



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

XXII. ENTEPE Conference in Madrid

I.

The ENTEPE Meeting, March 14 - 15 took place during the Spanish Presidency of the European Union and the national Conference was held in Madrid on March 16–18, 2010 on “Models of ICT integration in Education”. The Ministry of Education organised this conference “Modelos de integración de las TIC en Educación” as one of the events of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The organisers stressed the fact that it is especially important “that European countries meet the challenge of adequately introducing ICT into our educational systems in ways which satisfy the needs of our younger generations”.

The discussions among participants was hoped to make an extraordinary important contribution to fostering future cooperation in the area of education and teacher training. The conference offered a common ground and provided the opportunity to promote active dialogues among the attendees from different Member States of the European Union.

Sharing and exchanging various points of view and good practice on the envisioned topic, and the establishment of common recommendations as well as the future implementation of ICT in education, was planned to be one of the main aspects of this meeting.

The conference was intended for a European audience with policy makers and experts in the integration of ICT in education and in teacher training. A wide range of international models was presented and impressive practice examples were multiplied.

II. ENTEPE internal meeting

1.

“Continuous Professional Development (CPD) as a lifelong process in the continuum of EU teacher education – individual participation, partnerships and systemic approaches.” CPD has been a working theme for quite some time in ENTEPE and its various implications and components have implicitly been connected to the topic of the vision of a European Teacher, the new role of School Leaders and the lifelong process of professionalization including a systemic induction phase and continuing qualifying phases on the job.

For several years now studies on the improvement of students’ / pupils’ performance, the so called ‘outcome discussion’, have come up with findings



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

that leave no doubt about the close correlation between the professional development of teachers and increased student achievement.

Just lately the importance of the teaching profession was also highlighted at an Informal Ministerial Meeting in Gothenburg in September 2009 under the Swedish Presidency of the EU¹ and this was followed by the adoption of new Council Conclusions on the professional development of teachers and school leaders.

These Conclusions further develop and extend the European agenda for improving the quality of teaching and teacher education that was set out in Conclusions of November 2007, and developed in the Conclusions of 2008. The fact that teachers have been the subject of Council Conclusions in three consecutive years highlights the growing importance that Ministers attach to improving Teacher Education systems.

Taking these Council Conclusions together with those of 2008 and 2007, we now have a fairly comprehensive understanding of Ministers' priorities for improving Teacher Education. They want to:

1. Promote professional values and attitudes in the teaching profession (including a culture of reflective practice, autonomous learning, engagement with research, and

collaboration with colleagues.

2. Improve teacher competencies, making sure that they possess the necessary pedagogical skills to teach their own subjects and the transversal key competences, including in heterogeneous classes and making the best use of ICT.
3. Make recruitment and selection more effective, to attract and retain the best candidates for an attractive teaching profession.
4. Improve the quality of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) which should provide a Higher Education qualification and should balance research-based studies and teaching practice.
5. Introduce Induction programmes to provide professional and personal support ('induction') for all beginning teachers, during their first years in the profession.
6. Provide teachers throughout the career with enough support to be effective.
7. Improve the quality and quantity of teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD) by enabling teachers to undertake regular reviews of their individual development needs and providing CPD that responds to those needs and is quality assured.
8. Improve recruitment to School Leadership posts; improve the training and development of school leaders, and lighten their

¹ Documents and presentations from the Gothenburg meeting can be found here:
http://www.se2009.eu/en/meetings_news/2009/9/23/informal_meeting_of_education_ministers



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

administrative load so that they focus their attention on improving the quality of teaching and learning in their schools.

9. Ensure the quality of Teacher Educators (Teacher Trainers) who should have solid practical teaching experience, good teaching competences and be of a high academic standard.
10. Improve Teacher Education Systems so that Initial Teacher Education, Induction and CPD are organised as a coordinated and coherent continuum, are adequately resourced and quality assured and respond to evolving needs. Educational mobility will be the rule, rather than the exception, for all teachers.

Given their relevance for policy review in general and as a constructive basis to intensify our further work under this topic, the new Council Conclusions provide us with a good opportunity to review the present situation in our Member States in this context.

In addition to the central place that CPD is given in this list of priorities, it will be noticed that almost every one of the priorities has a connection with continuing professional development. For example, CPD is where professional values and competences are strengthened and developed beyond the base laid during Initial Teacher Education; better quality CPD - and proper induction - will make the profession more attractive; and CPD can help teachers develop the leadership skills to the point where they may decide to become school leaders or Teacher

Educators.

According to this text, to achieve a high level of quality in teaching it is “essential not only to ensure that those recruited to teaching and school leadership posts are of the highest calibre and well-suited to the tasks they have to fulfil, but also **to provide the highest standard of initial education and continuing professional development for teaching staff at all levels**. This in turn will contribute to enhancing both the status and attractiveness of the profession.”² (Council Conclusions Nov. 2009)

Furthermore “it is essential that initial teacher education, early career support (‘induction’) and continuous professional education are treated as a coherent whole”. This is one of the very important systemic views we have highlighted in our ENTEP paper on CPD as well and have discussed in depth in several conferences.

The text also states that ‘**teachers themselves must become aware of and reflect on their own needs** for further professional expertise’, in the context of their specific school environment; this is another issue pointed out in the above mentioned ENTEP paper on CPD³.

In their preliminary contributions to this CPD topic, all ENTEP members involved had stressed the fact that teachers should take greater responsibility for their own

² The Council Conclusions can be found here: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:302:0006:0009:EN:PDF>

³ O. Gassner, L. Kerger, M. Schratz, 2010. The first ten years after Bologna. Bucharest, p. 105



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

continuous professional learning. At the same time, concern had been articulated about too few opportunities to participate in CPD programmes as well as the question of the relevance of these offers to individual needs.

The effective cooperation of teacher education institutions in this endeavour was an objective (as another condition for success) with the sector of pedagogical research in higher education institutions and with schools; in particular the vision of schools as learning organisations or communities was generally agreed upon.

The following section highlights and summarises the discussion of ENTEP members during the conference in Madrid, which centred on the following questions:

Is there a common European mental picture on CPD?

1. How are teachers encouraged to review their work continuously?
 - Are they encouraged at all?
 - If so, how...by whom?
 - If not, who could or should take the lead for such action in your country?
(Self-evaluation / external evaluation / school leader...)
2. Do these actions or activities lead to any increase in the awareness for needs of CPD, of specific CPD
 - on the side of teachers
 - on the side of school heads
 - on the side of supervision bodies?
3. Do school leaders have opportunities to develop new competences in the area of detecting needs for CPD in their

staffs according to new skills they should further be able to gain? (CPD for school heads in this respect?)

4. Are all actors in the participating institutions of TE encouraged to enter a cooperation process for sharing knowledge about the latest developments in the field of TE?
 - to create transparency for a functioning continuum of ITE – IND – CPD with opportunities to feed back to the single institution to promote further systemic responses for the best of all partners
5. Is there awareness on the side of policy makers as well on that of teacher educators and schools that all these efforts may or even should also serve a need and an attempt for mobility within the EU?
 - on the one hand for the exchange of staff sharing knowledge
 - on the other to possibly cover lacks of teachers within the EU
6. In your national context, what can be done at no additional cost, to initiate about these changes?
- 7.

There are various international research findings about the modes for Professional Development and further learning of teachers and most of them stress the fact “(...) that teachers have not generally taken an active part in the production of knowledge about their own teaching”⁴.

How to motivate and encourage

⁴ Ibid.



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

teachers to become active in reflecting their own work, their classroom actions and their roles in a school setting is still a much-asked question in teacher education and CPD specifically. Teachers' personal theories and approaches, for instance their ways of defining and solving problems, their mindsets, their conceptions of what it is to be an effective teacher, inspire debate within a system like a school community. Such debates can be indicators of a lively learning organisation or of the obstacles to a cooperation process for the 'child's best'.

Because professionalization should also respond to the evolution of content and process, it is indeed meaningful to provide enough time and space for teachers to deepen their understanding of their personal beliefs and schemata and their effects on their practice.

In this respect, the most sensitive, and at the same time most challenging, aspect of CPD seems to be making the connection between internalised self images and concepts and new experiences; it raises the question of how to free up the energy to make this process coherent and sustainable.

At the level of decision makers and policy actors there still seems to be consensus in many countries that systemic inspection, with or without counselling, is still an instrument to be applied for selection rather than for encouragement and advising or even coaching. Such inspection often has consequences for the individual teacher and her/his career path but also for whole school communities; in many cases it deals with subject matter rather more than with

teachers' expertise in didactics and pedagogy. Accordingly, teachers' awareness of being 'experts in learning' seems to be higher in primary than in secondary education, where the focus is obviously still much more on the subject than on 'learning to learn'.

As studies are rare in these fields, strengthening the self concept of teachers as experts in learning in their specific subject fields and their general teaching role still must be one of the future objectives in schooling.

Reflecting a widespread image of education in Europe, many teachers still see themselves primarily as transmitting knowledge rather than supporting the construction of knowledge and creating an interesting and effective learning environment for individual learners. In this context, reflecting on their work does seem less attractive and less a professional habit; learning to learn and accompanying a learning process often still seem to fit more or less under marginal categories. But there is movement in the landscape, as the discussions with ENTEP members in Madrid brought to light.

Reflection is a new element that is very strongly implemented for instance in primary education in Luxemburg. Teachers there are ready to review and reflect on their individual work, while in the teacher training programmes teachers' reflection was introduced already in 1997.

In Sweden as another example, a new educational reform is being implemented. Teacher Education there follows an integrative approach (like for instance in



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

Germany) and scientific subject studies, pedagogy and didactics form a coherent curriculum. Therefore it is easier to introduce elements of reflection from a very early stage of studies, understanding professionalization as research based in all these fields.

In Cyprus an education reform is in process, with teachers being encouraged to reflect on their work. One outstanding example is the Induction Programme for Novice teachers (also in Estonia) where reflective and retrospective elements are important stages in the overall teacher education. In this concept, self-reflection is an important part within a framework, mainly focusing on the interaction between Novice Teacher and Mentor.

From the point of view of teacher education policies, **encouragement for reflection and review** might be better initiated by implementing transversal competences in the curriculum for student teachers and teachers in CPD, so that they are inspired to link their classroom practices with conceptual thinking and reflection on their work from the very beginning (Romania). Another way might be to have teachers work in teams or in tandems (Germany) and to encourage open schools with the participation and co-operation of the main stakeholders: parents, teachers, pupils (Netherlands). Such collaborative learning teams may be working according to many different models.

Considering the current discussion and papers (including the ENTEP CPD paper) intensifying teachers' ownership might be easier if they were increasingly included and involved in policy decisions and processes rather than being excluded

from the overall Gestalt Process in education reform: seeing them as subjects of change, action and creativity, rather than merely as objects; expecting them to become agents and actors of a reform process and anticipating their ability and willingness to engage in this and to enlighten it with their personal skills while they experience 'that they can do it'.

Beside the necessary policy conditions and frameworks for lifelong professionalization possibilities, **head teachers have an important and skilful role** in this whole endeavour. Merely making final recommendations as to whether a teacher has met or not met the core standards inside a specific local or national qualification system and the school reality does not seem sufficient and appropriate today.

It does not seem a sufficient condition for success for school leaders to inform teachers what needs should be achieved; rather, it is more effective to offer structured and progressively more challenging continuing professional development, based on each individuals' needs.

The question of whether and how school leaders are capable of identifying their staff's needs on an individual basis in the light of school profiles, school development and individual development plans for teachers, still remains a critical question.

Thus, the emphasis lies on promoting learning for school leaders (leaders for learning) and different countries are already moving in that direction. In Flanders there is an offer for special CPD



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

courses for School leaders while in Slovenia specific modules are offered during ITE.

Head teachers today are expected to possess an increasingly long list of competences, in comparison with former requirements for administrative or even management skills. Especially leaders of autonomous school environments are challenged to continuously develop competences during their lifelong career. Member States have adopted various approaches to help develop the skills of their current – and future – School Leaders. Some have established School Leadership academies (UK, Slovakia, Cyprus) or networks (Austria); others have established programmes for their training (Sweden), or professional development (Norway) or coaching (Netherlands, UK); in addition, Netherlands has adopted a professional registration approach, and some countries have projects that conceive of School Leaders (Germany - Hessen), or Educational leaders more widely (Austria), as agents for systemic change. Some countries (UK) have defined national standards for school leadership. In Belgium (Flanders) and UK, excellent school leaders are coaching and mentoring other school leaders.

It seems rather plausible that self-reflection alone does not automatically guarantee the awareness for individual needs for CPD; there is no correlation. Schools as learning organisations or communities do experience within their staff that the external view – systemic or individual – provides a long-lasting effect and somehow helps develop more awareness for reflection in various

domains of professionals in schools. Teams of teachers who provide ongoing support, which may even include personal coaching and classroom-practice reviews can really open up new dimensions on updating the implementation of new ways of learning and teaching.

Including student teachers during their practicum in such teams may have a double effect and serve as inspirational springboard for all participants. The Netherlands have reported such experiences during a Peer Learning on Schools as Learning Communities for their Teachers (The Netherlands, May 2006)⁵

The Dutch model showed clearly that it is more effective for teachers' professional development if there are systematic opportunities with conditions that allow change to happen with all partners involved in the field of TE; this also raises awareness of shared responsibility at each stage of TE and supports the approach of cooperation among the institutions involved with the possible effect that all partners in the school sector will value highly the establishment of a new learning culture while everyone is encouraged accordingly.

The group discussion in Madrid on the issue of **Cooperation among Teacher Education Institutions and schools** showed that in some countries there are experiences that University teachers in subject matters are not really interested in such cooperation and are therefore often

⁵ Final report of the 'Cluster Teachers and Trainers' on the Peer Learning Activity: Schools as learning communities for their teachers (2006)



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

not referred to (or do not see themselves) as teacher educators.

Rather those University teachers who are experts in learning such as in didactics, pedagogy or pedagogical psychology seem to be better integrated in such a vision of knowledge sharing, knowledge production and reflective practice. But to think that reflecting practice is an activity of lower academic quality would be to ignore the high level of metacognitive engagement and challenge in practice oriented research.

A cooperative approach in learning and learning to learn may “develop best when there are *systematic* opportunities for teachers to develop and learn. One-off activities have their place in tackling specific problems or issues but they are unlikely to lead to the development of a culture of learning.”

Therefore “it is important to recognize that changing school cultures and systems takes *time*; consequently there is a need to systematically *build capacity* in the system rather than assuming that everything can be achieved easily and quickly; e.g. setting out a three or five year plan for teachers’ continuing professional development which is linked to the school’s objectives”⁶

In Sweden the concept of cooperation and sharing are obviously well defined in the sense that universities’ role should be to do research on one hand and to share research with society on the other hand. In Denmark the cooperation between Ministries and Universities is

strengthened, where there are contracts between the Universities and schools on how CPD is offered. In Germany it is mandatory to open so called Centers of Teacher Education at Universities where all regional partners in Teacher Education of all three phases are cooperating in specific projects and in some Länder even practicing the exchange of staff in modules for teachers in CPD as well as student teachers during ITE and IND.

“The growing awareness that all European citizens should benefit from an increasing quality of education and thus be able to become active members of the knowledge society requires a profile of teachers who have the skills and competences to accompany future citizens in this process of education, evolving new skills and the expected mobility.”⁷

As we are dealing with a change of philosophy, actually creating a culture change in the field of teacher education one very critical “question of how we can really make things happen” still remains.

This brings us to the last question during the ENTEP group discussions in this quality endeavour via CPD in times “of ageing teaching staff and early retirement of teachers all over Europe, the risk of shortages in most countries, the lack of resources and many other obstacles”, precisely how to manage this change under national conditions. In other words,

⁶ Ibid

⁷ O. Gassner, L. Kerger, M. Schratz, 2010. The first ten years after Bologna. Bucharest, p. 108



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

what can be done at no additional cost, to initiate these changes?

The group discussion offered various ideas on activities with no extra cost, but taking advantage of local skills and competences and the personnel resources available. Schools as learning organizations could motivate specific experts in their staff to offer CPD within the school community or even within groups of schools. Students could be offering ICT courses to teachers or within their peer groups to less skilled students. There might be partnerships with economic actors not only for practice placements, but also for sharing knowledge in innovative projects and practice oriented programmes within the school curriculum.

Schools could also invite experts from different fields in society as authentic contributions to certain thematic issues in class and share 'results' and insights among "need clusters" within the school.

Furthermore, an exchange of competences between teachers and internal trainers in firms etc. could intensify mutual understanding for each others' needs and objectives and promote reflection on either side's conditions of work. Such activities could also be included in teachers' or even student teachers' portfolios and thus contribute to a more practice relevant profile.

Strengthening the use and availability of ICT offers in the "management" of CPD as well as the actual course designs is another point to think of. Various such CPD offers and approaches across Europe are already available online.

At the coming up ENTEP Conference in Salzburg in October ENTEP will continue this work and go more in depth. This will probably lead to another ENTEP paper on the above topic.

III.

ENTEP members sharing and discussing other topics of interest

Paul Holdsworth (EU Commission) gave a brief overview on current developments in the work of the Clusters.

The commission has published a Handbook for Policymakers on "Developing coherent and system-wide induction programmes for beginning teachers". Ministers had agreed that this handbook should be a practice guide for ministries about the step by step process of introducing beginning teachers into their professional field and the various implications.

There are two more handbooks in a planning phase; one on assessment and the other possibly on preventing early school leaving. A volume with the data from TALIS I by the OECD and the Commission is in final stages and might be published within a few weeks' time.

IV.

Recent changes within ENTEP membership and members of the Coordination Group

Scotland, Portugal, The French Community of Belgium and Italy have nominated new representatives for ENTEP, they will personally be welcomed at the first possible participation of one of



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON TEACHER EDUCATION POLICIES

the next ENTEPE Conferences. Due to inconvenient dates their attendance has not been possible in Spain yet.

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March 2010-03-11 **Ursula Uzerli**