Quality Teaching and Teacher Support: Two Sides of the same Coin

Quality Teaching and Teacher Support in the European Higher Education Area

- Andreas Keller, 17 June 2021 -

ETUCE: The Voice of Teachers and Academics in the European Higher Education Area

- European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE): European region of Education International (EI)
- Federation of 127 education trade unions in 51 countries, representing in total 11 million members all over Europe
- Covering all education sectors from early-childhood education to further education, including higher education and research
- Social partner for teachers and other education personnel at European level in the European Union
- Consultative member of the Bologna Process / European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

CSEE ETUCE

ETUCE affiliates in the Central-Asian region

- **Kazakhstan** branch Trade Union of Education and Science Workers (KTUESW)
- Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of **Kyrgyztan** (TUESWK)
- Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Republic **Tajikistan** (UESWRT),
- National Trade Union of Education, Science and Culture Workers of **Uzbekistan** (NTUESCWU)

Point of departure: Quality Teaching and Teacher Support – two Sides of the same Coin

In the first two decades of the Bologna Process students and institutions were the main focus of efforts to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA). But quality teaching is not possible without **highly qualified and motivated teachers**.

The trend to **casualization and precarization of academic work** throughout the EHEA undermines continuity and quality of teaching and research – and ultimately on studying and learning.

Furthermore there is a **lack of social dialogue** between the social partners in higher education, particulary on national level.

Rome Ministerial Conference 2020

- 10th follow-up conference after the Bologna Ministerial Conference 1999
- Virtual meeting on 19 November 2020 after having postponed twice
- Ministers and other representatives from 49 countries, the European Commission and 8 consultative members
- Rome Communiqué with three annexes
  - Annex I: Statement on Academic Freedom
  - Annex II: Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA
  - Annex III: Recommendations to National Authorities for the Enhancement of Higher Education Learning and Teaching in the EHEA

Rome Ministerial Communiqué (1/3): Visions

„(...) we commit to building an inclusive, innovative and interconnected EHEA by 2030, able to underpin a sustainable, cohesive and peaceful Europe:

- **Inclusive**, because every learner will have equitable access to higher education and will be fully supported in completing their studies and training;
- **Innovative**, because it will introduce new and better aligned learning, teaching and assessment methods and practices, closely linked to research;
- **Interconnected**, because our shared frameworks and tools will continue to facilitate and enhance international cooperation and reform, exchange of knowledge and mobility of staff and students.“

Rome Ministerial Communiqué (2/3): Fundamental values

- ETUCE: Quality teaching requires the freedom of teaching and discussion, freedom in carrying out research, disseminating and publishing its results, the freedom to express freely opinions about the institution and system in which academics work.
- Fundamental values in the EHEA according to the Rome Communiqué:
  - Institutional autonomy
  - Academic freedom and integrity
  - Participation of students and staff in higher education governance
  - Public responsibility for and of higher education

Rome ministerial Communiqué (3/3): Teacher Support

- Increased support for teaching and non-teaching staff
- Academic staff, including junior academics require
  - stable employment and career opportunities,
  - parity of esteem for teaching and research,
  - attractive working conditions,
  - access to up-to-date staff development.
- Digital technologies, skills and competences for all

Annex III: Recommendations for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching

1. Make student-centred learning a reality
   - Structured dialogue involving students, teachers and stakeholders
2. Foster continous enhancement of teaching
   - (Inter-institutional) continous professional development
   - Framework with decent working conditions, manageable teaching workload, attractive tenure opportunities
   - Parity of esteem for teaching and research
3. Strengthen higher education institutions‘ and systems‘ capacity to enhance learning and teaching
   - National higher education strategies as a basis for a structured and continous dialogue with higher education institutions and other stakeholders
   - Appropriate and stable funding and ressources

Conclusions

ETUCE calls on ministers in charge of higher education

- protect and promote academic freedom
- to increase teacher support,
- to foster social dialogue both on EHEA and national as well as regional (e. g. Central-Asian) level,
- to improve working conditions and career paths for higher education teachers: permanent jobs for permanent tasks, job security, reliable career paths, a supportive working environment and appropriate continuous professional development.

Thank you very much for you attention!

☞ https://www.csee-etuce.org/en/