



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

Entep Coordination Note/2/November 2006

XVII ENTEPE SEMINAR – Helsinki - 21-23 September, 2006

The autumn meeting of ENTEPE took place in Helsinki, Finland, on September 21 and 23. On September 22 a conference on **QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MOBILITY IN TEACHER EVALUATION** took place at Helsinki University. The event was organised by a team from the Finnish Ministry of Education and the University of Helsinki led by Armi Mikkola.

I Conference on QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MOBILITY IN TEACHER EVALUATION

The report on the conference follows the agenda of the event and is partly based on a report by Venla Märkälä and Henrik Hakala.

In his opening speech Markku Mattila, Director, Ministry of Education, discussed the importance of quality assurance and mobility in teacher education for the development of both European countries and the individual teacher. He focused on the Finnish approach, which emphasizes evaluative methods and competence improvement and discussed the different approaches of various EU member states, which all recognized that quality is a requirement of mobility.

Jarkko Hautamäki, Dean of the Faculty of Behavioural Sciences at Helsinki University, warned that teachers should be aware of problems arising from students' different family backgrounds which reflect current problems in society. He brought up the need for trust in teachers and the education system. Despite the fact that all EU member states need to protect their own interests, he stressed the need for cooperation to solve problems in education.



Quality assurance in teacher education, keynote by *Prof. Hannele Niemi, Vice- Rector, University of Helsinki*

In a knowledge-driven economy competitiveness is essential to produce well-being for all EU members. Prof. Niemi recognized the interdependence of education and democracy, social justice, equality and legitimacy: a change in any of these fields may have an effect on the other elements. The three factors she saw as being central to education were society, knowledge and human beings. She also distinguished between a program level and an institutional level in quality assurance.

According to Aloni 2002, teachers are seen as public intellectuals: “As public intellectuals, teachers have a right and an obligation to articulate educational needs and challenges in the society they serve. They also have to be essential parts in public debates and decisions affecting the development of schools and education. There must be an interaction between national and local authorities and teachers, either individually or collectively.”

An international group of experts has drawn up recommendations to be proposed to all EU member states: [Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications](#). The text describes teacher education as a graduate profession, a profession placed within the context of lifelong learning, a mobile profession and a profession based on partnership.

Prof. Niemi said that the “welfare and economy of society is decisively dependent on educational outcomes, which have a strong relationship with teachers’ competences.” There are a number of moral aspects connected with teaching and the teachers play a key role in the preparation of all members of society for change on various levels. On these grounds the accountability of teachers is high and quality assurance is the professional standard.

The conceptual model for quality assurance for teachers’ career-long development presented a vertical and a horizontal dimension of teacher education. The horizontal dimension follows the career path from “admission” to “initial teacher education” to “orientation to a new school

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community” to “in-service teacher education”. The components of the vertical dimension are

- Meta-knowledge of teaching and learning for LLL
- Academic and pedagogical knowledge; pathways to cultural richness and understanding
- Social and moral code of the teaching profession
- Reflection – development of the profession
- Practical skills for the profession.

At various stages in the career, different components from the vertical dimension will be highlighted, but they should be present in all stages to some degree.

Prof. Niemi was asked about the idea of trust in quality assurance, which she acknowledged as the basis for teacher education as a continuous process. Trust grows with good results which, in turn, create more trust. This trust is to be achieved through interaction between actors both inside and outside the school.

Views on the quality of teacher education. Employers', teachers', students' and evaluators' perspectives

Susanna Kahelin, Vice-chairman, Teacher Student Union of Finland - SOOL

Kahelin discussed quality assurance and mobility in teacher education from the students' point of view, emphasizing the need to see the student as an individual requiring flexibility in their studies. A sensible and logical structure as well as proper guidance is needed in teacher education to equip the student with proper tools for their teaching career.

Staff who follow up on the developments in their own field, and take part in research were seen as a basic requirement for good quality teacher education.

“Feedback is a major part of quality control and the acquired knowledge should be used to develop the study plans and teaching. Students should be aware of the criteria by which the faculty evaluates itself. Students should be involved in this developmental work and they should thus be included in all decision making concerning teacher training. Hearing the student’s perspective should be a part of the constant development process.” (Kahelin)

Juha Henriksson, Senior advisor, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities

Henriksson gave an overview of the role of municipalities in the Finnish education system. 20% of the Finnish workforce is employed by the public sector, out of which 27% work in education and culture. He stressed the importance of a Master's degree as a qualification for teaching, which plays an important role in quality assurance in Finland. He felt that more communication was necessary between pre-service and in-service teacher education.

Tuula Hirvonen, Member of the executive board, Trade Union of Education in Finland - OAJ

Hirvonen pointed out the importance of research-based teacher education and the regulation of qualifications to assure that degrees and qualifications are comparable and recognized throughout the European Union. She referred to the combination of a Master's degree and pedagogical studies as being a double insurance which diminishes the need for external certification.

Prof. Riitta Pyykkö, Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council - FINHEEC

Prof. Pyykkö explained how national evaluations, which are planned together with institutions, are based on development and thus improvement in the educational field. She saw knowledge as a global market, in which knowledge can be imported and exported for effective use; she acknowledged a need for more intercultural competency.

Common structures and principles in promoting mobility in teacher education

Prof. Hautamäki opened the discussion with the view that networks, communication and mobility are crucial for the EU's usefulness regarding teacher education.

As the floor was opened to discussion, it was noted that ENTEP was based on the principle of mobility, where the participants learnt something important about European educational systems everywhere they went. From Finland, the participants felt that they had learnt something valuable about the element of trust in the Finnish educational system, allowing its success. Two steps were suggested. Firstly, to increase the citizens' trust in their national

education systems and their schools; and secondly, to develop trust in the systems of other European countries. This would prepare the ground for increased mobility of teachers across Europe whereas a number of obstacles remain to be targeted: language, salaries, pension schemes, social security, and health insurance to name the most obvious ones.

Although participation in research is welcome, if not expected from Finnish teachers alongside their profession, there seemed to be no official time budget for this and teachers would have to invest a lot of their own time for research

II ENTEP meeting

The ENTEP meeting in Helsinki was mainly devoted to the discussion of the two big issues of Continuous Professional Development and the structural effects of the Bologna Declaration. An important point on the agenda was the presentation of current issues at commission level by Paul Holdsworth.

Presentation of current issues at European Commission – Paul Holdsworth

1. Development of a European Indicator of Teachers' CPD.

The Commission has worked very closely with OECD to help make sure that their up-coming Teachers Survey will gather the data that can be most useful to EU and Member States in developing a European Indicator to measure progress towards objectives for Teachers' CPD (which is a long-standing commitment within the framework of the Education and Training 2010 process).

2. Study on Teacher Mobility and teacher numbers in EU

This was commissioned from external consultants by the unit responsible for Indicators and Benchmarks. The final report should be available in October. Though the consultants found it hard to get data on all countries, there were some interesting findings: there should not be a major shortage of teachers in EU as a whole (as had been feared), though some individual countries may experience

shortages in some subjects or for some age groups; there may even be a surplus of teachers in some countries by 2014; but moves to decrease the pupil-teacher ratio and moves to increase participation in ISCED 3 (which is an EU objective) could create greater demand for teachers and make shortages more likely; teacher mobility is very low – still – even for language teachers; many countries train more teachers than they employ, so there are many 'dormant' teachers...

3. Cluster Teachers and Trainers'

This continues to work well and has held a very interesting Peer Learning Activity in NL concerning 'Schools as a Learning Community for teachers as well as for pupils'; future topics include the relationships between TE institutions and the schools to which they send trainees, School Leadership, and Preparing teachers for working in heterogeneous classrooms (with children from different races, cultures, religions, ability levels ...)

4. Communication from the European Commission - Equity and Efficiency in Education Systems

This has recently been published; it builds on PISA data showing that it is possible to have education systems that are effective AND equitable; implications for Teacher Education?...

5. Recommendation on Key Competences

This is in the final stage of negotiations with Parliament and Council; It proposes a framework of 8 competences for lifelong learning; it is interesting to ask what impact this will have on Teacher Education, for example: how can we train (all?) teachers to teach the so-called 'transversal competences' such as learning to learn, or entrepreneurship?

6. Proposed Public Consultation and Proposed Commission Communication on Modernising the School in Europe

The Commission plans to launch a public consultation to gather the views of stakeholders about the key issues in modernising the school – which issues can best be tackled at EU level, respecting subsidiarity, etc?

The plan is that the Consultation should also cover Teacher Education. It should be launched by the end of 2007; the aim would be for the Commission to produce a Communication by the end of 2008 that sets out a vision of the School in Europe for the medium term.

7. (Proposed Recommendation on) Improving the Quality of Teacher Education

The publication of this Recommendation, which draws on much important work by experts in all countries, (work which produced the Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications) has been delayed. It is now proposed to be published after the consultation on the School has taken place – probably in the first half of 2007. There is some concern at the Commission that Member States may not see the need for such a Recommendation in such a sensitive field.

ENTEP will get updated information on the developments in these fields.

Continuous Professional Development

Lucien Kerger (LUX) and Ursula Uzerli (GER) resented the issues clearly and the broad discussion clarified a number of points that still had been left open. It was agreed that a final draft of the text should be available to all ENTEP members three weeks before the Vilnius meeting.

Teacher education structures and the Bologna process - Convergence or new diversity? - Apostolis Dimitropoulos

A number of issues needed clarification in this face-to-face meeting. It is hoped that a text on primary and pre-primary education structures in Europe will be available in time for the next meeting.

Meanwhile, a questionnaire on secondary education is being filled in by the members of the network. Apostolis Dimitropoulos (GR) will analyse the data and present results at the next meeting in May 2007.

III Other ENTEP business

Coordination group

On Thursday, September 21, the members of the coordination group had a meeting where the following points were discussed:

- There should be a half-day meeting of the coordination group in Vilnius on Thursday, May 10, 9.30 – 12.30.
- The representatives from the two countries hosting the next conferences should be temporary members of the coordination group. Along with the nominated coordinator in the year previous to his or her term of office, the following representatives are invited to attend the meeting: Campos (PT), Gassner (A; chair), Jansen (NL), Kerger (LUX), Opincans (LAT), Pucko (SLO), Speiciene (LIT), Uzerli (GER).
- It was agreed that the job of coordinator of the network will in future be re-defined in conjunction with that of the hosting partner. It seems feasible to get the coordination notes written up by the host and then disseminated by the coordinator. When ENTEP is invited to take part in other events as a stakeholder, a substitute may be nominated. Finally, the website could be delegated to another country.
- It was agreed that the final draft text on CPD should be available three weeks before the Vilnius conference, i.e. around the middle of April 2007, so that the final version can be made available at Vilnius.
- New topics were listed:
 - Entry conditions for student teachers
 - Personality development in teacher education programmes
 - Types of teachers in EU countries (e.g. AST, expert teacher)

RECENT NATIONAL DOCUMENTS

Two very interesting texts have been offered to ENTEP by the representative from Portugal, Prof. Bártolo Campos. The texts are available on the ENTEP website.

[Text 1: The Balance Between Higher Education Autonomy and Public Quality Assurance](#)

The article analyses the process of development of the Portuguese accreditation system showing that this was a political and cultural process rather than merely a rational and technical one. Effects of public pressure on the higher education institutions are discussed as well as the ways that the numerous stakeholders interacted before the government decided to put the accreditation system on stand by.

[Text 2: The European Dimension of Teacher Education: A Policy Agenda](#)

The article identifies two main points of a policy agenda related to the European dimension of teacher education. This dimension arises from the European dimension of education curricula and from the existence of a European education and employment area; it implies both a European curriculum for teacher education and the assurance of comparability of teaching qualifications throughout the European area. Two priorities are outlined for such a policy agenda. Firstly, a European profile of teaching competences and qualifications is to be defined. Such a profile would, on the one hand, design those competences needed to ensure the teaching of a curriculum aimed at European citizenship education, as well as at European economic, social and political development; on the other hand, it would be a common European reference for the development of teacher education programmes leading to teaching qualifications comparable as to the learning outcomes and to the academic degree they confer. Secondly, assurance systems of comparability of teaching qualifications obtained in several Member States are to be developed or consolidated.

➤ NEXT ENTEP SEMINARS

(i) Lithuania: Vilnius: 10-13 May 2007

(ii) Portugal: October 2007

(iii) Slovenia: May 2008

The next ENTEP meeting and conference will take place in Vilnius from May 10 to May 13, 2007 on the topic of "School Leadership". The conference will be organised by the Lithuanian Ministry of Education.

➤ RECENT CHANGES OF ENTEP MINISTERS' REPRESENTATIVES

Martin Lally, Ireland, left the network as a promotion at home implied a change in his field of work. ENTEP would like to thank him for his valuable contributions to the work of the network.

➤ MEMBERSHIP

At the moment Italy and Poland are not represented in the network, and the membership of Belgium and Hungary is inactive.

A special welcome also to the substitute who was present at the Helsinki meeting: Mercedes Bravo-Canicero from Spain.

➤ ENTEP'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS

As a stakeholder, ENTEP was invited to participate in a special session of the **Education and Training Coordination Group in Brussels –October 6, 2006**. The meeting on the 5th and 6th of October 2006 was dedicated to assessing the progress of Member States in putting in place coherent and comprehensive lifelong learning strategies by 2006. This follows the recommendations of the 2004 Joint Interim Report and the 2004 spring European Council Conclusions. A special session of this meeting on 6 October 2006 included a dialogue between the ETCG Members and key European stakeholders in education and training.

While the involvement of stakeholders at a national level in both the design and implementation of national lifelong learning strategies was considered

crucial to their coherence, comprehensiveness and their overall success in setting the strategic direction of education and training, evidence for actual involvement of stakeholders is varied. Generally, the need for early and continued involvement of stakeholders has been recognised.

The Plenary discussion focused on the involvement and consultation of stakeholders in developing LLL strategies with these four questions as guidelines:

- What has been the experience of stakeholders' involvement in the process so far at a national level?
- How have countries involved/consulted stakeholders?
- What co-ordination mechanisms have been put in place by countries on national and regional levels?
- Are there any lessons to be learnt for the future involvement of stakeholders in the development of LLL strategies?

ENTEPE has also been invited to take part in the EAEA Annual Event with the thematic Conference "Communication on Adult Learning" in Avilés, Asturias, Spain from November 16 to 19. ENTEPE will be represented by the co-ordinator.

Otmar Gassner
ENTEPE Coordinator