarkable diversity in the percentage of top-performing students. For example, France has a mean score of 495 points in science in PISA 2006 and a proportion of 8% of students at high proficiency levels in science (both very close to the OECD average), and the partner country Latvia is also close to the OECD average in science with 490 points but has only 4% of top performers, which is less than half the OECD average of 9%. Although Latvia has a small percentage of students at the lowest levels, the result could signal the relative lack of a highly educated talent pool for the future. The OECD concludes that the variability of the proportion of students who are top performers across countries suggests a difference in countries' potential capacities to staff future knowledge-driven industries with talent educated in their home countries. Similar variability is shown in reading and mathematics with only slight differences in the patterns of these results among countries.

In explaining this variability, the OECD admits that socio-economic background is a crucial factor. In virtually every country for which there is comparable data, students in the top performing category come from families with comparatively advantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Across the OECD, the average socio-economic background of top performers is around two thirds of a standard deviation above the average OECD socio-economic background. There are also more top performers in science among native students than among students with an immigrant background but, in part, this merely reflects differences in socio-economic background.

While a disadvantaged background is not an insurmountable barrier to high performance, how much of an obstacle it becomes varies from country to country. In the typical OECD country, about a quarter of top performers in science come from a socio-economic background below their country's average. In some countries, the chances for students from a relatively disadvantaged background to become top performers are even greater. For example, in Austria, Finland, Japan, and the partner economies Hong Kong-China and Macao-China, one-third or more of top performers come from a socio-economic background that is more disadvantaged than the average in their country. On the other hand, in France, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal and the United States, as well as the partner countries Bulgaria, Israel and Lithuania, 80% or more of top performers come from a socio-economic background that is more advantaged than the average in their country.

The report concludes that there are some countries that succeed better than others in promoting excellence among disadvantaged social groups, linguistic and immigrant minorities. While the report concludes that there are lessons to be learned from these countries that may help improve excellence and equity in educational outcomes, it does not explain such lessons, leaving a question mark around the issue.

***Participation in Early Childhood Education***

*Education at a Glance* finds that there has also been a significant expansion of enrolment in early childhood education. According to the OECD data, on average across OECD countries in 1996 there were 41% of 3 to 4 year-olds enrolled in educational institutions, by 2007 it had grown to 71%. In fact, in Austria, Denmark, Spain, Norway, Korea, Portugal, Germany, Switzerland, Finland, Sweden, Poland and Mexico, this proportion more than doubled over this period. Sweden is acknowledged as a particular example, where enrolment in early childhood education stood at 40% in 1996 while in 2007 it was 98% -- virtually universal.

In contrast, in New Zealand, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Australia, France, the United States and the Netherlands, growth rates remained below 50%. However, in New Zealand, Iceland and France this is mainly explained by the fact that enrolment was already close to universal in 1998. In half of the OECD countries, enrolment in early childhood education is now 80% or higher, according to *Education at a Glance*.

EI welcomes this development and stresses how important it is that countries make provision for a sufficient number of well-educated pedagogical staff to meet the demands of this increase in enrolment in early-childhood education.

***Educational Attainment is Beneficial for Health and other Social Outcomes***

For the first time *Education at a Glance* 2009 goes slightly beyond economic outcomes and tries to assess the impact of education attainment on social outcomes such as health, political interest and interpersonal trust (Indicator A9). It finds that people with a higher level of education are more confident in themselves and the society in which they live. The report claims that even after adjustment for socio-economic factors such as household income, in the majority of countries there is a clear correlation between personal health as well as trust in fairness in society, and education level attained. In particular, an increase in educational attainment from below-upper secondary to upper secondary level is associated with a stronger and more consistent increase in health outcomes, compared to an increase in educational attainment from upper secondary to tertiary level, in all countries surveyed except Poland. An increase in educational attainment from upper secondary to tertiary level is broadly associated with stronger and more consistent increases in political interest and interpersonal trust.

Hence, there is a conclusion that what individuals potentially acquire through education – *e.g.* competencies and psychosocial features such as certain attitudes and resilience – may have an important role in raising social outcomes, independent of education's effect on income.

EI calls on the OECD governments to acknowledge this finding and take it into consideration when assessing benefits of a high level of education for their whole populations, and the wider social and economic benefits that this implies.

***Public and Household Spending on Education must be Scrutinized***

With reference to the current economic downturn, the OECD makes a very clear point, as in the previous reports, that it is inevitable that spending on education will be scrutinized more and more rigorously. OECD countries as a whole spend 6.1 percent of their collective GDP on education, all levels combined. As a share of total public expenditure, the OECD average in 2006 for education stood at 13.3 percent. Expressed on a per-student basis, OECD countries spend on average USD 93,775 per student over the duration of primary and secondary studies. At tertiary level (excluding R&D activities and ancillary services) expenditure is on average USD 8,418 per student per year. The United States with expenditure of USD 19,476 per student ranks first. However, this combines all sources of funding – private and public.

The report notes that expenditures per student on primary and secondary schools has increased in every country, on average, by 35 percent between 1995 and 2006, a period of relatively stable student numbers.

The pattern is different at tertiary level, where spending per student has fallen in one third of OECD and partner countries. In these countries, expenditure has not kept up with the expansion in student numbers. Nonetheless, at tertiary level, average expenditure on educational institutions per student increased by 11 percentage points between 2000 and 2006 on average in OECD countries, after having remained stable between 1995 and 2000. This shows governments' efforts to deal with the expansion of tertiary education through massive investment. Five out of the 11 countries (the Czech Republic, Mexico, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Switzerland) in which student enrolments in tertiary education increased by more than 20 percentage points between 2000 and 2006 raised their expenditure on tertiary educational institutions by at least the same proportion over the period, whereas other countries (Hungary, Iceland, Ireland and the partner countries Brazil, Chile and Israel) did not.

Moving away from the concept of education as a human right, the authors of the report interpret data showing that in at least at two levels of education – pre-primary and tertiary - household costs are increasing their share, as an opportunity for governments to look for new alliances for additional resources in education, respectively inviting governments to rely even more on private funds, replacing public funding.

***Cost-Sharing Between "Participants" in Education Cannot Be Seen as the Answer***

In the report, indicator B3 shows that, while in all countries for which comparable data is available, public funding on educational institutions increased between 2000 and 2006, household spending augmented at an even greater rate in nearly three-quarters of these countries, even if in 2006, 85% of expenditure, on average, for all levels of education combined, was still from public sources. Indeed, high investments seem justified, as indicator A8 shows that across OECD countries, net public returns for investments in tertiary education amount to over 50,000 USD on average.

However, among the 18 OECD countries for which trend data is available, the share of public funding in tertiary institutions on average decreased slightly from 78% in 1995 to 76% in 2000 and to 72% in 2005 and 2006. This trend is mainly influenced by non-European countries in which tuition fees are generally higher and corporations participate more actively by providing grants to finance tertiary institutions.

Compared to other levels of education, tertiary institutions and to a lesser extent pre-primary institutions obtain the largest proportion of funds from private sources, at 27% and 19%, respectively. In tertiary education, households account for most private expenditure in most countries for which data are available. Exceptions are Austria, Canada and Sweden where private expenditure from entities other than households is more significant.

As a consequence, the OECD makes a strong case in favour of tuition fees in tertiary level education. While the report does admit that tuition fees must not be high and can be combined with equity measures, it is noteworthy that Finland, Norway and Sweden - which do not charge tuition fees - are among the seven countries with the highest entry rate to university-level education, thus reiterating the benefit that can come about from public investment in tertiary education as a public good.

***Education Must Prove that it can be a Solution to the Crisis***

In *Education at a Glance*, the OECD makes a controversial argument (forgetting about social outcomes): in times of crisis, education must prove that it provides "value for money" in order to justify ever-increasing expenditure. The report does so by examining the choices countries make when investing their resources in primary and secondary education, such as trade-offs between the hours that students spend in classroom, the number of teaching hours of teachers, class sizes (proxy measure), teachers' salaries and the proportion of teacher's working time that is devoted to teaching (Indicator B7).

The OECD uses the new indicator "salary cost per student". The indicator is rather dubious, as it doesn't take into account some major determinants of teachers' salaries, such as types of qualifications, career structures, teacher shortages and regional disparities. Moreover, this rather dangerous indicator might lead governments to resort to salary cuts or class-size increases to improve their relative scores.

Salary cost per student at upper secondary level varies significantly between countries, from 3.6% of GDP per capita in the Slovak Republic (less than half of the OECD average rate of 11.4%) to over six times that rate in Portugal (22%, nearly twice the OECD average). Four factors influence these differences – salary level, instruction time for students, teaching time of teachers and average class size – so that a given level of salary cost per student can result from many different combinations of the four factors. As a result, similar levels of expenditure among countries in primary and secondary education can mask a variety of contrasting policy choices. For example, in Korea and Luxembourg salary costs per student as a percentage of GDP per capita are both around 15% at the upper secondary level. However, while Korea uses very large class sizes to pay high teacher salaries, finance above-average instruction time for students and provide teachers with time for other things than teaching, Luxembourg has invested most of its resources into small class sizes, at the expense of below-average instruction time and salaries for teachers. The report does not provide a policy recommendation into which factors are more important, leaving the impression that all combinations can work, until costs are under control. The choice of this aggregate indicator means that declining student numbers can be seen as a potential relief to overstretched education budgets as funding should correspond to student numbers. It, however, also means that teacher salary cuts, class-size increases and decreased instruction times could be used as measures by countries wanting to score better on this OECD indicator. Hence, governments should be reminded about the main determinants of teacher salaries as being different from the OECD calculations.

***More Effectiveness and Efficiency Measurement Mechanisms***

The report argues that for education systems and the actors within them to improve their effectiveness and efficiency, there need to be mechanisms in place to appraise performance and to provide incentives for continuous improvement. For the first time, the OECD is using a new indicator (Indicator D5), presenting data from the new OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), arguing that these mechanisms are lacking in many countries.

The report cites some general selected conclusions from TALIS 2009, such as:

- A number of countries have relatively weak evaluation structures: one-third or more of schools in Portugal (33%), Austria (35%) and Ireland (39%) had no form of school evaluation in the previous five years.
- On average across TALIS countries, 13% of teachers did not receive any feedback or appraisal on their work in their current school.
- Most teachers work in schools where they feel offered no rewards or recognition for their efforts: Three-quarters of responding teachers felt that they would receive no rewards or recognition for improving the quality of their work.

It remains to be added that there is no proof in TALIS that this lack of evaluation and feedback is somehow related to better performance or "effectiveness" of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the choice to use these conclusions in the context of proving that education provides "added value for money" is worrisome.

*In general, the Education at a Glance 2009 report gives a rich overview of the main statistical indicators of OECD and partner countries. As such it is valuable source of reference from which to draw evidence of main trends, however, we must remain careful about its policy messages.*

Research Unit, 2009-09-08
Brussels