LEADING TEACHERS' LEARNING

Report of the conference of the European Network of Education Councils,

Dublin, 21-22 September 2015

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Table of contents

INTRODUCTION

EUNEC is the **European Network of Education Councils**. Its members advise the governments of their countries on education and training. EUNEC aims to discuss the findings and recommendations of all European projects in education and training, to determine standpoints and to formulate statements on these issues. EUNEC wants to disseminate these statements pro-actively towards the European Commission, relevant DGs and other actors at European level, and to promote action by EUNEC's members and participants at national level. EUNEC also has the objective that the councils should put internationalization and mobility high on the national agenda, that they should recommend and support a European policy in education and training towards all relevant stakeholders.

CENTRAL QUESTION

Teachers are the most crucial factor in maintaining and raising quality of the education and training system. They are, beneath the learner himself of course, the first responsible for obtaining learning results. They are a crucial factor in any educational innovation. They are at the heart of the pedagogic process.

Therefore, the themes of the size and even more of the competences of the teaching profession is present in every EUNEC debate: how to attract, train, maintain, coach and stimulate talented professionals during their careers as teachers.

Therefore, it was decided to put the teaching profession in the picture of our work. The aim of the conference in Dublin is to share policy experiences and practices related to **continuous professional development of teachers.**

At the center of this debate is the awareness of a 'professional expertise', a professional attitude, acting in a competent, skillful, creative and innovative way, in an open debate with society and pupils but rooted in a professional identity. The starting point of the debate is to reflect on the characteristics of a teacher, needed for professional development. During the conference, we would like to elaborate the concept of the teacher as a reflective practitioner.

The conference will reflect on what this means for leading the learning of teachers. EUNEC wants to explore what are the main features and levers to allow teachers to develop towards professionals: at system level, at school level, within the personal development of an individual teacher.

The professional development is related to professional requirements, professional competences and attitudes. How to stimulate teachers to invest in their further learning? What can be the role of registration of the profession? How to focus also on individual learning needs?

A second and related point of view is the teacher within the school as a professional labour organization: the teacher functions within a school team, within a professional space where collaboration and ownership are crucial. It means that the school organization should be reconsidered to become a 'learning organization', also for teachers and school teams. What about early career support and needs and provision of career-long continuous professional

development? What about educational counseling and support in the school, and professional development around the teachers and the school, such as professional counselling services, school boards, pedagogical guidance?

The conference wants to work with the good practices and experiences of countries on continuous professional development of teachers. More specifically, we want to clarify the points of views of education councils and of the different perspectives of stakeholders on this issue. How to involve teachers unions? What is the impact on the responsibilities of schoolboards? Do social partners have an impact on this professionalization?

This working theme will valorize and go on with the findings of the conference on the teaching profession, held in Vilnius in 2008. In the statements concluding the Vilnius conference, EUNEC focused on changes, challenges and perspectives for the teaching profession, with impact on initial teacher training as well as on continuous professional development.

SOURCES TO PREPARE THE DISCUSSION

EUNEC

Conference on 'The teaching profession. Changes, challenges and perspectives', Vilnius, October 2008. (Including programme, full report and statements).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The Council Conclusions (November 2009) on the Professional Development of Teachers and School Leaders.

'Developing coherent and system-wide induction programmes for beginning teachers. A handbook for policy makers.', Commission Staff Working Document, 2010.

The Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the Rethinking Education Communication (November 2012)

The Council Conclusions (May 2014) on effective teacher education.

Results of the ET 2020 Thematic Working Group on Professional Development for Teachers (from July 2013 Thematic Working Group on schools). The Commission has set up this expert group to offer advice on the steps to be taken in order to ensure the attainment of the objectives identified in the Education and Training 2020 process. The experts of the group designated by participating countries and stakeholders participate in Peer Learning on the priority policy issues identified by the council.

Outcomes:

- ¬ Literature review: Quality in teachers' continuing professional development (June 2011)

- ¬ 'Supporting teacher competence development for better learning outcomes' (July 2013)

Recent reports, released 25 June 2015:

- ¬ The Eurydice Report 'The Teaching Profession in Europe. Practices, Perceptions, and Policies' is a comprehensive overview of the status of lower secondary teaching in Europe, today.

- ¬ The CRELL Report 'Teaching Practices in Primary and Secondary Schools in Europe: Insights from Large-Scale Assessments in Education' investigates how large-scale international assessments can shed light on the way European teachers work, what goes on inside classrooms and how teachers cooperate with each other.

OECD

Follow up of the results of TALIS (first results already presented and discussed in Vilnius), with focus on teacher professional development, in order to address the policy implications of teachers' views and opinions.

PROGRAMME

Monday 21 September 2015

Chair of the day: Adrie van der Rest, EUNEC president and secretary director of the Dutch Education Council

08.30 – 09.00	Registration
09.00 – 09.15	Welcome by Adrie Van der Rest, EUNEC president
09.15 – 10.00	Opening keynote, Gary Ó Donnchadha, Assistant Secretary in the Department of Education and Skills
10.00 – 11.00	Keynote, Professor Geert Kelchtermans, head of unit 'Educational Policy and Innovation and Teacher Training', KU Leuven
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 – 12.30	Keynote, Katarzyna Kubacka, OECD, TALIS analyst
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.00	Transfer to the school
14.00 – 16.30	Visit to Coláiste Bríde Clonalkin School
16.30 – 17.00	Transfer to Dublin city center
17.15 – 18.00	Visit to Chester Beatty Library
18.00 – 18.15	Transfer to the hotel
18.45 – 19.00	Departure at the hotel reception for dinner at Fire Restaurant

Tuesday 22 September 2015

Chair of the day: Mia Douterlungne, EUNEC secretary general and secretary general of the Flemish Education Council

09.00 – 10.00	'Teachers as adaptive, collaborative professionals in learning organizations', Francesca Caena, contract lecturer (University Ca' Foscari, Venice) and education consultant for the European Commission's Thematic Working Group 'School Policy'.
10.00 – 11.00	Presentation of three cases

> Cyprus, Christina Papasolomontos, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute
>
> Netherlands, Jasper Rijpma and Femke Cools, teachers of the   year
>
> Malta, Gaetano Bugeja, Department of Curriculum Management and Michelle Attard Tonna, Project Learning Outcomes Framework

11.00 – 12.00	Debate in working groups
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch
13.00 – 14.00	Presentation of three cases

> Portugal, Manuel Miguéns, secretary general of the Portuguese Education Council
>
> Ireland, Fergal McCarthy, Principal of Kinsale Community School and Chair of the Teaching Council Education Committee
>
> Finland, Anneli Rautiainen, Finnish Board of Education

14.00 – 15.00	Debate in working groups
15.00 – 15.15 general	Closing words by Mia Douterlungne, EUNEC secretary general

Opening Session

Adrie van der Rest

Adrie van der Rest is president of EUNEC and secretary director of the Dutch Education Council

Opening speech:

'May I offer you all a warm welcome to this Eunec conference on Leading Teacher's Learning? It is nice to see that there is so much interest for the important theme that we are going to be discussing with each other.

I'd like to offer a special welcome to our guests who will be helping us to kick-start the thought processes on this topic with an introductory presentation. Today we will hear from Gary O Donnchadha, Geert Kelchtermans and Katarzyna Kubacka, and tomorrow from Francesca Caena.

I would also like to extend a special welcome to all our colleagues from Ireland. For many of you, today will be your first time at a Eunec event. I would encourage you to take a full part in the discussions and I hope that afterwards you will be able to look back on a successful conference.

To start this meeting, I would first like to express my gratitude to the Irish Teaching Council for making this event in Dublin possible. Many thanks.

Now we move on to the theme of our conference.

Before discussing the programme, I would first like to talk about the theme of Leading Teacher's Learning.

Children attend schools. Children, uninhibited, full of expectation and potential. They face the task of growing up in a world so that they may participate in society as adults, making a meaningful contribution and building up an independent existence. Besides the parents of these children, it will primarily be the schools that support them in this. And in particular, the teachers. They play a key role. We all know that. And we all remember from our own childhoods the teachers that meant something to us. It may be the way they explained

things, the way they were, or their personality. These are the teachers we will be talking about in the two days ahead.

The aim of the conference is to share policy and practical experiences of continuous professional development (CPD). We will not be talking about initial teacher training, as we have previously looked at this within the Eunec format at the Vilnius conference. For the next two days, we will concentrate on teachers working in the classroom. How do they keep their professional skills up to date? How do they prepare for changes in teaching practice or how do they get to grips with innovation in their professional practice? What role do colleagues, schools, professional associations and the government play?

At this conference, we will be looking from the perspective of the teacher as a reflective practitioner, taking responsibility for learning to improve the quality of professional performance.

A variety of viewpoints will be considered. This will, of course, especially include the perspective of the individual teacher, but also other actors and circumstances that are layered around the teacher: the structure and the culture of the school. This includes things like leadership, teacher collaboration, staff relationships and communication, etc. And more removed from the teacher as an individual, actors such as school governing bodies and the government have a definite impact.

I want to say something briefly about these two perspectives: the teacher and the teacher's environment. It won't take more than a few minutes.

Let us look at the first perspective: the teacher.

The recently published Eurydice Report entitled 'The teaching profession in Europe. Practices, perceptions and policies' tells us that 'teachers on the whole feel at ease with their subject and the content of what has to be taught', but that they would like to improve in areas that enable them 'to develop more appropriate, diversified and innovative teaching practices'. Subjects mentioned include 'teaching students with special needs', 'ICT skills for teaching', 'approaches to individualised learning' and 'teaching cross-curricular skills'. The formal offering of professional development options in the form of courses and workshops was not always found to meet these needs. New forms of continuous professional development are needed, including activities that are more peer-based, collaborative, less structured and focused on grass roots involvement.

This takes me to the second perspective: the context in which the teacher operates.

In her review study into quality in continuous professional development, Francesca Caena, our keynote speaker of tomorrow, looks at the importance of teachers' empowerment through collaboration, as well as the development of school cultures valuing shared responsibilities. She goes on to sketch out more ways in which policy can affect professional learning. Examples of this include:

- ¬ Professional development standards with a body overseeing teacher licensing, standards and development;
- ¬ Individual professional developments plans required of teachers;
- ¬ Minimum levels of professional development for licence renewal.

During the international summit of education ministers on the teaching profession earlier this year in Canada, ministers also considered the significance of effective school leadership for the strengthening of teachers' confidence in their own abilities.

The teacher as a reflective practitioner needs the space to exercise their profession. They must have an impact not only on the teaching process and the subject matter at hand, but also on the school's policies. The teacher is a professional within an organisation in which rights and obligations are at play. School organisations need to be professional, modern workplaces. There is a crucial role for school leaders to play in this.

I'll now return to the programme.

EUNEC is a network of education councils. As such, we act as advisory bodies, not as academic institutes. Our key task is to provide advice, where possible based on scientific evidence and on experiences from teaching practice.

All the information is deliberated and considered, and at the end of this process the recommendations are formulated. The structure of this conference is largely the same. We bring scientific knowledge and practical know-how together. This afternoon, for instance, we will be taking a close look at hands-on teaching. Before we do that, though, we will first be immersing ourselves in the latest policy situation and scientific information on continuous professional development.

Tomorrow we will be finding out about policy practices in Cyprus, the Netherlands, Malta, Portugal, Ireland and Finland. To help us do this, we have invited a select group of interesting speakers from whom we can learn a lot. This will take place through workshop sessions. Working in groups, we will try to link all this information up and find out what conclusions we can draw in relation to the current policy and how, where needed, we can give that policy a push in the right direction.

I wish you all an inspiring and productive conference.'

Opening keynote: 'Leading teachers' learning'

Gary Ó Donnchadha

Gary Ó Donnchadha, Assistant Secretary, is head of the Curriculum, Assessment and Teacher Education Division of the Department of Education and Skills. His responsibilities include leading the Department's reform agenda relating to curriculum and assessment across both primary and second-level education and advancing policy relating to Teacher Professional Development and School Leadership. He also has responsibility for policy relating to Early Years education and the Digital Strategy for schools. Gary works closely with the Secretary General and colleagues on the Department's Management Advisory Committee to enhance the delivery of services in line with the Department's Integrated Reform Delivery Plan. Before his appointment to his current role, in 2015, Gary was Deputy Chief Inspector with responsibility for managing the annual inspection programme for schools. Prior to joining the Inspectorate, in 1998, Gary was a teacher and also served as an education officer with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). Gary is a member of the board of TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency.

The first part of the keynote gives an overview of possible levers that enable teacher professional development:

- Overarching vision for education, education policies and the national reform agenda
- A learner-centred focus – quality of learner experience and outcomes
- The school as a locus of teacher professional learning – quality and accountability policies for schools
- Teaching Council/Regulation and enabling professionalism/Phases of teacher education provision
- Projects that build professional capacity

The second part of the keynote proposes ways to think about ensuring the provision of high-quality teacher professional development:

- How teachers' reflective practice may be enabled and embedded?
- Who are the providers of professional development?
- What should influence teachers' learning and development?
- How will the quality of professional development be assured?

¬ What are the challenges in leading teachers' learning and professional development?

Thinking about levers that enable teacher professional development

Overarching vision for education, education policies and the national reform agenda

The vision and purposes for education that we create and communicate across the education system strongly influence the professional work of teachers. There has to be a match between overarching policies and the school practice.

Teacher Beliefs about Learning and Teaching influence teacher perspectives on educational change. Synergies for better Learning between system elements are significant: teacher development, school leadership development, student assessment, and internal and external school evaluation.

An explicit learner-centred vision is necessary to make the nature of the intended learning experience tangible.

The scope and breadth of the expectations regarding learner competencies and outcomes present a pedagogical challenge for teachers. New insights are brought into education constantly; teachers seem to be expected to absorb and deal with it.

The definitions of teacher professionalism articulated at system level influence the shape of educational policies that teachers implement.

Emphasis placed on the student voice and the Influence accorded to students and parents are very significant for what happens in classrooms. This is an underutilized source, related to the extent to which we trust students.

The role of teachers in national curriculum policy development influences both curriculum development and implementation in classrooms.

The structure and content of curriculum matters. The format of the curriculum specification, the knowledge, skills and concepts articulated and the explicit and implicit learning processes have a deep impact on teachers' practice and professional development needs.

Assessment policies and the balance between formal summative examinations and teacher-led classroom-based assessment influences classroom approaches.

Teachers are influenced by national policies on performance data at system and school levels, and how they are used. These data need to be used with caution

Major national reforms (for instance, the literacy and numeracy strategy in Ireland) may be explicitly designed to change classroom practice and these can have very significant impacts – or not!

A learner-centered focus – quality of learner experience and outcomes

Teacher learning must connect with student learning. Our priorities for improving the learner experience and learner outcomes must drive teacher learning and development.

Curriculum and assessment reforms at primary and second level aim to enhance learner experience and improve outcomes. Curricula are really driven toward 21st century learning and horizontal competences: Being literate, communicating, working with others, being creative, being numerate, managing information and thinking, staying well, managing myself.

The teacher competencies necessary to facilitate learning for the 21st Century are considerable and of a high order. Teachers should be enabled to develop evidence-based approaches to classroom practice and student learning.

The school as a locus of teacher professional learning – quality and accountability policies for schools

How can we support the school to be the primary locus of professional learning? There is still a long way to go; schools face several possible barriers.

- The governance of the school and concern for the quality of the educational experience of students.
- The school's leadership team, the espoused vision and the call to action.
- How resources are combined to translate the school's vision and mission into action.
- The professional expectations in the school and the source of these expectations.
- Who has ownership of the classroom space? – Cellular versus shared responsibility for practice. The classroom used to be closed; it will take a long journey to open it.
- Is the pedagogy entrepreneurial in seeking out opportunities to exploit for the benefit of learners?
- What school routines promote and sustain professional reflection?
- What are the tangible signs of the school's professional culture?
- Is there an internal locus of control? Is there agency within the school? Does the school take responsibility for the quality of services to learners? Is the school enabled to do this?
- What national or regional quality frameworks are implemented and do they foster professional engagement among teachers?
- Is a process and culture of school self-evaluation embedded? Do teachers lead the process? The idea of the teachers shaping his/her own profession is really new. Are they enabled to gather evidence about their practice? Is the core of learning and teaching central?

- ¬ How are individual teachers involved in action planning arising from self-evaluation? Is there a practice of classroom-based action research that feeds into school review?
- ¬ How fully is the student voice enabled in the school? Are SSE tools enabling pupils to share perspectives on what is working well and what they want to change in learning and teaching in the school?
- ¬ Are teachers enabled to work collegially to support continuous improvement in learning and teaching? This is related to the idea of creating time out of the contact owners, of the idea of really invest in teacher professional development taking place in the school.

Teaching Council/Regulation and enabling professionalism/Phases of teacher education provision

The Teaching Council has a key function in articulating the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers, a guiding compass for teachers in their professional lives; it sets out for others what they can expect of professional teachers; it underpins fitness to teach provisions.

The Teaching Council specifies the regulations that govern registration of all teachers in the school system. Only registered teachers may be paid from public funds

The Council is responsible for the accreditation and review of Initial Teacher Education programmes. This process of setting and renewing standards is a real good practice; it could be used also for professional development, although this context is more complex.

The Council also sets out procedures for induction and probation (Droichead – Bridge): fellow professionals in a Professional Support Team enable the beginning teacher's professional journey into teaching.

The Council is conducting a consultation on Continuing Professional Development of Teachers to advise the Minister on standards for teachers' professional learning. The Council also facilitates teachers in reflecting critically on their teaching and shows the range of modes including formal/informal, personal/professional, school-based/external, collaborative/individual.

A government reform is going on on transformation in provision and organisation of teacher education: new standards are articulated by the Teaching Council. Concurrent programmes are extended to 4 years and consecutive postgraduate courses to 2-year Professional Masters in Education.

The Literacy and Numeracy strategy has an influence on the course content, with greater emphasis on pedagogical knowledge and skills and extension of time on supervised school placement.

The Teaching Council reviews a strong and supportive lever to underpin quality professional formation.

The Induction and Probation model is a hugely significant development, a shift from an external inspection process to enabling professional growth through the school's own professional support team.

There is significant public funding for professional support services for the school system: Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST); PDST -Technology in Education; Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT); Special Education Support Service, National Educational Psychological Service – CPD Initiatives.

Projects that build professional capacity

External projects accessed by schools have significant capacity building potential. These projects can be useful, if debated at staff meetings. Some examples:

- Green Flag; Health Promoting Schools; Active School Flag
- Digital Schools of Distinction
- Reading Recovery, Ready Set Go Maths
- Incredible Years – Supported by NEPS
- FIS – Film in Schools Project
- F1 in Schools Technology Project
- Entrepreneurship Education initiatives
- Schools in difficulty requiring Turnaround - Improvement Group – DES initiative

> ### *Themes. Thinking about ensuring the provision of high-quality teacher professional development.*

How teachers' reflective practice may be enabled and embedded?

Professional reflection should be at the heart of teacher professional development. Reflection brings teachers into focusing on evidence from classroom practice. Professional reflection facilitates the connection between student learning and teacher professional learning.

Structured initiatives and school organisational routines such as school self-evaluation or arrangements for classroom-based assessment can facilitate collegial reflection. Professional reflection can enable collegial professional discussion among the staff team and help build the school as a learning organisation.

Who are the providers of professional development?

In the first place, schools and teachers sharing effective practices among the teaching team as a community of practice. Individual teachers share their experience internally and externally.

Beacon schools with particular competency and wanting to share it, can facilitate visits and share resources and experiences. This kind of networking between schools provides professional development.

Local or municipal authorities with an education brief or network of local education centres provide facilities for professional training and set out termly modules of continuous professional development in priority areas.

National authorities are providers through a formal team of support personnel such as the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)

Higher Education Institutions and Teacher Education are providers with outreach connections.

National or international educational consultants support teachers or schools on a commercial basis.

What should influence teachers' learning and development?

In other words: Who owns the content of professional learning? School objectives, classroom priorities and learners' needs:

- ¬ The strategic direction of the school and specific whole-school objectives.
- ¬ Important projects and initiatives with which the school is identified.
- ¬ The outcomes of the school's self-evaluation and external evaluations.
- ¬ Conclusions from analysis of student assessment data.
- ¬ Parental priorities for school development.
- ¬ Outcomes of individual and collective review and reflective practice.

Teachers learning and development is also influenced by teachers' individual professional learning needs and intentions:

- ¬ Individual professional development needs arising from reflection on practice.
- ¬ Competency areas for attention recognised by teachers through feedback from students, other teachers and school leadership.
- ¬ Areas of curriculum or pedagogy identified by teacher as potential areas of specialism and expertise.
- ¬ Teacher's interest and involvement in co-curricular initiatives and projects.
- ¬ External educational developments that capture the teacher's imagination and professional interest.
- ¬ Stimulus arising from engagement with research findings.

How to ensure the quality of professional development?

This theme is particularly relevant, given the number and diversity of the providers.

How can funders of teacher professional development (State, municipalities, schools, teachers or sponsors) be assured of value for money and a positive return on the investment of resources?

Is there a national framework for teacher professional learning that brings coherence to the involvement of a wide range of providers and ensures alignment with strategic priorities for education and fulfils teacher's professional development requirements? Who will set the criteria and standards for teacher professional development programmes? How will the views of teachers, students and schools be incorporated in assessing the quality and impact of professional development?

How can specification of standards, regulation and evaluation be applied pragmatically to such a diverse area of provision?

What are the challenges in leading teachers' learning and professional development?

Traditional providers of continuous professional development should be worried: the time of dropping a box with materials in the schools is over. To support school based learning, deeper expertise is needed. These are the main challenges fort his higher order level of continuous professional development:

- ¬ Being responsive and up-to-date with changing needs of learners, teachers and schools.
- ¬ Developing the expertise and competencies for deeper engagement with teachers on practice change initiatives rooted in the classroom.
- ¬ Impacting on teacher beliefs and behaviours through professional development requires higher-order leadership of learning.
- ¬ Providers of high-quality professional development travel the journey with the teacher.
- ¬ This requires competencies in evaluation, mentoring and expertise in classroom practice.
- ¬ It places a premium on relationships between providers and schools.
- ¬ Ensuring that programmes meet standards as part of a national quality assurance framework.

Conclusions

Take a whole-of-system approach to locate teacher learning within the wider context.

Understand the connection between student learning and teacher learning and appreciate the pedagogical challenges of facilitating high-quality learner experiences and outcomes.

Consider the influence of curriculum and assessment developments for teacher education.

Instil and embed habits of professional reflection and evidence-based practice among teachers from the start. Give voice to students about the quality of their learning experiences.

Exploit the potential of the school as the primary locus of teacher learning and development.

Examine how best to enable job-embedded learning for teachers and consider the implications for all providers of professional development.

Exploit ICT in the development of blended learning models of CPD.

Establish standards for teacher education and review provision to foster continuous improvement.

Support school leaders and teachers in developing an open culture of professional sharing and enable them to be the lead agents of professional learning.

From the public

Practitioners in the public agree that three main challenges can be identified in relation to leading teachers' learning:

- The mismatch between the policy (the vision) and the practice;
- The cost of time, which is crucial in motivating teachers for professional development;
- The issue of quality insurance linked to trust.

From a broader perspective, it is clear that education has to have the ability to be flexible and to react quickly to changing needs. A good example is the transition year in Ireland; in this transition year, teachers have the possibility to shape the curriculum based on learners' needs, within a broad framework. This kind of freedom allows innovation. Schools need to be or to become open spaces where pedagogy can happen.

Professional development: the challenging complexity of 'Leading Teachers' Learning'

Geert Kelchtermans

Geert Kelchtermans (*1962) studied philosophy and educational sciences at the KU Leuven, where he obtained a PhD in 1993 with a study on teacher professional development from a narrative-biographical perspective. He is now a full professor at that same university, chairing the Centre for Educational Policy, Innovation and Teacher Education. He research interest focuses on the complex relationship between individual educational professionals (teachers, principals, teacher educators) on the one hand and the organisational working conditions in the schools on the other. He also holds a part-time Visiting Professorship at the University of Oulu in Finland.

In the field of 'leading teachers' learning' professor Kelchtermans positions himself as researcher/academic, teacher educator and facilitator of professional development.

The presentation is built up in four main parts:

- Professional development, what's in a name? Definition and taking a stance.

(Intermezzo)

- Towards a conceptual framework of professional development.
- Towards a pedagogy of professional development: rules of thumb, conditions, promises and pitfalls.
- The potential of 'good examples of practice'.

Part 1: Professional development, what's in a name?

Multiple definitions exist, choosing one is taking a stance:

Professional development (PD) = the lifelong process of learning and development resulting from teachers' meaningful interactions with their professional contexts.

Unpacking the definition leads to summing up the main aspects of professional development:

1. PD is a process of learning and development
   PD is a process of **learning and development**. This means that PD is ongoing; it is conscious (learning) as well as unconscious (development).
2. PD is a career-long process
   PD is a l**ifelong/career-long** process. This stresses the importance and at the same time the limits of initial teacher education. It is thus recommended to let initial teacher education focus on their core business, and to let other 'providers' deal with PD. The 'apprenticeship of observation'[1] describes the phenomenon whereby student teachers arrive at their training courses having spent thousands of hours as school children observing and evaluating professionals in action.
   Different positions in the career entail different needs and interests for PD. There is, for instance, very little attention for those teachers who are reaching the end of their professional careers. The teaching job is a flat career, in most countries, vertical promotion is not possible. This stresses the need for possibilities for 'horizontal promotion'.[2]
3. Sense-making is central in professionals' learning
   'Meaningful interactions'. Teachers are sense-making professionals. Sense-making is central, at individual and collective level. This assumes the skills and the attitude of reflection.
4. Teachers are professionals
   'Interactions with their professional contexts'. The starting assumption is that teachers are professionals. Teachers' professionalism is related to their expertise: their knowledge, attitudes and skills. It is also related to their commitment and motivation. If one wants to do a job just for a living, there are easier ways than being a teacher; moreover, good teachers are 'unspectacular', they are not talked about. Teachers' professionalism is also related to their courage and skills to judge and to act upon their judgment; education is not an exact science, teachers have to be courageous enough to judge. This responsibility of the teachers is different from the concept of 'accountability', which narrowly refers to an economic, reductionist view on education. The fact that teachers are professionals implies a radical dismissal of the

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[1] The term is coined by Dan Lortie in 'Schoolteacher. A sociological study', 1975.
[2] Jennifer Nias, 1989

'remedial view' op PD: PD is not to be seen as a remedy or compensation for professional insufficiency. PD must rather contribute to teachers' professionalism, by refusing a 'blue-print approach' and by not considering teachers as executors of others' decisions.

5. PD as a descriptive and prescriptive concept
When talking about PD, it is possible to consider **descriptive** aspects: what happens during the PD process? It is also possible to consider **prescriptive** aspects: what should/could be done to create and/or support PD?

6. PD encompasses formal and informal learning
Formal PD can take place under the form of a conference, a workshops, a training or a full programme. However, even if a one-day workshop is brilliant, it cannot possible be sustainable if the outcomes are not taken up in the daily practice. This is about the **informal PD**: the daily practice or the daily operating of school contains multiple opportunities for PD. This is an important challenge for school leadership: this informal PD needs to be recognized as such, by the teachers and by the leaders.

7. PD can take place on-site and off-site
Both are relevant and important, but the impact and conditions for **on-site and off-site PD** differ.

Intermezzo: introducing the illustrative case

In Flanders, a PD-project has been set up by the Ministry of Education to support the development of 'local policies for broader educational care and attention to special needs education in primary schools'.

Participation to the project is free. The project takes 1 year, and is implemented in two groups of four core teams. The goal is to design PD based on principles from research, to document and to analyse the process, and to contribute to a 'pedagogy of PD'.

These are the key elements in the project approach:

- The condition for participation is that only 'core teams' participate; this means a team composed by a principal and two teachers;
- An intake interview is organized, in order to assure commitment and to adjust mutual expectations;
- This is a school-based innovative project as part of developing local policy;
- Five off-site meetings are organized, and one evaluation session;
- Follow-up and supervision takes place on-site during the process;
- Reflective log and systematic documentation by university facilitators;
- Input from participants (experience) and facilitators (theory and process), aimed at 'zipping'.

Part 2: Towards a conceptual framework of professional development

Individual professional development

Learning results in qualitative changes in both actions and 'thinking'. Teachers acquire a broader repertoire of skills to enact professional practice (action); teachers acquire a more valid 'personal interpretative framework', impacting on their lens to perceive, to make sense and to react on situations (thinking). This second level is more important, but difficult to measure.

The personal interpretative framework (PIF) is a more analytical way to look to what teachers are experiencing. The scheme below shows the components of this personal interpretative framework:
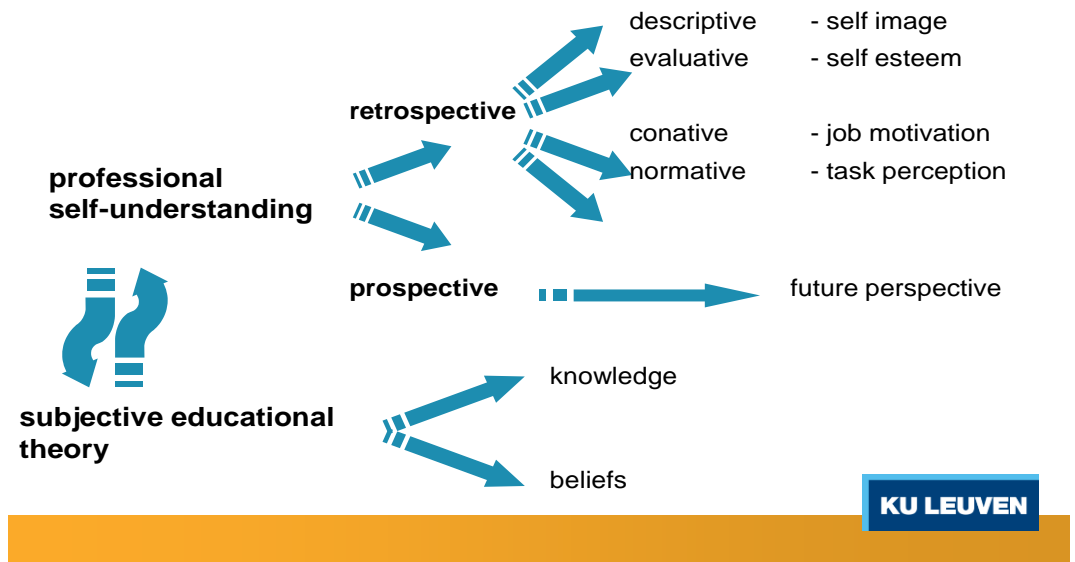
Learning by professionals can be described by the metaphor of the 'zipper'. The 'zipping' (of experience, content of PD,…) is done by the learner him/herself: it is the learner who decides to make or to make not the connection between the PD offer and the own experience; the 'provider' can only try to facilitate the zipping. The only moment when one reflects on zippers, is when they don't work: if the 'zipper' between the content and the experience gets stuck, this leads to reflection and analysis.

Reflection is a condition for learning. Although the notion of 'reflection' is becoming a victim of its own success (students hate the word…), the old image of the 'reflective practitioner' (Schön, 1983) still holds true as a guiding idea. The original idea is that reflection has to become a natural skill and attitude, linked to the attitude of a researcher: think and reflect in action. Stimulating and supporting reflection, on the form and on the content, is the essential condition, to be modelled by the facilitators.

¬ The form of reflection

The ALACT model of Korthagen (1984):

Awareness of essential aspects (formulating) — 3

4

5 — Try out in new situation

1 — Action (experience)

2

Looking back on the action

KU LEUVEN
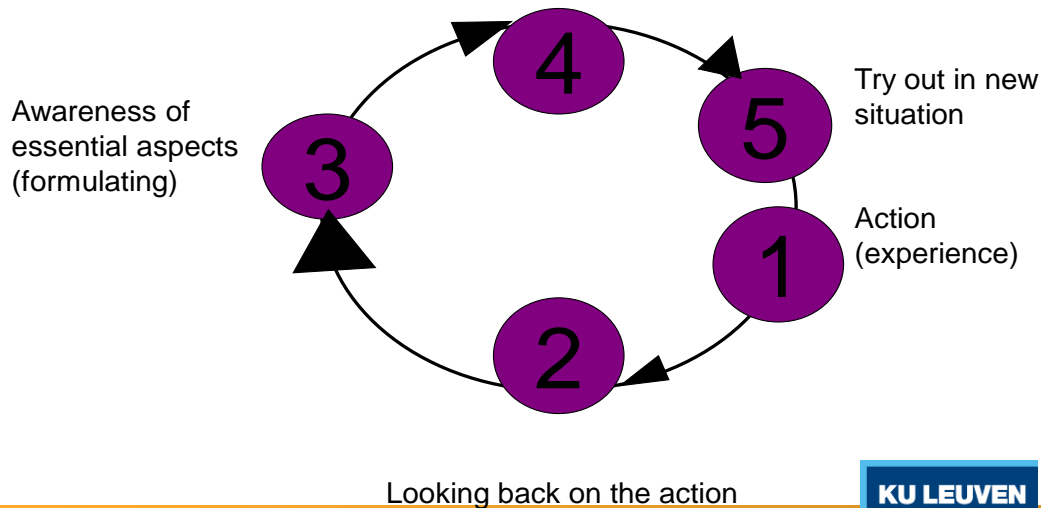
¬ The content of reflection: broad and deep

Broad reflection includes the following four dimensions:

- Technical dimension: what and how? (about problem solving)
- Moral dimension: why? (about ethical justification)
- Emotional dimension: what do I feel? (about emotional involvement)
- Political dimension: in who's interest? (about power and influence)

Deep reflection takes place beyond the level of action. It critically questions the underlying personal interpretative framework (supra) and is essential for deep and sustainable learning.

Broad and deep reflection are necessary conditions for PD to be professionalizing.

Inevitable contextualization

Sustained professional learning (enactment in practice) demands individual and school development to go hand-in-hand; PD always takes place in context. By consequence, context-independent claims on relevant or effective conditions for PD are problematic (see a.o. Temperley).

Teachers engaging in PD always come contextualized; participants in PD always bring their context with them. Each participant is a 'me in my working context'; the learning needs are always situated in and motivated from the actual context, and the learning results need to be transferred to that context.

Transfer as the central challenge

Transfer is about moving the changes in thinking and in action from the PD-setting to one's working context, and 'put them to (individual) practice'. A next level is the collective/collaborative practice, which demands changing the practices and thinking of others. It requires 'micro-political skills' of negotiation.

In designing PD structural anchorage needs to be envisaged, parallel to phases in literature on educational innovation: adoption – implementation – institutionalisation (Fullan, 1982).

On- or off-site? Some reflections

- ¬ On-site

When PD takes place on-site, this offers the advantage that the facilitator can experience, observe and analyse the context: the collegial interactions, the enactment of leadership, the organizational culture. Being the relative outsider, the facilitator can thematise the obvious. Having colleagues engage in work on or discussion about the issue in itself may already contribute to PD. The PD-setting repositions them, this opens space for development and learning.

- ¬ Off-site

When PD takes place off-site, the repositioning is more radical. The participant takes a distance, literally and metaphorically, being out of balance, out of the normal position.

Motivation for participation can differ widely, different interests may be in play, i.e. finding audience or public recognition which is denied 'at home'.

Paradoxically, opening up in discussion about ones practice and underlying beliefs is often easier to 'strangers'.

A pitfall of off-site PD is that the participant might lose touch with the colleagues, being too well professionalized.

Effectiveness: an underestimated issue

PD is not easy to evaluate, due to

- ¬ The complexity of individual-collective and contextualized sense-making
- ¬ Differences between individuals, between schools
- ¬ The fact that criteria to judge are far from evident
- ¬ The fact that effects take time

There is always happening more and less than what was planned for. The recommendation is to document, interpret, judge and conclude, and to refuse simplistic effect measurements.

The focus has to be on how teachers do as a community of professionals; it is about relationships, about deep and broad learning. Imposing a minimum

number of hours of PD is questioning the professional commitment f the teachers. We should not allow the accountability language of business to enter in the profession, and to take over the unique language of education.

Part 3: Pedagogies, promises and pitfalls

Theory is cool! And most practical… Helping professionals to master theoretical frameworks to better question, read and judge their practice is most practical.

Expect the unexpected, see the beauty of unintended side-effects. 'Unintended side-effects' are well illustrated by the anecdote of carpooling as a powerful learning environment: a school leader and two teachers are carpooling; the conversations during the drive might be as professionalizing as the PD-session they are going to. Another example: the authentic discussions among teachers around the coffee machine.

Facilitators need to take the researchers' attitude (cf. 'inquiry as a stance', Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

Part 4: The potential of 'good examples of practice'

It is important to make the results of PD public as part of the school development, as part of the professional responsibility (instead of accountability).

The problem with 'examples of good practice' is that there exist invalid assumptions about the possibility of best practices: contextualisation is important! Moreover, treating the audience as the ignorant who need to be told what to do is de-professionalizing.

Rather than to talk about 'examples of good practice', we could refer to 'good examples of practice'. 'Good' refers then to the form and the content. The examples are descriptive (how are things happening?) and explaining (why are things happening the way they do?): conceptually unpacking, critically analysing, grounding. The user is treated as a competent partners in an ongoing dialogue; his professionalism is acknowledged. This way, publicly shared and critically grounded professional knowledge, based on practice, can be developed.

A good example of practice works

- ¬ Revealing: it shows, makes visible, demonstrates;
- ¬ Problematizing: it questions the obvious and taken for granted;
- ¬ Inspiring: it appeals, calls on professional commitment.

Reading more

- ¬ Kelchtermans, G. (2004). CPD for professional renewal: moving beyond knowledge for practice. In C. Day & J. Sachs (Eds.), *International Handbook on the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers* (pp. 217-237). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

- ¬ Kelchtermans, G. (2009). Who I am in how I teach is the message. Self-understanding, vulnerability and reflection. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 15*, 257-272

- ¬ Kelchtermans, G. (2015) Learning from 'good examples of practice'. *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice, 21*, 361-365. (DOI: 10.1080/13540602.2014.969103).

- ¬ Vanassche, E. & Kelchtermans,G. (2015). Facilitating self-study of teacher education practices: toward a pedagogy of teacher educator professional development. *Professional Development in Education, DOI: 10.1080/19415257.2014.986813*

TALIS 2013 results. An international perspective on teaching and learning

Katarzyna Kubacka

Katarzyna Kubacka is an analyst on the 'Teaching and Learning International Survey' (TALIS) project in OECD's Education and Skills Directorate. She joined the OECD in 2011 as an analyst on the Education and Social Progress project, at the Centre for Educational Research for Innovation (CERI). Before joining the OECD, Katarzyna was based at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam where she taught and conducted research on a variety of topics related to interpersonal processes. Her work has appeared in peer-reviewed psychology and communication science publications.

Katarzyna holds B.Sc in Social and Cognitive Psychology, and Integrated Social Sciences from Jacobs University Bremen (Germany), MSc. and a PhD in Social Psychology from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (The Netherlands).

TALIS in brief

Over 100 thousand randomly selected lower secondary teachers and their school leaders from over 6500 schools, representing more than 4 million teachers in 34 countries, took an internationally agreed survey about the working conditions and learning environments in their schools. They responded to questions about their background, their teaching practices, support and development, their relationships with colleagues and students and the leadership in their schools.

TALIS seeks to help with:

- ¬ Developing Teaching as a profession;
- ¬ Improve the societal view of teaching as a profession;
- ¬ Recruit top candidates into the profession;
- ¬ Retain and recognise effective teachers – path for growth;
- ¬ Support teachers in continued development of practice.

TALIS focuses on

- ¬ The learning environment: characteristics of teachers and schools;

¬ The importance of school leadership;
¬ Examining teacher practices and classroom environment;
¬ Developing and supporting teachers;
¬ Teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction: why they matter.

This presentation focuses on:

¬ Developing and supporting teachers;
¬ Improving teaching using appraisal and feedback;
¬ Teacher practices and beliefs;
¬ Teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

Developing and supporting teachers

Accessibility and participation

Differences between accessibility and participation tell us that just installing programmes is not sufficient. The graph below shows that not everywhere where induction programmes are accessible, teachers use them.

6 — Not everywhere where induction programmes are accessible do teachers use them

Percentage of lower secondary teachers with less than 3 years experience at their school and as a teacher, who are working in schools with the following reported access to formal induction programmes, and their reported participation in such programmes
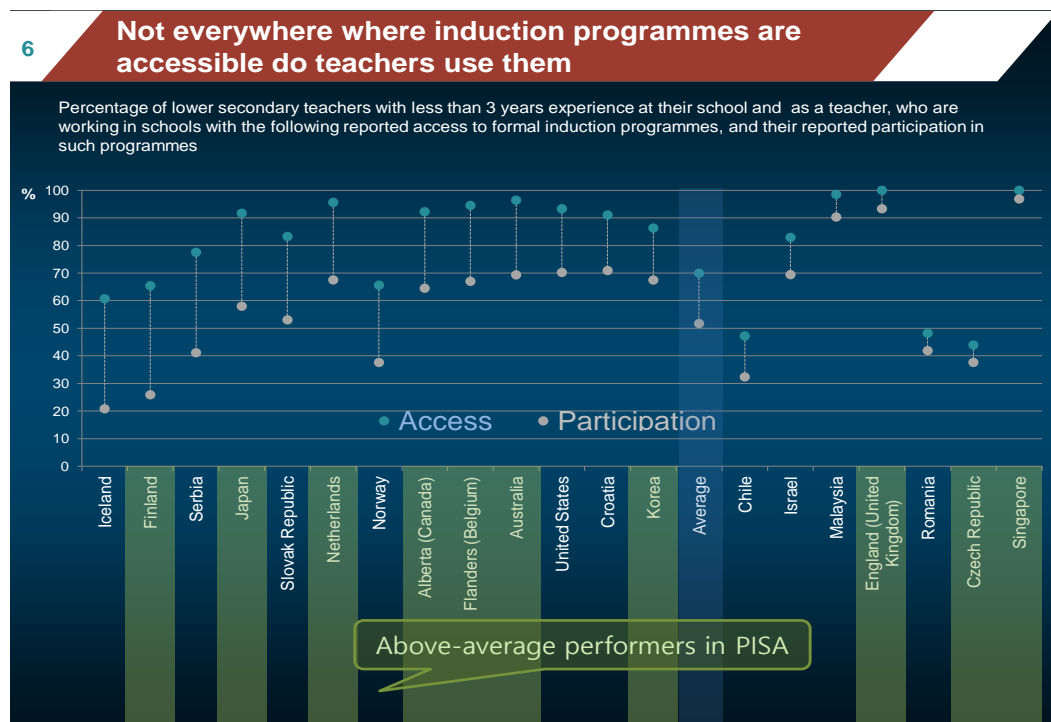
Not everywhere where principals say mentoring is available, teachers have mentors.

7   **Not everywhere where principals say mentoring is available do teachers have mentors**
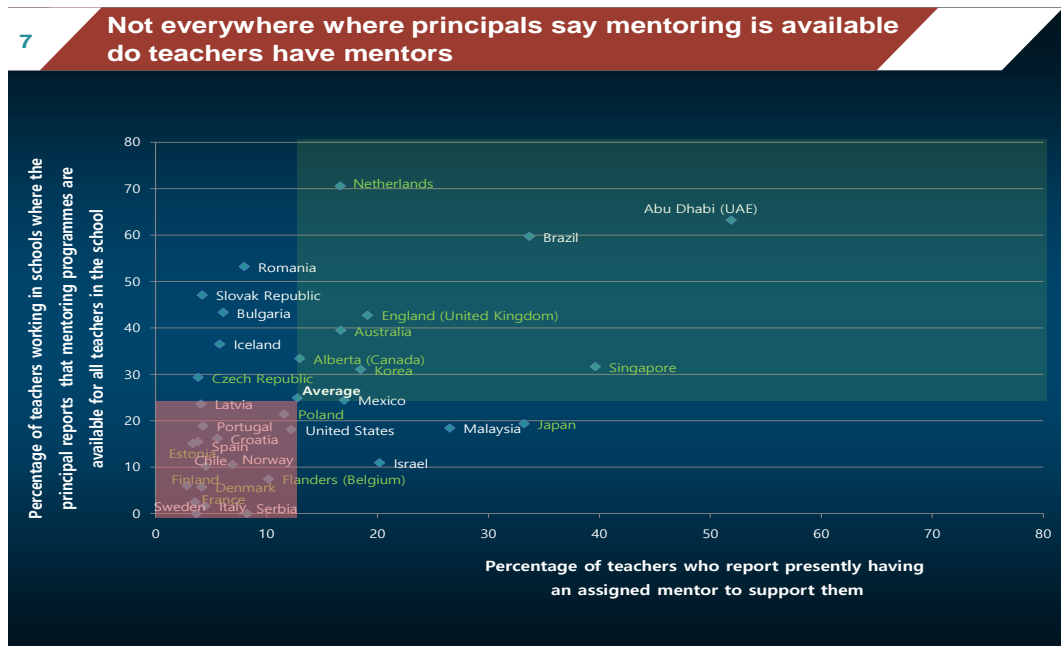
Needs

When teachers report on their needs for professional development, they mostly refer to needs related to teaching students with special needs and to ICT skills for teaching. This is the case for teachers in lower secondary education, and most probably also for teachers in primary education and in higher secondary education.

8   **Teachers' needs for professional development**

Percentage of lower secondary teachers indicating they have a high level of need for professional development in the following areas

Barriers

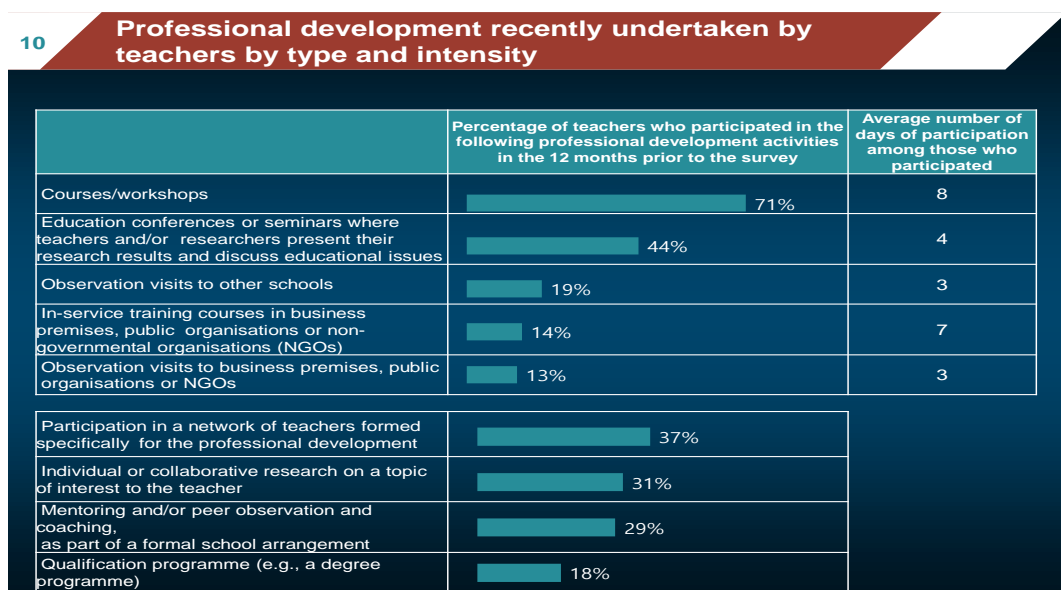When teachers report on the barriers to professional development participation, they mostly refer to professional development conflicts with their work schedule, to the fact that there are no incentives for participating in such activities, and to the fact that professional development is too expensive.

9 — **Barriers to professional development participation**

Percentage of lower secondary teachers who "agree" or "strongly agree" that the following elements represent barriers to their participation in professional development activities
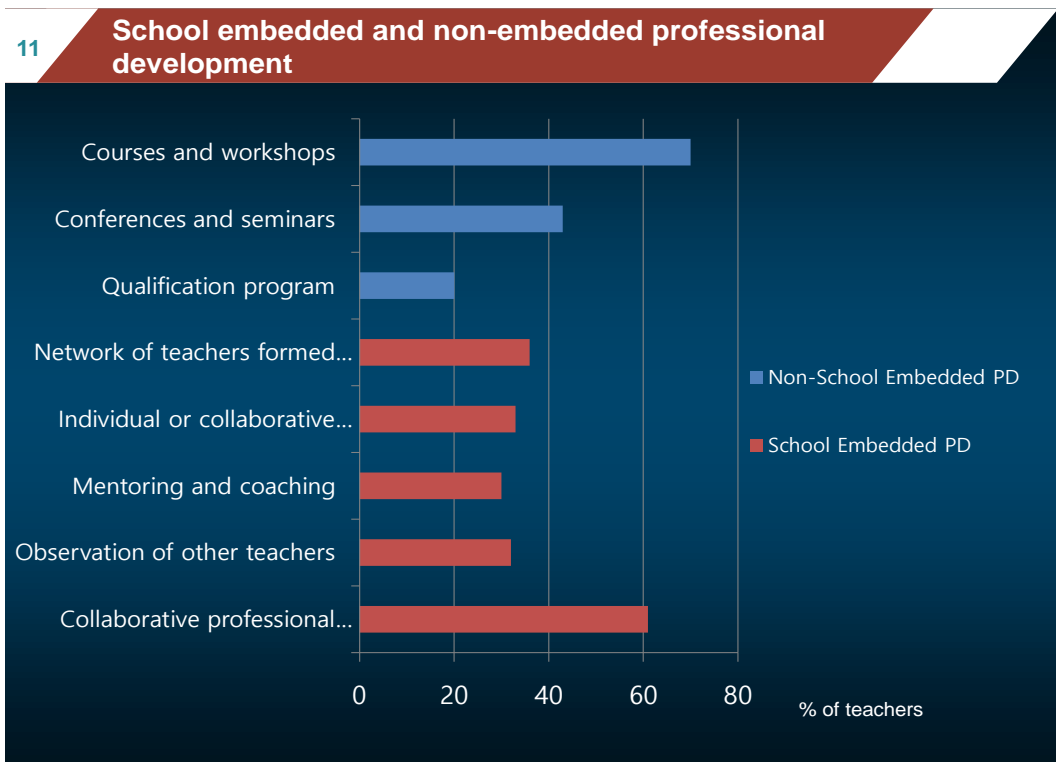
Type and intensity

Teachers who actually take part in professional development activities, most frequently took part in courses or workshops; in these cases, the average number of days of participation among those who participated were relatively higher. The graphs below informs about type and intensity of both school-embedded and non-school embedded professional development.

10 — **Professional development recently undertaken by teachers by type and intensity**

	Percentage of teachers who participated in the following professional development activities in the 12 months prior to the survey	Average number of days of participation among those who participated
Courses/workshops	71%	8
Education conferences or seminars where teachers and/or researchers present their research results and discuss educational issues	44%	4
Observation visits to other schools	19%	3
In-service training courses in business premises, public organisations or non-governmental organisations (NGOs)	14%	7
Observation visits to business premises, public organisations or NGOs	13%	3
Participation in a network of teachers formed specifically for the professional development	37%	
Individual or collaborative research on a topic of interest to the teacher	31%	
Mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching, as part of a formal school arrangement	29%	
Qualification programme (e.g., a degree programme)	18%	

11 **School embedded and non-embedded professional development**

The following graph shows the participation in school-embedded and non-school embedded professional development, per TALIS country.

13 **School embedded and non-embedded professional development**
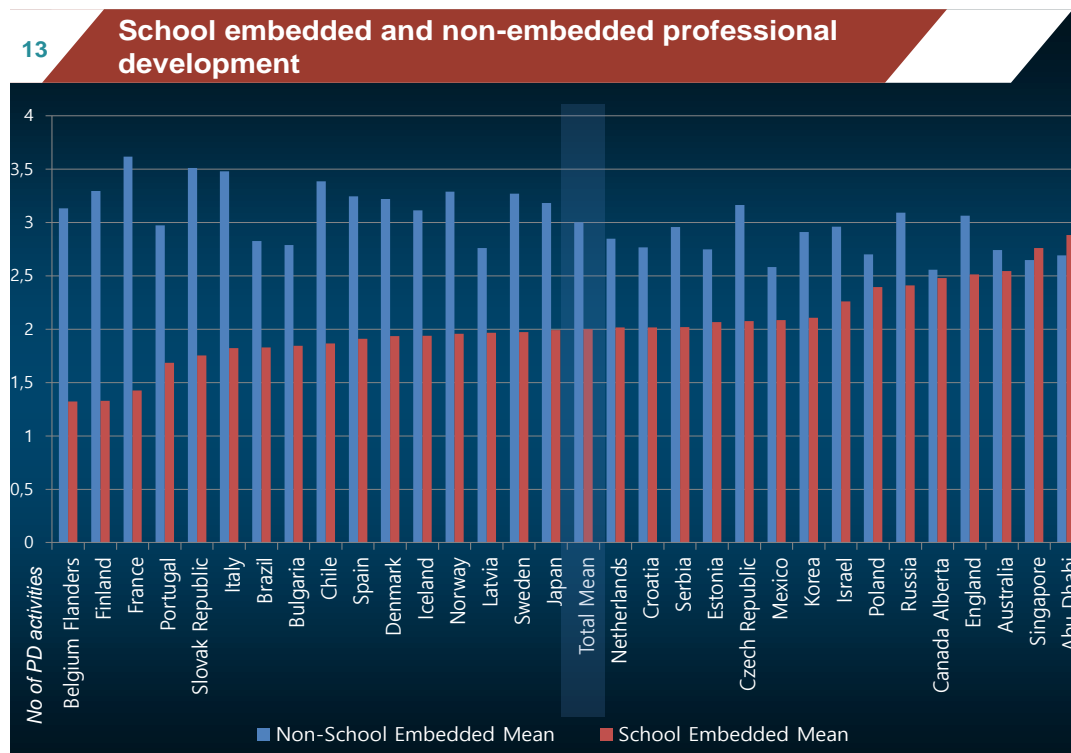
Impact

Regardless of the content, over ¾ teacher report that the professional development in which they have participated has had a positive impact on their teaching. They also report that school-embedded professional development has more impact than non-school embedded professional development. This impact is situated in the following fields:

- ¬ knowledge and understanding of my subject field(s);
- ¬ pedagogical competences in teaching my subject fields(s);
- ¬ knowledge of the curriculum;
- ¬ student evaluation and assessment practices;
- ¬ ICT (information and communication technology) skills;
- ¬ student behaviour and classroom management;
- ¬ teaching cross-curricular skills;
- ¬ student career guidance and counselling.

Improving teaching using appraisal and feedback

On average, across TALIS countries, just above half of the teachers report receiving feedback on their teaching from one or two sources; and only one in five receive feedback from three sources.

The next graph shows on which issues feedback has been given:

16 Emphasis placed on feedback

Percentage of lower secondary teachers who report the feedback they received emphasised the following issues with a "moderate" or "high importance"

This is the percentage of teachers, per country, who never received feedback on analysis of students' test scores, on direct classroom observation, and on assessment of content knowledge.

17 — Teachers feedback : *never received*
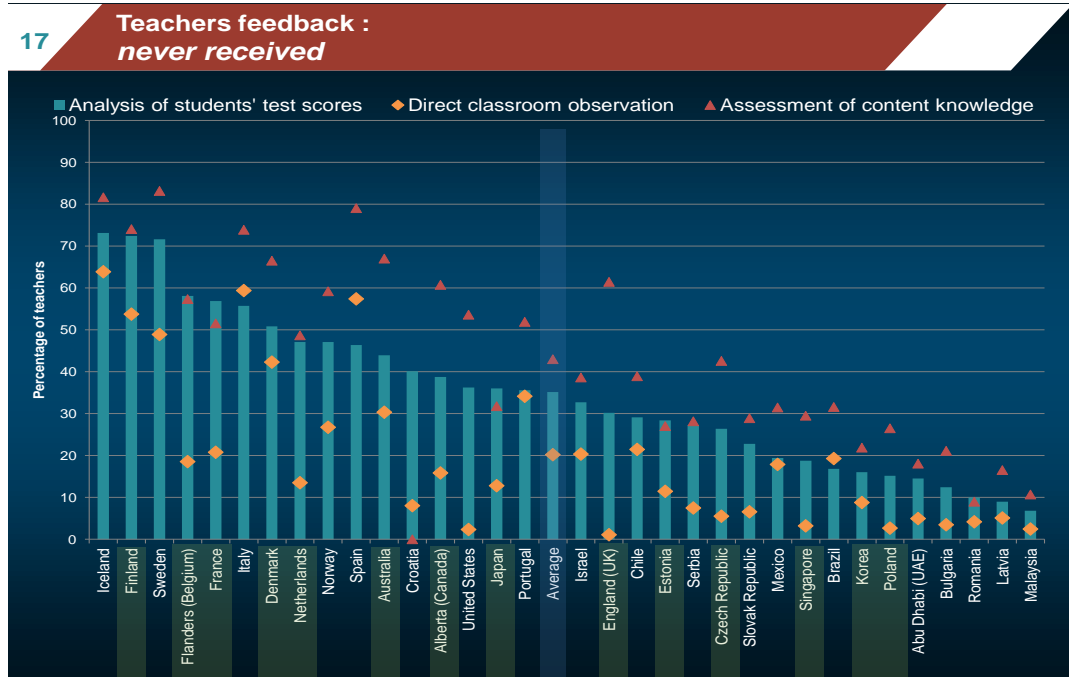
The next graph shows among other things that on average in TALIS countries, 50 % of teachers agree or strongly agree that teacher appraisal and feedback are largely done to fulfil administrative requirements. The graph also shows that results are mixed in many countries.
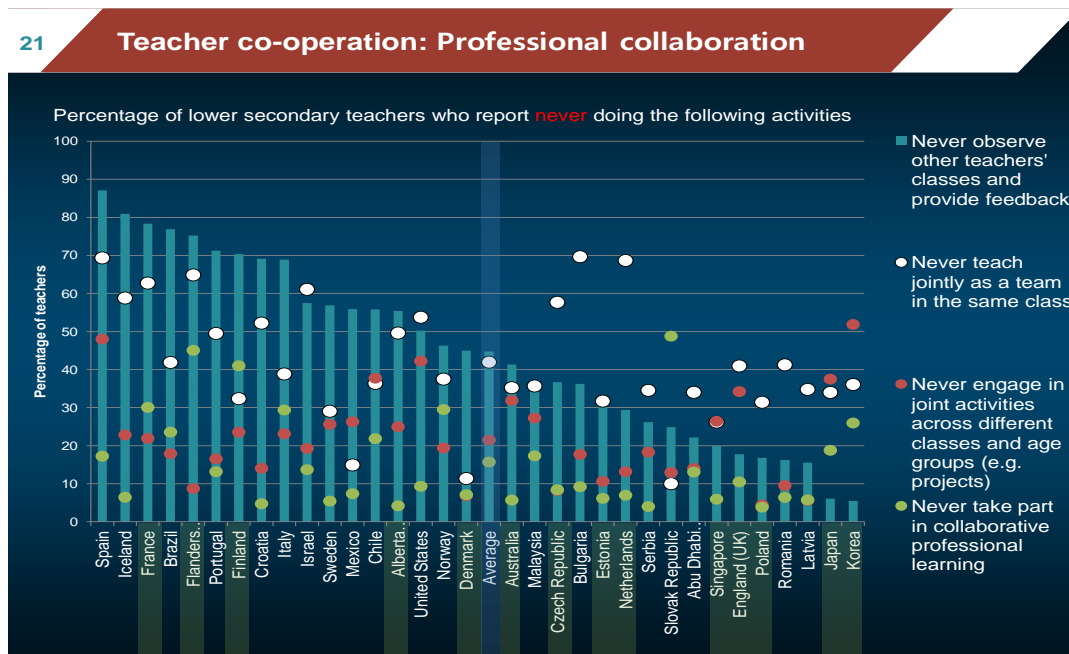

18 — Impact of teacher appraisal and feedback systems in schools
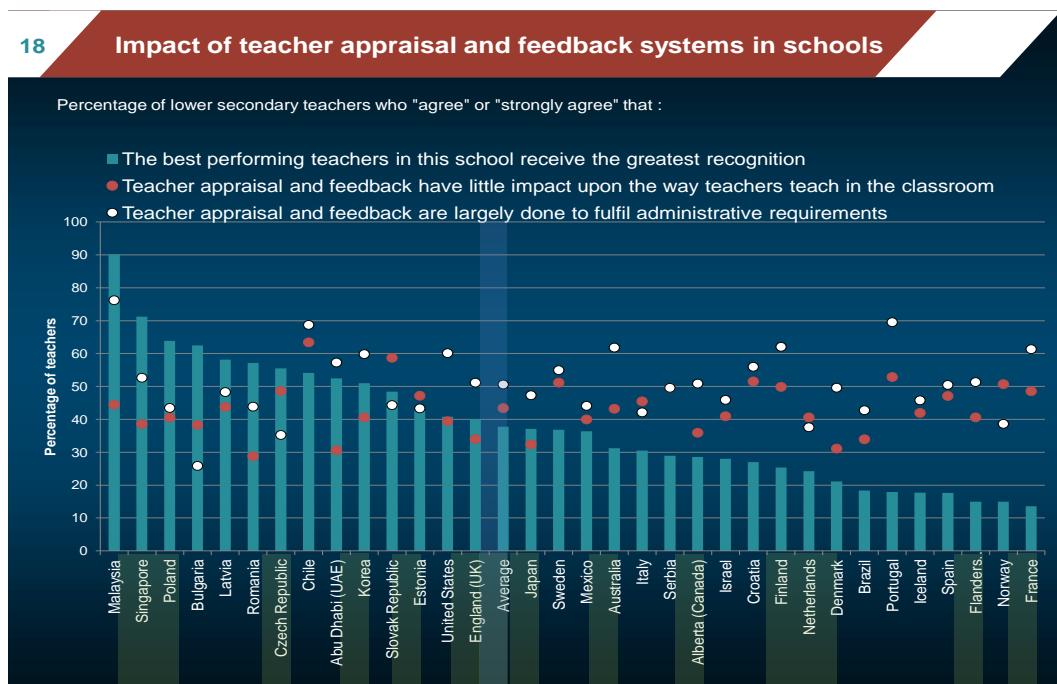
When teachers report on the positive change after feedback, it appears that most of the changes are to be situated in the personal field (related to confidence, motivation, job satisfaction), and less in the professional field (related to likelihood of career advancement, salary bonus).
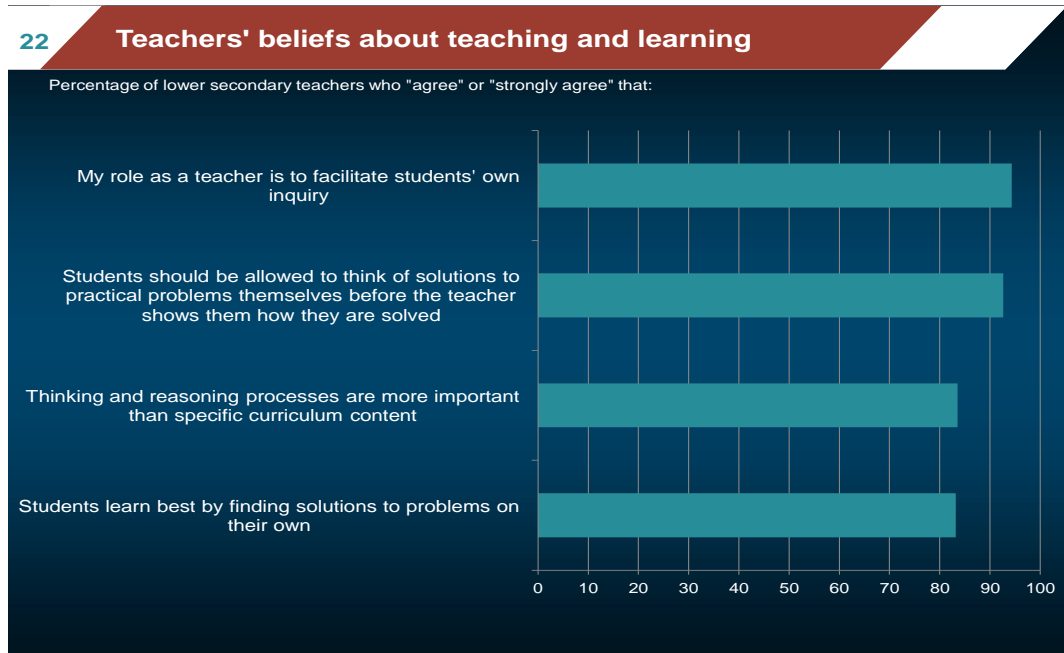
19 Feedback and change in behavior

Percentage of lower secondary teachers who report a "moderate" or "large" positive change in the following issues after they received feedback on their work

Teacher practices and beliefs

Almost half of the teachers in TALIS countries never observe other teachers' classes and provide feedback; they never teach jointly as a team in the same class.
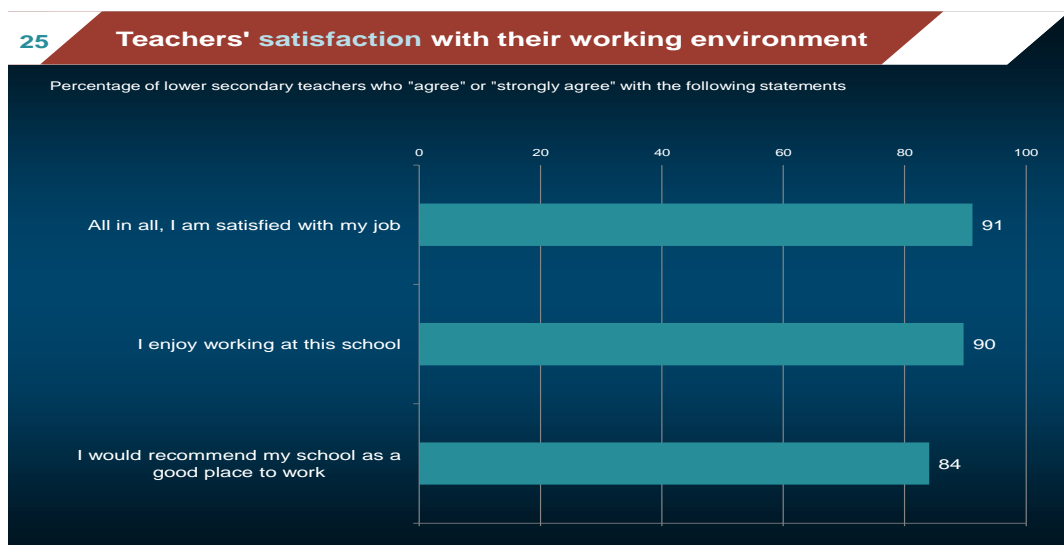
21 Teacher co-operation: Professional collaboration

Percentage of lower secondary teachers who report never doing the following activities

On the other hand, a large majority of teachers agree or strongly agree that their role as a teacher is to facilitate students' own inquiry, and that students should be allowed to think of solutions to practical problems themselves before the teachers shows them how they are solved.

22 **Teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning**

Percentage of lower secondary teachers who "agree" or "strongly agree" that:

Teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction

About 90 % of lower secondary teachers agree or strongly agree that, all in all, they are satisfied with their job, and that they enjoy working in their school.

25 **Teachers' satisfaction with their working environment**

Percentage of lower secondary teachers who "agree" or "strongly agree" with the following statements

At the same time, on average in TALIS-countries, only about 30 % of lower secondary teachers agree or strongly agree that the teaching profession is a valued profession in society.

26 **Teachers' perceptions of the value of teaching**

Percentage of lower secondary teachers who "agree" or "strongly agree" that teaching profession is a valued profession in society
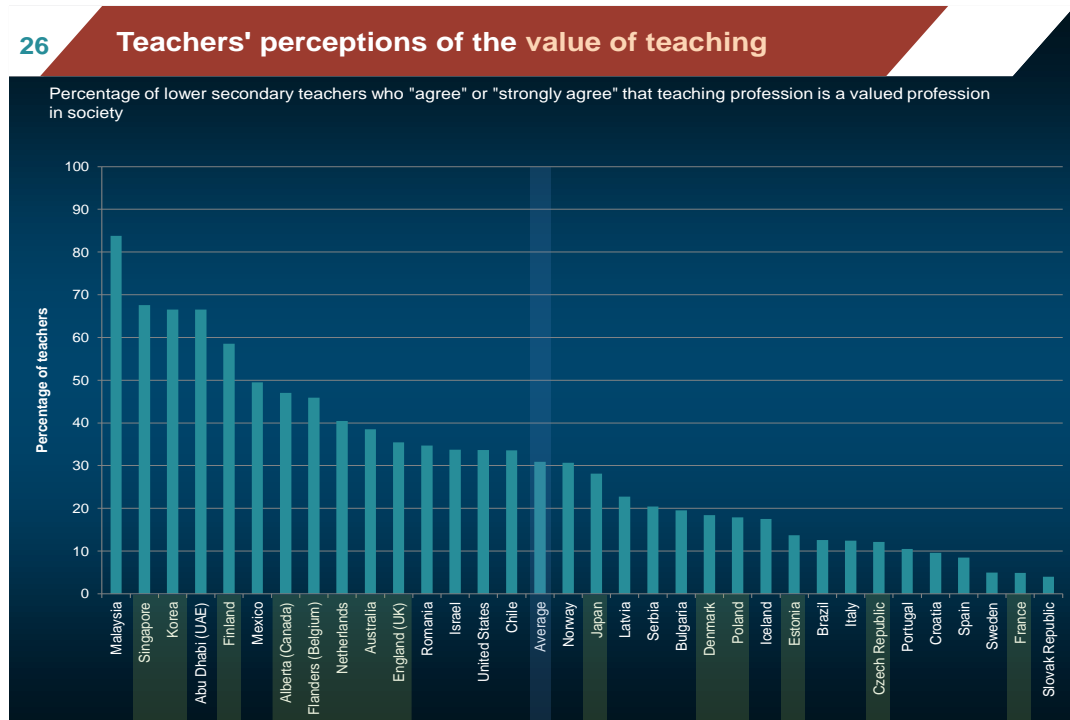
Key messages

Drivers of job satisfaction and self-efficacy:

¬ **Positive interpersonal relationships** with their colleagues and their students can help teachers be more successful in challenging circumstances. They are also related to higher levels of teachers' job satisfaction and self-efficacy. The quality of the relationships teachers have with their colleagues and their students also affects their self-confidence. In fact, in many countries, the association with self-efficacy is stronger with teacher-teacher relations than with teacher-student relations. In Brazil, France, Italy, Mexico, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain and Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates), the strength of the association between self-efficacy and teaching more low-achievers is weaker or no longer significant when teachers have good working relationships with their colleagues and students. In Australia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Israel, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates) and England (United Kingdom), the association between self-efficacy and teaching more students with behavioural problems is also weaker when teachers have good working relationships in school.

- ¬ TALIS results show that teachers in most participating countries report greater job satisfaction when they receive feedback about classroom management and when they are appraised by at least two evaluators. TALIS also finds that teachers who believe that **appraisal and feedback** have an impact on their teaching practices also report greater job satisfaction.
- ¬ TALIS finds that teachers who **collaborate more with their colleagues** - teaching jointly in the same class, observing and providing feedback on each other's classes, engaging in joint activities across different classes and age groups, and taking part in collaborative professional learning - report a greater sense of self-efficacy and job satisfaction.
- ¬ The more teachers report that they are provided opportunities to **participate in school decisions**, the higher their level of self-efficacy and the higher their job satisfaction. As for most professionals, teachers derive the most satisfaction from their work when they feel that they are treated as professionals, when their opinions are sought and valued, and when they feel they have a say in how they work.

Find out more about TALIS at: www.oecd.org/talis

Teachers as adaptive, collaborative professionals in learning organisations

Francesca Caena

Francesca Caena's background, interests and publications focus on European education policies, comparative studies, teacher education, virtual learning environments and foreign language teaching. She has a varied and extensive professional experience - as a consultant for the European Commission, as a teacher educator and lecturer in initial teacher education, as well as an EFL teacher and in-service trainer. In 2010 she successfully defended her Ph.D. Education thesis in Padua University (a mixed-method comparative analysis of teacher education case studies in four European countries). She gained additional insights as an Erasmus LLL project coordinator, working on a European joint master's curriculum in teacher education involving eight universities.

Change of paradigm: beyond a factory model.

The image below illustrates the ongoing change of paradigm: the digital-native student, surrounded by all kinds of devices (computers, iPhones, advertising, television channels), distracted, impatient, overwhelmed, and the teacher at the blackboard asking to focus on today's lesson. Pupils are diagnosticised as ADHD patients and take Rilatine, while it has to be education's duty to awake, to energize, to make curious, and to stimulate divergent thinking, which is the ability to imagine many different answers to a particular question (Sir Ken Robinson). This is true for pupils, but also for teachers as modern learners.

Education is still very much starting from a production line mentality, education still stresses conformity and standardised tests. Pupils are compartmentalised, based on their year of education; school hours are regulated by the bell; classes are organised in separate rooms with closed doors.

Deep learning (Fullan and Langworthy, 2014) is characterised by

- Learning from each other, with and from pupils and colleagues;
- Leveraging peer teaching;
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of learning;
- Fostering pupils' leading their learning.

New pedagogies are related to

- Learn, create dispositions needed to thrive;
- Create new knowledge and connect in the world;
- Unleash students' and teachers' energy and excitement;
- New learning partnerships to find, activate and foster deep learning potential.

In these new pedagogies, teachers take up the role of mentors, farmers, alchemists, scaffolders, multipliers, welders, activators, facilitators, .. Whatever term is used, there role is proactive: spark, structure and drive the learning process forward; design deep learning tasks; cultivate key skills/character education, self-regulation, responsibility, perseverance, empathy, collaboration, imagination. Teachers cannot be just facilitators; this concept seemed like a huge innovation, but it is not enough; teachers don't only have to facilitate learning, but to activate and stimulate learning.

Core features of effective teacher continuous development[3]

The following characteristics are key for effective teacher continuous development:

- ¬ Content focus;
- ¬ Active learning;
- ¬ Experimentation;
- ¬ Specialist expertise support;
- ¬ Focus on student aspirations;
- ¬ Coherence;
- ¬ Duration (long, intensive, sustained);
- ¬ Collective participation;
- ¬ Good staff communication in schools.

The following continuous professional development activities seem to work:

- ¬ Collaborative enquiry: experimentation and professional dialogue about evidence;
- ¬ Coaching and mentoring;
- ¬ Networks, within and between schools;
- ¬ Structured dialogue and group work to explore beliefs and assumptions, to try out new approaches and to receive feedback.

Collaborative learning activities require a climate of trust and an open environment. It requires a mind-set change and the support of middle leadership figure. In collaborative learning, environments matter: the habits and habitats for meaningful learning, the school culture, the teacher motivation, the student motivation and learning.

Collaborative learning can take different forms:

- ¬ Communities of practice with a student/teacher learning focus, focusing on reflective professional inquiry. This type of professional development is flexible, can be individualised. Knowledge is created and shared.
- ¬ Partnerships and networks.

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[3] Borko, 2004; Cordinglay & Bell, 2012; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000

¬ Collaborative learning within the school: workplace learning by discussion of ideas, or by observation of practice.
¬ Action research communities.
¬ The untapped potential of the virtual learning environment, which offer the advantage of transparency, immediate and sincere feedback, distributed leadership in cooperative endeavours.

In order to enable collaborative learning environments there has to be good (vertical and horizontal) leadership, with impact on the organization and on relationships, leaving room for experimentation, reflection and inquiry opportunities. Teachers need support structures and resources in terms of time and funding; this is an important recommendation at the policy level. All actors should be empowered to take responsibilities. Collaboration and reflective practice need to be embedded in the schedule and culture of the education institutions and professionals, with enough time to discuss and to share. Collaboration cannot be imposed, it can only be nurtured, promoted and encouraged with a mixture of top-down measures and grass-root approaches.

The European Commission discourse over the last five years in the field of collaborative learning environments is like a bridge over troubled waters. A comprehensive policy requires a link between the cultural, the political and the structural dimension. Very often, the focus is on only one dimension. The European discourse on teacher policy focuses on the three following issues:

¬ The continuum perspective of the teaching profession, considering it as an ongoing professional journey, not a destination;
¬ Collaborative learning environments as the connective tissue, across professional settings, along the career;
¬ Collaborative governance, with room for stakeholder consultation, dialogue, coordination and responsibility.

Key priorities for policy makers

Key priorities for policy makers, based on the work of OECD (TALIS) and the European Commission (Thematic Working Group):

¬ Policy investment recommended on collaborative continuous professional development and on digital skills (open educational resources); on collaboration within and across schools (mentoring, networks, research) and on teacher leadership and school governance;
¬ Collaborative e-communities of practice and strategic partnerships;
¬ Collaborative capacity of teachers within and beyond schools, starting from initial teacher education, to reduce early school leaving.

The competence framework for teachers developed by Michael Day can be a guide for policy makers:
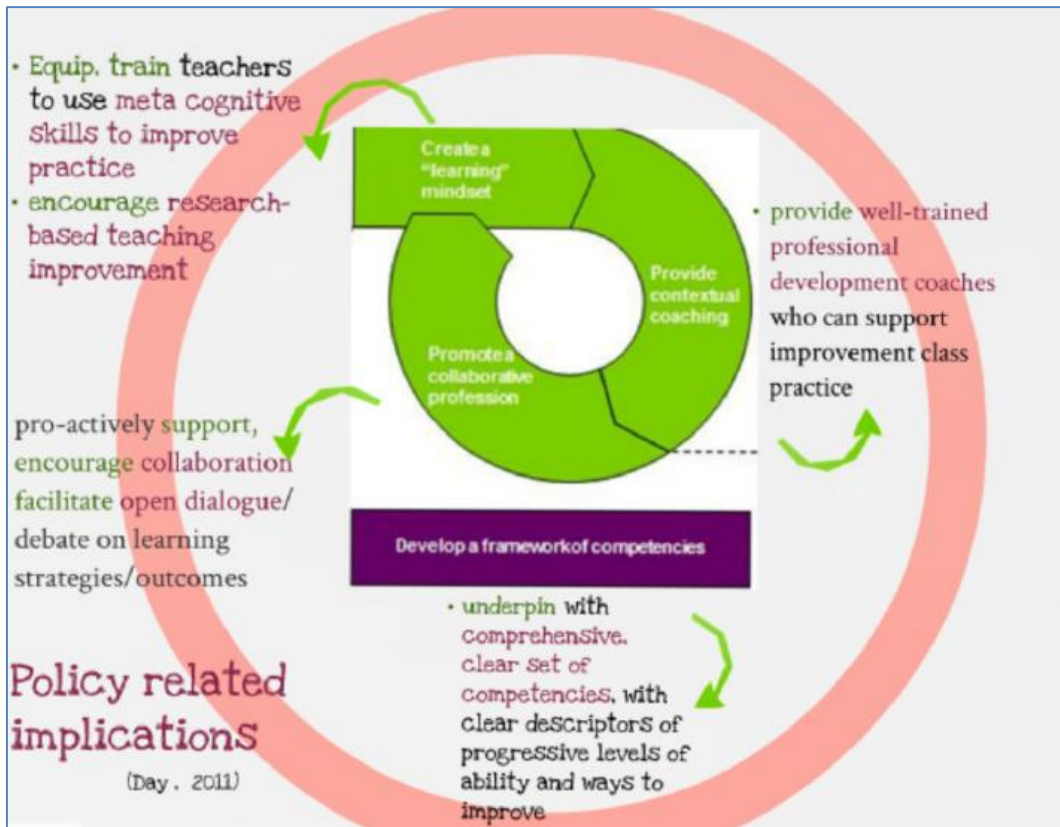
Policy makers, stakeholders, principals, coordinators and teacher educators can play a key role as boundary brokers, helping to transfer innovation and to connect.
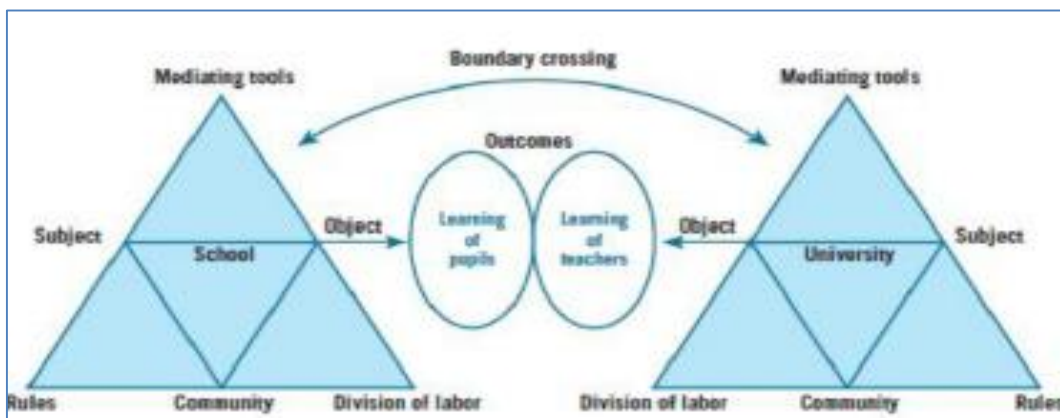
Cases presented by EUNEC members and partners

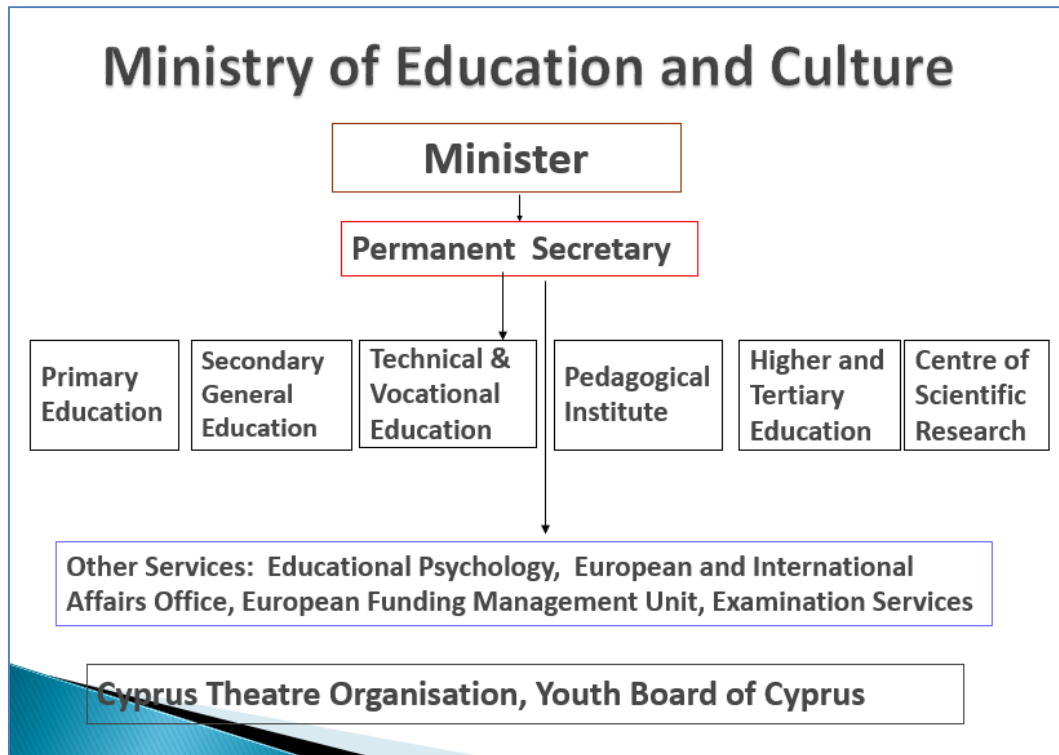## LEADING TEACHERS' LEARNING. THE CASE OF CYPRUS.

Christina Papasolomontos

Dr Christina Papasolomontos is the Head of the Department of Educational Documentation at the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute where she has been working since 2000. She got her M.Ed in Educational Studies (1994), M.Sc in Educational Research (1995) and her Ph.D. at the University of Manchester, UK (1997). She has worked as a Research Associate at the Centre of Formative ad Assessment Studies (CFAS), Department of Education of the University of Manchester (1998 - 2000). She was also a visiting lecturer at the Cyprus College (2004 - 2006) and at the Cyprus University of Technology (2010 - 2011) teaching research methods and analysing quantitative and qualitative data with SPSS and NVivo. She is a member of the Scientific Committee of the European Social Survey in Cyprus since 2005. She has taught Research Methodology and Educational Psychology in the in-Service training programmes offered by the Pedagogical Institute. She has also got funding for organizing various training programmes. She is also involved in the evaluation of the in-service training programmes of the Pedagogical Institute. Her latest work includes the research on teachers needs in the Cyprus.

The education system

The graph on the following page shows how the education system in Cyprus is organized:

Ministry of Education and Culture

Minister

↓

Permanent Secretary

| Primary Education | Secondary General Education | Technical & Vocational Education | Pedagogical Institute | Higher and Tertiary Education | Centre of Scientific Research |

Other Services: Educational Psychology, European and International Affairs Office, European Funding Management Unit, Examination Services

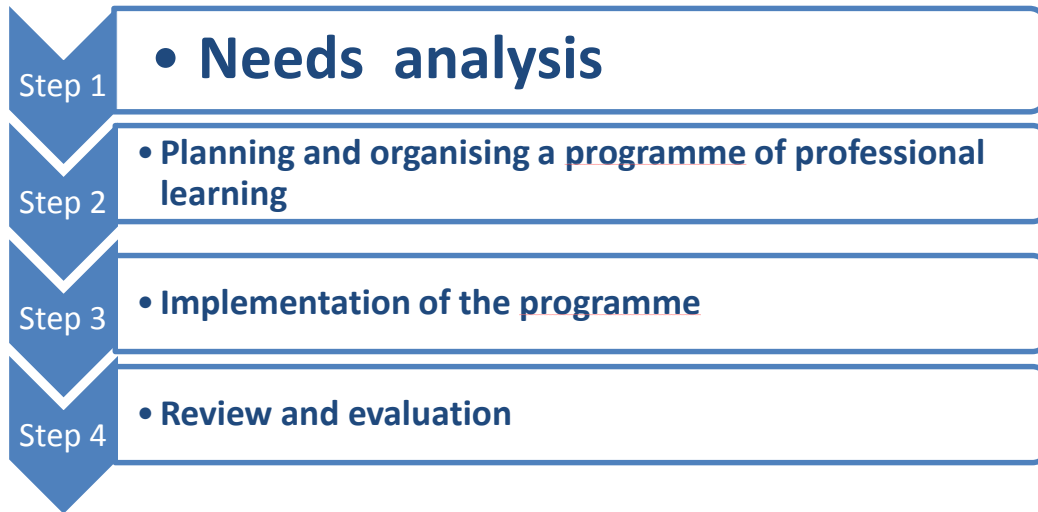**Cyprus Theatre Organisation, Youth Board of Cyprus**

A new policy on the professional learning of teachers

In the preparation of a new policy on the professional learning of teachers, a scientific committee has been appointed by the Minister of Education and Culture in August 2014. This committee evaluated the present situation, and took into consideration the international trends, the suggestions of the World Bank and the feedback from the teachers' unions and from the stakeholders on the draft report submitted in October 2014. They submitted their final report in March 2015.

Following the decision made by the Council of Ministers on 19 August 2015, the New Policy on the Professional Learning of the Teachers will take place in a number of schools (primary and secondary schools) for the year 2015 – 2016 on a pilot basis.

The main aspects of this new policy can be described in four steps:

Step 1	• **Needs analysis**
Step 2	• **Planning and organising a programme of professional learning**
Step 3	• **Implementation of the programme**
Step 4	• **Review and evaluation**

Two levels of action can be distinguished:

¬ School based level

The school has to provide the staff with opportunities for development taking into consideration the needs of the school and those of the teachers as well.

¬ Teacher level

Teachers will have to attend 50 hours of various activities including conferences, seminars and workshops in two years. They will have to keep an e-portfolio for all the activities they take part in.

This e-portfolio includes ALL the activities in which the teacher takes part, according to the plan of his/her professional learning such as:

¬ Attending conferences, seminars, workshops;
¬ Application of new methodologies, material in the class;
¬ REFLECTION on the activities in which the teacher took part. This focus on reflection is part of the new approach: just attending is not sufficient.

The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute

The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute will act as a facilitator to the professional learning of the teachers.

'(…) a center where the profession itself undertakes a critique of its activities, and where cooperative work is done by educators at all levels of seniority in the system, whether they are engaged in class teaching, in teacher training, in supervisory roles or in educational administration.' [4]

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[4] Weddell, UNESCO report 1971, p. 14, §3.9

The mission of the Pedagogical Institute is the design and implementation of continuous professional development of teachers at all levels, the setting of framework for the teacher competences and the promotion of horizontal issues of educational priority, improving the content and effectiveness of the education provided in accordance with the wider international, European and local context.

In-service training programmes

In-service training programmes are set up for administrative staff (newly appointed head teachers of primary education, secondary general and secondary technical and vocational education and deputy head teachers of secondary general and secondary technical and vocational education). These programmes are compulsory. Two days teacher seminars are compulsory as well.

Other in-service training seminars are organized; they are optional.

Furthermore, there is specific training of teachers who are entrusted with the support of foreign speaking pupils. There is a specific programme of training secondary teachers who teach the 3rd grade of Lyceum. And school-based seminars are organised for teachers and for parents.

There are also programmes of training expatriates teachers from Eastern European countries and from the Greek Community Schools of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. There are conferences on different subjects co-funded by the European Social Fund, as well as conferences under the auspices of European Programmes and the Council of Europe.

Conclusion

The new policy on the professional learning of the teachers, with the teacher taking up responsibility for his/her own professional learning, is a step towards

- ¬ Teacher self-evaluation;
- ¬ Teacher autonomy;
- ¬ School autonomy.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IN MALTA. A CULTURE FOR CHANGE.

Gaetano Bugeja

Gaetano Bugeja is currently the Director of Curriculum Management within the Ministry for Education and Employment (Malta) and a member of the National Curriculum Framework Implementation Board. The main responsibility in this role is the process of converting the present subject syllabi, taught in compulsory education, into Learning and Assessment Programmes based on learning outcomes. Vocational subjects are also being introduced in secondary schools as part of a strategy to diversify the range of subject options offered to learners and the assessment modes presently applied in schools. Previously he was responsible for national summative assessment and before that he taught science subjects in secondary schools for 15 years. He participated in a number of EU funded projects including PRIMAS and was a member of the EU thematic working group focusing on Low Achievers in Science and Mathematics. He has participated in various international conferences related to education. He analysed the national data for TIMSS in 2007 and 2011 when Malta participated in this international study.

Michelle Attard Tonna

Michelle Attard Tonna is currently heading the Learning Outcomes Framework project which sees the development of a learning outcomes framework for all Learning Areas, Cross-Curricular Themes and Subjects within compulsory education in Malta. She forms part of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta and is in charge of educational mentoring, a role which proposes to oversee the mentoring of student-teachers during their field placement. Her primary research interests include the professional development of teachers and comparative studies of the way teachers learn. She has contributed to various European-wide studies in the area of teacher learning and also participated in various conferences and European networks in which she has presented her research. She has completed a PhD with the University of Aberdeen, UK, focusing her research on professional teacher learning in Malta.

The current situation: A changing landscape

Teachers in Malta are currently being faced with **significant changes** in the education system that they inhabit:

- ¬ changes in a selective, tripartite system of schooling after 11+ to a mixed-ability approach;
- ¬ the introduction of banding, with mixed classroom according to ability;
- ¬ the introduction of co-ed classes in the state sector;
- ¬ an increasingly diversified pupil population;

- ¬ an increasing amount of migrant students (good employment opportunities).

This **calls for further upskilling** and a commitment to change one's pedagogical approach to reflect these new reforms. At the same time, the Maltese teacher population is also characterized by a reform fatigue.

The DQSE (the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education) hence acknowledges the **need** for creating spaces where teachers can learn and enhance their professional status, in order to build their capacity to address these curricular and day-to-day challenges, and in order to allow them to lead more effective teaching and learning. This differs from the earlier top-down approach.

There are a number of **opportunities** for teachers in Malta to engage in professional learning:

- ¬ In-service training and professional development sessions organised by the DQSE;
- ¬ professional collaboration within schools (like curriculum development time in the primary sector, and subject meetings with Head of Departments in the secondary sector);
- ¬ Scholarships, sabbatical leave and study leave;
- ¬ Further certification, particularly at Masters Level and in School Leadership;
- ¬ Distance learning courses with foreign universities and Higher Education institutions;
- ¬ Participation in EU funded projects such as eTwinning and FP7 projects (Seventh Framework Programme).

A number of **challenges** may undermine opportunities for teacher professional learning:

- ¬ A highly centralised system;
- ¬ Lack of variety of learning opportunities. At a small island, always the same limited networks operate, which often leads to more of the same;
- ¬ Face-to-face training is not always accessible (teaching load; highly feminised profession with the family life as a barrier);
- ¬ Lack of professional learning communities in school; lack of professional dialogue;
- ¬ Many teachers say that they don't have time to reflect, and they have no spaces to nurture a critical stance towards their own teaching – no culture of peer learning, critical friend, and team teaching.

There are also a number of **positive experiences.** One particular research study with science and mathematics teachers (PRIMAS) has given the space for teachers to meet, discuss, implement and evaluate. The project was based on a pedagogy of inquiry-based learning, where teachers were given space to meet regularly for a period of two years. The approach was bottom-up. Participating teachers reported that they tried out different teaching methods and evaluated the response of the learners.

The learning outcomes framework

The National Curriculum Framework proposed a Learning Outcomes Framework as the keystone for learning and assessment throughout the years of compulsory schooling. The aim of the Learning Outcomes Framework is to free schools and learners from centrally-imposed knowledge- centric syllabi, and to give them the freedom to develop programmes that fulfil the framework of knowledge, attitudes and skills-based outcomes that are considered national education entitlement of all learners in Malta. The LOF is thus intended to eventually lead to more curricular autonomy of colleges and schools, so as to better address the learning needs of their students.

With the implementation of the LOF, it is being recognized that teachers need to engage in further learning and to collaborate amongst themselves. In particular, they need to re-dimension the way they plan their lessons, the way they assess their students, and the way they address different learning needs.

This calls for a change in the way we regard teacher professional development, and allow CPD opportunities through:

- Virtual environments;
- Professional learning communities;
- Support from more experienced teachers and peers in the same subject or area;
- bigger investment in training courses, seminars and workshops which are directly relevant to teachers' needs and which can feed back into the classroom
- an evaluation of teachers' learning needs, and the way these PD opportunities are addressing them.

The way forward

Upcoming initiatives offer opportunities for teacher professional development:

- The 'Train the Trainer' programme;
- School-based mentoring;
- Strengthening the link between the Faculty of Education, schools and training providers;
- A continuum of teacher professional learning starting from initial teacher education, induction and in-service. The MTL (master & teaching in education) programme proposed will help support teachers in these three phases.

THE EMANCIPATION OF THE DUTCH TEACHER. FROM SHEEP TO ENGINEERS.

Jasper Rijpma

Jasper Rijpma is Dutch teacher of the year 2014 (secondary education)

The article written by Jasper Rijpma on his blog is a fine way of presenting the headlines of his presentation.

"In my country, teachers have long fulfilled a position in the civic-political order I can perhaps best describe as the role of the executioners of government policy. Politicians, media, advisors, experts and novices alike, they all seem to look at the teacher as a voiceless, semi-free employee, who is not to be taken very serious. We are merely, as a leading newspaper has put it, 'meekly sheep'. We blindly follow the orders of policy makers and school leaders, who herd us like a pack of sheep. Of course this is a caricature, but the message is clear: the Dutch teacher finds himself badly in need of emancipation.

Thankfully, in recent years things are starting to improve. As my colleague Laurent Chambon has put it in the television documentary "Power to the Educator!" our role "is changing from employees to engineers of education". So what sparked this small revolution?

Since a commission led by Jeroen Dijsselbloem in 2007 made clear the teacher is the vocal point of education, sound government policies has been made to strengthen the position of the teacher. These policies are clustered in the teacher's agenda and include all the usual suspects of international teacher

policy: better teacher training programs with better students, better induction programs and coaching for starting Teacher. An independent corporation has been created to facilitate the program.

What is also included in the scheme, is a professionalization program by the name of the teachers register. From 2017, all Dutch teachers are mandatorily enlisted in a central register, where their professionalization activities are administrated. The register is highly controversial, as some see it as yet another example of unpopular top-down policy. Others, myself including, regard it as a tool to set a quality standard for our own profession and as a method to liberate ourselves from the state of 'meekly sheep'.

Then there are those who believe emancipation is only possible when we change the entire civic-political order we work in. In other words: we need to flip our system. This is in a nutshell the vision of the teachers Jelmer Evers and René Kneyber – the latter was recently appointed to the Dutch education council.
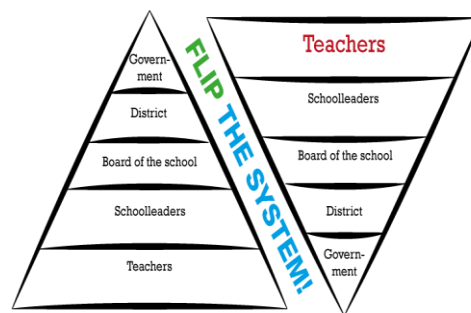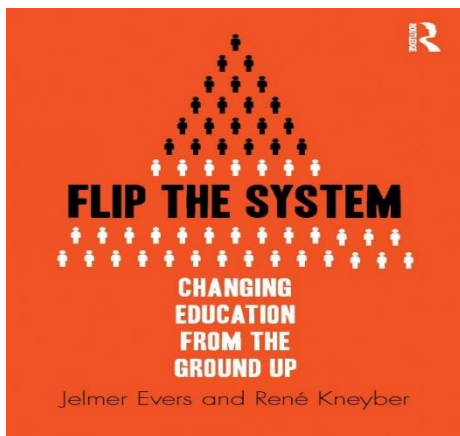
Though I see more value in connecting and bonding with other stakeholders ('poldering' the Dutch call this) I do firmly agree with Evers and Kneyber in at least one aspect of their work: bottom-up initiatives have far greater impact than top down government policy. This is why the register can only work when teachers claim it as their own instrument to set a quality standard. We might have some well-constructed policies on CPD, we might have a 500 euros personal budget for CPD and available time to spend it, these are all external means. What we need is teachers who are truly motivated to work on their professional development. I believe this is not something policymakers can ignite.

For this reason, I am very enthusiastic about a number of bottom-up initiatives in my education system that strengthen the position of the teacher. First there is the LeerKRACHT foundation, who support peer review, intervision and collaboration between teachers.

LeerKRACHT has been successful in recent years, the word is spreading from one school to the other. The plan is to stop in 2020. By then a critical mass should be achieved of schools and teachers who want to collaborate and learn from each other.

I myself am involved in two other initiatives: the first is Leraar2032, an attempt to increase the influence teachers have on the curricula. The other is called De Onderwijzers, or The Educators. A virtual learning community for teachers to meet, collaborate and learn from each other.

Future will tell if the register comes at the right time for the professional community to claim as our own. It seems like initiatives such as the ones described above have sparked a small revolution. The emancipation of the Dutch teacher seems to be taking form. Ever more often, teachers are taking the stage in the public debate. What's key in this development is hearing the teacher's voice. We want to join the discussion. No more carrot and stick policies. It's time to start regarding us as the engineers of education we are.

PASSION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. OR THE OTHER WAY AROUND?

Femke Cools

Femke Cools is Dutch teacher of the year 2014 (primary education)

The text below are the words used in the emaze presentation, to be found under this link: https://www.emaze.com/@AOQZCCOQ/passion-and-professional-development.

Connectedness, freedom and reflection are essential for meaningful education.

Connectedness: I exist in relation to others.

There are three conditions for connectedness: love, trust and partnership.

- ¬ Love for yourself, love for humans in general, and love for the profession[5].
- ¬ Trust, related to openness, honesty and vulnerability.
- ¬ Partnership, with students, parents and colleagues.

True connectedness leads to happiness.

Freedom: Give me space!

There are three conditions for freedom: courage, confidence and knowledge.

- ¬ Courage to make mistakes, to let go, to experiment6.
- ¬ Confidence, in yourself, in each other, in the purpose.
- ¬ Knowledge, coming from your personal power7, from the talents of other, from up-to-date professional knowledge8.

True freedom leads to passion.

Reflection: lifelong learning.

There are three conditions for reflection: yourself, partners and sources.

- ¬ Yourself: self-knowledge, self-criticism, intrinsic motivation.
- ¬ Partners: (student) feedback9, visible goals, availability
- ¬ Sources: social media, professional literature, science.

True reflection leads to professional development.

Passion and Professional Development. Or the other way around? Passion and Professional Development reinforce each other.

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[5] http://juffemke.nl/2015/03/25/a-call-for-a-happy-leader
[6] http://juffemke.nl/2015/02/01/digismart-students-help-you-to-help-yourself
[7] http://juffemke.nl/2015/03/25/teacher-show-yourself-2
[8] http://juffemke.nl/2014/01/27/montessori-and-social-media%E2%80%A8-challenges-and-treasures-for-a-new-age-of-learning%E2%80%A8
[9] http://juffemke.nl/2014/06/07/the-beauty-of-cosmic-education

IN-SERVICE TRAINING IN PORTUGAL – A BRIEF NOTE.

Manuel Miguéns

Manuel Miguéns is Secretary General of the National Council of Education in Portugal since 2000. He holds a degree in Biology from the University of Lisbon (1981), with a Master's in Education at the University of Bristol (1990) and science education studies at King's College, University of London (1995-2000).

He was professor of primary and secondary education and a member of the Installation Committee of Portalegre School of Education;

He collaborated as an expert in the evaluation of European projects in education and teacher training. He coordinated and participated in several national and international research projects in education and teacher training. He participated in several inter-university cooperation programs at European level, involving courses, and mobility of students and teachers.

He coordinates the publications of the National Council of Education, including the State of Education annual report published since 2010.

A (very) brief historical note

In the 70s, with the education boom and a growing educational system, there was a shortage of teachers.

In the 80s, the system reacts. New teacher education institutions were set up, for pre-, primary and preparatory education. There were more and more integrated teacher education courses.

In the 90s, teacher education school centres were set up for in-service training, organising courses, workshops, isolated initiatives…

From 2000, there have been less pupils (related to birth rate). Teachers had to obtain a master degree; the number of teacher education courses fell. There was a surplus of teachers.

An example: the national programme in science education

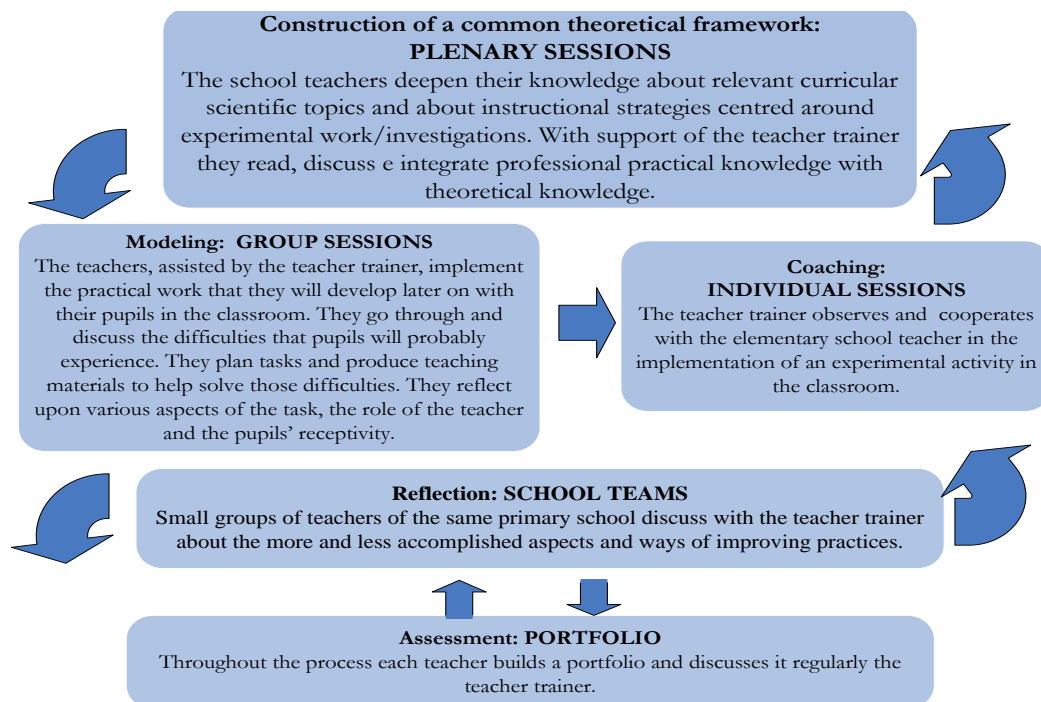This national programme has three lines of action:

1. In-service teacher education, during one or two academic years.
2. Production of teaching materials. Eight didactic guides where produced, published in print and available in pdf on the website of the Ministry for Education and Science.
3. Financial allocation of participants schools for the purchase of laboratory equipment.

The main goals of the programme are:

1. To understand the relevance of an adequate science education for all, capable of motivating teachers for innovating approaches in science teaching;

2. To develop pedagogic content knowledge concerning science education in the first years of schooling;

3. To conceive, implement and assess practical, laboratorial and experimental activities for science teaching in elementary school.

The scheme below illustrates a model of in-service teacher education in context, starting from plenary sessions, over group sessions and individual coaching sessions, all leading to reflection within the school teams and with the teacher trainer.

Construction of a common theoretical framework: PLENARY SESSIONS
The school teachers deepen their knowledge about relevant curricular scientific topics and about instructional strategies centred around experimental work/investigations. With support of the teacher trainer they read, discuss e integrate professional practical knowledge with theoretical knowledge.

Modeling: GROUP SESSIONS
The teachers, assisted by the teacher trainer, implement the practical work that they will develop later on with their pupils in the classroom. They go through and discuss the difficulties that pupils will probably experience. They plan tasks and produce teaching materials to help solve those difficulties. They reflect upon various aspects of the task, the role of the teacher and the pupils' receptivity.

Coaching: INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS
The teacher trainer observes and cooperates with the elementary school teacher in the implementation of an experimental activity in the classroom.

Reflection: SCHOOL TEAMS
Small groups of teachers of the same primary school discuss with the teacher trainer about the more and less accomplished aspects and ways of improving practices.

Assessment: PORTFOLIO
Throughout the process each teacher builds a portfolio and discusses it regularly the teacher trainer.

The following schemes illustrate in-service teacher training through partnerships between teachers and researchers, related to two projects: the EART project (Educação Ambiental em Regiões Transfronteiriças) and the AIEB project Aprender a Investigar na Escola Básica). The comments, per phase, illustrate the progression per phase, in terms of the theoretical foundations, the identificaton and definition of problems and the partnerships (for phase 1); in

terms of the planning of activities and the construction of materials, of the classroom activities and of reflection in and on practice (for phase 2); in terms of evaluation (for phase 3).

		PROJECTS	
		EART	AIEB
Phase I	Theoretical Foundations	Weak. Limited to the basic theoretical assumptions of the project.	Strong, formal, scholarized, researcher-centred. An overview of the state of the art about the topic and the project standpoint within the topic were given. A model for teaching investigations was also presented. Teachers experienced and trained competencies to deal with investigative work.
	Identification and Definition of Problems	Problems identified and defined by the teachers based on their previous ideas and professional experiences.	Problems were identified and defined by the researchers.
	Partnerships	The partnerships were organised according to the problems and interests that the teachers put forward, independently from the grades or subject areas they taught. Three sub-projects were organised.	Partnerships were formed according to the problems selected by the teachers that were teaching the same grades.

		PROJECTS	
		EART	AIEB
Phase II	Planning activities and constructing materials	Carried out by the teachers according to their own ideas and previous experiences and supported by the teacher trainers/researchers. It generated a great diversity of activities and pedagogic materials.	The plans of the activities were devised in a collaborative way by teachers and researchers and were based on the given teaching model.
	Classroom Activities	Activities were delivered by the individual teachers or in partnership with other teachers.	Teachers implemented the activities by themselves sometimes with a researcher as an observer.
	Reflection *in* and *on* practice	Teachers identified problems and difficulties during implementation of activities in the classroom. They question the activities and pupils' learning - reflection in action - discuss and analyse the work done with other partners (teachers and/or researchers) - reflection on action.	Teachers identified problems and difficulties during implementation. They questioned the particularities of each activity as well as their students' learning - reflection in action -, and discussed and analysed them with other partners (teachers or/and researchers) - reflection on action.

		PROJECTS	
		EART	AIEB
Phase III	Evaluation	A meeting with all the participants was held to reflect upon the obtained results (impact in pupils on teachers and their practices, and on the school community). The main difficulties and limitations to develop the project were identified. Teaching materials were evaluated and reformulated. Firstly all these were individual and written answers in a questionnaire. Subsequently the subprojects were presented in detail and analysed by the whole group.	A meeting with all the participants was held, to reflect on the obtained results in terms of teaching and learning investigative work as well as on the impact of the project on teachers and their practices, on students and on the school.

Concluding

Innovation, reflection and partnership seem to be key concepts in continuous professional development.

However, if we want to achieve real teacher development, critical and informed reflection and genuine collaborative partnerships, the way ahead should be reappraised.

We can neither fall in the temptations of applying the same model of teacher education in all the programs nor to assume some models as clear-cut and pedagogically correct while others are regarded as just wrong.

In a concrete teacher education project, we need to analyze the specificity of each particular moment and to avoid the extreme points of several continua. We need to make unbiased and flexible decisions in order to use more or less scholarised, more or less formal, more or less collaborative, more or less researcher centered, more or less theoretical approaches, according to the specific context of each moment of the project.

Like the river margins, teacher education models and approaches have ill-defined boundaries…

THE CASE OF IRELAND. A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHERS' LEARNING. COSÁN.

Fergal McCarthy

Fergal McCarthy is the principal of Kinsale Community School and is a member of the Teaching Council since 2009. He has chaired the Finance Committee of the Council and is the current Chair of the Education Committee of the Council. Fergal has a particular interest in teacher professional development and the supports that teachers need to be life-long enquiry oriented practitioners.

Fergal is also very interested in curricular reform and the development and enhancement of the further education sector.

> '*Teachers need an outlet to showcase what they have achieved. Schools are good at celebrating the successes of their students, but are still reticent about applauding the successes of teachers … Let us see a celebration of what we have achieved. Let it feel prestigious and let it hold value. Let us find ways to link up research projects across the country and expand the dialogue … Creative professional development deserves to be acknowledged and applauded.*[10]

Background

The **legislative and policy background** is set by the Teaching Council Act, by the background paper and by the policy on the continuum. Following on from research, extensive consultation, sectoral meetings, drafting and redrafting of a policy document together with considerations from 200 submissions from individuals and organisations, a Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education was published in 2011 by the Teaching Council.

In order to find out more about teachers' experiences of professional learning and to inform the development of a national framework for teachers' learning, a comprehensive three-phased **consultation process** was devised by the Teaching Council. The first phase, which took place in late 2014, comprised of three avenues of consultation with the teaching profession. They were:

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[10] Owen, L. (2014). "Continuing Professional Development: can it ever be creative?" In: Hallgarten, J., Bamfield, L. & McCarthy, K. (eds.) *Licensed to Create: Ten essays on improving teacher quality.* London: RSA Action and Research Centre. p. 62.

1. An online survey for individual teachers;

2. Online consultation workshops in Education Centres nationwide;

3. Whole-school feedback following school-based workshops.

The consultation to date is in its first phase. In total, 3349 teachers participated in phase 1 of the consultation process.

This was a unique process in that, before preparing any draft of the framework, teachers were invited to give their initial views on their experience of learning. In that way, it enabled the profession to shape the first draft of the framework.

A summary of the issues emerging is set out in the scheme below:

Based on the feedback received during the first phase of the consultation, the Teaching Council has drafted a consultation paper introducing Cosán, its proposed framework for teachers' learning.

Cosán, a framework for teachers' learning

The continuum of teacher training encapsulates initial teacher education, Droichead (the Irish word for brigde) and Cosán.
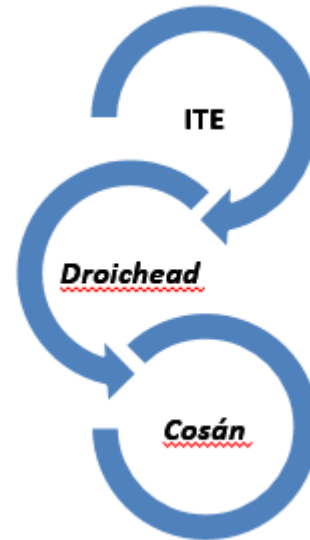

Cosán is the Irish word for "pathway". It reflects the idea that teachers' learning is essentially a journey, and one in which the act of travelling on that journey is more important than the destination. In other words, Cosán is about steady and ongoing progress, rather than elusive perfection. Teachers and all stakeholders with an interest in teachers' learning are now invited to provide their feedback on these proposals.

Cosán is based on the **core values** of

- ¬ Professional autonomy. Central to Cosán is a vision of teachers as professionals who take ownership of their professional development and steer the course of their own learning journeys.
- ¬ Flexibility. CPD should be linked to teachers' needs and pupils' needs and differentiated to suit the culture and context of teachers' work.
- ¬ Relevance and quality. A frequent criticism of CPD programmes is that they treat teachers' professional development as an activity distinct from teachers' daily work, which both limits its effectiveness and restricts the opportunities for schools to benefit from teachers' learning.
- ¬ Accessibility. It is vital that appropriate opportunities for professional learning must be accessible to teachers. The principle of accessibility can be understood to incorporate a range of aspects including cost, time and geographical considerations. Effective school leadership, fostering a culture of professional learning and engagement at school level, is important.
- ¬ Acknowledgement. More than half of the responses from the consultation workshops with teachers reflected a belief that a lack

of recognition or accreditation contributed to a negative experience of CPD.
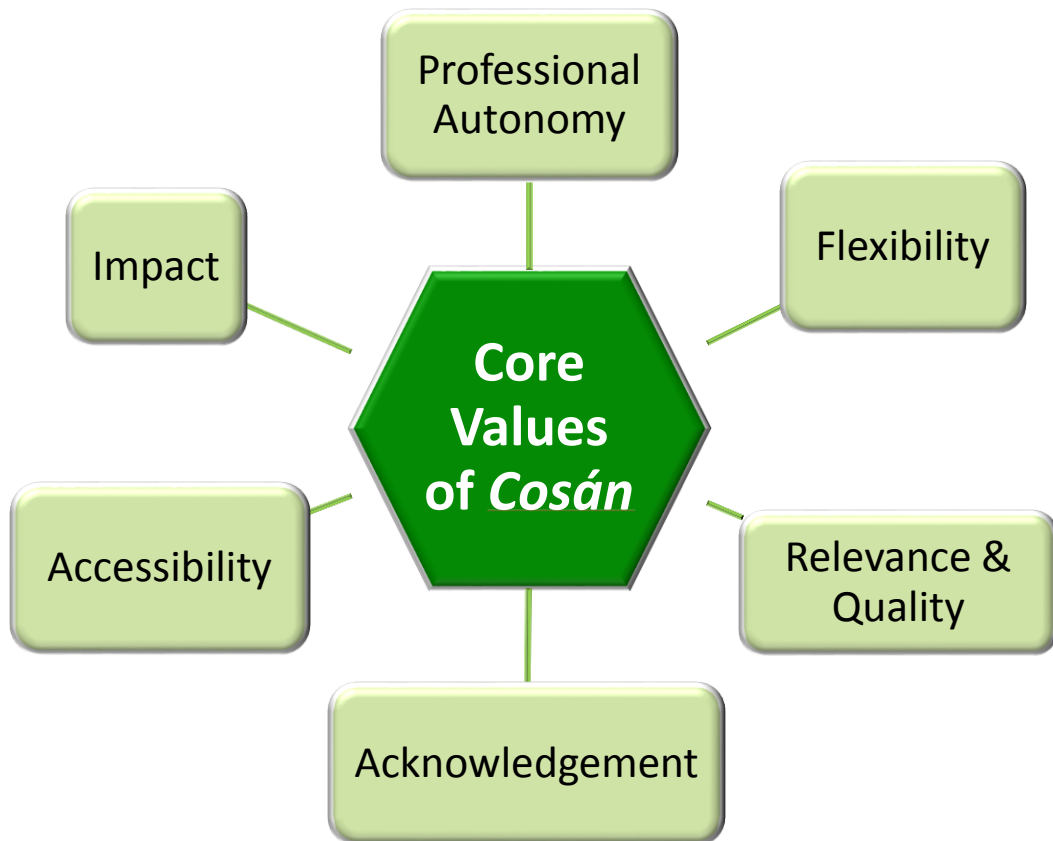
Dimensions of teachers' learning

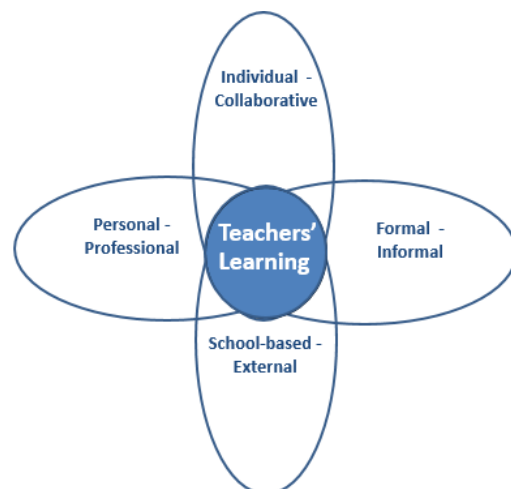Teachers' learning can be viewed as having the following four dimensions:

1. Formal and informal.

Teachers see informal as particularly valuable.

2. Personal and professional.

Teachers have a strong interest in both and suggested that they are inextricably linked. Cosán will need to recognise this interconnectedness.

3. Collaborative and individual.

Cosán is based on the premise that while teachers involved in collaboration are working towards shared professional goals, each will have identified a personalised learning pathway towards those goals. These pathways overlap (school-based learning, professional learning event) and it's at those points of intersection that teachers can strike an appropriate balance between the enhancement of their own practice and the creation of dynamic professional learning communities.

4. 4. School-based and external.

Teachers see value in both.

Teachers' learning processes and priority areas for learning

The figure below highlights the **types of learning processes** in which teachers currently engage, drawing on a review of the literature and the feedback from teachers as part of the consultation process.

It is intended that, in planning their personalised learning pathways, teachers would choose a combination of learning processes which best meet their learning needs in a range of areas including, but not limited to, the priority areas identified in the figure below. It is proposed that these **priority learning areas** would be reviewed by Council from time to time, in consultation with the profession and other stakeholders.

Standards to guide learning and reflection

Professional standards are central to all of the Council's work. Cosán envisages that teachers' learning journeys would be guided by standards which would facilitate teachers, as individuals or collectively, in:

- ¬ reflecting critically on their teaching and their learning, and the relationship between them;
- ¬ identifying areas for further professional learning;
- ¬ planning for their learning;
- ¬ celebrating their learning experiences and accomplishments.

The Council is proposing the following three standards to guide teachers' learning:

- ¬ Teachers demonstrate a sustained commitment to quality teaching and learning
- ¬ Teachers demonstrate a commitment to continued professional growth
- ¬ Teachers demonstrate a commitment to practising professionally, and to sustaining that level of professionalism over a prolonged period.

The Council has developed a number of indicators of good practice which may be considered by teachers for the purposes outlined above.

Quality Assurance processes

Through Cosán, the Teaching Council, as the professional standards body for teaching in Ireland, is seeking to provide reassurance to the profession and the public that teachers are engaging in lifelong learning. The Teaching Council must also give reassurance, through the national framework, about the quality of that learning. Its accreditation role will be a key element in that regard.

The Teaching Council's role in assuring quality involves:

- ¬ Developing the framework;
- ¬ Establishing standards and indicators of good practice;
- ¬ Developing procedures and systems for recording learning;
- ¬ Accrediting programmes.
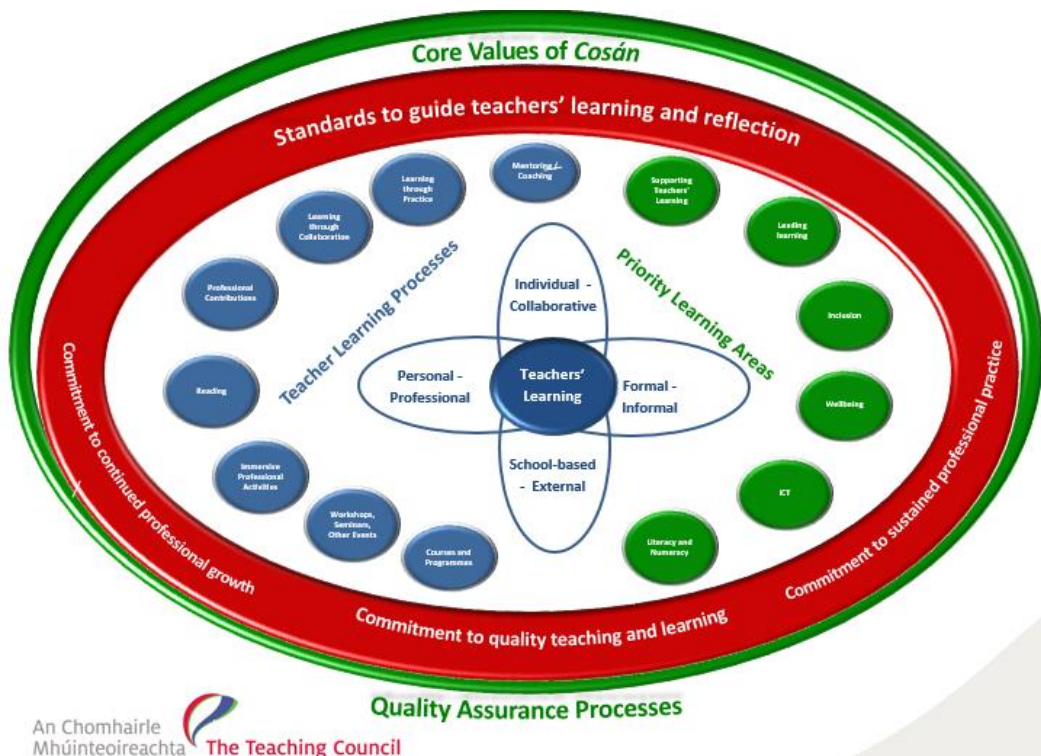
IN TEACHERS THEY TRUST – HOW TO IMPROVE TEACHERS' COMPETENCES THROUGH PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IN FINLAND?

Anneli Rautiainen

Anneli Rautiainen, Master of Education, is Head of Unit of Basic Education and Early Childhood Education at the Finnish National Board of Education.

FNBE is a national development agency responsible for the development of pre-primary, basic, general upper secondary, vocational upper secondary and adult education. FNBE is subordinate to the Ministry of Education and Culture and its tasks and organization are set in the legislation.

Anneli´s main duties consist of coordinating the annual decision-making and developing processes of early childhood education and basic education in Finland. She is also responsible of state-funded continuing professional development (CPD) of Finnish teachers and principals and coordination of cooperation with institutions representing both teachers' initial education and their professional learning. Her responsibilities also consist of development and coordination of education provider´s development plan and facilitation of Lighthouse school innovation network in Finland. She has a long background in education having worked as a teacher and principal prior to the position at the FNBE.

Anneli has been a speaker at various international conventions and has been a member of international education networks such as International School Connection, Global Education Leaders´ Program and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation´s ITE international network.

Introduction

What kind of citizens does Finland need in the future?

- ¬ Active and innovative;
- ¬ Committed in the community;
- ¬ International and multilingual;
- ¬ Creative and good in practicing their competences;
- ¬ Appreciative and respectful for others;
- ¬ Critical and analytical;
- ¬ Multi-skilled experts and lifelong learners;
- ¬ Confident and future-oriented;
- ¬ Interactive and cooperative.

Finnish government objectives

Finland is a country that encourages people to continuously learn something new. Finland is in the vanguard of education, skills and modern learning techniques. Finland has a young, 33-years old new Minister of Education. The government term is four years. Learning environments are being modernised and the opportunities offered by digitalisation and new pedagogical approaches are grasped in learning.

Key projects in basic education are supported by the government:

- The introduction of digital learning environments;
- New pedagogical approaches will be introduced;
- Development projects for initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional learning (CPL)will be launched;
- Classroom management and working culture will be improved;
- Regional projects will be launched to expand the range of languages, beginning the study in grade one;
- Access to art and culture services will be facilitated.

Rethinking competences

The world is changing rapidly. How is education reaction? There are two options: education can sit, wonder and wait. Or education can take the lead, which is what is happening in Finland. Competences are being retaught in the National Core Curricula (NCC) in 2014. The most important shift is moving from what to learn to how to learn.

The image on the next page offers a typology of seven competences, essential for the development as a human being and as a citizen:

Teacher education

What do we know?

There is a gap between teacher education and reality, which causes problems for starting teachers during the first working year. (Blomberg 2008)

The individual development goals of teachers do not meet the development strategies of educational institutes and municipalities.

Only 14.5 per cent of all teachers have a personal training and development plan. (Teachers in Finland 2013)

As far as participation of teaching staff in the development of professional competence is concerned, a comparison of the number of participants in basic education and general upper secondary education is presented as an example. The graph shows (for 2012, source: Teachers in Finland 2013) that four out of five, or 80%, of the teaching staff have attended continuing education (teachers and directors of educational institutions. There is a significant change in attendance from 2008 when various training was attended by 68% of teachers and directors.

	Basic education	General upper secondary education
Principals	87.6%	89.5%
Full-time teachers	82.3%	84.4%
Special class teachers	80.0%	

Four areas of development are identified:

- ¬ Pupils' learning;
- ¬ Competence of the personnel;
- ¬ Sustainable well-being;
- ¬ Leadership.

Each development area is divided further into smaller, more specific areas of development.

Challenges in the light of statistics

- ¬ One-third of all Science and English teachers are 50 years old or older.
- ¬ According to teachers, coping and staying at work can be strengthened through the means of continuing education, peer support, mentoring and job guidance, and by developing the entire working community.
- ¬ Teachers are used to be in the centre of learning. They should not be afraid of letting go the control. At first, it might lead to chaos, but in the end it will allow more attention for each individual pupil.

Starting points for an actual change

Developing the competence of the teaching staff and having them committed to the development are central issues in order to produce actual changes. When changing teachership, the following principles are key:

- ¬ Teachers are experts in and activators of learning (from subject to activator);
- ¬ Students are in the centre of their learning (building their learning and recognizing their style of learning);
- ¬ The school acts as a learning community (joint teachership/team teaching);
- ¬ Pedagogic leadership is functional (the principal and leadership team leading the learning process);
- ¬ The entire surrounding community is present.

The Finnish National Board of Education provides the schools with

- ¬ A tool for strategic planning for the education providers;
- ¬ An orientation folder for educational institutions;

- Professional development plans for teachers
  - Development plans for starting teachers
  - Development plans for acting teachers

The goal of professional learning

The goal of professional learning is that teaching staff training develops pedagogical and professional competence, which, at best, leads to new pedagogical thinking and activities, a change in the working culture, joint learning (team teaching), competence sharing, wellbeing at work, individual development and the development of the entire working community.

For new schools, new pedagogies and new learning, development plans at all levels are required (government level, municipal level, school level). A new core curriculum needs to be designed. A network of development schools is set up: 108 schools and 38 municipalities meet regularly; this is a bottom up initiative, leading to schools defining their priorities.

An inspiring example

The 'lighthouse' is an example of a professional learning network. It enables cooperative learning. It works as a structure for cooperation. It encourages to goal oriented development and to experiment activities. It helps to spread out the development actions and results.

This is the list of the development themes within the Lighthouse network:

- Pupils´ wellbeing and motivation, improving learning outcomes;
- Pupil participation;
- Pedagogy and teaching methods;
- Joint teaching, cooperation;
- Teacher competencies and wellbeing;
- Learning environments;
- Structure of schooldays and teaching arrangements;
- School culture;
- Technology;
- Leadership.

Statements

EUNEC formulated critical remarks and statements on the issue leading teachers' learning. EUNEC wants to disseminate these statements pro-actively to the European Commission, the European Parliament and relevant DG's. EUNEC also wants to promote action by its members at national/regional level. These statements can contribute to the national advisory opinions of education councils. They should lead to reflection and action by relevant stakeholders in the field of education and training, such as providers of education, teacher trade unions, social partners, students, parents and experts in the field of education and training.

Introduction

Teachers are the most crucial factor in maintaining and raising the quality of the education and training system. They are at the heart of the pedagogical process. Therefore the theme of the teaching profession is present in every EUNEC debate: how to attract, educate, maintain, coach and stimulate talented professionals during their careers as teachers?

The conference on 'Leading teachers' learning'[11] focused on sharing policy experiences and practices related to continuous professional development of teachers. The conference reflected on what the concept of the teacher as a reflective practitioner means for leading the learning of teachers. What are the main features and levers to allow teachers to develop as professionals, at system level, at school level and within the personal development of each individual teacher? A second point of view is the teacher within the school as a professional learning organization.

This working theme valorises the findings of the EUNEC conference in Vilnius (2008)[12], focusing on changes, challenges and perspectives for the teaching profession.

Definition and contexts

'**Professional development is the lifelong process of learning and development resulting from teachers' meaningful interactions with their professional contexts**'[13].

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[11] Leading teachers' learning, Dublin, 21-22 September 2015
[12] The teaching profession: changes, challenges and perspectives, Vilnius, 2008
[13] Professor Geert Kelchtermans, presenting at the Dublin conference

Learning needs of teachers are always situated in and motivated from the actual context, and the learning results need to be transferred to that context.

- ¬ System level. The vision and purposes for education at system level strongly influence the professional work of the teachers. The format of curriculum specifications, the knowledge, skills and concepts articulated have a deep impact on teachers' practices and development needs. Take a whole system approach and start from an overarching vision to locate teacher learning in the wider context. Try to bridge the gap with initial teacher education.
- ¬ School level. Sustained professional learning demands individual and school development to go hand in hand. The strategic direction of the school and the whole school objectives influence teachers' learning. This direction is based on the outcomes of school evaluation, the conclusions of students' assessment, parental priorities.
- ¬ Teachers' level. Individual needs arising from reflection on practice; from areas of curriculum or pedagogy identified by the teacher as potential areas of specialism and expertise; from teachers' personal and professional interest; from external educational development; from engagement with research findings.

The framework for professional development will need to have an inherent flexibility to take account of all of these variables, while simultaneously enabling the needs of the pupils, the teachers, the school and the system to be met. We cannot fall in the temptations of applying the same model in all contexts. The specificity of each context has to be analysed and flexible decisions have to be made.

> *From Continuous Professional Development as a compulsory number of hours of formal in-service training organized by external providers to continuous collaborative learning in the school*

Professional development is broader than formal in-service training

In the heads, professional development used to be limited to formal in-service training, organized by 'traditional' providers: local or municipal authorities, national authorities, higher education institutes and teacher education providers, education consultants. However, the international TALIS survey[14] as well as the particular school[15] show that teacher learning that is embedded in the school context, and in which teachers collaborate with their same-school colleagues, which focuses on problems of practice and utilises real student work and curriculum examples, has positive impact on teachers' classroom practices.

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[14] OECD (2015), "Embedding Professional Development in Schools for Teacher Success", *Teaching in Focus*, No. 10, OECD Publishing, Paris.
[15] Visit to Colaste Bride Clondalkin at the occasion of the Dublin conference

When teachers have to report on the professional development they took part in, they often only mention formal professionalization activities. However, good professional development should encompass at least four dimensions of teachers' learning:

- ¬ Individual/collaborative
- ¬ Formal/informal
- ¬ Personal/professional
- ¬ School-based/external

It should be noted that the four dimensions are not mutually exclusive, and can combine and overlap to create an array of different learning opportunities. For example, formal learning can be either collaborative or individual, and learning opportunities often incorporate collaborative and individual elements, such as a workshop involving an individual reflection piece. Equally, collaborative learning can be formal and informal, while school-based and external learning can each be simultaneously personal and professional.

The teacher as a reflective practitioner

The idea of the teacher taking charge and shaping his or her own profession is relatively new. Teachers are more and more considered as lead agents of their own professional learning, and not as executors of others' decisions.

The idea of the teacher as a reflective practitioner[16] remains strong, although the concept 'reflection' is becoming victim of its own success. Broad and deep reflection as a natural attitude is an essential condition for professional development to be professionalizing. The four dimensions of reflection are ideally included: What and how (technical dimension)? Why (moral dimension)? What do I feel (emotional dimension)? In whose interest (political dimension)[17].

The teacher's reflective practice allowing collegial reflection within the school as a learning organization

Professional reflection can enable professional reflection in team and help build schools as learning organizations. In this sense, schools and teachers are the main providers of professional development, developing publicly shared and critically grounded professional reflection, based on practice. Schools and teachers share practices among the teaching team as a community of practice. Teaching is improved using appraisal and feedback.

Allowing teachers to work together collegially supports improvement in learning and teaching. Spaces where teachers can learn and enhance their professional status need to be created, in order to build their capacity to address these curricular and day-to-day challenges, and in order to allow them to lead more effective teaching and learning. Positive interpersonal relationships can help teachers be more successful in challenging circumstances. They are also related

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[16] The reflective practitioner, Donald Schön, 1983
[17] ALACT model of reflective practice, Korthagen et al., 2001.

to higher levels of teachers' job satisfaction and self-efficacy[18]. The more frequently that teachers report participating in collaborative practices with their colleagues, the higher their level of self-efficacy and job satisfaction[19].

At best, it leads to new pedagogical thinking and activities, a change in the working culture, joint learning (team teaching), competence sharing, wellbeing at work, individual development and the development of the entire working community.

For all these reasons, collaborative reflection should be at the heart of teachers' learning. And the potential of the school as the primary locus of teacher learning and development needs to be exploited.

There is need for recognition of the daily practice of exchange and cooperation in schools.

> "*Teachers need an outlet to showcase what they have achieved. Schools are good at celebrating the successes of their students, but are still reticent about applauding the successes of teachers … Let us see a celebration of what we have achieved. Let it feel prestigious and let it hold value. Let us find ways to link up research projects across the country and expand the dialogue … Creative professional development deserves to be acknowledged and applauded*."[20]

This does not mean, of course, that exchange should be limited to same-school colleagues. Technology offers quasi unlimited opportunities for the development of blended learning models of professional development and for the creation of learning communities larger than school. Virtual learning environments can offer the advantages of transparency, immediate feedback and distributed leadership in cooperative endeavours.

Impacting on teacher beliefs and behaviours through professional development requires higher-order leadership of learning.

Professional development as described is of a higher order level, it is a journey undertaken by school leaders and teachers, supported sometimes by external providers. It thus requires higher order leadership. It is a challenge to cherish the moments of spontaneous exchange between teachers.

School leaders have to give literally space and time (out of the contact hours) for collaborative and reflective practice; this has to be embedded in the schedule and the culture of the school. The time dedicated outside of the contact hours on professional development should be acknowledged. Habits of professional reflection and evidence-based practice among teachers have to be

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[18] TALIS 2013 results, presented by Katarzyna Kubacka at the Dublin conference
[19] Ibidem
[20] Owen, 2014, from the presentation by Fergal McCarthy at the Dublin conference

embedded and instilled from the start. Structured initiatives and school organizational routines such as school self-evaluation or arrangements for classroom-based assessment can facilitate collegial reflection.

 "If I want to grow as a teacher I need my school leader in a way a student needs his teacher"[21]

Quality control and effectiveness measurement

How will the quality of professional development be ensured? How can funders be assured of value for money and a positive return on investment of resources? A national framework can bring coherence and ensure alignment with strategic priorities. Teachers' views, students' views and schools' views have to be incorporated in assessing.

It is crucial, when assessing, to take into account that learning is, fundamentally, a journey, and one in which the act of travelling on that journey is more important than the destination. In other words, professional development is about steady and ongoing progress, rather than elusive perfection[22].

TALIS shows that, regardless of the content, over ¾ of the teachers report that the professional development in which they have participated had a positive impact on their teaching. However, effectiveness is not easy to evaluate. Criteria to judge are far from evident, and effects take time. It is important, when measuring effectiveness, to document, interpret, judge and conclude, rather than to adopt and build on simplistic effect measurement.

Responsibility is more than accountability

The starting assumption needs to be that teachers are professionals, and that they have to be trusted as professionals. Professional development courses should not tell the teachers how they should work. Professional development seen as a remedy for professional insufficiency is rather de-professionalizing. In this sense, imposing a minimum hours of professional development to teachers is questioning the professional commitment of the teacher.

Motivation and passion

We might have well-constructed policies on professional development, we might have a budget and time to spend, these are all external means. What is needed, is teachers who are truly motivated to work on their professional development. That is why we should not accept the business language to take over the unique language of education. Meaningful education is about relationships, about connectedness, trust and confidence.

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[21] Femke Cools, presenting at the Dublin conference
[22] Cosàn,Irish for journey

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