



Promoting Public Sector Education in an Age of Austerity

Resolution

“Those who have the least are those who suffer more from the budgetary cuts”

Submitted for adoption by FETE-UGT (Spain) and FNE (Portugal) to the ETUCE Conference, the Regional Conference of Education International, meeting in Budapest on 26-28 November 2012, adopted on 27 November 2012

In view of the fact that:

1. In the Mediterranean countries members of the European Union, education is being submitted to measures of austerity more stringent than those imposed by the economic crisis itself. The requirements of performance of the deficit do not leave any margin to the Government for alleviating the adverse effects of the crisis on the public utilities and in particular, on education. The educational community is suffering from the after-effects of the budget cut that has been realised in education: on the one hand the reduction affects the families that see how the cost of an essential service like education is increasing; the pupils receive less economic and educational assistance and the teaching staff, that is affected twice: as teaching staff and as worker of a fundamental public utility.
2. The budget cut which education is experiencing year after year becomes a social reality by a breakdown of the equity and social cohesion. Education has no longer a role of integration and does no longer guarantee the equality of opportunities for the citizens of these countries, because while the families with a high purchasing power have resources to pay the educational “quality” of their children, the rest are seeing how it decreases, due to the continuous aggressions it is undergoing.
3. The pupils who have difficulties in their learning process and those necessitating support programmes offsetting the inequalities are those who suffer more from the consequences of the disappearance of that type of programmes and assistance. The reduction of the number of teachers per centre and the increase of the number of pupils per classroom are elements that prevent a larger personalisation of the learning process, whereby the pupils with special needs are fundamentally affected.
4. From a professional point of view, this period is characterised by the loss of professional and social achievements obtained after years of union fights, which supposes an attack to the rights acquired by the teachers. With this respect the loss of purchasing power and loss of early retirement in the educational sector, are a good example thereof.



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5. The reduction of the budget items meant for education affects also in a deciding way the work conditions of the teaching staff. The increase of the work timetable and increase of the number of pupils per classroom as well as the increase of the working day, together with the salary reduction and a very aggressive tax policy, are measures the Governments of these countries are carrying out, while eroding seriously our rights as well as the quality of education.

The Educational Trade Unions belonging to the Education International (European Trade Union Committee for Education):

6. Reassert the urgency that the European Parliament should approve guidelines towards the national governments so that the educational budgets of the various countries remain on the margin of the cuts and requirements of public deficit in order to provide the necessary means and resources to guarantee an inclusive education of quality for all, and to recognise that the investment in education is one of the solutions to the economic crisis.