

The focus of the meetings was:

1. Latest information about the negotiations for the Convenio Colectivo de l'Ensenyament Privat de Catalunya
2. Open debate about working conditions in the sector.

### **1. NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE CONVENIO COLECTIVO DE L'ENSENYAMENT PRIVAT DE CATALUNYA**

- The first steps to start the negotiations were taken towards the end of 2006. Currently the negotiations are stalled due to disagreement about the unified status of the convenio. The company representatives want to split the convenio in two different convenios, one for Regulated sector (such as primary and secondary schools, which follow a regulated national curriculum) and another for the Non-Regulated sector in which most of the private language schools are.
- CCOO is the union with most representation in the Non-Regulated sector and along with the second placed union in this sector, UGT, we are clear about defending the unity of the convenio (i.e. as it is now) being the best way to defend the current rights as defined in the convenio.
- We are concerned that the detailed negotiations have not yet started. We'll inform you of any developments.

### **2. DEBATE ABOUT CURRENT WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE SECTOR.**

The debate covered a variety of topics that concern the participants. Here is a summary of the main points.

#### **Contracts**

- The insecurity of illegal and temporary contracts, the fraudulent use of Obra o Servicio contracts, and the need for more job security.

#### **Working Hours and Timetable**

- A variety of comments about the lack of recognition of all the hours that we work, for example, preparation of classes, travelling time to In company classes.
- The problems that arise from the accumulation of hours during the year as a result of classes or courses being cancelled outside the control of the teacher, hours which then have to be recuperated later in the year.
- The issue of Flexibility and Availability being demanded by companies balanced against the needs of workers. How do we define the limits? What is the maximum working week? What limits should be placed on working hours and number of courses?

#### **Wages and Nóminas**

- The low level of wages.
- The big problem of being paid 'cash in hand' and therefore not receiving the full social security payments.
- The problems of being paid varying amounts from month to month and not being able to rely on receiving a standard amount every month.

#### **Holidays**

- Not receiving the full entitlement to holidays that we are due, including bank holidays, or receiving them in ways that create difficulties for workers and outside the rules set down in the convenio.

### **Paid Time Off Work**

- Our rights need to be improved.

### **Social Issues**

- The need for more rights and flexibility for families, and achieving a better balance between family life and work.

### **The atmosphere in the sector**

- There's a lot of fear and lack of awareness, the sector of Spanish for Foreigners was highlighted as particularly bad.

### **Quality and Professionalism**

- There is a great lack of quality in teaching whether it is insufficiently qualified teachers or schools that don't care about the quality of their teaching or students who accept poor teaching.
- There's a great lack of recognition of the professionalism of teachers, and also professionalism by teachers themselves.
- The idea of creating a Certificate of Quality, with political support from the Generalitat. That subsidies should be given based on conditions of quality of teaching and quality in working conditions.
- A wish by teachers to be more involved in designing the curriculum.

### **Languages in Catalunya**

- The Generalitat places a high priority on languages and wants Catalunya to be at least tri-lingual, with English for example as a priority. So where is commitment to quality and improving working conditions in the sector?

### **Health and Safety**

- If you have an accident on the way to a class In Company, are covered by your company's insurance? What about the impact on your personal car insurance? It's very important that companies take this issue seriously because the fines could be very high for a failure to ensure the health and safety of their workers.

### **Freelance Workers**

- The problem that the amount of social security that you have to pay is not related to the amount earned.
- You're not entitled to unemployment benefit.
- Sometimes staff are obliged by companies to become Freelance (with various offers by companies to pay some of their social security) or on the other hand, some companies won't employ freelance workers at all.

### **Convenio**

- Professional Categories– many companies don't fully recognise the category of teacher and try and impose various inferior categories.
- The category 'Technician' or 'Systems Operator' doesn't exist – referring to staff who manage IT systems. There should be recognition that now IT is a central part to many teaching methods.
- The debate about how much detail should be written in the convenio when defining Professional categories.

### **Objectives of the Languages Working Group**

- The group is not only about participating in the negotiations of or the convenio but can also initiate action in support of workers in different schools.

### **About CCOO**

- There is a need for more distribution of information and also information translated into English and other languages.
- The idea of having a guide for teachers about conditions in Catalunya/ Spain.