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# ETUCE

## European Trade Union Committee for Education EI European Region

**To: all ETUCE member organisations in Serbia**

Brussels, 30 August 2018

Ref.: SF/vd/9999

**Subject: Solidarity with the ETUCE member organisations in Serbia**

Dear colleagues,

With this letter, ETUCE supports you, the teachers, other education personnel and education trade unions, in Serbia in your upcoming protest action to demand decent salaries and comprehensive social dialogue in education.

We, 132 education trade unions, representing more than 11 million teachers across Europe, strongly support the joint action of the education trade unions in Serbia in front of the buildings of the Ministry of Education, the Serbian government and the Ministry of State and Local Administration on Friday, 31 August 2018.

It is unacceptable that the positions of the Law on Salaries in the public sector, which are to come into effect at the beginning of 2019, rank salaries for education personnel in the eighth salary group, when the salary for other public sector employees with similar levels of qualifications is to be allocated under the ninth salary group. An ominous threat is that the eighth salary group implies no career development perspectives for education personnel in Serbia.

This conflicts indeed with the statements made by the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of education and teaching. The crucial role that education has for the society, the future of the country, economic growth and democratic citizenship implies that concrete measures need to be taken to support education personnel in practice. As a candidate country to the European Union, and looking in the same direction, the Serbian government should also take into consideration the new EU Strategy "European Education Area 2025" wherein the EU Leaders [acknowledged](#) that [...] "offering them [*teachers*] excellent training and attractive perspectives for their professional development and remuneration" [...] is an important measure to preserve the teaching profession.

ETUCE together with you, demands a better negotiation position for education trade unions to upgrade teachers' salary to the ninth salary group and promote quality education for all in Serbia.

Attacks coming from the government's decisions only further exacerbate the low status of the teaching profession which is already offset by such factors as an aging workforce, high workload, lack of continuous professional development, the lack of public funding, low recognition of the profession and the need for better working conditions.

ETUCE calls on the Serbian government to truly commit itself to promoting quality education in particular through preserving decent working conditions for those working in the sector,

supporting the teaching profession to make it attractive also for young graduates and comprehensive consultations with education trade unions in Serbia.

ETUCE raises its voice with you in your protest. May your protest action lead to comprehensive negotiations with meaningful outcomes.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. Flocken". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susan Flocken  
European Director