



Brussels, 13 February 2026

**TO:**

Mrs. Sofia Zacharaki  
Minister of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports of the Hellenic Republic  
37 Andrea Papandreou Str., 15180, Maroussi, Greece

**Cc:**

Mr. Theodoros Tsouchlos, President, Greek Secondary Teacher's Federation (OLME)  
Mr. Spyros Marinis, President, Greek Primary Teachers' Federation (DOE)

**Subject: Support for the Greek Teachers' Federations (OLME, DOE) in defence of teachers' rights and quality public education**

Dear minister Zacharaki,

The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE), representing 127 education trade unions and more than 4.9 million teachers and education personnel across Europe, expresses its full and unwavering support for the Greek Teachers' Federations (OLME, DOE) and their members in the face of alarming challenges from the Greek government.

ETUCE is deeply concerned by the continuous exclusion of teachers' unions from meaningful dialogue on educational policy. Social dialogue is a cornerstone of democratic governance and is essential to ensuring quality, inclusive, and equitable public education. The refusal of the Greek government to engage with OLME and DOE in good faith constitutes a blatant violation of **ILO Convention No. 144** on Tripartite Consultation and undermines the democratic process.

We also strongly condemn the legal actions taken against teachers' federations, including repeated attempts to declare strikes illegal and the disciplinary measures targeting teachers participating in legitimate union actions. These measures are a clear violation of trade union rights as enshrined **in ILO Conventions No. 87 and No. 98**, as well as the **European Social Charter**.

ETUCE is deeply alarmed by the discriminatory treatment of contract teachers, who continue to face unequal working conditions despite performing the same duties as permanent staff. Equal pay and working conditions for equal work is a fundamental principle of justice that must be upheld by all governments.

We are equally disturbed by the government's refusal to engage in collective bargaining for a collective labour agreement for primary and secondary education teachers. Collective bargaining is a fundamental right of all workers and is key to ensuring decent working conditions and professional respect.

The reported economic hardship, intensified workload, and chronic underfunding of schools have led to alarming levels of burnout and resignation among teachers in Greece. These conditions are unacceptable and threaten the sustainability of the teaching profession and the right to quality education for all students.

Europe is facing many challenges, and a key pillar to face those challenges is public education and the teaching profession. In his report on the future of Europe, Mario Draghi singled out a strong and attractive teaching profession as fundamental for a democratic and innovative European future. Education and teacher policies should be based on the [\*\*59 recommendations of the UNESCO High Level Panel on the Teaching Profession\*\*](#). And the [\*\*UNESCO Santiago Consensus\*\*](#) (August 2025), which states that governments should:

**"Establish permanent, inclusive and transparent mechanisms for social dialogue between governments and democratically elected representatives of teachers, including trade unions, in order to promote a genuine participatory and constructive decision-making process at all stages of policy making and implementation that have an impact on the teaching profession and the achievement of SDG4."**

We hope and expect that the Greek government will design education and teachers' policies based on these fundamental principles. ETUCE stands in solidarity with the teachers of Greece and calls on the Greek government to:

- Immediately cease all legal actions and disciplinary measures against teachers exercising their legitimate trade union rights.
- Respect social dialogue and engage constructively with OLME and DOE.
- End discrimination against contract teachers and ensure equal rights for all teachers.
- Enter into meaningful collective bargaining negotiations for a collective labour agreement for primary and secondary education teachers.
- Increase teachers' salaries to ensure fair and competitive remuneration that reflects the essential role of teachers in society.
- Significantly increase funding for public education to guarantee quality learning environments for all.

Our members OLME and DOE stand ready to build a strong public education system and an attractive teaching profession to ensure quality education for all Greek students. ETUCE stands ready to support OLME and DOE in raising these concerns at European and international levels and to advocate for the rights and dignity of teachers in Greece.

We are available to discuss our concerns and recommendations with you in more detail at your convenience, together with our members OLME and DOE.

Your sincerely,

Jelmer Evers  
ETUCE European Director

John MacGabhann  
ETUCE President