

Report on Education International Programme/ Activities in 2017

Worldwide

61st Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

An EI delegation participated in the 61st Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW61) at the UN Headquarters, from 13-24 March. The CSW61 focused on the priority theme of 'Women's Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work'. EI's delegation was part of the broader labour delegation including delegates from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and Public Services International (PSI), as well as from national labour centres such as the Canadian Labour Congress. This year, the full labour delegation comprised 160 women from 44 countries.

An EI/ITUC/PSI co-sponsored parallel session was convened on 'Mobilising Collective Action for Women's Economic Empowerment'. Dianne Woloschuk, Chair of EI's Status of Women

EI consultation workshop on quality terms of employment in the education sector

From 13-14 March, over 60 representatives of EI affiliates launched a global dialogue on quality working conditions and terms of employment. Participants from over 50 countries joined EI's for this consultation workshop. It laid the foundations for the development of an EI policy brief on employment in the education sector, as well as an online platform for strengthening affiliates' capacity to develop relevant and effective policy proposals.

International Summit on the Teaching Profession

The International Summit on the Teaching Profession was hosted in Edinburgh, Scotland, from 29-31 March, by the UK and Scottish Governments, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), EI and its affiliates, the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), the National Union of Teachers (NUT), and members of the British Irish Group of Teacher Unions (BIGTU). The event welcomed official delegations of education ministers, trade union representatives, teachers, and education experts from over 20 countries.

Global March Against Child Labour's Board meeting

Strategies to eradicate child labour and to multiply rather than duplicate the impact of actions are amongst the outcomes of a meeting of the Board of the Global March Against Child Labour (Global March) on 30-31 March in The Hague, The Netherlands. The Global March was started 20 years ago by Nobel Laureate and current Global March Honorary President Kailash Satyarthi.

During the meeting, Board members, including EI, welcomed the Government of India's ratification of the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) two conventions making child

labour illegal. From 8-9 July, over 60 parliamentarians from 35 countries (including Bangladesh, Ghana and India) were to meet at the Second Parliamentarians Without Borders' event in The Hague. This is an initiative which was launched by the Global March to encourage parliamentarians to take public action against child labour.

EI Executive Board

From 4-6 April in Brussels, Belgium, the 49th meeting of the Education International (EI) Executive Board (ExBo) took stock of the implementation of EI's quadrennial work programme as mandated by the 2015 World Congress.

They also received reports from events held since their last gathering, and reviewed regional reports, including the reports of the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) Conference and the Arab Countries Cross-Regional Structure (ACCRS) Conference.

The Global Response to the Privatisation and Globalisation in and of Education Campaign was high on the agenda. Aiming to enhance public education and access to education, the EI leaders also focused on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.

The EI Status of Women Committee also reported on the preparations for the 3rd EI World Women's Conference, to take place in March 2018 in Marrakech, Morocco.

During a special session, Dr. Dennis Shirley, Professor of Education at the Lynch School of Education at Boston College, USA, made a presentation on the new imperatives for educational change needed to improve teaching and learning globally.

PISA results look into complexity of students' well-being

The latest set of results from the 2015 PISA study focuses on students' well-being and the role families, teachers and the school community play in achieving quality education for all. The report emphasises the vital role of schools in their communities, according to EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen. "A sense of belonging at school for students is fundamentally important for their achievement and happiness. In fact, the concept of 'the happy school' highlights just how important schools and their teachers are to young people's lives. The idea that schools and teachers can somehow be substituted by MOOCs and out-of-school learning is implicitly, but fundamentally rejected by the report", he said.

He however regretted that the report does not factor in the views of teachers from the PISA teacher questionnaire. "There is nothing in the report on the damaging impact of aggressive evaluation regimes on teachers, nor on the implications for the curriculum and staffing of its important calls to enhance student well-being and belonging at schools", he said. "Simply saying that teachers must try harder does not constitute a strategy or an analysis," he emphasised.

World Bank protest

As part of EI's ongoing advocacy around Bridge International Academies (BIA) and its supporters, on 21 April, a protest took place outside the World Bank in Washington DC, USA, to coincide with the Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group.

The protest was designed to draw attention to and condemn the World Bank's support for BIA. The rally was organised by the American Federation of Teachers and was supported by several EI member organisations and civil society allies.

Global Action Week for Education 2017

Education International called on affiliates and concerned citizens to join the Global Action Week for Education 2017 (GAWE), from 23 to 29 April, which urged governments develop and fund credible plans for the implementation of the full SDG 4 agenda; recognise the critical importance of strengthening public systems and state capacities to ensure that education is free, of good quality, and equitable; and ensure that there are credible, transparent mechanisms for participation of civil society in the monitoring and accountability processes for the agenda.

Unite for Quality Education and Leadership Conference in the Netherlands

Ensuring that teachers and their unions are the architects of the teaching profession and co-designers of education systems - from the classroom level to the national policy debates to the global level – was the core message of Education International's Unite for Quality Education and Leadership Conference held in Rotterdam from 3-5 May. Over 300 leading educators from around the world attended the event, which was built around four themes of professionalism, pedagogy, leadership, and curriculum.

OECD event: The future of education and skills: Education 2030

This OECD meeting, held from 16-18 May in Lisbon, Portugal, aimed to engage governments, school networks and social partners in further development of the 2030 framework for the 'future we want'.

Curriculum overload was also seen as a stressor for both students and teachers, and there was serious acknowledgement of the anxiety it causes. The Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC) will provide examples of how education policies and practices lead to curriculum overload for teachers and students and provide advice on steps taken to avoid curriculum overload. The OECD is listening to TUAC input and developing a more teacher-focused approach to the solutions around this work but much work remains to avoid the obvious pitfalls of excessive workload and performative approaches.

Launch of "The Journey of Hope: Education for Refugee and Unaccompanied Children in Italy"

A new Education International study launched on 23 May reveals the immense challenge facing Italian authorities and education personnel to help the thousands of unaccompanied minors safely integrate into society after reaching European shores. Of the 28,223 refugee minors in search of a better future who landed on Italy's beaches in 2016, representing 15.5

percent of all those who arrived by sea, 91.5 percent of them travelled without an adult. These staggering figures, which have seen a steady increase since 2014, show no sign of abating. Gaining access to education is one of the many hurdles facing the children once they make it to Italy, which is the focus of this latest study commissioned by EI, "The Journey of Hope: Education for Refugee and Unaccompanied Children in Italy."

ILO meeting on decent work for persons with disabilities

From 15-16 May, Education International (EI) took part in the Expert conference on disabilities organised by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) in cooperation with the Gender, Equality and Diversity branch. The meeting, held in Geneva, Switzerland, called for more engagement of worker's organisations to guarantee the right to decent work for all workers.

Unions and trade union confederations were encouraged to integrate the rights of workers with disabilities in social dialogue and collective bargaining as well as union structures. In addition, the key role of inclusive education was stressed in terms of empowering people with disabilities to find decent work, reach their full potential, learn about their rights and the benefits of inclusive societies. It was also stressed that girls with disabilities face the biggest challenges in terms of getting access to quality education.

At the meeting, a new study on workers with disabilities was launched. EI affiliates contributed to *Trade Union action on Disability and Decent Work - A Global Overview* by sharing their work on teachers and education support personnel with disabilities. Read the EI resolution on the rights of children and teachers with disabilities

Research – Refine – Resist: Annual global Research Network meeting in Belgium

Under the banner, Research - Refine - Resist: Unions on the move!, this year's EI Research Network (ResNet) meeting focused on further strengthening EI's research network and research programmes to foster resistance and reverse misleading education policies, attacks on trade union rights and privatisation trends. There was a firm focus on using research for activism and the skills and practices needed to do this.

From 31 May-1 June in Brussels, among other issues, participatory workshops explored opportunities and challenges in the use of technology in education, along with career pathways, teacher identities and professional standards. Education 2030, inclusive practices, breadth of learning and the development of EI's research toolkit also featured on the agenda.

In addition, EI launched its latest Research Board study, *Organising Teaching: Developing the power of the profession*.

PSI Tax and Finance Report Workshop

Public Services International (PSI) organised a workshop on tax and finance with Finance Uncovered in Ferney-Voltaire, France, from 31 May-2 June.

The workshop examined the accounts of selected companies, especially in relation to potential tax avoidance, 'fat cat'-style pay compared to flat-lining or dwindling average workforce pay, high dividends compared to large redundancies and extraordinary profits. EI reviewed the accounts of Elsevier, the largest global commercial academic publisher.

106th Session of the International Labour Conference

This year's annual International Labour Conference was held from 5-16 June in Geneva, Switzerland. The Conference, which adopts standards to protect workers worldwide and promotes social justice and decent work, focused on: migrant workers' rights, a review of country violations of labour standards, the adoption of a new standard on decent work for peace and resilience; and recommendations for the implementation of fundamental principles and rights at work. In the ILO Committee on the Application of Standards, clear recommendations were issued to governments. Education unions contributed to the discussion on Algeria, Bahrain, Botswana, Cambodia and Ecuador.

The discussions on labour migration governance will inform the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in 2018. The ILO Committee highlights the recognition and compliance of migrants' rights without distinction and not only for "chosen migrants". The relevance of existing ILO Conventions 97 and 143 on migration was acknowledged. Further guidelines may be considered for fair recruitment because of the poor practice of some employment agencies.

The ILO Committee on Employment and decent work for Peace and Resilience adopted a new standard, Recommendation 205, to deal with contemporary crisis situations arising from wars, conflicts and different forms of disasters.

Technical training on the Trade in Services Agreement

From 6-9 June, the Seattle to Brussels Network and Our World Is Not For Sale organised in-depth technical training on the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) strategy, in Brussels, Belgium. Jane Kelsey, a law professor at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, guided participants through the main aspects of the TiSA.

Meeting of the OECD Informal Working Group on Higher Education

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Informal Working Group on Higher Education met on 15-16 June in Paris, France.

The Higher Education Secretariat updated attendees on the state of the Benchmarking Higher Education Systems Performance project. The first round of the benchmarking exercise will examine the quality of the higher education teaching profession, equity in higher education, and the social impact of higher education. In-depth country reviews will be conducted in Belgium (Flanders), Estonia, the Netherlands, and Norway. The secretariat also presented a proposal to study the resourcing of higher education as the second topic of the in-depth analysis.

TUAC meeting

The Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC) organised a second launch of *Organising teaching: Developing the power of the profession*, from 19-20 June in Paris, France. Delegates said the report would help them in the process of union renewal.

Delegates acknowledged the contributions of John Evans, long-time chair of TUAC, and Mike Jennings, General Secretary of the Irish Federation of University Teachers and long-time voice for higher education, both attending their last TUAC meeting.

Other topics explored included the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment and wellbeing, refugees and migrants, Education 2030, the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey's Starting Strong, and the early childhood education pilot to the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies and Jobs and Skills in the digital transformation.

CoE Conference on Education for human rights and democratic citizenship

Education for human rights and democratic citizenship was the focus of a conference held by the Council of Europe (CoE) from 20-22 June, in Strasbourg, France. The participatory event brought together around 300 representatives of governments, education institutions, civil society, and youth organisations.

Participants agreed on recommendations for practical and actionable ways to implement the CoE Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights. The charter, adopted in 2010, commits to making education for democratic citizenship and human rights universal, and this review exercise was part of the CoE's contribution towards the United Nations World Programme for Human Rights Education and the UN 2030 Education Agenda.

The EI delegation highlighted the role of quality education systems, from early childhood education through to higher education, including vocational education and training, in making Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights a reality for all. EI underlined the role that teachers and education personnel play –

provided that they are trained and qualified, and supported in the profession, including through decent working conditions and trade unions rights.

Education International continues its work on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights within the framework of the implementation of the SDGs, and particularly target 4.7. Democracy and human rights values in education will be discussed by EI affiliates at a world conference in 2018

Africa

Welcomed decision countering education privatisation in Kenya

On 17 February, a Kenyan court upheld the Busia County Education Board's 2014 decision to close Bridge International Academies' schools for failing to comply with educational standards. The board had cited Bridge's failure to employ trained and registered teachers and its inadequate facilities as the reason for its decision. The county has been instructed to secure places for students currently enrolled in Bridge schools in neighbouring public schools. Bridge has announced it was to appeal the decision.

TTU-PATC-AEU-EI Book Launch in Tanzania

The Pan African Teachers' Centre (PATC)/EI Africa regional office (EIRAF) participated in the book launch programme at the Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) head office on 27 February in Dar es Salaam. Seventeen resource books were launched, all written by classroom teachers and education and curriculum experts from Tanzania. The initiative was coordinated by PATC, with financial support from the Australian Education Union (AEU) and technical support from the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF).

Capacity building workshop in Tanzania

From 28-29 February, TTU leaders attended a capacity building workshop in Dar es Salaam. They learned about the 1966 Recommendation on the status of teachers, the sustainable development goals (SDGs), and the EI Human and Trade Union Rights Policy Paper. The leadership identified possible policy directions for the TTU concerning the status of teachers, their rights, and the role of the union in promoting the SDGs, especially SDG 4.

"Out of Work and Into School" project in Mali

The "Out of Work and Into School" project in Mali was assessed by an EI mission from 4-10 March. Using the [EI manual](#) to learn how to speak about child labour and engage with parents and local communities, 474 teachers and headmasters were trained by the *Syndicat national de l'éducation et de la culture* (SNEC). Forty-two anti-child labour clubs are operational in schools, co-animated by focal point teachers and students. Associations of students' mothers and monitoring committees at village level have also been created by SNEC in the seven regions involved in this initiative.

Thanks to the project implemented by SNEC, over 8,000 children have been rescued from child labour and prevented from dropping out of schools, dropout rates have significantly decreased in the schools and students' learning results have improved. The SNEC has also successfully lobbied for the integration of the fight against child labour in school curricula.

SLTU-MEST-PATC-AEU-CTF-EI book writers' workshop in Sierra Leone

From 6-15 March, the PATC/EIRAF, with financial and technical support from AEU and EI, conducted a book development workshop for members of the Sierra Leone Teachers' Union (SLTU), in Freetown. Planning meetings for the workshop were conducted with SLTU leaders from 3-4 March. The Minister of Education, Science and Training (MEST) supported the project and thanked EI for contributing to the promotion of literacy in Sierra Leone.

Thirty-one book manuscripts were produced, with 20 chosen by the facilitators to be edited, proofread, and illustrated in Ghana. Additional books will be printed in Sierra Leone in the framework of the literacy promotion programme for enhancing achievement of quality public education in this country.

Workshop on indigenous peoples' Right to Education in Kenya

The EIRAF, in conjunction with EI's affiliates in Kenya, the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEHIA), and the Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET), organised a capacity building workshop from 7-8 March in Kitengel, County of Kajido.

During the workshop, attendees developed a specific understanding of the need to encourage teachers (and students) from minority groups to familiarise themselves with the ILO Convention No. 169 on overcoming discrimination against indigenous peoples. They also committed to developing policies and strategies intended to promote and protect the rights of indigenous people to quality education. And attendees defined mechanisms to enable indigenous peoples' full and effective participation in union life and activities.

Legal action against teacher union leader in Kenya

On 8 March, lawyers representing the for-profit school operator, Bridge International Academies, threatened to take legal action against KNUT General Secretary Wilson Sossion. The move is in response to Sossion's continued efforts to expose Bridge's actions. As research in both [Kenya](#) and [Uganda](#) shows, Bridge's business plan undermines the attainment of inclusive and equitable quality education for all. On 15 March, KNUT responded stating that it has no intention "to stop or not continue the publication of reports and stories ... by any media house or any person as such events and information are justified and fair comment" about Bridge. The for-profit education company has since commenced legal proceedings against KNUT and its General Secretary, and as a result, a court has issued an injunction prohibiting KNUT and Sossion from making statements regarding Bridge.

Programme against child labour in Uganda

From 20-24 March, Dominique Marlet and Samuel Grumiau led an EI mission in Kampala. They discovered that a sensitisation programme around child labour by the Uganda National Teachers' Union (UNATU) has proved effective, leading to a substantial increase in the enrolment and retention of students. The UNATU programme against child labour in Erussi, close to the Congo border and a nine-hour drive from Kampala, and in the second poorest district in Uganda, has changed the mindsets of parents and teachers towards education and child labour. After three years, teachers in 11 public schools have been trained, school leaders hold daily registries of school attendance, schools have been equipped with sports and art equipment, parents have joined income savings initiatives (to cover school costs), income generating activities have been launched in some villages, and school clubs reach out to children not in school.

This UNATU programme belongs to the "child labour free zones" project, promoted by EI with the support of Dutch funding provided by the Stop Child Labour Coalition and FNV Mondiaal. The project aims to support education unions in training school leaders and teachers; raise awareness amongst local political leaders, community and religious chiefs, parents and education stakeholders; and advocate to source additional funding for education.

Development cooperation meeting in Malawi

The Private Schools and Education workers Union of Malawi (PSEUM) and the Swedish union, *Lärarförbundet*, held a review and planning meeting from 23-27 March. The Malawian union has increased membership recruitment and retention, along with media exposure and presence in schools. PSEUM's advocacy has led to a willingness by school managers to allow PSEUM union leaders to access their schools.

In addition, PSEUM has succeeded in getting private school teachers included in the government's in-service training programmes. An agreement signed for the 2017-20 period details that *Lärarförbundet* to further assist PSEUM with membership growth, leadership training and communication.

Education union leaders released in Djibouti

On 27 March, the Syndicat des Enseignants du Premier Degré (SEP) General Secretary, Ahmed-Kadar Nour, and the SEP Deputy General Secretary, Omar Ali Ewado, were released from prison, much to the relief of EI and the global education community. The two men had been arrested on 19-20 March by the Djibouti Security Services, as part of ongoing harassment and repression of teachers and trade unionists seeking to exercise their legitimate rights and freedoms in Djibouti.

The release followed global activity calling for the men's release. On 21 March, EI issued a protest letter supporting its Djibouti colleagues and launched a campaign on LabourStart to free the education trade unionists. EI also issued an appeal for solidarity with Turkish teachers and the SEP sent a letter to the President of Turkey supporting persecuted Turkish teachers. On receiving the letter, the Turkish embassy had complained to the Djibouti Government. On his release, Nour thanked EI and its affiliates for their support and stressed that this SEP letter of solidarity was the main reason behind their imprisonment.

Project evaluation meeting in Zimbabwe

From 29-31 March, the Zimbabwe Teachers' Association (ZIMTA) and *Läraryförbundet* from Sweden completed their cooperation agreement, which had been in place since 1985. The meeting centred on an evaluation of the "Reconstruction, Retention and Recruitment" project, which started in 2009, after the union almost collapsed due to the economic crisis.

The project rescued the trade union, whose membership grew from 32,000 to 45,000, and almost all union structures have been revitalised. In 2016, ZIMTA contributed 83 per cent of the project funding, and is contributing 100 per cent of the project funding in 2017.

3rd EI/FES capacity development programme - Young teachers for quality education and effective unions

The third and final workshop in a three-year capacity development programme targeting young union members in Francophone African countries, supported by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), took place in Dakar, Senegal, from 10-12 April. Sessions were facilitated by EI resource persons and external technical experts

Regional Dialogue Forum on Human Resources Management in the Education Sector in Senegal

The Regional Dialogue Forum on Human Resources Management in the Education Sector took place in Dakar, Senegal, from 26-27 April. It brought together Ministry of Education officials and education sector workers from nine countries - Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, The Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Nepal, Uganda, and Senegal.

The delegates are involved in the global teachers' effort for better education project and reflected on the key issues affecting human resources management. They shared good practices and lessons learned, identified priority issues and areas for improvement, and jointly decided the next steps for education stakeholders to set up human resources management policies leading to improved education quality.

EI Global Response workshop in Nigeria

A two-day workshop on the Global Response campaign on the privatisation and commercialisation in and of education was held for the National Executive Council of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) in Abuja from 10-11 May. It was chaired by NUT President and EI Executive Board member Michael Olukoya, and EI's Angelo Gavrielatos explained the EI Global Response strategy and described the situation of privatisation in Nigeria with a mapping tool.

Participants heard about the status of privatisation in various states with some state NUT branches opposing State governments handing over schools, especially public secondary schools, to private hands. The workshop agreed on a strategy including research on privatisation in Lagos, with special focus on Bridge International

Academies schools, and scaling-up capacity building, organising and advocacy in Lagos and the Federal State.

Solidarity visit to NUT in Nigeria

On 12 May, Richard Etonu from EI's Africa Regional Office (EIRAF) visited the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) to learn more about its many current challenges, starting with the Boko Haram insurgency in the North East of the country, which had claimed the lives of many teachers, teachers' children and relatives, and caused displacement of school pupils, hunger and famine.

Other issues facing teachers in Nigeria include the non-payment of salaries in 28 out of 36 states for several months due to the recession. Some states are paying just half of the monthly salaries, while check-off dues deducted from teachers' salaries for up to 10 months have not been released.

The NUT has also condemned the abductions of teachers for ransom, including NUT executive members, as well as the suspension of 19 NUT branch presidents and the outright dismissal of 15 NUT state officers in the Ogun State.

UNESCO Research on Harnessing Cultures to Advance Education in Sub-Saharan Africa in Ghana

The EIRAF Office participated in the UNESCO research study on "Harvesting Cultures to Advance Education in Sub-Saharan Africa". The 16 May focus group meeting in Accra attended by nearly 40 participants, including officers from UNESCO, the Ministry of Education, Ghana National Teaching Council, Inspectorate Board, Curriculum and Assessment Council, the Ghana National Association of Teachers, the National Association of Graduate Teachers, and classroom teachers.

The research study was intended to compile concrete examples of past cultural and traditional values, policies, and practices, which could be adopted and incorporated into future processes and outcomes of education policy formulation, strategies to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) more effectively than the Millennium Development Goals. Participants hoped that the inclusive consultations would scale up democratic policy formulation, promote the provision of quality public education for all, and integrate disadvantaged groups, girls, minorities, and the disabled.

The EIRAF cooperated with local EI affiliates, UNESCO Ghana Office, Ghana Government officials responsible for Education Service, and union grassroots members in providing data for the researchers.

Regional workshop on effective teacher management for quality education in Kenya

The EIRAF participated in the experience and good practice-sharing workshop organised and funded by the UNESCO Dakar office, and held from 17-19 May in Nairobi.

Senior policymakers from the Ministry of Education (MoE), lead donor groups' representatives and delegates from teacher unions learned about teacher-management tools focusing on teacher deployment for effective resource management. They also identified the best ways to use technology for faster and effective distribution of teachers within the available resources to ensure that every child in school is taught.

Union representatives were involved from the initial stages of the tool development. They emphasised the need to employ qualified, well-paid and motivated teachers, even in hardship areas. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and unions were encouraged to seek out good governance and accountability on the implementation of the teacher management tool. Trade unions and the MoE should ensure that teachers were well informed on the implications of the tools for the benefit of their professional wellbeing.

Initiative on school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in Kenya

A planning and design meeting was held for Phase II of the programme on School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) from 19-20 May in Nairobi. This is a joint initiative (2016-2019) of EI and the UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), with technical support from Gender at Work and funding from the government of Canada.

Seven unions in east and southern Africa have participated in Phase I of the programme (Ethiopian Teachers' Association [ETA], Kenya National Union of Teachers [KNUT], Uganda National Teachers' Union [UNATU], Basic Education *Teachers' Union of Zambia* [BETUZ], Zambia National Union of Teachers [ZNUT], National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa [NAPTOSA], and South African Democratic Teachers' Union [SADTU]).

The transition to Phase II of the programme will allow enough time for Phase I unions to consolidate the work done so far. In addition, a no-cost extension will be requested from the Canadian government to document the learning and results. Accordingly, the programme will end December – instead of January - 2019; to ensure sustainability of the work started in the unions, the mentoring of union change teams by Gender at Work Associates will continue for another 12 months; Phase II will begin in west Africa with two more unions in early 2018; and concerted

efforts will be made to disseminate results and share learning and experiences from the programme to different internal EI (and external) audiences.

AFTRA Conference in South Africa

EI Chief Coordinator Assibi Napoe attended the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA) conference held from 23-27 May in Johannesburg. She expressed her disappointment that the teachers' unions present did not voice their opposition to certain issues affecting teachers.

14th General Conference and Golden Jubilee Celebration of the AAU in Ghana

The 14th General Conference of the Association of Africa Universities Conference (AAU) in Accra, Ghana, from 5-8 June, was based around the theme "Achievements, Challenges and Prospects for Sustainable Development".

The conference was opened by the President of the Republic of Ghana, who called on African leaders to value and invest in higher education as it is pivotal to economic development in the knowledge economy.

The importance of higher education in achieving meaningful sustainable economic development in African nations was highlighted. Speakers also called for curricular reform and enhanced quality higher education as key to graduate employability and entrepreneurship.

However, it was repeatedly indicated that sufficient resources are needed to overcome the challenge of expanding access to higher education while struggling to maintain quality.

Education Consortium in Liberia

From 7-10 June, Assibi Napoe, Lucy Barimbui, and Emanuel Fatoma undertook a mission on behalf of the Liberia consortium partners.

Their meetings revealed organisational challenges, including a failure to share information and produce reports. Externally, the National Teachers' Association of Liberia (NTAL) is facing the threat of public private partnerships (PPPs) in education. It is currently paying the salaries of 15 teachers who have been removed from the government's payroll because of the NTAL's resistance of PPPs.

The mission strengthened the working relations between NTAL staff and its leadership. PPPs will be evaluated at the end of July and the NTAL may hold a convention before end-2017.

Fighting privatisation of education in Cote d'Ivoire

Against the backdrop of growing privatisation, from 10-11 June, EI's member organisations in Cote d'Ivoire met in Abidjan to further develop a national campaign in defence and support of quality free public education for all.

The affiliates are determined to call for a reinvestment in public schools and the construction of new public schools. They are also demanding a governmental guarantee that non-state actors must comply with minimum standards around the employment of qualified teachers.

ACCRS

EI Global Response planning meeting and study launch event in Lebanon

On 11 April, 18 teachers and school leaders representing EI affiliates in Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq - the Public Primary Schools Teachers' League in Lebanon (PPSTL), the *Ligue des Professeurs de l'Enseignement Secondaire Public du Liban* (LPESPL), the Teachers' Syndicate of Lebanon (TSL), the *Comité des enseignants techniques officiels* (CETO), the Kurdistan Teachers' Union (KTU), the Iraqi Teachers' Union (ITU), and the General Union of Workers in Teaching (GUWT) - participated in a one-day planning meeting on the EI Global Response against the privatisation and commercialisation in and of education initiative organised by Angelo Gavrielatos and the EI Arab countries office.

On 12 April, together with these member organisations, EI released a landmark report, "Investing in the crisis: Private participation in the education of Syrian refugees". Exploring the complex interrelationship between conflict and private sector participation, the report, by University of Massachusetts Assistant Professors Francine Menashy and Zeena Zakharia, raises serious questions about the ethical tensions between humanitarian and profit motivations through a case study of the education of Syrian refugees.

At the launch event, EI's affiliates issued a joint statement supporting EI's position and the research. At an earlier planning meeting, member organisations began the process of developing strategies to ensure that governments fulfil their obligations with respect to the rights of Syrian refugee children, including the provision of free quality public education

11th EI-ACCRS standing committee meeting in Lebanon

The newly elected Committee of the EI Arab Countries Cross-Regional Structure (ACCRS) held its 11th standing committee meeting on 9-10 May in Beirut.

The members appointed Hussein Boujarra (Tunisia) as chairperson and Abdelmaoula Bouzzit (Morocco) as vice-chairperson. Committee member Mahdi Abu Deeb (Bahrain) was absent due to a travel ban imposed on him by the Bahraini authorities, but he was able to contribute by phone. Members discussed privatisation trends in education in most Arab countries, the violation of teachers' rights, the impact of the refugee crisis in the Arab

countries on education and the role of education unions in this regard. Gender equality issues in Arab countries were also discussed, in relation to the EI World Women's Conference to be held in February 2018 in Morocco.

Education unionist released in Iran

Esmail Abdi, a leader of the Tehran Teacher Trade Association, was released from prison on 25 June. Abdi, targeted by the Iranian authorities for his union activism and campaign for free and accessible public education for all, was sentenced to six years in jail on false charges in October 2016 and had been kept in harsh detention conditions in the Evin prison.

On 30 April, Abdi started a hunger strike to protest the continued unlawful repression of teachers and human rights defenders and the lack of judicial independence in Iran. In May, EI reiterated its call for global solidarity to demand Abdi's immediate and unconditional release, and that the Iranian government lift all sanctions against education unionists for conducting their legitimate trade union activities

Asia-Pacific

Building the Global Response in Nepal

From 4-5 March, in Kathmandu, EI's member organisations, the Nepal National Teachers' Association (NNTA), the Nepal Teachers' Association (NTA) and the *Sansthaगत Vidyalyaya Schickshak* Union Nepal (ISTU), began building a national action plan to confront the growing privatisation of education. The plan is focused on ensuring the government implements and enforces a legislative and financing framework to achieve the SDG 4 "*inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*". Unregulated private education, supported by the State, has grown significantly before and after its recent earthquake.

IEU Women and Leadership Conference in Australia

From 10-11 March, the Council of Pacific Education (COPE) women's coordinator, Neselinda Meta, attended the Independent Education Union (IEU) Women and Leadership Conference held in Canberra. The conference helped her explore how teacher unions in developed countries communicate and network in order to build successful teacher unions.

Evaluation and planning meeting of AIPTF/AEU/EI EFAIDS Programme 2017-18 in India

The All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF)/Australian Education Union (AEU)/EI/EFAIDS project held an evaluation and planning meeting in New Delhi from 11-13 April.

Attendees reviewed the implementation and achievements of the project in 2016-17 in the Uttarakhand and West Bengal states. An additional 197 children accessed education in the project implementation area in 2016-17. Due to the HIV/AIDS prevalence in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, it was decided to also run the programme there.

Teachers' unions in the selected states will raise awareness on HIV/AIDS, its spread, prevention and against the social stigma attached to AIDS. The project will also focus on identifying out-of-school or dropped-out children, particularly girls, and bring them to school with the help of teachers, parents and community.

FTU 87th Annual Conference in Fiji

The 87th Annual Conference of the Fiji Teachers' Union (FTU) on 24-26 April was opened by EI Asia-Pacific (EIAP) Chief Regional Coordinator Shashi Bala Singh. Held in Ba, the conference's theme was "Education 2030 – Through Inclusive and Participatory Approach".

Bala Singh described EI's role in the development of the Education 2030 Agenda and reminded attendees that Fiji still has to ratify important international conventions on human rights and the right to education, including the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education. She urged the FTU to engage strategically in the implementation of SDG 4 and contribute to national plans indicators and mechanism for monitoring. She also pressed the union to engage in social dialogue with the government to amend the Education Act by incorporating a legal guarantee to achieve the Education 2030 Agenda.

FTA Women/Youth Network Workshop on Networking for Change and Progress in Fiji

Shashi Bala Singh and Govind Singh also attended the Fijian Teachers' Association (FTA) Women/Youth Network Workshop on Networking for Change on 27 April in Suva.

Bala Singh outlined the Global Education Campaign and SDGs, particularly SDGs 4, 5 and 8. She called on FTA to ensure that the Fijian Government fulfils its global and constitutional commitments to ensure quality and education for all children and groups.

Govind Singh emphasised the importance of networking in trade unions, highlighting EI's networking activities at international, regional and national levels. He challenged participants to ensure the networking opportunities for grassroots members in rural, remote, and maritime areas.

Fiji Trade Union Congress

The Council of Pacific Education (COPE) General Secretary, Govind Singh, attended the social gathering of the Pacific Islands' union leaders organised by the Fiji Trade Union Congress (FTUC) on 23 May. The event was also attended by ILO representatives, national union centre leaders and other union leaders in the country and from the region. It provided a networking opportunity for trade unions in the Pacific Islands and likeminded organisations.

On 26 May, Singh opened the FTUC Youth and Women Network National Quiz Competition in Suva. The theme of the quiz was "Raising Awareness on Labour Rights and the Role of Trade Unions in Fiji." In his opening address, Singh highlighted the role and responsibilities of trade unions and a roadmap to awareness/development activities/programmes that should be implemented by the Youth and Women Network.

EIAP and PGRI National Board consortium meeting in Indonesia

The EI Asia-Pacific (EIAP) Regional Office met on 31 May in Jakarta with the Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia (PGRI) National Board to discuss the effective implementation of the PGRI-EI Consortium project activities for 2017.

Debates focused on how socio-political developments in Indonesia impact the quality of education and professional/trade union rights of teachers and learners. Achievements and challenges in PGRI advocacy programmes and campaigns were also explored.

Dr. Unifah Rosyidi was elected as President during the National Working Conference in January 2017, replacing Dr. Sulistiyo who died in 2015.

PGRI-EI Consortium Project's Module Development in Indonesia

The 2016 Independent External Evaluation of the PGRI-EI Consortium Project's Module Development in Indonesia was conducted from 1-4 June in Jakarta.

In assessing the Pilot Phase (2014-2016), one outstanding recommendation was made: to improve the Consortium Project's teaching-learning tools by reviewing the various materials used in the past three years and develop standardised modules to be used in grassroots training activities under the project, as well as in PGRI's other training programmes.

After feedback on the modules from stakeholders, the modules will be translated from Bahasa Indonesia into English, and could be shared to interested member organisations and partners.

JTU 70th anniversary in Japan

The Japan Teachers Union (JTU) celebrated its 70th anniversary on 8 June, highlighting the work of the union to improve teachers' working conditions and status.

At a reception in Tokyo, JTU President Yuichiro Izumi recalled the union's successes in defending teachers' rights and promoting quality public education. He also detailed the four principles that have guided the union since its establishment in

1947: full pacification, adherence to neutrality, opposition to the provision of military bases, and a stand against rearmament. Indeed, the union is currently resisting efforts by the Japanese government to change the country's constitution allowing it to build up armed forces.

In his address, EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen also stressed how the Japanese education system has been the catalyst of great technological innovation and artistic achievement. "So much of our world exists today because of what was born out of your classrooms, what began with your union and its teachers, and we are all better for it," he said, presenting the union with EI's "Certificate of Commendation".

On 9 June, van Leeuwen met with several Democratic Party members of Japan's legislature.

Europe

Government urged to explain backing of for-profit education in The Netherlands

On 14 February, Dutch Socialist Party MPs announced the tabling of questions in parliament challenging their government's support for Bridge International Academies. One of the questions posed to the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development is: "Do you think it is justified to finance, directly or indirectly, for-profit education with public money?"

Joint meeting of International NGOs and Northern Education Coalitions in the UK

The Joint meeting of International NGOs and Northern Education Coalitions organised by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) took place from 22-23 February in London. The meeting aimed to strengthen the global education movement, prepare for the Global Action Week for Education (GAWE), and plan for 2017. It brought together GCE international NGO members, national GCE coalitions from Europe and North America, including teacher union representatives, as well as other education campaigning organisations and speakers from GPE, Education Cannot Wait and the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity.

Economic governance: ETUCE contributes to assessment of country reports on education and training

On 22 February, the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) published a document outlining its education and training priorities, policy challenges, and member organisations' views on their own national situations. This document contributed to the assessment by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) of the European Semester's Country Reports.

In its contribution, ETUCE welcomed the focus on inclusive education and teachers' professional development. It strongly opposed the Country Reports' focus on enhancing private financing, including public-private partnerships, performance-based funding,

enhanced cooperation between businesses and universities, and the commercialisation of public universities' research outcomes in higher education and research.

New ETUCE project on teachers' professional needs

On 22 February, ETUCE held in Brussels, Belgium, the first advisory group's meeting for the new project, "Education Trade Unions for the Teaching Profession. Strengthening the capacity of education trade unions to represent teachers' professional needs in social dialogue".

The advisory group includes representatives of ETUCE member organisations from Germany (GEW), Poland (*Związek Nauczycielstwa Polskiego-ZNP*), Italy (UIL Scuola), Latvia (*Latvijas Izglītības un zinātnes darbinieku arodbiedrība-LIZDA*), Finland (*Opetusalan Ammattijärjestö-OAJ*), and Lithuania (Federation of Lithuanian Education and Science Trade Unions-FLESTU).

At the meeting, the partners discussed the project's objectives and expected outcomes, and prepared an online survey to assess European teachers' professional needs and how these needs can be met by education trade unions via social dialogue.

EI/ETUCE mission to Turkey

The EI/ETUCE organised a mission to Ankara on 27-28 February. The mission was led by ETUCE President Christine Blower and ETUCE European Director Susan Flocken, and comprised representatives from 11 member organisations from Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

The delegation met representatives from EI affiliate *Eğitim Sen*, the Turkish Confederation of Public Employees' Trade Unions (KESK), the Delegation of the European Union to Turkey, the ILO, and UNICEF, and with officials of various embassies in Ankara, along with dismissed teachers.

ETUC event for International Women's Day

On 7 March, to celebrate International Women's Day, ETUC hosted in Brussels, Belgium, a panel discussion entitled "Can a pay rise make a dent into the persistent gender pay and pensions gaps?"

ETUC General Secretary Luca Visentini underlined that closing the gender gap should be seen as an economic imperative, and a pay rise would be the greatest economic stimulus package Europe has ever seen.

Tripartite Social Summit in Belgium

On 8 March, the European Tripartite Social Summit, gathering of the Presidents of EU institutions and the European social partners, was held in Brussels. It dedicated 2017 to "The future of Europe: charting the course towards growth, employment and fairness". The cross-sectoral social partners' delegation handed over a framework agreement on Active Ageing

and an Intergenerational Approach to the European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker, the Council President, Donald Tusk, and the Maltese Prime Minister, Joseph Muscat.

Investing in education: advisory group meeting in Belgium

On 10 March, the advisory group of the project, "Investing in Education: Strengthening the involvement of Teacher Trade Unions in the European Semester on Education and Training" met in Brussels. The meeting gathered representatives from ETUCE member organisation project partners from Denmark (Danish Union of Teachers-DLF), Italy (FLC-CGIL), Lithuania (FLESTU), Slovenia (Education, Science and Culture Trade Union of Slovenia-ESTUS), and Malta (Malta Union of Teachers-MUT).

Participants discussed the outcomes of the project survey research on privatisation patterns across Europe conducted by the University of Nottingham. They also prepared for the upcoming final project conference, "Education in Europe: Public Investment, Privatisation and Reforms. What role do education trade unions play?" to take place in Brussels on 30 May.

ETUCE Higher Education and Research Standing Committee's meeting in Belgium

From 14-15 March, the ETUCE Higher Education and Research Standing Committee (HERSC) met in Brussels, with more than 40 delegates representing 26 European countries attending the event. The Committee expressed its solidarity with dismissed teachers and academics in Turkey, and demanded that European ministers raise awareness about the persecution of Turkish education personnel.

The Committee also discussed the 30th Anniversary of the Erasmus mobility programme and the European Commission's Proposal for a Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market in light of digitalisation and intellectual property rights of academics and researchers. They learned about the work of the European Quality Assurance Registry (EQAR) and expressed their concerns on the developments of the European Pension Fund for Researchers (RESAVER).

Social partners in education sign historic sectoral agreement in Georgia

On 16 March, the Educators' and Scientists' Free Trade Union of Georgia (ESFTUG) hosted a ceremony to celebrate the historical signing of the Sectoral Agreement on Education. ESFTUG is a member organisation of the ETUCE member organisation.

The Agreement is a significant development for the education trade union, which was on the brink of collapse a few years ago due to severe attacks from the Ministry of Education and yellow unions. Both parties recognised the importance of the agreement and the role of ETUCE during the reconciliation process.

EI EQUIP focus group meeting in Belgium

The EI focus group of the EQUIP project, 'Enhancing quality through innovative policy and practice', met in Brussels from 15-16 March. The group devised ways to support and

promote a consistent, efficient and innovative embedding of the revised Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

This focus group will contribute to the EQUIP study that will examine the impact of the ESG revision on relevant stakeholders, the changes in practices necessary to comply with the ESG's new elements, and innovative approaches to tackling the challenges that arise from these new elements.

UEN international seminar in Norway

From 15-16 March, the growing commercialisation and privatisation of education was put under the spotlight at the annual international seminar of *Utdanningsforbundet* (UEN) in Oslo. The UEN's Executive Board has recently adopted two new strategies to combat the further privatisation/commercialisation of education in Norway, one related to the early childhood education sector and the other to the primary school sector. The union is keen to ensure that its members locate their national campaigns within the context of EI's Global Response.

Meeting of ETUCE Standing Committee for Equality in Belgium

From 20-21 March, the Annual ETUCE Standing Committee for Equality meeting in Brussels focused on "Securing diversity in education". Rossella Benedetti (UIL-Scuola of Italy) was re-elected as chairperson of the Committee and Alexandra Cornea (*Fédération des Syndicats Libres de l'Enseignement*-FSLE, Romania) was voted in as the new vice-chair. The 60 participants produced recommendations on how to implement the 2016 ETUCE Conference resolutions on equality.

ETUCE supports member organisation in demand for decent salaries in Moldovan education sector

On 23-24 March, the Education and Science Trade Union Federation from Moldova (ESTU) protested against low salaries in the education sector in front of the Government buildings and the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.

In support, the ETUCE urged the Moldovan government to make meaningful and constructive proposals and take the necessary steps to ensure both decent working conditions and the recruitment and retention of education personnel.

Education trade unions' fight for free high quality public education in Italy

On 27 March, the ETUCE highlighted the need for the involvement of education social partners in all stages of the processes around EU structural and investment funds in education. This followed the condemnation of Italian public authorities by the UIL-Scuola and the *Federazione Lavoratori della Conoscenza* CGIL (FLC-CGIL) – the public authorities intend to give Italian non-state schools wider access to funds made available under the European structural and investment funds.

The ETUCE urged the Italian authorities and the European Commission to promote the active involvement of education social partners with regard to the allocation of EU structural and

investment funds in education. This would ensure the effectiveness of the expected outcomes and high quality public education in Italy.

European Social Dialogue: working group meeting on higher education and research in Belgium

On 31 March, the European Education Social Partners – the ETUCE and the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE) – gathered in Brussels for their annual working group meeting dedicated to higher education and research, within the European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education (ESSDE).

The meeting focused on gender equality, geographical and employment mobility in higher education and research. The role of the education social partners in addressing gender imbalances in academic careers and in contributing to supportive environments for itinerant academics and researchers in higher education and research was discussed. The outcome of the discussions contributes to the joint work of the European Sectoral Social Partners in Education.

Liaison forum meeting in Belgium

On 3 April, a liaison forum meeting was organised by DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion in Brussels. European cross-sectoral and sectoral social partners shared information on recent developments in social dialogue in their respective fields: topics included the European Commission's initiatives to increase the attractiveness of vocational education and training.

ETUCE committee spring meeting in Belgium

From 3-4 April, in Brussels, the new ETUCE Committee held their second meeting since the ETUCE Conference in Belgrade last December. The main topic on the agenda was the preparation of the consultation on EI's structures, developments on education and training policy, social dialogue, and economic governance.

ETUCE Statement on Copyright in the Digital Single Market

At its meeting on 3-4 April, ETUCE adopted a Statement on Copyright in the Digital Single Market, expressing its views on the proposed European Commission Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market.

In its statement, ETUCE reiterated that education is a public good and urged European institutions to promote social dialogue and collective bargaining agreements in the education sector by including social partners as main actors in negotiations on national copyright regulations in education. It also notes that the use of digital materials for learning requires sufficient public investment in an adequate infrastructure and up-to-date digital equipment in schools, as well as teachers' and researchers' initial and continuous professional development.

The report of the European Parliament on the Directive on Copyright will be voted in plenary in June 2017. The ETUCE called on its member organisations to lobby MEPs in support of the ETUCE statement.

ETUC Women's Committee meeting in Belgium

On 4 April, ETUCE contributed to the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) Women's Committee meeting in Brussels. The main points of discussion concerned the annual 8 March survey and the gender pay and pension gap.

ETUC Employment and Labour Market Committee meeting

On 6 April, ETUCE contributed to the ETUC Employment and Labour Market Committee meeting in Brussels. The main points of discussion concerned the drafting of the ETUC position on Quality Jobs, the work and contribution to the upcoming European Union Pillar of Social Rights, as well as the collection of feedback and review of the 2017 Country Reports of the European Semester to which ETUCE and its member organisations contributed from the education sector perspective.

BFUG working group meeting in Belgium

From 6-7 April, ETUCE hosted in Brussels the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) working group meeting on Policy development for new European Higher Education Area (EHEA) goals. This meeting prepared a report to be presented at the Bologna Ministerial meeting.

Danish teacher union delegation's visit to ETUCE and EI head offices in Belgium

On 25 April, the Executive Board members of the Danish Teacher Unions (DLF) visited ETUCE and EI head offices in Brussels to learn about the latter's international work. The delegation included DLF President Anders Bondo Christensen, and DLF and ETUCE Vice-President Dorte Lange

European Pillar of Social Rights

On 26 April, the European Commission unveiled the European Pillar of Social Rights, a long-awaited initiative first announced by Commission President Juncker during his 2015 State of the Union address.

The Pillar, a set of proposals and working documents, reaffirms 20 principles and rights, aimed at improving the living and working conditions of European citizens. Highlights include the proposal for equal rights of parental leave for women and men.

ETUCE issued a press release following the Pillar's publication, acknowledging the initiative as an encouraging sign of the European Commission's commitment to social rights. ETUCE also warned that the Pillar's full completion represents the last chance for the EU to relaunch social Europe and put the interests of the citizens first.

ETUCE's call for action in Moldova among its member organisations

Over the course of several months, the Education and Science Trade Union Federation from Moldova, an ETUCE member organisation in Moldova, has been tirelessly fighting for an increase in salary for education personnel. With no progress in this matter, ETUCE urged its member organisations to demonstrate solidarity and unity with education personnel in Moldova via letters, using a template provided, to the Moldovan authorities.

Networking Project Day for project promoters on social dialogue

On 27 April, ETUCE contributed to Social Dialogue Unite, a networking day for project promoters organised by the European Commission.

It presented its current project, "Education Trade Unions for the Teaching Profession. Strengthening the capacity of education trade unions to represent teachers' professional needs in social dialogue" to sectoral and cross-sectoral social partners, as well as research institutes. The project is co-funded by the European Commission under the social dialogue budget line.

At this networking event, project promoters exchanged experiences and good practices in order to foster mutual learning and achieve a wider dissemination of outcomes.

2nd joint ITUC/ETUC mission in Turkey

From 3-5 May, ETUCE joined the 2nd International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)/ETUC mission to Ankara. Jaap Wielen, ITUC Deputy General Secretary, and Luca Visentini, ETUC General Secretary, led the delegation that included the ETUC President, representatives from two national confederations – the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB) and the British Trade Union Congress (TUC) – as well as the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU), and the UNI Global Union and IndustriAll Global Union.

During the mission, the delegates met with the four ITUC/ETUC Turkish confederations - Türk-iş, Hak-iş, DISK and KESK – along with representatives of the main Turkish political parties, the EU delegation and the International Labour Organization (ILO) office, non-government organisations (NGOs) and human rights associations, the Turkish Bar Association and the Ministry of Labour. The delegates also met with Mesut Firat, Eğitim Sen General Secretary, and a delegation of dismissed public workers, including education personnel

ETUI/ETUCE training in VET in Germany

From 4-5 May, 25 vocational education and training (VET) experts of ETUCE's member organisations from 20 European countries met in Munich for training on 'Improving skills provisions in VET'. This was the sixth year that the joint training seminar was organised for national VET experts of teacher trade unions, supported by the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) and by the financial assistance of the European Commission.

This year, many VET experts came not only from the EU/European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and candidate countries but also from non-EU countries, such as Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Ukraine, and Tajikistan.

The training participants discussed new challenges facing VET teachers and trainers and learned about recent EU policies on skills provision in VET, trainers' and teachers' skills and competence development, and supporting VET teachers.

European Social Partnership-Round table of education social partners in Portugal

On 8 May, ETUCE and the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE) met with Portuguese social partners in education in Porto at the occasion of a social dialogue round table kicking off the joint-project, "ESSDE [European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education] capacity building III".

The social partners reflected on opportunities and challenges in social dialogue at national and European level and highlighted key obstacles for their involvement in the shaping and implementation of policies in the education sector. They also discussed the role of the social partners in promoting the teaching profession, including through initial training and continuous professional development. The meeting succeeded in fostering the integration of the national social partners into the ESSDE.

Latin America

Meeting with education union's new executive committee in Chile

On 3 March, Combertty Rodriguez met the new executive committee of the *Colegio de Profesores de Chile* in Santiago. At the meeting, he outlined the relationship between the EI regional office and the trade union leaders.

Meeting with the UNESCO Regional Office in Chile

On 4 March, Combertty Rodriguez met with the UNESCO Regional Office in Santiago to develop ways to best ensure the achievement of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

Cooperation meeting with Lärarförbundet and UEN in Costa Rica

From 13-15 March, the Latin America Regional Office met with Ina Erickson and Joakim Olsson from the *Lärarförbundet* (Sweden) and Rune Fimreite from UEN (Norway) to discuss the next steps concerning cooperation projects for the coming years. The meeting was held in San José.

Global Campaign against the privatisation and commercialisation in and of education in Uruguay

From 22-23 March, EI's member organisations, the *Federación Nacional de Profesores de Enseñanza Secundaria* (FENAPES) and the *Federación Uruguaya de Magisterio - Trabajadores de Educación Primaria* (FUM-TEP) strengthened their campaign against the growing privatisation of education in Uruguay. The activities were organised in Montevideo around the presentation of the EI Global Response Campaign against the privatisation and commercialisation in and of education in Latin America.

El's Angelo Gavrielatos outlined the EI Global Response Campaign and urged Latin American governments to guarantee the defence of quality public education for all. Mauro Moschetti from the *Universidad Autonoma Barcelona* also shared the findings of research on educational privatisation in Latin America. The presentation of preliminary research findings at a press conference and before a meeting of parliamentarians and policy makers generated significant media coverage. The research will be released in July. The education unions have been joined by the broader union movement and the student union movement in their campaign to defend quality public education.

Global Response campaign in Uruguay

On 21 March, Combertty Rodriguez and Gabriel Castro travelled to Montevideo, where they, and Angelo Gavrielatos, met both the *Federación Nacional de Profesores de Enseñanza Secundaria* (FENAPES) and the *Federación Uruguaya de Magisterio - Trabajadores de Educación Primaria* (FUM-TEP) about the Global Response campaign.

From 22-23 March, they took part in national activities in the framework of the global response.

“Escuelaitinerante” and Global Response activities in Argentina

On 17 April, Combertty Rodriguez participated in a public event in Buenos Aires organised by the Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina (CTERA) on “Escuelapúblicaitinerante” (Itinerant public school). This event was also attended by Angelo Gavrielatos and Nicolas Richards on behalf of EI.

The CTERA also hosted the launch of a Global Response report: La privatización educativa en América Latina: Un cartografía de políticas, tendencias y trayectorias by Antoni Verger, Mauro Moschetti and Clara Fontdevila maps the various policies, trends and trajectories of education privatisation across the Latin American region. The study reveals that, in recent decades, Latin America has seen the steadiest growth in the privatisation of education. Member organisations from Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay were present at the launch.

On 18 April, Combertty Rodriguez met with the *Confederación de Educadores Argentinos'* Executive Committee to inform its members about the Global Response campaign. He also met with the *Federación Nacional de Docentes Universitarios* (CONADU) Executive Committee which was celebrating the 10th anniversary of the creation of the CONADU Instituto de Estudios y Capacitación

Preparations for the IV Latin American pedagogical meeting in Brazil

From 24-25 April, Combertty Rodriguez took part in a meeting with the *Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores em Educação* (CNTE) Executive Committee in Belo Horizonte. Attendees made decisions around the logistics (hotels and meeting rooms) for the IV Latin American Pedagogical meeting to take place in November 2017.

European economic governance

On 22 May, the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) urged its member organisations in the European Union (EU) to take action to influence the 2017 Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) on education and training in the framework of the European Semester.

The ETUCE has produced and disseminated an analysis of the CSRs on education and training proposed by the European Commission, encouraging its member organisations to actively engage with national and European decision-makers ahead of the European Council that is set to endorse the CSRs. These are related to inclusive education, higher education and education financing, and should be implemented by EU member states within the coming 12-18 months.

International workshop on active trade unionism among youth in Belarus

From 22-23 May, the workshop “Trade union and Youth – Together. Together to future!” was organised in Minsk under the auspices of the Belarusian Trade Union of Workers of Education and Science, an ETUCE member organisation.

ETUI workshop on psychosocial risks at work

From 23-24 May, a workshop on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work was organised by the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) in Brussels.

ETUCE Programme Officer Eduardo Nadal outlined the two-year ETUCE/EU-funded project on ‘Social partners promoting decent workplaces in the Education sector for a healthier working life’.

Tax justice and fair taxation

On 26 May, ETUCE urged member organisation to contribute to European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) activities in the field of tax justice and fair taxation by acting to influence the European Parliament’s vote on the European Commission’s Directive on publiccountry-by-country reports from multinational companies. On 16 June, ETUCE also joined the online petition on the No to Tax Havens platform, asking the European Parliament to support the creation of an EU-wide common corporate tax base

Higher Education: Bologna Follow-Up Group meeting in Malta

From 24-25 May, ETUCE represented member organisations in the Bologna Follow-Up Group meeting in Gozo. The ETUCE vice-president, Andreas Keller, highlighted crucial topics in higher education and research such as academic freedom, support to teachers and researchers, and institutional autonomy.

General Assembly of EQARin Malta

The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) members convened for the 13th General Assembly, hosted by the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU and in conjunction with the Bologna Follow-Up Group meeting from 24-26 May.

Karl Dittrich was unanimously elected as EQAR President with a mandate from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2020. Six new Committee members were approved by the General Assembly, with their two-year term starting on 1 July: Maria Arminda Bragança de Miranda, Riita Kaarina Pyykkö, Izabela Suika, Beate Tremel, Anne Verreth and Steffen Westergaard Andersen.

Andreas Keller, ETUCE Vice-President, outlined ETUCE's activities on higher education and research, highlighting academic freedom, support to teachers and researchers, and institutional autonomy.

Eğitim Sen's General Assembly in Turkey

The General Assembly of Eğitim Sen, an ETUCE member organisation in Turkey, took place from 26-28 May in Ankara. Delegates urged the Turkish government to end the state of emergency and allow dismissed and suspended teachers and workers return to their posts.

The ETUCE Vice-President, Odile Cordelier, together with representatives from the Turkish *Cypriot Secondary Education Teachers' Union* (KTOEOS/Cyprus), the Eastern Mediterranean University Union of Academic Staff (DAU-SEN/Cyprus), the Danish Union of Teachers (DLF/Denmark), the *Syndicat National des Enseignements de Second degré* (SNES-FSU/France), the Federation of Secondary School Teachers (OLME/Greece), the Primary Teachers Union (DOE/Greece), the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT/United Kingdom), the *Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft* (GEW/Germany) and the *Algemene Onderwijsbond* (AOB/The Netherlands) participated in the Assembly.

ETUCE Conference on public investment, reforms and privatisation patterns in education across Europe

On 30 May, in line with the EI Global Response initiative, the ETUCE Conference, 'Education in Europe: Public Investment, Privatisation and Reforms', took place in Brussels, Belgium.

This event marked the closure of the ETUCE-led project, 'Investing in education: Strengthening the involvement of teacher trade unions in the European Semester on education and training'. Around 100 participants discussed investment in education, with a focus on privatisation and commercialisation trends throughout Europe. A

Research Report and a Practical guide on the European Semester for education trade unions were presented.

ETUC Mid-Term Conference in Italy

From 29-31 May, the ETUC held its Mid-Term Conference in Rome. The conference focused on Europe for working people – the future the European trade union movement wants to build for European workers and their families.

European Alliance for Apprenticeship

From 30-31 May, ETUCE and several member organisations celebrated the fourth anniversary of the European Alliance of Apprenticeship in a high-level event organised by the European Commission and the Maltese Presidency of the EU Council in Malta.

ETUCE highlighted the important role vocational education and training (VET) teachers and trainers play in organising apprenticeship for students and maintaining its quality.

Open Educational Resources Policy Forum in Poland

On 1-2 June, the second Open Educational Resources Policy Forum took place in Warsaw, organised by Communia Association.

The ETUCE presented the ETUCE Statement on Copyright in the digital single market representing the position of education trade unions across Europe.

Social partners' hearing on the future of the European Quality and Effective Framework for Apprenticeship

On 7 June, ETUCE participated in the second Social Partners' hearing organised by the European Commission on the future European Quality and Effective Framework for Apprenticeship.

It called for support of VET teachers in the forthcoming initiative, which will be adopted in the autumn as a Council Recommendation.

ETUC Youth Committee

On 9 June, the ETUC Youth Committee met in Brussels, Belgium.

It discussed the draft proposal for a ETUC Youth Committee Position on Youth Mobility, including the demand for simplified procedures of recognition of academic qualifications, and the ETUC Resolution on the European Solidarity Corps.

Agnes Roman, ETUCE Senior Coordinator, highlighted the latest developments regarding the European Quality Framework for Apprenticeship. The ETUCE also provided material on precarious work in the education sector to the Pay Rise Youth Branch campaign

ETUC Conference ‘Safe at home, safe at work’

On 12 June, the ETUC held the final conference of its “Safe at home, safe at work” project in Brussels, Belgium.

This initiative made an innovative link between domestic violence and work. During the event, several panellists emphasised the role of trade unions in addressing and preventing gender-based violence.

Key Competences Conference

On 14 June, ETUCE participated in the European Commission’s Conference on the Revision of Key Competences Framework in Brussels, Belgium.

Participants identified competences related to citizenship, personal and social development, sustainability, and cultural awareness and expression. They also explored how to better support the use of the key competences framework.

Public debate on ‘Education and copyright’

On 21 June, ETUCE participated in the public debate on the copyright reform for the education sector in the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium.

Significantly, the ETUCE letter sent to MEPs was debated concerning amendments of the so-called COMODINI report of the EP Legal Affairs Committee, in line with the ETUCE Statement on Copyright in the digital single market.

Public Services Day: EPSU and ETUCE launch media campaign on pay rise

On 23 June, ETUCE joined forces with the European Public Service Union (EPSU) on World Public Services’ Day, in a media campaign.

The campaign called for increased wages for public sector workers, including in education, as well as restoration of social dialogue and collective bargaining across Europe. This action is in line with ETUC campaign, “Europe needs a pay rise”.

In the context of the joint-action, ETUCE and EPSU issued a joint press release and a briefing entitled Pay in the Public Sector: how workers continue to pay for the crisis.

They urged member organisations to share and disseminate campaign material, including an animated [video](#).

European Social Partnership: Round table meeting in Ireland

On 27 June, ETUCE and the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE) met the Irish social partners in education in Dublin at the second [social dialogue round table](#) of the joint ETUCE-EFEE project on [European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education capacity building III](#).

Participants discussed European and national social dialogue, particularly in relation to the promotion of healthy workplaces in education. They were joined by experts from the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, and the project's expert consultant firm, ICF. Additionally, Slovakian social partners in education shared their experiences.

Discussion on the future of education and privatisation in Africa in Germany

On 1 June, under the banner "Inequality discarded–Time for Justice", as part of the Programme of the International Week of Justice 2017, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation organised the discussion, "Earning by learning – is this the future of education in Africa?"

The panel consisted of Utz Dräger, journalist; Wilson Sossion, KNUT General Secretary; Professor Annette Scheunpflug, University of Bamberg/Germany; and Angelo Gavrielatos, EI. The discussion focused on the growing opposition to the expansion of Bridge International Academies in Kenya and beyond.

Approximately 90 people representing GEW, civil society organisations, and members of the public were in attendance.

On 2 June, at a special briefing at the German Parliament, Sossion conveyed the growing concerns directly to German decision-makers, NGOs and business representatives.

"Investing in the crisis: Private participation in the education of Syrian refugees" seminar in Norway

On 2 June in Oslo, the Union of Education Norway (UEN) organised a seminar on the growing presence of private actors in the education of Syrian refugees.

Assistant Professors Francine Menashy and Zeena Zakharia (University of Massachusetts Boston) presented their report, [Investing in the crisis: Private participation in the education of Syrian refugees](#), released in Lebanon earlier this year. This was followed by a panel discussion with representatives from the

Norwegian Refugee Council, The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, and UEN President Steffen Handal.

Support for human rights activists in Turkey

Education International joined the call from Amnesty International demanding that the charges against Taner Kılıç, Chair of Amnesty International Turkey, be dropped and that he be released immediately and unconditionally.

Kılıç, a longstanding human rights defender, was taken into police custody on 6 June. On 9 June, he was charged with membership of a terrorist organisation and imprisoned pending trial. Kılıç is one of thousands, including activists, journalists, academics, unionists and others critical of government policy in Turkey who have been subject to criminal prosecutions on false terrorism charges following the coup attempt of July 2016.

Education International has repeatedly condemned the targeting of tens of thousands of education employees across the country, including members of the education union, Eğitim Sen. It has also created a solidarity fund to provide financial assistance to Eğitim Sen members who have been dismissed and cannot apply for new positions in the education sector. In June, more than 1,400 Eğitim Sen members received funding from the EI fund.

Launch of the Centre for International Development in the UK

A new Centre for International Development was launched on 15 June at the Institute of Education, University College London.

The new Centre will be co-directed by Professors Elaine Unterhalter and Moses Oketch, and comprises a team of internationally recognised experts in international development, education, and international educational policy. The Centre delivers world-class teaching and carries out research of global importance.

Work at the Centre is clustered under five themes: poverty, education and inequalities; examining conflict, violence, and peacebuilding through education; education and the promotion of physical, social, emotional, and sexual health wellbeing; understanding the interconnections between education and migration; and knowledge creation relating to education, gender equity and empowerment.

North America-Caribbean

CIES 2017 in the USA

El's research work related to the Global Response campaign on the privatisation and commercialisation in and of education was showcased at the Comparative International Education Society (CIES) conference in Atlanta, from 5-9 March. El presented research projects to an international research audience and built strategic alliance for its future research activities.

A highlight at the conference was the presentation to Antoni Verger, Clara Fontdevila and Adrian Zancajo of the 2016 Globalisation and Education Special Interest Group (SIG) book award for the El-commissioned book, *The privatisation of education: A political economy of global education reform*.

Also, against a backdrop of deprofessionalised and demoralised teachers around the world, El research on teacher unions in challenging times, carried out by Nina Bascia of the University of Toronto, was the focus of a panel discussion on "Teacher unions and university academics: Unlikely Bedfellows".

Conscious of the serious need for research on technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and the importance of an independent focus on it, El commissioned a two-phase study which was presented to the conference. "Global Trends in TVET: a framework for social justice maps out the current state of play" shows a TVET sector firmly grounded in the SDGs, analysing the impact of various TVET systems on students and investigating the impact on marginalised students.

More attention to professional standards in Jamaica

From 18 to 20 April, the Jamaica Teachers Association (JTA), representing 21,000 members in all education sectors and one of the largest El affiliates in the Caribbean, brought together teachers from all over the island to discuss ways to improve their professional practices.

During the event, legal experts, children's rights advocates, law enforcement officers, social media specialists briefed delegates on topics related to teaching and schools. The participants were also updated on the use of new technologies, including robotics. Some 250 educators attended the conference, which was held in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

In his opening remarks, JTA President Howard Isaacs told the conference that the Jamaican teaching profession has an important responsibility improving professional standards and education quality. The association is planning to step up its work on professional issues.

The keynote speaker, El General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen, said that the commercialisation of education services and the de-professionalisation of teaching are the most important challenges facing the teaching profession globally. "Although the Caribbean has a proud history of promoting public education for all, when confronted with budgetary constraints, your governments may be tempted to open their national school systems to market forces. You must try to prevent that," van Leeuwen stressed, adding that "we are not against partnerships with the private sector. On the contrary, we need businesses building our schools and producing teaching and learning materials. Where we draw the line is where corporations start running our schools on a for profit basis causing social inequity, or where they would invade teachers' professional space and tell us what and how to teach."

ILO support for teacher union in Ecuador

The Government of Ecuador has been invited by the ILO to "revoke the decision to dissolve the teacher union, *Unión Nacional de Educadores* (UNE), and to allow the free functioning of the trade union". This is one of the recommendations from the ILO Committee on the Application of Standards, where implementation by Ecuador of ILO Convention 87 on freedom of association was reviewed.

"The registration of our Executive Board has been refused, the union has been legally dissolved by administrative decree, our offices ransacked and the government has proceeded to sell the union buildings," said Rosana Palacios, President of UNE, as an EI delegate at the International Labour Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, from 5-17 June. "The government is seeking to destroy the representative teachers' organisation, and is promoting a parallel organisation called the Teachers' Network."

The ILO requested the government in Ecuador to report progress to the Committee of Experts by November 2017