



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training



Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme

Teachers and Trainers Continuing Professional development and career opportunities Study Visits

Novice teachers at school - Improving their professional
development

31 January to 04 February 2011, Tallinn, Estonia

Continuous professional development of teachers and trainers
22 to 25 March 2011, Dublin, Ireland

I. INTRODUCTION AND EU POLICY BACKGROUND

Initial, continuing professional development and induction of teachers and trainers as parts of their professional development are crucial for their performance as teaching professionals and for their role as one of the main stakeholders in teaching and learning. High quality of teachers' education and training reflects in high quality of learning outcomes.

In their response to the Commission's Communication 'Improving the Quality of Teacher Education' ⁽¹⁾, Ministers of Education in 2007 agreed that:

'High quality teaching is a prerequisite for high-quality education and training, which are in turn powerful determinants of Europe's long-term competitiveness and capacity to create more jobs and growth in line with the Lisbon goals ...' ⁽²⁾.

Priorities for improving professional development of teachers and trainers (PDTT) were defined by Ministers of Education in the Council Conclusions of November 2007⁽³⁾, 2008⁽⁴⁾ and 2009⁽⁵⁾. In all recent EU documents PDTT is addressed as a coherent system, providing a career-long perspective leading from initial training through induction, in-service training and mentoring - to continuous professional development.

With regard to induction, the Council in November 2009 agreed, amongst other things, that:

'Efforts should be made to ensure that all newly qualified teachers receive sufficient and effective support and guidance during the first few years of their careers.'

⁽¹⁾ COM (2007) 392 final. 3.8.2007.

⁽²⁾ Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 15 November 2007, on improving the quality of teacher education (Official Journal 2007/C 300/07 of 12.12.2007).

⁽³⁾ Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on improving the quality of teacher education (Official Journal C 300, 12.12.2007).

⁽⁴⁾ Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on preparing young people for the 21st century: an agenda for European cooperation on schools (OJ 2008/C 319/08).

⁽⁵⁾ Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders (OJ 2009/C 000/09).

Ministers also invited the Member States to:

'Make appropriate provision for all new teachers to participate in a programme of induction (early career support) offering both professional and personal support during their first years in a teaching post.'

As a response to this a policy paper, "Developing Coherent and System-wide Induction Programmes for Beginning Teachers - a handbook for policymakers" (Further on - Induction Handbook) has been drafted as a result of a 'peer learning activity' (PLA), facilitated by the European Commission. The handbook comprises comparative analyses of different policy approaches to teacher induction in a number of countries and draws policy conclusions. The work was further developed by members of the Peer Learning Cluster 'Teacher and Trainers' at Commissions' level and was recently published on-line⁽⁶⁾.

Considering that no initial training and induction in the profession can equip teachers with all competences they need for their changing roles and competences, EU and member countries agreed to ensure support for teachers throughout their careers to continue updating their knowledge, skills and competence **within the continuing professional development phase** of teachers training. The EU countries are encouraged to assure quality in CPD, as well as to improve supply and flexible training provision⁽⁷⁾ and investment in teachers' professional development.

The European Commission and Cedefop support efforts at EU and countries level to address different topics of teachers and trainers professional development. The Thematic Working Group on professional development of teachers at Commission's level and Cedefop studies⁽⁸⁾ and Train the Trainers network (TTnet) monitor and analyse changing in teachers and trainers roles and competences and the relevance of professional development to approach this process. Teachers' roles and performance as lifelong learners, quality agents and key stakeholders in reform and modernisation of VET have been addressed as well.

Teachers' professional development is also widely represented in the Study Visits programme, managed by Cedefop. In the academic year 2009/2010, 24 visits that took place dealt with the topic on professional development of teachers and trainers and with leadership in education and for the year 2010/2011 28 study visits are planned. Additional information and specific examples of teachers' professional development in Europe may be found in the study visits group reports which are available on line at <http://www.studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu/>

Two out of three main topics of the Synthesis seminar, organised by Cedefop on 1-2 February 2010 in Thessaloniki on "Quality and efficiency of education and training: Findings from study visits 2008/09" were devoted to ensuring high quality teaching and training, educational leadership and management. The outcomes of the seminar are available on-line at:

http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu/index.asp?cid=3&artid=7170&scid=77&artlang=EN&per_id=2532

and served as basis for the publication 'Better competences through better teaching and leading: Findings from study visits 2008/09' that was published online in July 2010: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/16385.aspx>

⁽⁶⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/doc/handbook0410_en.pdf

⁽⁷⁾ The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training for the period 2011-2020, http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/vocational/bruges_en.pdf

⁽⁸⁾ A bridge to the future. European Policy for Vocational Education and Training 2002-2010, Luxembourg, 2010 http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3058_en.pdf

In this way the Study Visits programme contributes to the issue of teachers professional development being part of an effective platform for cooperation in education and training in Europe. The opportunities provided by the programme for exchanging experience and sharing knowledge create a European forum for peer learning and enrich the information and evidence base for policy making.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY VISITS/PLA ON INDUCTION AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

This note has been drafted in order to support the preparation and organisation of two study visits in the field of professional development of teachers and trainers (PDTT) and to disseminate the results of the discussions and results at a policy level.

Based on priorities, defined in EU policy papers and on latest research and good practice examples, identified by the work of Cedefop, the two study visits to be held in Tallinn, Viimsi and Tartu, Estonia (visit 78) and Dublin, Ireland (visit 214) will further explore main aspects of teachers' professional development: induction for novice teachers and further opportunities for continuous professional development (CPD) of teachers based on the results of the initial training.

The study visit in Estonia addresses the issue of methods and tools to support novice teachers in their induction period, as well as the impact of a structured induction system on the quality of training provided. The visit will show the expertise of two Estonian universities in implementing novice teachers' and mentors' training programmes. Induction practices in different educational institutions will be demonstrated.

The study visit in Ireland touches upon challenges and demands facing teachers and trainers, some reflections on the preparation of teacher students to enter the profession within the initial stage of their professional development, practical examples and initiatives of CPD and leadership training, aspects of evaluation and assessment of training activities for teachers.

In addition to this, participants in the two visits will share experience about practices in different European countries and will take part in in-depth discussions on the topics of the visits. Working papers of EU Commission and Cedefop will be circulated as background materials, supporting participants with additional research and practical information to consider, disseminate and reflect upon. Final reports with the findings and good practice examples will be elaborated after the visits to include also feedback from the participants and organisers. The results of the Study Visits will be disseminated later on across the thematic working groups and networks at European level.

Thus both study visits will contribute to the strategic objective of enhancing training and professional development opportunities for teachers, trainers and VET leaders.

The study visits will bring together representatives of policy makers, researchers, teacher training institutions, universities, national experts and teaching professionals.

III. TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: CHALLENGES AND TRENDS ⁽⁹⁾

1) Identifying changes, barriers and challenges in teachers' professional development

In order to define both gaps and support needed in teachers' professional development countries try to map changes, barriers and challenges both at the level of governance and at the level of provision.

In almost every country it has been identified that the perception of the role and competences of teachers and trainers, as well as the general expectations of the society regarding their performance has changed a lot in recent years. Teachers and trainers should be good professionals both in terms of their subject and in pedagogy, be able to work in an inclusive manner, taking into account individual learning needs, aiming at high quality learning outcomes, applying new learning methods and technologies, able to work in teams, projects and networks, consider labour market needs etc.

In the same time many country examples report on higher social expectations than social support and consideration of teachers' needs has been taking place: limited instruments and sometimes inefficient resources; imbalanced teachers' education programmes and rather out-dated methods; not enough practical oriented, rather academic style, lack of a consistent system and failure in leading to a specific career path - all these factors deeply influencing teachers' professional development.

Issues for consideration in general terms and building upon the discussion topics during the study visits: In how far professional development of teachers and trainers attracts the support of the decision makers in real terms? In how far PDTT reflects the changing environment and roles and competences of teachers and trainers? Is PDTT a pro-active factor addressing challenges and changes in teachers and trainer profession, or rather a reflective one?

2) Trends in teachers' professional development

A) TEACHERS AS LIFELONG LEARNERS

The professional development of teachers and trainers has been placed in the context of Lifelong Learning. It should be seen as a lifelong learning process, as a continuum which includes initial teacher education, induction, in-service training and continuing professional development. It comprises formal, informal and non-formal learning, both subject-based and pedagogical training, offered throughout the careers as a part of a coherent system and competences recognised appropriately⁽¹⁰⁾.

"The first stage concerns the preparation of teachers during initial teacher education, where those who want to become teachers master the basic knowledge and skills. The second stage is the first independent steps as teachers, the first years of confrontation with the reality to be a teacher in school. This phase is generally called the induction phase. (Induction is generally seen as a form of

⁽⁹⁾ This part is based on the findings of the Cedefop publication: A bridge to the future. European Policy for Vocational Education and Training 2002-2010, Luxembourg, 2010
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3058_en.pdf

⁽¹⁰⁾ See also "Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualification
http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles_en.pdf

support programme for new entrants to the teaching profession.) The third phase is the phase of the continuing professional development of those teachers that have overcome the initial challenges of becoming a teacher" ⁽¹⁾.

Issues for consideration in general terms and building upon the discussion topics during the study visits: In how far PDTT is considered a homogeneous process and a coherent system in the countries? The society, experts and policy makers perceive teachers and trainers lifelong learners. Do teachers and trainers do so as well? Are they well equipped and supported in order to do so? Which are the strengths and the weaknesses in the phases of PDTT accross Europe?

B) RAISING QUALIFICATION LEVEL AND PROFESSIONALISATION

Teachers and trainers profession is a well-qualified one. Almost all countries require higher education degree of their teachers and those of them that still have post-secondary, non university teachers education institutions tried to level them to bachelor degree. For both induction and CPD phase teachers and trainers should also have the opportunity and career path open for a high quality provision.

In order to achieve this in the **stage of induction** some of European countries introduced a state-wide system of induction as such (Estonia is one among them). In other - Greece, Spain, Italy and Cyprus - teachers have to follow compulsory training during their probationary period, the length of which varies very widely. Compulsory training for new entrants also exists in France, Liechtenstein and Turkey⁽¹²⁾.

In several countries **induction and CPD** have become a compulsory part of teachers' professional development. (In Hungary legislation prescribes compulsory participation in continuing professional development every seven years; In Czech Republic, Greece and the United Kingdom continuing professional development has been made statutory.)

Issues for consideration in general terms and building uopn the discussion topics during the study visits: Formal teachers and trainers qualifications tend to rise and the number of professionals, possessing such qualifications - as well. What are the differences among the different stages of PDTT regarding certification of competences acquired in formal and non-formal settings and validation of learning outcomes of professional development? Higher qualifications = better and more adequate skills and competences?

TOWARDS A TEACHERS/TRAINERS COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK/PORTFOLIO/STANDARDS?

Despite the diversity in methods of preparing teachers for their profession, one emerging opinion is that initial teacher education and its completion should be outcome-oriented in the form of declared competences. That explains why more and more countries are developing a minimum standard, a framework of competences or a professional profile comprising professional, didactical and other core competences. During the induction period and CPD those sets of competences are supposed to be up-graded, enriched, applied into practice and turned into values.

Concerning trainers, there is a significant orientation to define a profile, to create regulations or standards (Cyprus, Greece, Romania, and the United Kingdom), procedures on continuing assessment base for trainers in CVET and adult learning

⁽¹⁾ Induction Handbook, p. 4, p.7

⁽¹²⁾ Induction Hanbook, p. 7

and even for trainers of trainers (Greece). “Ideal” competence frameworks have been circulated both concerning VET trainers and adult learning professionals.

Issues for consideration in general terms and building upon the discussion topics during the study visits: What would be the contribution of the different phases of PDTT to a competence framework of teaching professionals? Will potential levels of competences in such a framework reflect the phases/stages in the PDTT?

C) PDTT AS PART OF EDUCATIONAL REFORMS AND PRIORITIES

Professional development of teachers and trainers has become a policy priority in several countries and is considered imperative for implementing education reforms (Cyprus). A huge variety of measures and forms - state programmes, training networks, new institutions, projects under ESF, placements, etc (Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania) support CPD on a systemic level, making it more coordinated, consistent and a part of a modernisations and reform actions. In the same time big efforts are put in creating and increasing links between the world of education and those of labour market and business, by introducing measures for keeping teachers and trainers abreast with the requirements of the respective sectors, as well as to create entry possibilities for specialists from outside education to enter teaching profession.

Issues for consideration in general terms and building upon the discussion topics during the study visits: In how far PDTT addresses reform processes and vice versa - experiences the impact of the modernisation and reform processes? Do projects and networks become non-formal “providers” of PDTT?

D) NEW ROLES AND COMPETENCES

Initial professional development, induction, in-service training and CPD have more and more to take into account the new roles and competences of teachers moving increasingly in line with transformation of educational institutions in centres of lifelong learning, decentralized and “open” schools, and “factors for sustainable development”. All this means that new competences in the field of administration, marketing, financial management, organisational culture, innovation and creativity and creating sustainable lifelong learning environment are required. Other areas have emerged in which the teachers felt the need of more training or new competences dealing with difficult students and new contexts of assessment and evaluation. This, as well as the orientation towards project-, team-, partnership- and network oriented approach and the EU supported mobility of teaching professionals should also be taken into account by their professional development.

To support teachers’ professional development and in line with the overall changing roles and competences, the need arises for a diversification of teachers and trainers positions and creating more specialised roles/positions such as teacher’s mentor, career orientation counsellor, tutor etc. This diversification has its impact on all stages of the teachers’ professional development in almost all countries.

Issues for consideration in general terms and building upon the discussion topics during the study visits: Does PDTT reflect and address diversification in teaching professions? Are there differences among the phases: IPD, induction, CPD? Does PDTT cover in a sufficient and high quality manner the new competences needed for a decentralised, innovative and fast changing learning environment? Are there differences among the phases, are some more flexible than others?

3) Summing up ⁽¹³⁾:

- Teachers' professional development is expected to be part of coherent and system-wide support measures. It should be regarded more efficient being part of an entire educational reform, quality assurance mechanisms, changing teaching and learning approach towards competence based curricula and learning outcomes.
- Initial training, induction and CPD should address gaps, shortages and needs in teachers' professional development with the aim to improve quality and effectiveness of performance; addressing changing roles and competences; new pedagogical paradigms and labour market requirements. They aim also at reducing "drop out" of teachers, providing feedback for initial teachers' education at universities etc.
- A variety of support forms and methods has to be applied in all stages of teachers' professional development like national programmes, international projects, PLA, mobility schemes, networking etc.
- Favorable conditions should be available or created in order to enable effective professional development: resources, quality management, learning culture... Measures in legislation, strategies, new or optimised structures, coordinating mechanisms, state and ESF-funded programmes and networks aim at providing more consistent professional development systems.
- There is no one successful single model for teachers' professional development. Policy makers and other respective authorities, social partners and universities should create such, fitting best the particular needs of the country.
- Case studies and examples from different countries as well as exchange during peer observations, such as study visits, illustrate different models and enable peer learning and decision taking.

⁽¹³⁾ Based on: Induction Handbook, p. 4

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