



## Newsletter 2011.5 - AUGUST

### THE NETWORK'S GA AND THE EI CONGRESS KEY EVENTS GIVE RENEWED IMPETUS

The Education and Solidarity Network team met in Cape Town from 20 to 26 July 2011. Their aim was to mobilise trade union organisations of education professionals around:

- Social protection and health
- Building social protection systems
- Disseminating a culture of social protection.

#### 1. The Education and Solidarity Network's General Assembly

The rich and varied discussions at the General Assembly, in addition to the usual reports on policy, activities and the work of the ESN's statutory bodies, focussed on the two big themes examined in the round tables:

- The occupational health of education professionals, with presentations by the MGEN (Health Department); the Health Network of the National Education Association (NEA, United States) and the SNEA-B (the Burkina Faso Teacher's Union);
- Education and training in social protection and health, with interventions from the Social Security Department of the International Labour Office, the MGEN's Activists' Training Centre (a video on their work on social economy training) and the Director General of the Teacher's Health Fund (THF) of Australia.

The Executive Board was strengthened at the General Assembly with the inclusion of the Director General of the THF, the President of the NEA MEMBERS BENEFIT and the President of the AFECYM (Argentina), as well as the election of four members from the African continent, including a new arrival, Séma BLEGNE, General Secretary of the SNEA-B (Burkina- Faso).

Jean-Philippe HUCHET, the MGEN's representative, was unanimously re-elected as President of the Network.

#### 2. The EI Congress

The Congress, which brings together 1500 delegates from throughout the world every four years, was an important opportunity to mobilise teachers in the service of a cause.

That was achieved for social protection and health, thanks to a resolution tabled by UNSA-Education and three other trade unions, from Canada (CSQ), Gabon (SENA) and Australia (AEU).

The resolution is aimed at mobilising all teachers' unions behind the defence and promotion of social protection for teachers, and behind the establishment of social protection floors and the extension of quality, solidarity-based social protection.

The resolution invites the unions to actively support the Education and Solidarity Network and develop activities with the world of mutual health funds.

#### The resolution was adopted unanimously by Congress.

We were also able during the Congress to have a meeting with the General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), who is herself an Australian teacher. This first contact will enable us to get our voice heard by one of the forces due to participate in the meetings of the G20 and its social summit on 24 and 25 September.

#### 3. Many contacts and meetings

The MGEN and the Network were present throughout the Congress thanks to a stand that gave us high visibility and attracted many visitors.

Thanks to this permanent presence and following our General Assembly, we signed up eleven new members and made promising contacts with potential members, notably the Japanese and Costa Rican trade unions.

Cape Town also provided an ideal opportunity to begin or continue areas of cooperation:

- NEA and the NEA Members Benefit, the Teachers Health Fund, the Mutuelle Générale de l'Education Nationale and the Union Mutualiste Retraite (France) met to commence cooperation, which will later be open to all members of the Network, on two areas:

- pooling experience, practice and results regarding teachers' occupational health;
- the conditions to be met to rise to the challenge of solidarity-based retirement, a concern shared by all developed countries

- Several projects for mutual health funds were discussed, on what seem to be realistic and pragmatic bases, notably in Burkina Faso, with the CSQ (Canada), in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Costa Rica.

- A meeting was planned for the end of 2011 on mobilising the world of education around the dissemination of social protection culture. It will be attended by trade unions from six Latin American countries, the ILO and the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies (CIESS);

### **A key theme emerged from these discussions that will guide the future work of the Education and Solidarity Network:**

**« Faced with the globalisation of financial markets and the social and economic issues at stake, globalising solidarity is essential! »**

## **STATUTORY MATTERS: A NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD AND REVISED STATUTES**

When the General Assembly reached the discussion on statutory issues, members present and represented adopted several changes to the statutes, on two main axes:

- updating the presentation of the association's aims, in line with the Network's Manifesto adopted by the Executive Board at the beginning of 2010;
- opening membership to individuals and defining several levels of membership for associated members according to size.

The General Assembly unanimously re-elected Jean-Philippe HUCHET, the MGEN representative, as President of the Association.

Elections to the Executive Board were organised in order to ensure that members were represented equitably. This resulted, unanimously, in the following decisions and elections:

- The GA's decision to give greater representation to Africa for the next four-year mandate (2 titular and 2 substitute members). The aim was to take into account that the Network carries out a high level of activity on this continent. Four administrators for Africa were elected unanimously.
- Regional balance for the other regions of the world with:
  - 2 members for Europe
  - 2 members for the North America-Caribbean region
  - 1 member for Latin America
  - 1 member for the Asia-Pacific region.

As there were no other candidates for the remaining two posts for Latin America and the Asia-Pacific region, members may be co-opted pending the next GA.

The three founding members were also appointed as new administrators for their organisation.

The Executive Board that met after the GA elected Agnès BREDA as Treasurer and Alain COHEUR as Vice President. The Board also decided on the working calendar for the coming years, based on a two-year work programme.

**PHOTOS FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**



Round table on teachers' occupational health with Mrs. V. GIROUD (ILO); Mrs. C. DUDET (MGEN, France), Mr. J.P. HUCHET, President of the Network, Mr. J. NEWBERRY (NEA HIN, USA) and Mr. D. BLEGNE (SNEA-B, Burkina-Faso)

A well attended and highly attentive meeting



Round table on education for social protection and prevention: Mrs. V GIROUD (ILO) and Brad JOYCE (THF, Australia)

A lively debate with Network members

