



Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
Internacional de la Educación
Bildungsinternationale



ETUCE – European Trade Union Committee for Education
Education International - European Region

ETUCE-CSEE

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Brussels, 11 March 2025

Ref.: JE/Ie/10414

To: Mr Yusuf Tekin, Minister for National Education of the Republic of Türkiye (MEB)
(abdigm@meb.gov.tr)

Cc: Mr Kemal Irmak, President of the Education and Science Workers' Union of Turkey
(Eğitim Sen) (international@egitimsen.org.tr)

Solidarity with the ETUCE member organisation Eğitim Sen

Dear Minister,

The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) represents 123 education trade unions, encompassing over 11 million teachers and other education personnel across all levels of education in Europe. As a recognised European Social Partner for education at the EU level and a European Trade Union Federation within the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), ETUCE stands as the European Region of Education International (EI), the global federation of education trade unions.

With this letter, ETUCE expresses its unwavering solidarity with its member organisation in Turkey, the Education and Science Workers' Union of Turkey (Eğitim Sen), in the face of the threats received in relation to their initiative "A Gender Equality Lesson" on the occasion of the International Women's Day.

We have been informed by Eğitim Sen about the statement issued by the Ministry of National Education criminalising the action of the teachers participating in this initiative.

ETUCE strongly condemns any attempt to limit the scope of union freedom of association and action. Gender equality is at the core of the human rights acquis, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights", and it should not be misapplied by the Ministry of National Education as an ideological matter to undermine trade unions and workers' rights.

ETUCE fully stands by Eğitim Sen and its assertion that such actions are clearly preventing the application of constitutional rights for Eğitim Sen's members and infringing the ILO Conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining, namely "Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise" (No. 87,



ratified by Turkey on 12 July 1993) and “Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining” (No. 98, ratified by Turkey on 23 January 1952), respectively.

ETUCE supports Eđitim Sen and insists on the importance of social dialogue and the correct implementation and involvement of workers’ representatives, in line with ILO Convention (No. 144) and Recommendation (No. 152) on Tripartite Consultation. Teachers, academics and other education personnel deserve and rightly demand respect for their professional autonomy and for conditions that ensure a decent and appropriate teaching and learning environment for teachers and students.

ETUCE stands in solidarity with Eđitim Sen and its affiliates in Turkey. We believe in respect for democratic values, the rights of social partners and freedom of association, as stated by article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We continue to monitor the situation closely and to support Eđitim Sen and its members in this fight to ensure fair trade union representation and decent working conditions for education and academic staff in Turkey.

Yours sincerely,



John MacGabhann
ETUCE President



Jelmer Evers
ETUCE European Director