

EI Teacher Migration Campaign Proposal

The global phenomenon of teacher migration requires discrete attention and response from the global teachers' union federation. As more and more evidence pours in from around the world about the growth in this trend, EI should research its impact and develop constructive strategies to defend the rights of migrant teachers and mitigate the potentially devastating impact to source countries of the loss of their best and brightest teachers.

Worker migration is happening in all sectors of the economy, and the ITUC and many other GUFs (including BWI, PSI, and UNI to name a few) have developed programs and devoted staff to the issue. Now is the time for EI to follow course and develop a concerted teacher migration campaign. To that end, the following steps are recommended:

- 1) **Develop a Teacher Migration Taskforce**, comprised of representatives from both source and destination countries. Convene at least one meeting of this Taskforce before the World Congress in order to develop a strategic plan on the issue for EI. Migration experts from other GUFs should be invited to attend this meeting in order to share their experiences and program models.
- 2) **Develop a Global Network of Migrant Teachers via the EI Website** in order to facilitate the essential sharing of information and ideas. The EI Website should be enhanced to include a special section for migrant teachers. Teachers would register as users for this portion of the site, providing an excellent opportunity for data collection. For example, when registering, teachers could be asked to identify where they are from, where they are working, what they are teaching, why they decided to work abroad, whether they used a recruitment agency, how long they plan to stay in their destination country, etc. Such basic demographic data is essential to studying this trend, but there is currently no source for such information.

Once registered, teachers could receive updates from EI on a regular basis, post information about recruiters or employers, seek guidance, raise concerns, be connected with EI affiliates in their destination country, chat with other migrant teachers, etc. This network could provide an important vehicle for awareness building and professional support. In addition, it would create a channel through which teachers could raise concerns when their rights are being violated, even if there is not a union representing them in their jobsite. Such a mechanism may be particularly important for teachers migrating to places like the Gulf States, which is a growing trend. Such a network could even lay the foundation for a possible direct EI membership program in the future.

- 3) **Conduct a Forum on Teacher Migration at the World Congress**, in order to build awareness about the issue and encourage affiliates to engage in advocacy and organizing in support of migrant teachers. Such a forum was requested following the session on teacher migration at the OECD meeting this March, and could be planned by the Taskforce. It would provide the ideal venue in which to launch a global teacher migration campaign. Drafts of a strategic plan and a website demo could be unveiled, and a resolution supporting those efforts could be presented to the Congress for adoption.