



UNION OF EDUCATION
NORWAY

Union of Education Norway International Strategy 2016-2019



Adopted by the Executive Board March 2016



Objectives of Union of Education Norway's international engagement

Union of Education Norway (UEN) shall actively use its membership of Education International (EI) to influence global education policies and acquire knowledge of international trends and processes in the field of education

UEN is a member of Education International (EI), the world's largest trade union federation. With 32 million members in 171 countries and territories, EI is a global alliance that stands united behind a set of common goals for education and trade union policy.

UEN works to make EI's fundamental principles, policies and priorities known to all parts of the organisation and to the Norwegian authorities as well as amongst our allies and partners both at home and abroad.

Union of Education Norway shall:

- help EI to set the agenda on issues surrounding education and trade unionism internationally
- be a proactive member of EI and participate in the organisation's democratic decision-making processes
- give priority to its EI boardroom positions and embed the work in the organisation
- seek new knowledge and know-how from other organisations and share own expertise and insight
- keep up to date with developments and trends in the fields of inter-

national education policy and trade union policy

- work actively to influence policy and professional discourse by participating in networks, working groups and other relevant fora
- follow up on the decisions made at the 2015 EI congress in general and EI's key initiatives to resist privatisation and commercialisation in and of education in particular

Union of Education Norway shall help strengthen the international trade union movement

A strong global union movement and professional voice require strong national institutions. As a member of EI, it is our responsibility to assist and show solidarity with our trade union colleagues in other countries.

Co-operation between UEN and teachers' organisations in other countries is a building block for sharing experiences to help strengthen the organisation as the voice of the teaching profession nationally and to ensure good pay and working conditions for our members. This way, the experiences and expertise of individual member countries can be converted into global policy development. This is a long-term process.

In September 2015 the UN adopted 17 global sustainable development goals (SDGs). The fourth goal states: **Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning**

opportunities for all. This goal has seven subsidiary targets and a number of indicators to be able to evaluate outcomes.

The efforts to reach goal number four was a key topic at the EI congress in 2015. Education is also a prerequisite for reaching other sustainable development goals.

This is particularly true for goal number five: **achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**, goal number eight: **promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**, and goal number ten: **reduce inequality within and among countries.** UEN must actively contribute to EI's efforts to reach the sustainability goals and to the Norwegian authorities' work to implement them.

The last EI congress adopted a policy document on human and trade union rights (the **Human and Trade Union Rights Policy Paper**). The document sets out fundamental human rights and trade union rights and demonstrates how these rights form the basis for the work of the trade unions in the education sector.

The document is intended to strengthen the work of teachers' organisations both in terms of conditions and rights for their members' and the battle to give everyone the right to good-quality education.

The ILO is the UN's dedicated agency for labour issues. Decent work, tripartite co-operation and social dialogue are key concepts in the work of the ILO.

The ILO's eight core conventions are the most fundamental conventions for standards in the workplace. All of the core conventions are important to the unions, but the freedom of association is in a unique position.

UNESCO is the only UN agency that has explicitly adopted education as one of its main areas of responsibility. Education for all, sustainable development goals and the importance of education to society are central issues for the organisation.

Union of Education Norway shall help strengthen the international trade union movement by:

- supporting EI in its work to develop policy
- becoming the teaching profession's leading advisor to the Norwegian authorities on education policy
- working to ensure that the Norwegian authorities' efforts to implement the sustainability goals are in line with EI policy
- helping to demonstrate that the sustainability goals also apply in Norway
- making EI's two founding documents on education, human and trade union rights known and using them in our political work with authorities and employers
- keeping up to date with the work of the ILO and UNESCO and using this knowledge to strengthen policy-making on domestic issues
- influencing international trade and investment agreements through EI, ETUCE and Unio

Union of Education Norway shall keep up to date with and influence European education and trade union policy

The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) is EI's European branch. As the largest teachers' union in Norway, UEN has a permanent place on the ETUCE board. There we represent all EI members in Norway. Active participation in ETUCE provides us with access to information and allows us to exert influence. ETUCE is a recognised representative of the education sector in relation to the EU system, the Council of Europe and the Bologna Process.

ETUCE represents employees in the social dialogue taking place in the European education sector.

Norway is currently engaged in an extensive education partnership with the EU, much more so than when the EEA Agreement came into force in 1994. Diligence is essential in order to gain insight into what is happening and to influence developments.

The work of the Council of Europe is often overshadowed by what is happening at the EU and OECD. Key policy areas at the Council of Europe are also important to UEN.

In order to keep abreast of and influence European education policy, Union of Education Norway shall:

- be represented on the EI executive board
- use its positions of office and participation in various working groups and professional networks to forge relationships and gain insight into trends in the European education sector
- seek to influence education, trade union and labour policy processes in the EU
- be familiar with what is happening at the Council of Europe and use the knowledge in our domestic lobbying
- be well prepared for the ETUCE congress in December 2016. Decisions made shall be made known across the organisation



Education International
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Union of Education Norway shall contribute to the sharing of knowledge and experience with other Nordic teachers' organisations

The Nordic Teachers' Council (NLS) is a Nordic confederation of trade unions for teachers that is not part of the EI structure. The NLS has no decision-making authority. The NLS is an arena for network-building and the exchange of information. It has its own board and holds sector meetings on early childhood education, primary and lower secondary education, upper secondary education and special needs education.

Topical issues concerning education policy are raised through the NLS, and UEN shall contribute to the sharing of experiences and knowledge on both a political and a professional level. Our membership of the NLS also provides access to information about processes and initiatives launched by the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers.



In order to contribute to the sharing of knowledge and experiences with other Nordic teachers' organisations, Union of Education Norway shall:

- actively participate in the NLS network in all established arenas
- develop close relationships and co-operation with Nordic colleagues and seek advice and know-how where relevant
- strengthen collaboration on organisational development and youth politics

Union of Education Norway shall keep up to date with and exert influence on OECD policy in the areas of education, skills and employment

The Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) is an advisory committee to the OECD in the field of education, skills and employment policy.

Participation in the committee provides access to important information at an early stage along with an opportunity to influence OECD processes. The committee is made up of representatives of national trade union confederations and EI members in OECD countries.

It is also important to share experiences by raising the level of knowledge about the effects of OECD policies on different countries. This way TUAC can provide a robust platform for teachers' organisations and trade union confederations for lobbying the OECD. It is also important to lobby the Norwegian authorities in order to move the OECD in the desired direction.

In order to keep up to date with and exert influence on OECD initiatives and processes, Union of Education Norway shall:

- be represented on TUAC
- help influence the content and direction of OECD surveys and projects in the fields of education, skills and employment policy
- use the insight and experiences gained from TUAC to exert influence on the Norwegian authorities' involvement in the OECD

Union of Education Norway shall sustain a dialogue with the Norwegian authorities on international education and trade union issues and influence the authorities' work in this field

We shall exert influence over the Norwegian authorities' policies internationally. We must also have a presence in arenas where we can provide input to the national authorities.



UEN shall also seek to influence Norwegian development policy in the fields of education and human rights. Where appropriate, we shall help promote EI policies and priorities to the Norwegian authorities in respect of international processes and initiatives

relevant to teachers, their trade unions and the education sector in general.

In order to sustain a good partnership with and lobby the Norwegian authorities, Union of Education Norway shall:

- challenge the authorities to highlight the knowledge and experiences garnered by Norwegian participation in international comparative studies
- challenge the Norwegian authorities to acknowledge how international processes and outcomes are related to overall domestic policy
- recognise and make decisions on international trends when encountering them at home
- draw upon experiences and arguments from international arenas in the domestic debate
- enter into partnerships, seek alliances and promote our political and professional positions
- participate in the public discourse on relevant international issues



Union of Education Norway shall strengthen its national and international work through membership of Unio

UEN shall co-ordinate its efforts with Unio on international issues and policy where relevant.

Through Unio, UEN is represented on panels such as the Norwegian ILO Committee.

Unio is a member of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). These platforms and alliances are crucial to the safeguarding and further development of the rules of play in the workplace, both nationally and internationally.



In order to strengthen its efforts through Unio, Union of Education Norway shall:

- support the work of the global confederations
- co-ordinate political initiatives with Unio where appropriate
- co-ordinate lobbying activities towards the Norwegian authorities on relevant issues of an international nature

Members of Union of Education Norway shall be able to identify interrelationships between local, national and international education policy

Knowledge of international processes and trends helps strengthen UEN's policies. For that reason members at all levels of the organisation must be enabled to recognise interrelationships between local, national and international education policy. We must analyse and understand new landscapes in order to be able to grasp the opportunities that arise and meet the challenges we face.

International trends have an impact on our members' pay and working conditions as well as fundamental aspects of the teaching profession. These areas must therefore be placed in an international context in order to be fully understood. Part of the international dynamic involves establishing a common vocabulary for exchanging ideas, methods and views.

A large number of refugees and asylum seekers have arrived in Norway in recent times. Many of those who come lack education, language skills and networks. Access to good education is essential to the successful integration of the refugees and asylum seekers who have entered the country.

For our members to be able to identify interrelationships between local, national and international education policy, Union of Education Norway shall:

- follow up on EI's priority initiatives against privatisation and commercialisation in and of the education sector
- study global trends and analyse the commercial players' interest and interests in publicly financed education and disseminate this information to all levels of the organisation
- ensure that members are familiar with the processes surrounding international trade and investment agreements
- strengthen its efforts to include and involve more young members in trade union work and employee representation
- work systematically and purposefully to ensure that UEN is represented on the board of the Norwegian UNESCO commission and the board of the United Nations Association of Norway
- pay close attention to the Nordic governments' attempts to restrict workers' rights and assess how they could affect the situation in Norway
- pay close attention to the work being done by different organisations on developing 21st century skills and assess how this affects the content of Norwegian education
- keep up to date with the effects of austerity policies in various countries and the consequences this has had for the education sector and teachers' organisations
- prepare the organisation for the publication of the TIMSS (November 2016) and PISA (December 2016) surveys and influence how the results are interpreted and used
- set out a policy and engage the entire organisation in the efforts to integrate refugees and asylum seekers in the Norwegian education system
- by entering into concrete partnerships, help to ensure profession-driven, practice-based and relevant research (NORCAN)
- familiarise the organisation with the outcomes of the International Summit for the Teaching Profession (ISTP)









UNION OF EDUCATION
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Utdanningsforbundet
Postboks 9191 Grønland, 0134 Oslo
tel +47 24 14 20 00
fax +47 24 14 21 00
utdanningsforbundet.no