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European Trade Union Committee for Education EI European Region

TO: ESTUS, ETUCE member organisation in Slovenia

Brussels, 2 October 2017

Ref.: SF/vd/ 9913

Subject: Solidarity with the ETUCE member organisation ESTUS in Slovenia

Dear colleagues,

ETUCE wishes to express its full solidarity with you and all your members for the expanded session of your Main Board which you hold on the occasion of World Teachers' Day.

On 5 October 2017 when people across the world celebrate teachers and other education personnel whose profession requires full dedication and commitment and without whom society would not function, ESTUS pursues to acknowledge the high quality work of kindergarten and school teachers in Slovenia which remains significantly undervalued. ESTUS seeks to further emphasise that it is the government's responsibility to take concrete measures in order to, among others,

- improve the status of teachers,
- invest in professional development of teachers
- ensure teachers receive adequate payment for their responsible and demanding work;
- increase investment in education.

ETUCE shares your views on the unacceptable practice that while being recognised as one of the best education systems in the world (according to [TIMSS](#) and [PISA](#) assessments), the dedicated work of education employees has continuously been neglected. Indeed, since the onset of the financial and economic crisis, public education in Slovenia has had to face persisting and severe austerity measures despite achieving comparatively outstanding international results.

It is deeply concerning that in comparison with the OECD average, Slovenia devotes a lower percentage of GDP to education institutions. In parallel, Slovenia is among a minority of countries that allocate less than 8% of public funds to education in terms of total expenditure from the budget (7.5% compared to the average of 11.2% in OECD countries).

The low level of teachers' salaries in Slovenia is more than alarming: salaries of teachers at all levels of education and at all career levels remain below the average of their colleagues in member states of the OECD.

ETUCE supports ESTUS on this initiative with which you aim to raise the governments' awareness on the precarious situation of teachers in Slovenia. Low salaries and poor working conditions are unacceptable, especially in a profession that prepares young people for life, employment and the country's future. Indeed, the continuous neglect of education

and of those who dedicate their lives for a prosperous future of the country risks to result in deteriorating quality in education.

ESTUS demands are backed by the [Pay Rise Campaign](#) of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) which encourages collective bargaining and negotiations at all levels and advocates for a general raise in salaries, especially in Eastern European countries which are faced with an alarmingly big east-west pay gap.

Together with you, ETUCE calls on the Slovenian government to listen to the voice of education personnel and restart comprehensive negotiations with ESTUS in order to guarantee continuous high quality education for the benefit of the country through decent salaries and working conditions and respect for teachers' daily hard work.

ETUCE wishes you a successful meeting leading to fruitful outcomes.

In solidarity,



Susan Flocken
European Director