

Draft 10th World Congress resolution:

TRADE UNIONS REJECT AUSTERITY POLICIES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Proposed by FECCOO-Spain, SEC/Costa Rica, SINDI2/Chile, FLC-CGIL/Italy, SNES-FSU/France and FSLE/Romania

- (1) The austerity policies that are being implemented in many countries, cutting public spending on education, are having adverse effects on our education systems and are failing to provide solutions to the challenges we face, such as ensuring quality, equity, equal opportunities and leaving no one behind.
- (2) Strengthening public education above all requires (as various international studies have shown) increased investment in the sector and improving it in terms of quality and equity. Such a demand is entirely reasonable, bearing in mind that education is not a cost but a necessary investment for the future of our pupils and our society.
- (3) It should also be recalled that the UNESCO Paris Declaration of 10 December 2021 calls on all governments to fulfil the commitments made at the 2015 World Education Forum in Incheon and the 2018 and 2020 Global Education Meetings to allocate at least 4% to 6% of GDP and/or at least 15% to 20% of total public spending to education.
- (4) The economic crises in many countries, the ever-increasing privatisation and the budget cuts in education are having a negative impact on the status of the teaching profession, leading to poorer pay and working conditions for all educators as well as cuts to teacher training and to the employment of the new professional profiles that are so essential to improving attention to the diversity, coexistence and wellbeing of the educational community, along with other tasks.
- (5) An end must be put to the implementation of austerity policies that block the much-needed increases in investments in education, which are so essential to lowering teacher-pupil ratios and thereby increasing the ability of teachers to focus on those tasks that improve the work done in the classroom and the educational outcomes achieved.
- (6) Action is also essential to increase the number of teachers and all the professionals required to attend to pupils with specific educational support needs and special education needs.
- (7) Another key issue is the working conditions of teachers and other staff, which must be improved so that they are able to fulfil their core work with the support, the resources and all the recognition they deserve, avoiding excessive workloads and, in particular, an

overload of bureaucratic tasks, and ensuring that policies are in place to improve work-life balance and thus promote co-responsibility.

- (8) Measures are also needed to ensure stable employment and reduce temporary work in the education sector as a whole.
- (9) Our pupils are still affected by inequality gaps and digital divides, which particularly affect the most vulnerable and are impossible to remedy when austerity policies are applied to education.
- (10) It should not be forgotten that the interests of private management are being protected to the detriment of public education, and yet it is public education that ensures equal opportunities, social cohesion and the right to quality education.
- (11) Strengthening public education means investing in teacher training and capacity building, improving school infrastructures, updating curricula in line with current needs, ensuring the participation of the educational community and guaranteeing equal access to quality education for all students without exception. This requires a strong political will and a clear commitment on the part of education ministries and the relevant education authorities to prioritise education funding and not to implement cutbacks and austerity policies in the education sector.
- (12) For all these reasons, the member organisations of Education International urge governments and education administrations to respond to the trade union calls for increases in education funding, for decent salaries and pensions, for an end to all forms of precarious work and for better working conditions for all education workers.
- (13) We must focus our efforts on strengthening international trade union networks, building international trade union alliances and fighting all austerity policies affecting education funding, with all the union strategies and tools at our disposal.
- (14) Now, more than ever, we need to invest in education.
- (15) Because without investment in education there is no future and without equity there is no quality.

Proposed amendments

Amendment 1: GEW/Germany

1. Throughout resolution B9, replace the words “pupil” and “pupils” with the words “student” and “students”.

Amendment 2: SADTU/South Africa, NAPTOSA/South Africa and SAOU/South Africa

2. In paragraph (6), insert the words: ‘including psychosocial support for learners, teachers and ESP.’ on the last line after the word “needs”.

Amendment 3: CSQ/Canada

3. Add a new paragraph (7) after paragraph (6):

“(7) The number of students with special needs is increasing. It is therefore essential that teachers have the resources they need to respond adequately to these needs, including opening the special classes required to accommodate these children.”

Amendment 4: SADTU/South Africa, NAPTOSA/South Africa and SAOU/South Africa

4. In paragraph (11) add the words “adequate Learning, teaching and support material (LTSM)” after the word “infrastructure”.