



Press Release



World Teachers' Day:

Safe and healthy workplaces are the future of education

On World Teachers' Day 2019 we especially celebrate young teachers, the future of the teaching profession. To safeguard this future, the European Social Partners in Education have launched innovative new Online Interactive Risk Assessment Tools for the early childhood education and care and secondary sectors. ETUCE and EFEE agree that all education personnel should have workplaces which protect their mental and physical wellbeing.

5 October 2019

Every 5 October, teachers around the world are celebrated for their hard work helping students reach their full potential as engaged citizens and skilled professionals. Teaching is more than a job, and teachers must show constant intellectual, emotional and physical commitment. In such a challenging role with such importance for society, it should be presumed that teachers would have the best working environment and conditions possible, in order to entice outstanding aspirants to become teachers. However, the teaching profession currently faces challenges such as low attractiveness, recruitment and retention issues. In view to prevent teachers shortages, which would have a negative impact on the overall quality of education, recruitment and retention of teachers is therefore key. In this regard, the topic of the 2019 edition of World Teachers' Day: Young Teachers, are a significant point of focus.

Young teachers, alongside all other workers in the education sector, need supportive, healthy and safe work environments from the very start of their careers. A strategy to prevent and combat occupational risks in the workplace is a cornerstone of well-functioning education establishments. At the centre of such a strategy must be systematic risk assessment procedures, corresponding to European and national legislation. These risk assessments are the responsibility of the employer – as is required by law in article 9.1. of the EU '[OSH Framework Directive](#)' – and implemented in constant cooperation with staff and union representatives. The European Social Partners in Education, [ETUCE](#) and [EFEE](#) are fully committed to support their national member organisations in setting up effective occupational health and safety prevention structures. We have undertaken joint work on the topic of occupational risks ever since the inception of social dialogue in education at European level.

Today, on World Teachers' Day, we launch new Online Interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA) tools for childhood education and care and secondary education. The two tools are easy-to-use and available free online. They have been developed in the context of the joint OiRA project in cooperation with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU OSHA).

On the eve of the launch of the first OiRA tools for the education sector, Susan Flocken, ETUCE European Director, commented: *'Each year, on 5 October, ETUCE celebrates teachers and education personnel as the devoted forces of good they are for their students and communities. This year, as we pay special tribute to young teachers, I am delighted to present these new OiRA tools. These tools are an innovative way to support our member organisations and all education personnel in their daily work. Health and safety is not just paperwork, and the fall in fatal accidents does not mean the modern workplace it without risks. It is about wellness at work, an issue where teachers really need support. We must protect their mental and physical wellbeing so that they can do what they do best: teach.'*

EFEE General Secretary Daniel Wisniewski further added: *'As the European Social Partners in Education, we hope, with the development of the Online Interactive Risk Assessment Tools, to provide to our Member organisations a concrete example of joint work to make working environments safer for all teachers and other personnel working within the school setting. These tools are just the beginning in our efforts to building accessible risk assessment mechanisms for all education institutions. We are looking forward to the future projects in this area, to make our schools healthier and safer.'*

The tools help occupational health and safety services within schools to assess occupational hazards for education personnel related to the working environment, and then develop an action plan to prevent and combat them. The OiRA tools refer to EU law in the domain of occupational health and safety, and ETUCE and EFEE member organisations are warmly invited to regard them as a good practice example to be supplemented by similar tools referring to national legislation.

Two OiRA tools are available from today:

- [The OiRA tool for the early childhood and care education sector](#)
- [The OiRA tool for the secondary education sector](#)

Learn more about earlier work on occupational health and safety by [ETUCE](#) and [EFEE](#).

More news are available on our websites : csee-etuce.org and educationemployers.eu



The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) represents 132 Teacher Unions and 11 million teachers in all countries of Europe, 4.2 million teachers in the EU, from all levels of the education sector. ETUCE is a Social Partner in education at the EU level and a European Trade Union Federation within ETUC, the European Trade Union Confederation. ETUCE is the European Region of **Education International**, the global federation of teacher unions.

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The logo for EFEE is a solid red square with the text 'EFEE' in white, centered within it.

EFEE

The European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE) represents 44 education employer organisations from 23 European countries in all levels of education, from pre-school to higher education and research. This includes different national organisations, such as education councils and ministries of education, associations of VET colleges and universities and local and regional authority employers' organisations.

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