



**Professional Education Committee
Florence, Social Forum 2012**

**Students
Network for Knowledge**

**Manifesto of Education
From Unions, Associations, Education Networks
Florence, November 2012**

As unions, associations, Education and Research networks, aware of their role and mission in our society, want to give a contribution from their countries to the economic and cultural growth, in order to overcome the European and international crisis and the regressive and restrictive policies which are going nowhere. Educational areas that we represent give a guarantee of democracy and train informed and motivated citizens, capable of analyzing problems and seeking solutions, as well as accepting individual or collective responsibility.

Effective education needs quality, authenticity and must take into consideration diversity, whatever it is, as well as a democratization of its production and diffusion.

Education belongs to our people and their democratic and free societies and is essential to the construction of a better future.

The states in their politics must take into consideration their citizens' quality of life and must increase their physical well-being, moral and cultural development as well as the transmission of knowledge.

In order to guarantee quality of education, control and transparency of educational systems open to all and for all, without distinction of race, culture and religion, public investments are necessary.

Freedom of teaching must be guaranteed by the states to ensure the autonomy of educational institutions and the collegial structure of the decisions. Measures must be taken to increase the attractiveness and the career-advancement to ensure sufficient salaries in all countries and at the same time to build up the quality of the teaching as well as to develop the knowledge to the university staff (teachers, educators, education professionals, researchers, administrative, technical).

Initial and lifelong staff training is the base for any evolving educational system, and must be open, in an enriching way, to changes and to diversity of cultural society.

So we are calling for this program to take action in the whole of Europe and in all the regions of the world, to create an inclusive society founded upon a high scholastic, academic, social education, and public research which answers the following principles:

1. Education is a common good and cannot be reduced to the level of merchandise. It must be thus guaranteed and protected. The common good must also be defended and consolidated, free and accessible to all citizens.

2. While respecting the historical and cultural diversities of each country, governments, institutions, cultural associations, students or parents of pupils, the wider community, must be involved in the construction of an interdependent education system and cooperation and fight wild competition at national and international levels.

3. Education must be above all for the training of people, citizens, and has to aim at the vocational training. It must be used as a social elevator and prevent that the social inequalities become also school inequalities.

4. Education has to develop the autonomy, critical thinking, has to contribute to social, democratic, environmental, cultural, ethical and economic development of each country and to the welfare of all social and generational categories. This objective implies a diversity of educational methods, smaller classes and an economic, political and religious independence of the whole educational system. The link between knowledge, critical and democratic awareness should be strengthened in order to guarantee to our learners a human and totally civic formation. The role of pedagogues and education professionals is essential, especially in this area.

5. This also involves an initial and continuing training rooted in the system and financed systematically. The quality of education depends closely on the quantity and the quality of the amount of financing, to be used not only to expand the teaching and the didactic formation, but also to promote research on the pedagogical methodologies in their plurality of traditions and innovations and intercultural exchanges between professionals. It should also be favored by the synergies between professional educators, pedagogues, teachers, greater customization of training for a greater autonomy of the learner, seen as wealth for civic participation and democratic.

6. Autonomy and democratic ruling within institutions between students and teachers, directors and professors, institutions and persons in charge of establishments and shared responsibility by all staff at all levels, regardless of their role, are the basis of quality and meet the needs and expectations of the new generations.

7. The freedom of education must be ensured and strengthened in all the countries as the untouchable and fundamental right as we must also recognize the contribution of teachers and educators on school and extra-scholastic ground.

8. Recruitment of staff must be transparent and regulated, rooted in the system as a fundamental principle to ensure an efficient public service, and non-discriminatory.

9. The collective bargaining or the national constitution have to guarantee protection, quality of education, adequate salaries, jobs stability and an adequate environment for working;

10. The European authorities and national governments must take necessary measures to greatly reduce insecurity, and guarantee the stability of teachers and staff employment.

11. It is time to encourage an international and European mobility in all sectors of education, for students and teachers, in order to disseminate some experiences and good practices and to stimulate the cultural and scientific development. This mobility, far from being obligatory, should not be penalizing and must guarantee professional and individual protections to the professors, to be open to students at various levels and covered by public funding.

12. International schools and universities which sit abroad, as well as their staffs, must have good economic, legal and environmental conditions in order to ensure a good cultural transmission, appropriate for every country, and promote the training of multilingual citizens without borders.

Unions, networks, associations in education, appeal to the national governments and the European union so that they leave the regressive and restrictive policies and too often blind of the Troika and seek alternative solutions and shared economic, social and ecological growth.

Unions, networks, associations in education make a commitment to spread education with their colleagues and society in this "Manifesto of Education", to promote these principles and to mobilize all social actors of national, European and international community.