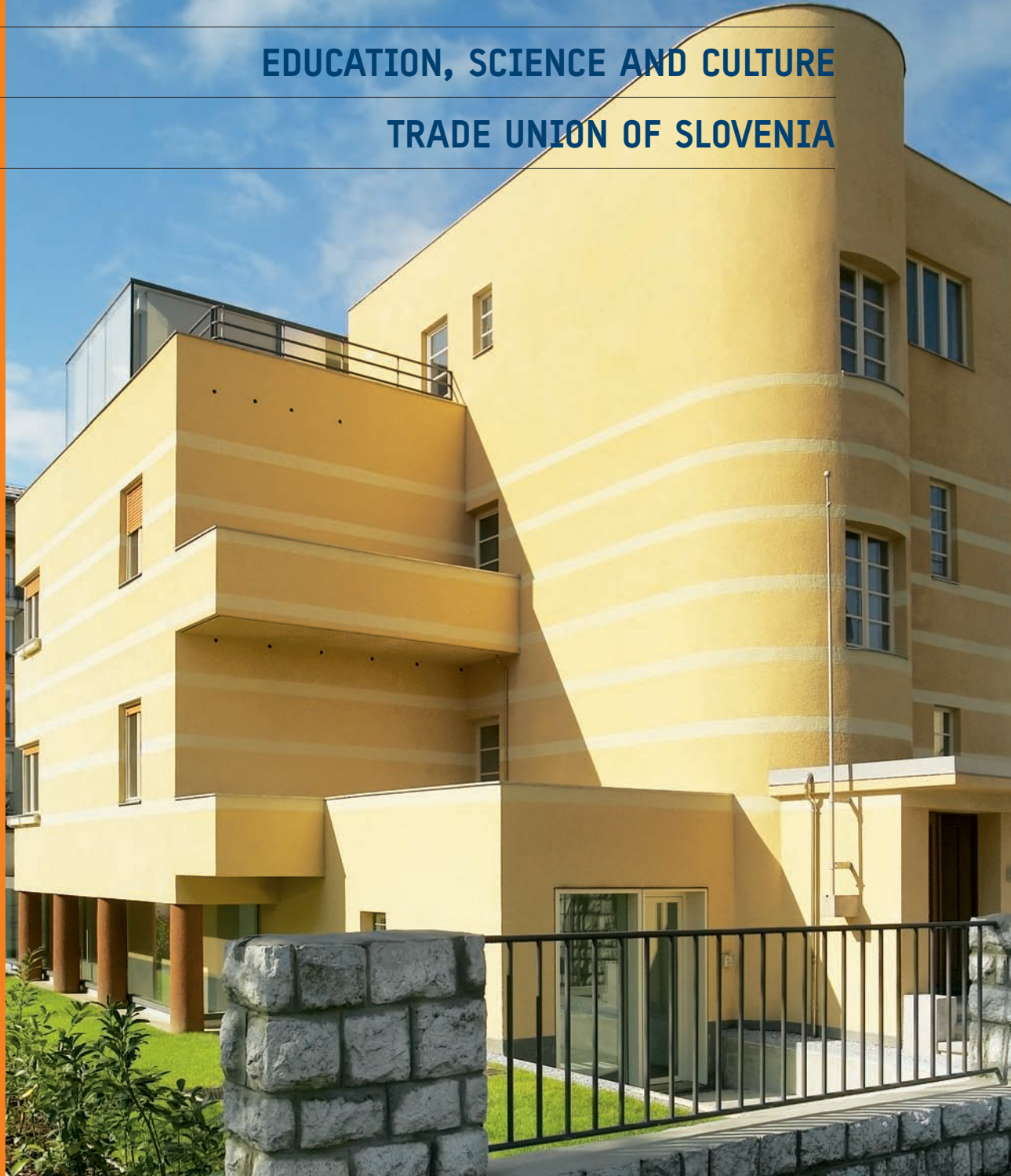


ESTUS

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE
TRADE UNION OF SLOVENIA





Education, Science and Culture Trade Union of Slovenia (Sindikat vzgoje, izobraževanja, znanosti in kulture Slovenije) is the biggest independent trade union in the public sector. The union was established in 1990 and counts 39.000 members today.

At the very beginning of its existence ESTUS focused mostly on the realization of the members' primary needs - salaries, enforcement of collective agreements and other employee rights. We later shifted our attention more towards legislation - we collaborated with the government, ministries and other organizations in order to prepare new legislation for sectors which we cover. Today, we try hard to dedicate as much of our time as possible to professional issues concerning not only salaries and working conditions but pedagogical aspect of our work as well.

The majority of our collective rights have been obtained with great collaborative effort as we literally went on strike every single year from 1991 until 1997. The power of our trade union could really be seen between 1998 and 2002 when it was enough for ESTUS to merely announce a strike and have it voted through among its members and the demands for a more appropriate and just evaluation of the teaching profession were brought into effect.



Members

ESTUS is one of two trade unions uniting people employed in pre-schools, primary as well as secondary schools and the professionals employed in the higher education and science sectors (there is another trade union active in this field). In 2001 we also became the representative trade union for those who work in the cultural arts sector (artists are being represented by one other trade union).

The membership of ESTUS is diversified; members come from pre-schools, primary, secondary, music and higher education schools. We also have members who work in student halls of residence, institutions educating children with special needs, centres for adult education as well as in higher education, science and cultural arts organizations. Our trade union does not only include pedagogues and teachers, but also administrative workers, auxiliary personnel and pensioners.

Objectives

ESTUS is an independent, democratic and non-party organization uniting the employees in education, training, science and culture on a voluntary basis in order to:

- express and implement their interests in an organized way,
- protect their economic and social standing,
- protect employee rights,
- enforce the role and the importance of education and science as fundamentals of successful future of our country,
- influence the shaping of policy in education, science and culture.

ESTUS signs and supervises the implementation of:

- the General Collective Agreement on Public Sector,
- the Collective Agreement on Education,
- the Collective Agreement on Research,
- the Collective Agreement on Culture,
- and brings laws into line with the government in the preparliamentary procedure

The trade union strives to ensure the best possible financial and social standing for its members, but its main aim is to achieve an economic situation of its members equal to the financial situation of those employed in other activities. ESTUS endeavours to influence the shaping of the policy in upbringing, education, science and culture in an organized and systematic way.

Due to the increasingly violent behaviour of some of the younger students in our primary and secondary schools and violence against the teachers, ESTUS decided to establish a special group to deal with the issue of violence and the development of effective strategies for its prevention. In March 2005 the union began with an anonymous telephone service where qualified experts offer help and advice to anyone employed in schools, or anyone for whom violence at work is an everyday occurrence.

Principles

- Mutual solidarity of the employees, regardless of their sex, occupation and education level,
- political independence,
- quality public education,
- free schooling at all levels of education,
- social partnership and collective agreements,
- increase GDP share for education, research and culture,
- consistent application of the National Research Programme,
- adoption of the National Culture Programme,
- salaries which will be comparable with the social role of teachers, researchers, guardians of cultural heritage and other expert staff,
- due evaluation of administrative as well as expert and technical staff,
- double-track strategy - social and professional partnership,
- greater professional autonomy of teachers, research workers and those employed in culture,
- greater influence of women in education, training, science and culture,
- permanent professional advance training and promotion of all employees,
- better working conditions stimulating high quality of teaching and research,
- care for redundancies.



Major Achievements

1991 - **The Collective Agreement on Public Sector is signed**

1992 - **The Collective Agreement on Research is signed**

1993 - The basic ratio for tariff group VII is increased from 3.10 to 3.25, base salaries of advisory staff are levelled with those of teachers, salaries of older teachers with two-year university level education are also increased **(as a result of a strike)**

1994 - System regulation of salaries in the public sector **(as a result of a strike)**

Overall reduction of total working hours by two hours and of the teaching time by one hour

The Collective Agreement on Education is signed:

- First to introduce lump sum indemnity for unlawful dismissal,
- First to secure protection for older teachers by reducing the teaching minimum,
- First to achieve accounting of the jubilee award on gross salary,
- Bonuses for teaching baccalaureate subjects and those which are externally assessed as well as supplements for teaching three subjects

1995 - Bonus for tutorship qualification

1996 - Permanence of professional titles and easier acquisition of titles

- Salary brackets also for those employed in education and training **(as a result of a strike)**

- Bonuses for physical activity, for obligatory election for titles, for handling children, youngsters and students, for research work, for special strains and responsibilities, for management and tutorship

1997 - advancement into higher salary groups

1998 - Agreement is signed between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, University Trade Unions and the Research Institutes on the restructuring of the salary system to make the salaries of university and research institute staff comparable to those of other top qualified professions.

All university teachers can be elected to the Senate; the academic assembly is the representative body of all university teachers, researches and university associates; lecturers become university teachers and librarians become university associates.

1999-2002 - Comparable rise in salaries for all employees in education, science and culture

Constitutional dispute resolved in our favour

1994 - against compulsory membership in the Social Chamber,

- against the legal provision preventing non-pedagogical staff to participate in the management in institutional councils.



HELD STRIKES

1991: 16 April, 23, 24, 27 May and 10 October

1992: 28 October

1993: 2 and 4 April, 9 through 11 June

1995: 31 May

1996: 7 May and 22 May



2005: June 16: a 100 ESTUS representatives participate in a protest taking place in front of the Ministry of Health headquarters (1,000 participants all together); November 26 - 1,500 representatives participate in the biggest demonstration Slovenia had ever witnessed - the protest is against the upcoming social and economic reforms announced by the government (40,000 participants all together)

2006: September 8 - another protest assembly in front of the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs headquarters (200 ESTUS members, 1,000 participants all together)





ESTUS is a member of state sector trade unions coordination and participates in the following parliamentary committees: Committee of Culture, Schooling and Sports, Committee for the Internal Affairs, Public Administration and Justice, Committee for Higher Education, Science and Technological Development, Committee for Labour, Family, Social Policy and the Disabled Committee. ESTUS also participates in the socioeconomic council operating as a consulting forum relating to issues of economic and social policy. The council helps in the shaping, implementation and modification of the Social Agreement. One of its responsibilities is also to prepare initiatives, suggestions, recommendations and reports for the Government, the National Assembly and the National Council.

In the spring 2006 ESTUS established a Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions in cooperation with 4 other public sector trade unions. The Confederation represents 81,000 members - more than half of all the employees of the public sector.

ESTUS is also a co-founder of Education International (EI) and has been its member since 1993. Education International is the federation of organizations representing over 29 million teachers and other education workers, through 338 member organizations in 161 countries and territories

When Slovenia joined the EU as a fully authorized member state on May 1st 2004, ESTUS became a member of the ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education). ETUCE, established in 1975, represents approximately 5,5 million members from 118 teachers' unions in 28 European Union (EU) and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries. ETUCE is composed of national organizations of teachers and other staff in education being member organizations of Education International (EI) or the World Confederation of Teachers (WCT). It has associated member organizations in the Central and Eastern European countries. The total coverage in Europe amounts to 166 organizations.



Rights and Benefits of Members

- Legal counselling and representation through a network of contractual lawyers and through permanent legal assistance provided at the headquarters and some of the regional committees of ESTUS,
- financial assistance to members in need,
- credits and subventions for advanced training,
- subsidizing education for the acquirement of suitable qualifications for ESTUS members
- cheaper voluntary insurance,
- accident insurance,
- low-price stays in 33 holiday apartments owned by SVIZ: at the seaside in Simonov zaliv, Izola, Lucija, Ankaran and Piran; in Kranjska Gora, Bohinjska Bistrica and in the spas of Dobrna, Ptuj, Podčetrtek, Zreče, Moravske Toplice, Šmarješke Toplice, Rogaška Slatina and Banovci,
- favourable credits from the Workers' Savings Bank,
- organization of different cultural and sports activities,
- acquirement of different benefits for ESTUS members.



The membership fee accounts for 0,6 % of gross salary.

42 % of the membership fee is used by the institute's trade union, while the other part is allocated to the assurance of membership benefits and for the smooth operation of the regional, national and international organizations.

Humanitarian Activities of ESTUS

Not only does ESTUS regularly help its members with financial aid, the union had in the past successfully carried out a number of humanitarian actions and donated funds for those in dire need of help. We intend to pursue this course in the future as well.

So far funds have been donated for the needy Iraqi children, the youth health and summer resort in Debeli rtič, for the construction of schools and the purchase of the necessary equipment for schools in Burkina Faso, for the inhabitants of Asia affected by the tsunami and the irradiation device given to the Institute of Oncology Ljubljana. We called out to all of our members and tried to collect 1,000 sleeping bags for the victims of the devastating earthquake in Pakistan. The response was overwhelming. We managed to collect more than we had set out to. In 2005 we celebrated the World Teachers' Day by inviting our members to donate blood; again, the response was unbelievable.

Organizational structure of the union

ESTUS has its trade union representatives in the majority of Slovenian pre-schools and schools, numerous faculties, research institutes and cultural organizations. These representatives are elected by those employed. A trade union (in a school, a research institute or a cultural organization) representative is the spokesperson vis-à-vis the school management and is the first person to establish contact with the regional committee or secretariat. He or she represents and protects the interests of the membership. The representative convenes trade union meetings, participates in the employees' rights, obligations and responsibilities enforcement processes and presents the trade union views. The representatives are trained to advise their colleagues about the trade union work and are there to inform them about the current activities, new developments, future plans, etc.

To ensure that the representatives get a proper training and are fully informed about the most recent developments and important topics which they need for their work, ESTUS organizes educational seminars throughout the year.

Regional Committees

The union has 28 regional committees which form the link between the members and the management and secretariat of the union. Each regional committee autonomously oversees the implementation of collective agreements in its region, gives recommendations to the main board regarding the measures to be undertaken and is in charge of the execution of projects in its region. Regional committees offer their members solidarity help which is within their financial means and ensures their right to free legal representation.

The Congress

The congress, the supreme authority of the union, meets every four years to lay down the general political framework of the activities of the union. The congress consists of regional delegates - these delegates are elected by the members, one delegate per 200 members but no more than 50 delegates per one regional committee. The congress receives a report on a trade union's activities and programme aims and adopts constitution. Delegates elect the Secretary General, the Supervisory Board and the Commission for statutory questions and complaints.



Main Board

The Main Board is the highest authority between the two congress meetings and is convened when necessary, but at least two times per year. The Main Board shapes the standpoints, findings and demands in the areas within its jurisdiction, adopts annual action programme and a financial plan, discusses incentives and suggestions of the executive committee, decides upon specific joint activities connected with the management of economic, financial and social standing of the membership and those employed in all activities. The Main Board has got 57 members.

Trade Union Conferences

Trade union conferences of: Pre-school education, Elementary, music schools & adult training institutes, Institutes for Education & Training of Children with Special Needs, Secondary schools & pupils homes, Higher education and research, Cultural organizations all operate within the scope of ESTUS.

Executive Board

Executive Board has seven members, all presidents of trade union conferences and general secretary. Executive Board exercises decisions and standpoints of the Main Board. It brings into line the activities of trade union conferences and regional committees, evaluates the realization of preset demands, is in charge of trade union's financial matters, ensures that the union's policies and decisions are always properly presented to the public



Secretariat

The secretariat assists the general secretary in carrying out the daily tasks. Furthermore, the secretariat offers services to members and regional committees in the form of advisory and consultancy service. The secretariat, located in Ljubljana, employs 10 staff officers.

Members' notification

Members are informed by up-to-date online notifications or special reports sent to the trade union representatives who in turn notify their members. ESTUS also publishes monthly articles in the pedagogical journal Šolski razgledi.

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