

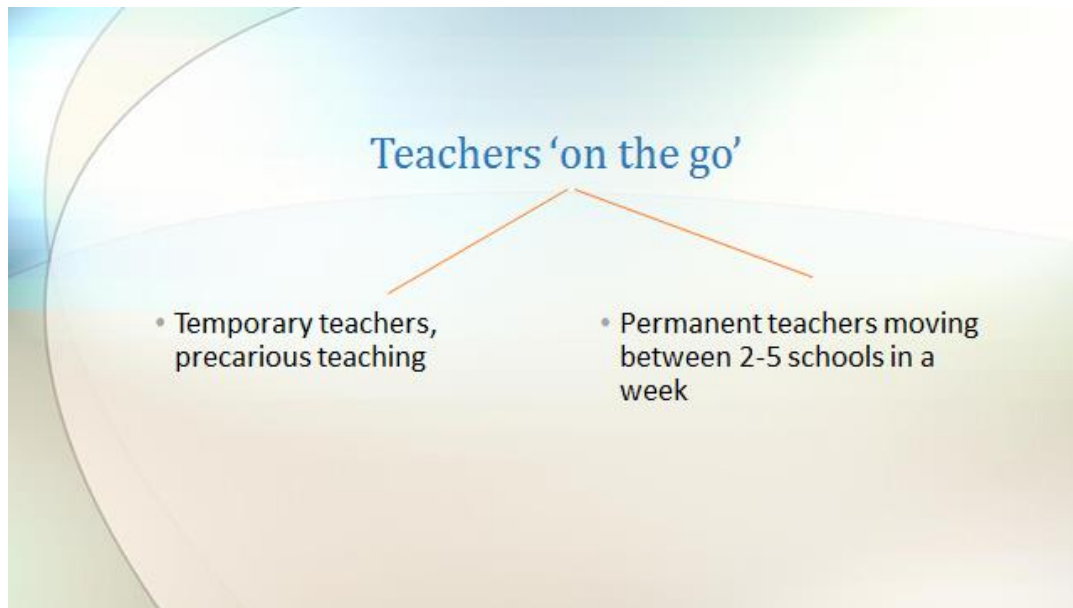


ΟΜΑΔΑ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ ΜΕ ΞΕΝΟΥΣ ΑΝΤΙΠΡΟΣΩΠΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΟΛΜΕ

Το Σάββατο πριν την έναρξη του συνεδρίου οι προσκεκλημένοι αντιπρόσωποι από εκπαιδευτικές ενώσεις του εξωτερικού συμμετείχαν μαζί με αντιπροσώπους της ΟΛΜΕ σε ομάδα εργασίας για ανταλλαγή στοιχείων και απόψεων με θέμα «*Εκπαιδευτικοί σε Διαρκή Κίνηση, Επισφαλής Εργασία*».



Ύστερα από το καλωσόρισμα του Προέδρου της ΟΛΜΕ στους ξένους αντιπροσώπους, ακολούθησε σύντομη αναφορά του Προέδρου κ. Κωνσταντίνου στα εργασιακά προβλήματα των εκπαιδευτικών που έχουν οξυνθεί τα τελευταία χρόνια της κρίσης. Έγινε ιδιαίτερη αναφορά στο θέμα των αναπληρωτών εκπαιδευτικών, καθώς και εκείνων που μετακινούνται από 2-5 σχολεία προκειμένου να καλύψουν το δικακτικό τους ωράριο.



Η συζήτηση επεκτάθηκε στα προβλήματα που συνεπάγεται η κατάσταση αυτή για τους ίδιους τους εκπαιδευτικούς, τους μαθητές και το διδακτικό έργο.

Με τη σειρά τους τοποθετήθηκαν όλοι οι εκπρόσωποι πάνω στο θέμα αυτό δίνοντας παράλληλα πολύτιμες και ενδιαφέρουσες πληροφορίες από τα τεκταινόμενα στην εκπαίδευση στις χώρες τους.

Έγινε λεπτομερής καταγραφή των στοιχείων που ανέφεραν οι ξένοι συνάδελφοι, η οποία παρατίθεται στη συνέχεια.

INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP

Saturday, 29 June 2019

In the context of the 19th OLME Congress, a meeting among the European Teacher Unions' Delegates was held on Saturday 29th June. The President of the Greek Teacher Union, OLME, Mr Konstantinou Nikiforos, addressed the European Representatives and presented the situation in Greek schools which has certainly worsened over the years of the crisis (2009 - 2019):

22,000 secondary school teachers have retired but there have been no permanent teachers' appointments to take their place since 2010. All these vacant positions have been covered with precarious teachers resulting in doubling the percentage of precarious teachers from 7% to 14% (both at primary and secondary levels) over the last decade while 2,500 schools have closed down or merged. Teacher mobility in the same period has been almost nonexistent and the estimated number of teachers "trapped" away from their families or their permanent place of residence has risen to 10,000. The average age of permanent

teachers is 50 years while the average age of temporary teachers replacing those that have retired has risen to 40 years.

Permanent teachers have to move from 2-5 schools within the week (about 40% of permanent teachers have to move to 2 different schools within a week while 10% have to move from 4 to 5 schools) and this situation is worsened by the lack of supporting staff in Greek schools. The last school secretaries were appointed from 1980 – 1985 so all secretarial work and relevant paperwork is carried out by teachers and school principals who find their workload greatly increased.

Greek Unions are trying to convince the government and the other political parties of the necessity of new permanent teachers' appointments and the need of an increase in teachers' salaries as Greek teachers have suffered a 30% cut in salaries on average in the years of austerity while the salaries in the broader public sector have been decreased by 18%.

In conclusion, it is evident that employment conditions in Greece are very bad and are constantly deteriorating. The Greek teachers' Unions focus on shedding light to the problems permanent teachers are facing and try to force the government to offer precarious teachers the same rights as permanent teachers.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S, short address:

Before the memorandum the funding for education was 3.5% of the Greek GDP which after the memorandum dropped to 2.8%. The memorandum dictated that the ratio of workers retiring from the public sector to new appointments of permanent civil servants was 5 to 1 and the current government has pledged to change it to the much needed - but according to OLME's viewpoint still not enough to cover the public sector's needs- 1 retiree to 1 new appointment. The current government has announced the appointment of 4500 permanent teachers and the recruitment is in progress.

SNES-FSU, FRANCE

In France, permanent teachers enjoy the status of civil servants whereas precarious teachers work on a contractual basis and do not have the same rights as permanent ones. They do not have equal salaries and they perhaps have to move to two schools with no additional compensation. They are also not paid during the summer holidays.

In general, the status of teachers' profession is degrading. The new "modernization" bill that passed in the Senate increases the number of temporary teachers and the Unions are fighting hard to stop the new changes.

President Macron hates Unions and important issues are:

- What kind of actions should the Unions initiate?
- How should we fight neoliberalism?
- We should find effective mechanisms to fight for teachers' rights.



UIL Scuola, ITALY

There are 800,000 teachers in education and 200,000 supporting personnel.

The government is trying to reduce funding for education because of the crisis to 3.9% of GDP. They are closing or merging schools and unions are fighting against that. One third (1/3) of teachers in Italy are temporary/precarious teachers. The profession is unattractive to educated Northerners because of low salaries. So, teachers are moving from the South to the North of Italy or Europe also because of the high rate of unemployment in the South.

The Italian Union made use of the European legislation and the European Court of Justice has decreed that Italy would pay a fine if they did not employ precarious teachers.

The average age of permanent teachers in Italy is 55 years and the precarious teachers are appointed in their 40s. Now 50,000 new teachers will be hired from people already on lists so teachers will not get any younger. Teachers have to work in up to 3 schools in a week.

Financial superpowers exercise pressure on Italy. At present teachers have the same salaries throughout Italy but if regionalization passes they will have different salaries in different regions.

ESEUR, RUSSIA

Officially, education is a priority for the government but in reality the government spends 3.1% of the GDP on Education thus Russia is the 90th in the world in terms of education funding.

Russian teachers work 27-28 class hours a week. If they work less, they are paid less and there are differences in salaries in different regions ranging from 400€ to 1500€.

There are no precarious teachers. Teachers have an almost permanent status but in case of conflict with the school principal a teacher may face problems.

FENPROF, PORTUGAL

Greece and Portugal have faced similar problems dealing with the Troika and the provisions of a memorandum. During those years austerity measures deteriorated teachers' working conditions, with larger classes, heavier workload, more administrative control over teachers' work, namely through electronic platforms.

Between 2001 and 2016 there was a reduction in the number of schools from about 16.000 to about 8.000 due to the closure and merger of schools. 25,000 teachers (mostly precarious) were unemployed.



In the last four years, the socialist government supported in the parliament by all left parties has reversed cuts in salaries, but still pressure for low deficit is exercised so insufficient money is spent on education.

Portuguese teachers are quite old, the second oldest in Europe after Italy, and Portugal is next to last before Greece in the number of teachers younger than thirty. Teachers' retirement age is 66 years and 5 months.

Teacher mobility is almost nonexistent. About 15% of teachers are precarious. Precarious teachers become permanent and receive equal payment only after a long period of 10, 15 or more years and that makes the profession even less attractive- only 1% of students want to become teachers.

Research has shown that 76% of teachers feel emotionally exhausted, 84% would retire immediately if they could and almost 50% feel unfulfilled.

The Union has promoted several initiatives (press conferences, meetings with political parties and parents' associations, etc) to denounce the negative impact of precariousness and to raise social awareness to the fact that teachers' problems are society's problems.

The involvement of precarious teachers in Unions is difficult, specially of those subject to increased job insecurity. This is also felt in social activism.

The FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE agreed that the new liberal policies attack the core of education aiming at the destabilization of the teaching profession so that teachers can accept the status of precarious teachers. The qualifications, the quality of work is and should be the government's responsibility. A new law in France has made the position of civil servants' worse.

GEW, GERMANY

Germany has also faced the consequences of austerity. On average in Germany 4% of the budget goes to Education but in Hamburg, whose Union they represented, they spend 3.8%.

Teachers have to work for 29 hours per week in the classroom but they also have bureaucratic duties. They have long working hours: 50 hours per week if preparation for classes at home or on holidays is included.

In Germany there is competition among regions to provide better education so Unions use this to improve teachers' position. Nevertheless, the working conditions have not improved and low funding has a negative impact on school facilities' maintenance (dirty toilets etc.)

SVIZ, SLOVENIA

There are predictions that funding for education will diminish globally and that can only be done by diminishing the importance of teachers. For Slovenian teachers the year 2012 was the worst, when they had to face a 15% reduction of salaries and 20% reduction of the number of teachers.

The Slovenian government wanted to increase teachers' hours of work which are 22 class hours for primary school teachers and 20 for secondary school teachers. Unions organized huge demonstrations and strikes and managed to avoid the increase in working hours but had to accept a 4% decrease in salaries as opposed to a 15% decrease the government aimed to impose.

Before the crisis Slovenia invested 6% of its budget /GPD (?) on education but now that amount has fallen to 4.2%. The other parts of public sector are not so severely affected presumably because governments have the false impression that they can decrease the funding of education and diminish teachers' position and still get the same results, or the deterioration cannot be detected by the parents.

FNEC- FP FO, FRANCE

The representative of the French Union first stressed the need for solidarity among teachers from other countries against common problems since the deterioration of public schools is evident everywhere. Evaluation causes stress and the feeling of "burn out" which consequently leads teachers who cannot cope with it to resignation. The attractiveness of the teaching profession is reduced, especially among mathematicians.

In France, the number of precarious teachers has risen by 10%. Their salaries are negotiated with the headmaster of each school with no chance of increase. They also have no right to mobility and they can be easily dismissed.

As they expect that the inequality will increase and the working conditions will deteriorate the Teachers' Union is organizing strikes for September at the start of the school year.

OELMEK, CYPRUS

Last summer the Cypriot government unilaterally tried to impose new liberalism policy measures including an increase in the number of teaching hours by 40 hours annually. Unions organized huge demonstrations in August in which almost all teachers (15,000) took part and they forced the government to take everything back. There have been discussions with the government to restore salaries at the level before the economic crisis. The Unions have appealed to the Higher Court and its decision will almost certainly be favourable to the teachers' demands.

TUS, SERBIA

Many schools have been closed or merged. When teachers are retired they are replaced with new teachers with permanent posts, a procedure that is being monitored by the Union.

The IMF and Serbia reached an agreement to increase government saving and the easy victim was education. There were 10% cuts in salaries but more recently in conditions of improved economy their salaries were restored to the previous level.

Egitim Sen, TURKEY

Teachers in Turkey face a lot of problems: large classes (40-50 students), low salaries because of low funding and the elimination of work safety rights. After the failed attempt of a coup d'état three years ago 1,600 teachers, all of whom were union members, were fired, 160,000 civil servants were sacked. New laws facilitate the firing of civil servants.

The recruitment of permanent teachers has stopped. 80,000 contract teachers were hired for four years but they can be fired at any moment so out of fear of losing their jobs they avoid becoming independent syndicate members preferring to join pro-government syndicates with the hope of securing a permanent job.

At the end of the meeting there has been an intervention by the Greek leftish PAME who called upon the solidarity of all workers worldwide so that they can fight for their rights against austerity measures and the decline of social policy.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, all representatives agreed that the working conditions of teachers have deteriorated all over Europe and austerity has affected education more severely than the rest of the public sector. So the Teacher Unions have to draw up an action plan and come up with effective mechanisms to deal with similar policies and their consequences/impact on the teaching profession.

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