



European Dimensions of Teacher  
Education – Similarities and Differences

Edited by  
**Milena Valenčič Zuljan and Janez Vogrinc**

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*Edited by* Milena Valenčič Zuljan and Janez Vogrinc  
*Reviewed by* Barica Marentič Požarnik, University of Ljubljana,  
Slovenia and  
Pavel Zgaga, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia  
*Proofreading* Romina Plešec, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia  
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1. Valenčič Zuljan, Milena

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## FOREWORD

A precondition for the quality execution of the educational process is the professionally trained teacher. Today, in a time characterised by rapid and constant changes, this is even more important than it was in the past. The focus of the teacher's professional operation is no longer simply the mediation of knowledge; the teacher must also provide support to students in the process of learning, gaining independence and taking responsibility for their behaviour, of course taking into account their age. The teacher's role in the contemporary school is becoming ever more complex, thus also establishing new challenges and tasks in the education of teachers. Future teachers need to be trained to implement differentiation and individualisation in order to be equipped to adapt instruction to the individual characteristics of the students, to work with students with special needs, including working with talented students, and to actualise the principles of integration and inclusion; they must master information-communication technology, must be capable of creating a multicultural learning environment, etc. In spite of all of the innovations and changes, the principle that the teacher must have authority with regard to the students is still valid. Only a teacher with good professional and didactic training can possess authority, a teacher who has knowledge and knows how to mediate this knowledge to the students in an appropriate way, i.e., adapted to their abilities, their prior knowledge, their characteristics, etc. It is very important that, with his or her knowledge and relationship towards the students in the classroom, a teacher knows how to establish discipline. A teacher must know how to form rules and must hold to the rules set, consistently sanctioning their infringement. Nor can we overlook the teacher as a role model. Of key importance is that the teacher knows how to establish a relationship with the students that is based on respect.

The present monograph presents 12 different systems of teacher education. Despite the fact that in different countries we have been confronted by similar social and economic changes, national educational systems have responded to these changes in different ways, as is evident from the individual contributions. This is understandable, as in forming conceptual and systemic solutions for the teacher education system it is

necessary to undertake professional reflection and seek solutions that are appropriate not only to the demands of the present time but also to the characteristics of a specific society. The solution of individual countries cannot, therefore, simply be transferred from one country to another without taking into account the characteristics of the social environment of the country to which the solution is transferred. However, a familiarity with the systems in various countries enables us to undertake professional reflection on individual good solutions and transfer these to practice in such a way that we either adopt that which is feasible in our own environment or adapt the solutions to the characteristics of the concrete situation. In all of the countries we share a common goal: to find solutions that lead teachers to quality and durable knowledge and assist them in their professional and personal formation and in their active inclusion in society.

*Prof. dr. Janez Krek*  
*Dean*



## INTRODUCTION

Changes in society place teachers, as well as school policy and teacher education, before new demands and challenges. Much more is expected from teachers than just the traditional mediation of knowledge. Teachers are increasingly called upon to help young people become fully autonomous learners by acquiring key skills, rather than memorising information; teachers are asked to develop more collaborative and constructive approaches to learning and expected to be facilitators and classroom managers rather than *ex cathedra* trainers. These new roles require education in a range of teaching approaches and styles. Furthermore, classrooms now contain a more heterogeneous mix of young people from different backgrounds and with different levels of ability and disability. Teachers are required to use the opportunities offered by new technologies and to respond to the demand for individualised learning; they may also have to take on additional decision-making or managerial tasks consequent to increased school autonomy.<sup>1</sup>

High expectations regarding teachers are nothing new; such expectations were pointed out by the well known German pedagogue and teacher educator Diesterweg as early as in 1835.<sup>2</sup> What is important, however, is how teachers are enabled to follow and realise these high expectations. Crucial on the systemic level in this regard is to enable the quality initial education of teachers and to organise a coordinated process of ongoing further professional education that takes place throughout the teacher's entire professional career.

Improving the quality of teacher education aimed at equipping teachers for quality instruction is an important goal of education systems in Europe. Amongst other things, quality teacher education is thought to

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<sup>1</sup> Buchberger, F., Campos, B.P., Kallos, D., Stephenson, J. (Eds.) (2000). Green Paper on Teacher Education in Europe. High Quality Teacher Education from High Quality Education and Training. Thematic Network on Teacher Education in Europe. Umeå universitet.

<sup>2</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament. Improving the Quality of Teacher Education. Brussels (2007), 3.8.2007. COM(2007) 392 final  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/com392\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/com392_en.pdf)

influence the ability of the European Union to increase its competitiveness in a globalised world. In European countries teacher education has therefore been subject to numerous systemic modifications, as well as changes to concrete content, in the last 10 years. In addition to national projects, various European projects in the area of teacher education and professional development have also been undertaken (e.g., Partnership between Teacher Education Institutions and Schools, etc.).

The monograph *European Dimensions of Teacher Education – Similarities and Differences* is divided into broad content sections: initial teacher education, initiation into the profession, ongoing professional training and the progress of teachers, as well as an analysis of current questions in the area of teacher education, which are defined in more detail with concrete or specific items.

The fundamental purpose of the monograph is to gain a deeper insight into systemic solutions and experience in the area of teacher education in various European countries and to encourage reflection on the potential for the mutual supplementing of teacher education systems. It is aimed at designers of school policy, faculties that educate future teachers, institutions that are responsible for the further education and training of teachers, as well as practitioners (principals, school counsellors and teachers) who execute the educational process on a daily basis.

The invitation to collaborate was responded to by professionals from 12 countries: Finland, The Netherlands, Russia, Sweden, Estonia, Poland, France, the Czech Republic, Norway, Croatia, Romania and Slovenia. We sincerely thank all of those who have contributed to the present publication. We are also grateful to prof. ddr. Barica Marentič Požarnik and prof. dr. Pavel Zgaga for their in-depth professional review of the material.

*Milena Valenčič Zuljan and  
Janez Vogrinc*

## REVIEWS

### **Why we need to learn one from another and work together?**

Prof. dr. Pavel Zgaga

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

This monograph contains twelve in-depth studies on national teacher education systems in the “large” Europe: from Russian Federation to France, from Norway to Romania. Therefore, it is not a report on teacher education in selected EU Member States; its ambition is broader. It belongs to comparative studies: reading the next 338 pages is a highly informative exercise which brings particular national systems closer to us and which stimulates to identify similarities as well as diversities among them. With regard to “traditional” subject areas like medicine, architecture, law or chemistry there are more diversities than similarities, however. This should not be taken as a surprise. Teacher education as a subject/disciplinary area has rather a short history.

Prior to the 1990s, teacher education in Europe was rarely an issue of European and/or international cooperation in (higher) education. It was mainly a closed, self-sufficient “national affaire” and predominantly a non-university type of study. Since the early 1990s European national education systems have encountered new challenges: Europe’s ‘internal internationalisation’ (i.e. the *Europeanisation* process) has moved onto various agendas; including in education. Two main political determinants have emerged in the late 1980s: (1) an agreement within the ‘small’ European Union of previous times (EU-12) that despite the subsidiarity principle “the Community” should also get certain responsibilities in education as well as (2) the deep political changes in Central and Eastern Europe symbolically represented by the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Within the process of gradual European “coming together” of the last decades, education in general remained actually for a long time on margins. Within the European Communities (the EU of today) vocational education received a little more interest rather early because

vocational qualifications were of high importance for economic cooperation while general education – as well as teacher education – got a “green light” on the EU cooperation crossroad only with new provisions in the *Maastricht Treaty* of 1992. We have to bear in mind the most important part (Art. 126) which has remained basically unchanged for almost two decades – until the present *Treaty*: “The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action”. This action “shall be aimed at” e.g. encouraging mobility of students and teachers, recognition of diplomas and periods of study; promoting co-operation between educational establishments; developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the education systems; etc. (*Maastricht Treaty*, 1992).

At a practical level, new times came a bit earlier – with the introduction of the *Erasmus*, *Socrates* and *Leonardo* programmes at the end of the 1980s. Direct collaboration between educational institutions from EU countries increased substantially. The 1990s were, at the same time, the beginning of the period of European enlargement. It was very important also for teacher education that special EU cooperation programmes were launched which supported broader cooperation in education among EU and non-EU countries. The *Tempus programme*, for example, has offered many opportunities to strengthen cooperation between teacher education institutions – until the present day from more than 50 countries (and not only limited to European countries).<sup>1</sup>

European Commission’s programmes have definitely and substantially contributed to extraordinary growth of educational cooperation across borders of nation states as well as to a new quality of educational cooperation. This has been in particularly true in higher education – and teacher education is its inseparable part today. What is a new quality of cooperation in teacher education? A comprehensive study could be written on this issue but here we can only try to describe it briefly – and mainly in a chronological order – main trends as well as some successful networks with interests in this field, in particular institutions of teacher

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<sup>1</sup> The *Life Long Learning Programme* (LLP) of the EU, a successor of *Socrates* and *Leonardo*, includes today 32 countries (27 EU Member states; Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway as the EFTA and EEA countries and Turkey and Croatia as the candidate countries) while 27 countries of East and South-east Europe, Central Asia, Middle East and North Africa cooperate within the frames of *Tempus programme*.

education. It is necessary to stress that important developments which have been achieved during the last two decades would not be possible without energy and enthusiasm of teacher educators across different countries. Cooperation projects among institutions, conferences as well as journals and monographs have decisively contributed to the changing teacher education landscape in Europe.

We should start this brief overview with the *Association for Teacher Education in Europe* (ATEE).<sup>2</sup> It is today a well known non-governmental European organisation with over 600 members from more than 40 countries, which focuses on the professional development of teachers and teacher educators. In the early 1990s, ATEE produced a comparative study on teacher education curricula in the EU member states (Miller and Taylor, 1993) which was very important in the early years of increased European cooperation in teacher education and it remains an important reference group also today. The study was supported financially by the European Commission and ATEE continues to play a creative role in European cooperation in teacher education.

At the beginning of the 1990s, a similar attempt was made also from a trade-unionist perspective. The *European Trades Union Committee for Education* (ETUCE) published a text on *Teacher Education in Europe* (ETUCE, 1994) which dealt with a range of issues such as the organisation as well as the content of teacher education, the European dimension and mobility, teachers' professionalism, equal opportunities and intercultural education. The concluding chapter (12) focused on the role of European institutions and programmes. These issues were in the central focus of the early 1990s and were important in building stepping stones for the further development of European cooperation in Teacher Education.

As we already mentioned, the European Union's Socrates-Erasmus programme opened new perspectives for European cooperation in general education in the late 1980s and made good progress since the beginning of the 1990s, in particular through the programme action of that period on "*university cooperation projects on subject of mutual interest*". Similarly as in other areas of higher education, a thorough reflection on teacher education was prepared in this context during the

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.atee1.org/> (accessed 28/12/2010).

mid-1990s. In 1994, within a larger framework of investigating the effects of the Erasmus programme, the European Commission funded a pilot project in this area: the *Sigma – European Universities' Network*. Within the network, 15 national reports<sup>3</sup> were produced for an Evaluation Conference which took place in June 1995, the proceedings of which were published by Universität Osnabrück (Sander, 1995). These reports presented an extremely variegated image of teacher education systems in the EU-15 of that time. Reports focused on initial teacher education as well as on in-service training in national contexts but also reflected on new needs and perspectives in Europe.

A special *European Report* was also added to the publication dealing with European cooperation in teacher education of that time, particularly with regard to perspectives of the *Erasmus programme* in the special area of Teacher Education (Delmartino and Yves Beernaert, 1996). This publication was based on the lessons learned from the development of the RIF (Réseau d'Institutions de Formation – Network of Teacher Training Institutions) which developed steadily from January 1990 onwards, following the organisation of the first European Summer University for teacher educators in October 1989 at the Hogeschool Gelderland, Nijmegen (NL) under the ERASMUS programme. As such this publication is one of the most relevant sources of information on European cooperation in teacher education for the period up until the mid-1990s.

Subsequently with the aim of enhancing the European dimension of university studies as part of the *Socrates-Erasmus programme* (Action 1), the European Commission supported 28 Thematic Networks in the academic year 1996/97. The *Thematic Network on Teacher Education in Europe* (TNTEE) was the only network devoted exclusively to teacher education. The main objective was to establish a flexible multilingual transnational forum for the development of teacher education in Europe linking together as many universities and other institutions as possible. The network was coordinated by the Board of Teacher Education and Research located at the Umeå University, Sweden.

The sub-networks of TNTEE focused on (1) the culture and politics of professional formation, (2) the development of innovative strategies of

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<sup>3</sup> Reports from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

cooperation between the TE-institutions, schools and education services, (3) promoting life-long learning in and through teacher education: evolving models of professional development, (4) teacher education as powerful learning environment – changing the learning culture of teacher education, (5) searching for a missing link – subject didactics as the sciences of a teaching profession, (6) developing a "reflective practice" of teachers' work and teacher education by partnerships between researchers and practitioners, (7) intercultural education in teacher education and (8) gender and teacher education.

Within TNTEE, a new evaluation study of teacher education in the EU countries was made at the end of the 1990s (Sander, 1999). However, the most visible and the most influential product of TNTEE was the *Green Paper on Teacher Education in Europe* (Buchberger, 2000) – the first policy paper on teacher education in Europe produced in collaboration between experts from European teacher education institutions. TNTEE formally ended in 1999; it was marked as a “success story” and has been the largest network in teacher education so far. It influenced further cooperation and networking and its website<sup>4</sup> is – after a decade – still operative and well visited.

Teacher education took part also in another “success story” – the *Tuning project*<sup>5</sup> which was launched in 2000 as the “universities’ contribution to the Bologna Process”. Originally, there were ten disciplinary areas included to the project; education sciences (including teacher education) were its integral part. The basic aim of the “Tuning Educational Structures in Europe” project was described as “a university driven project which aims to offer a concrete approach to implement the Bologna Process at the level of higher education institutions and subject areas” (Tuning, 2008). A group of representatives from institutions in sixteen countries (both EU as well as non-EU) were working for several years to apply the Tuning method in the education/teacher education subject area. Main focus was given to qualifications, typical occupations of the graduates, learning outcomes and competences, student workload and ECTS, learning, teaching and assessment, quality enhancement etc. Experience from cooperation in the project and its outcomes (see

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<sup>4</sup> See <http://tntee.umu.se> (accessed 28/12/2010).

<sup>5</sup> See <http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu> and [www.rug.nl/let/tuningeu](http://www.rug.nl/let/tuningeu) (accessed 28/12/2010).

Tuning, 2008) have been identified as an important help to redesign and reorganise Teacher Education curricula at institutions in even more countries. Collaboration within the Tuning project offered also an excellent approach to understanding large varieties within teacher education across European countries.

However, the central source of providing a European picture of teacher education and acting teachers during the last decade has been *Eurydice*<sup>6</sup> (the information network on education in Europe) which was established as long ago as in 1980 by the European Commission and EU Member States to boost cooperation, by improving understanding of educational systems and policies. Therefore, studies in teacher education are only a part of its activities. It is a network consisting of a European Unit and national units. The network covers the education systems of the EU Member States, the EEA countries and the EU candidate countries involved in the common EU programmes. Eurydice has prepared and published several extremely important studies, mainly country descriptions on the organisation of teacher education as well as comparative studies on these topics, e.g. *The Teaching Profession in Europe: Profile, Trends and Concerns* (3 vol., 2002, 2003, 2004); *Reforms of the Teaching Profession: a Historical Survey* (2005); *Quality Assurance in Teacher Education in Europe* (2006), etc.

With the advancement of the Europeanisation process in education, a need appeared to bring *national* policies in teacher education face to face on a *European* level – i.e. to apply the “open method of coordination” also in this field. In May 2000, as part of the initiatives launched by the Portuguese Presidency, a Conference on Teacher Education Policies in the European Union and Quality of Lifelong Learning was held. The conference was attended by representatives of Ministries of Education (including teacher education representatives), the European Commission and representatives from different international organisations, active in teacher education. During the Conference the *European Network of Teacher Education Policies* (ENTEP) was launched which aimed to reinforce on-going European cooperation in education and to develop the political dimension of teacher education.

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<sup>6</sup> See Eurydice portal [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php) (accessed 28/12/2010).



The conference adopted the General Framework of the Network which has been used as the ENTEP programme until the present day. In the *Annex* to this document, a number of issues were listed which became the bases for content work within the network, e.g. new challenges to the professional teacher profile, shortage of teacher education candidates, higher education and school partnerships, continuous teacher education systems, teacher education and teacher career advancement, teacher mobility, issues concerning equal opportunities, research and graduate studies related to teacher education and teachers' work. All these issues are still topical today.

During this decade, ENTEP has developed its activities in the field of teacher education policies. It has been an advisory/reference group that acts as a sounding board for the European Commission and individual EU Member States. At the European level, it promotes the exchange of information, addresses issues of common concern, works on the construction of convergences etc. Within the Member States, it contributes to a European perspective on the debate concerning teacher education policies. In principle, each member state has one ENTEP representative (in some cases they are from national Ministries of Education, in other cases from teacher education institutions). A website<sup>7</sup> has been established with information, news from ENTEP meetings and publications etc. The last ENTEP publication – *The first ten years after Bologna* – put recent developments in teacher education policy in the context of the Bologna Process and EHEA (European Higher Education Area) thus expressing “its conviction that teacher education must have a special place in this newly-created European landscape” (Gassner et al., 2010).

In a few years, parallel to the “ministerial” ENTEP network an “academic” European network was also created; this time by institutions. The *Teacher Education Policy in Europe* (TEPE)<sup>8</sup> is a network that builds on the work and community developed from a number of the previous European collaborative projects in the domain of teacher education policy; TNTEE first of all. The first initiative dates in 2006 but the TEPE Network was formally established at its inaugural conference

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<sup>7</sup> See <http://entep.unibuc.eu/> (accessed 28/12/2010). The home server is changing as the network coordination is changing.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://tepe.wordpress.com/> (accessed 28/12/2010).

in Tallinn in February 2007 with an overarching aim to strengthen comparative studies in teacher education and to develop policy implications and policy recommendations from an institutional point of view.

At its inauguration, the network stressed that “Europeanisation in higher education has reached a point in time which requires a range of responses at the institutional and disciplinary level. The current situations demand that such responses are based on academic (self-)reflection and that research methods are applied in the process of preparing and discussing reforms in European universities. The academic world is able to provide policy analysis in order to strengthen a process of decision making at institutional level as well as a process of European concerting. Education policy is a genuine task for higher education institutions today”. It was also stressed that “during a period when we move steadily closer to achieving the goal of the European Higher Education Area, declared by the Bologna Process, it is most urgent that these issues are addressed again, from today’s point of view, encountering questions and dilemmas of today and learning from rich European contexts.” (TEPE, 2006). The TEPE network has met at a conference every year to discuss various issues in teacher education with a direct or indirect policy impact. Two monographs were published on these bases (Hudson et al., 2008; Hudson et al., 2010) with contributions coming from colleagues across Europe and with the main intention to contribute to quality culture in teacher education.

We should not forget that direct cooperation between teacher education institutions across Europe has also enormously increased during the last decade. A large number of teacher education consortia have been established to address various issues in the field (e.g. curriculum development, quality enhancement, etc.) as well as to strengthen students’ and teachers’ mobility; far too many to analyse them one by one in this short introduction. Let us limit to two cases only which indicate further transnational, i.e. European trends.

At the beginning of this decade, one of the most direct outcomes of the TNTEE network at the level of institutional cooperation was an Erasmus project EDIL (later called EUDORA) which aimed to develop joint European modules at doctoral level and to catch the pace of innovating doctoral studies in other (traditional) disciplinary areas. The project was

coordinated in the first phase (2000–02) by Umeå University as the *Europeisk Doktorat en Lärarutbildning (EDIL)* project and in the second phase (2002–05) by the Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes in Upper Austria, Linz as the *European Doctorate in Teaching and Teacher Education (EUDORA)* funded as Socrates / Erasmus Advanced Curriculum Development projects. The core group was based on a consortium of 10 Teacher Education institutions from various European countries though other faculties and institutions were welcomed to join activities.

Within this project, 5 intensive programmes and modules were developed and conducted, each on several occasions: Analysis of educational policies in a comparative educational perspective; Innovative mother tongue didactics of less frequently spoken languages in a comparative perspective; Active Learning in Higher Education; e-Learning in Higher Education; Researching the teaching and learning of mathematics; Researching social inclusion/exclusion and social justice in education. Summer schools were organised in various countries from 2002 onwards; the largest one in 2005 involved about 100 doctoral students and staff. The EDIL/EUDORA experience<sup>9</sup> constructed a corner stone to be considered for an eventual full joint doctoral programme in European teacher education which is still waiting for (better) future.

However, at the undergraduate level an interesting initiative has been launched recently: a LLL programme sponsored consortium of teacher education institutions from seven countries (Austria, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Sweden), coordinated by the HAN University (Nijmegen, NL), are working to prepare a one year joint programme of the *European Teacher (EPTE)*<sup>10</sup> to be launched experimentally in autumn 2011. The programme will offer six modules: Language, Mathematics, Natural and Social Sciences, Arts, Pedagogy and Didactics, Philosophy and Culture. Students from these seven countries – and hopefully from more countries in future – will learn together to achieve 60 ECTS which will be fully recognised by their home institutions as a part of their degree study programme in teacher education. It would be really interesting to know how these young

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<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.eudorportal.org/> (accessed 28/12/2010).

<sup>10</sup> See <http://eptep.info/node/5> (accessed 28/12/2010).

people of today will find their European learning experience in classrooms of tomorrow.

Much has already changed within European teacher education and in its broader societal and political context during the last two or three decades. After decades of changes and advances, teacher education in Europe is again being challenged by new large-scale developments. Can it continue to compete? It can often be noticed in today's political discourses that 'the role of teachers is crucial' in national development and in European co-operation, intercultural understanding etc. If we take these statements seriously and try to make them a reality, the role of teacher education within higher education and society at large should be significantly improved, in particular it is important to learn mutually one from another and to work together beyond national borders, across Europe, worldwide.

Contributions to this monograph definitely support such kind of learning and, hopefully, initiate new joint projects in near future.

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## Teacher education in Europe between unity and diversity

Prof. ddr. Barica Marentič Požarnik

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

What can be expected when a group of eminent experts in teacher education (TE) is invited to answer a questionnaire and write a report on some facets of recent developments in teacher education (TE) in their respective countries? The result – the collection of reports from 12 European countries – is an interesting publication that can be read in two ways:

- to search for commonalities and differences in a certain area or
- to regard every report as a case study in its own right, to see how a blend of tradition, given circumstances and context generates particular solutions and also frictions, dilemmas and problems.

Both approaches help us to better understand the interplay of different variables in shaping TE and thus also one's own situation. Solutions presented can be the source of ideas for policy makers and teacher educators. We can not always search for common solutions; the differences among countries can also be seen as enrichment.

The present introduction to the text is not meant to be an »executive summary« of the reports, but a personal selection of interesting common points and also points of diversity in views, problems or solutions.

In the questionnaire, the following three broad areas were covered:

- **initial TE** (the level education required of teachers, institutions responsible for TE, admission procedures, the renewal of study programmes according to Bologna process, induction period, postgraduate studies,
- **in-service training** (institutions, areas, financing; teacher promotion policies), and
- **broader issues** (areas of current discussions, research studies and proposals for further development).

The texts that resulted from the answers show beside some commonalities a wide variety and diversity of approaches that reflect not only differences between countries but also between experts themselves, their perspectives and conceptions, their personal judgement of what they regarded as important and worth mentioning. One of the important differences is that some case studies are mainly descriptive – presenting data, regulations, describing programmes... while others are more problem-oriented, with a personal touch – arguing about solutions, mentioning dilemmas, unsatisfactory processes and open problems, as can be seen already from the subtitles: »Teacher Education in The Netherlands: Balancing between autonomous institutions and a steering government«, »Teacher education in France: persistent tensions between profession and civil service«, »Teacher Education in Norway between scientific ambition and professional relevance.«

There are differences already in the **introductory section**. Some reports start with description of the school system, some give the historical background – and some include **theoretical background** and **main principles** that guide curriculum construction and the overall policy of TE. These principles are, for example, mentioned in the report from Estonia, or Finland, among others the serious attempt to bring together high quality academic subject matter knowledge with pedagogical knowledge, metaknowledge and high quality pedagogical skills with reflection as a bridge between academic and professional development.

Another important component of some reports (maybe it should find a place in all of them) is the description of **main competencies** required from teachers in the changing society as a basis of curriculum renewal. Reports from Sweden, Poland, Norway and some others include a detailed list of knowledge, skills and competences. In Finland and The Netherlands where a broad consensus regarding competencies is being achieved, also the ethical dimension of teacher profession is being stressed. Certainly most of the countries involved have done some efforts in defining competencies, as it is a »conditio sine qua« for any renewal, but not all reports presented them.

### **The level of education required**

In the descriptions of the renewal of initial TE study programmes according to Bologna process, there are some commonalities. In all

countries, teacher education is an area that remains more regulated than other sectors of higher education. It means that TE is at the very centre of public attention. Minimal standards or at least recommendations were set up by ministries or universities. Sometimes, the level of regulation is being regarded as too strict, like in The Netherlands where the ministry decides not only about qualification framework, but also about the knowledge base of teachers, even national tests for teachers are being planned.

Following Bologna process, a renewal of TE curricula took place in all countries. They had first to make a decision about the level of the required TE for different types of teachers – whether to educate them at the first or second cycle of studies. The countries like Finland, Estonia, Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovenia, have decided to educate all (except preschool) teachers at the second cycle which means 300 ECTS or the equivalent of 5 years of study (the so-called »masterisation« of TE). Other countries embraced a different, sometimes more flexible system, like Norway, The Netherlands, Sweden (which requires 210 ECTS for preschool and primary teachers and 270 ECTS for subject and secondary teachers). In The Netherlands, all secondary teachers are being educated in a consecutive mode, after finishing the academic study of their subject. In Norway, there are different paths to become a teacher, but usually for a teacher certificate a broad integrated 4-year TE-program at bachelor-level (240 ECTS) is being required. In most of the countries, the minimum of 90 ECTS of subject matter study are required, in Sweden, they require 120 ECTS to teach mother tongue.

For some countries, the transition from the previous situation to Bologna system represented a big challenge and a fundamental structural change. For others, like Finland, that already before had a Master degree for all prospective teachers, Bologna process was more a phase of national analysis and evaluation of the teacher education curriculum than a fundamental change.

### **Institutions responsible for TE**

are now more or less everywhere part of the universities (the so-called process of »universitisation« of TE which some observe with mixed feelings). The usual, but not universal pattern is that faculties of education are responsible mainly for education of teachers for



compulsory school; other faculties (of humanities, art, science...), that offer academic training also for other professions, train secondary school teachers. The fate of specialised institutions, like the French IUMF, is uncertain.

## **Admission procedures**

As regards admission procedures, we find a great variety among countries. A lot depends on shortage or surplus of teachers for a certain subject or area and the number of candidates. Admission procedures have to be better defined when there is more competition for the places, like in Finland or Russia. Usually, there is more interest to study for preschool and primary level than to be a secondary school teacher.

In most of the cases, the main criteria are results of final (usually external) secondary school leaving exams, also combined with school marks and sometimes with exams of knowledge in the subject of academic study (The Netherlands, Poland) or proficiency in English (Sweden). Importance of other characteristics like communication and cooperation skills, interest in education, educational experiences... is being widely recognised, but only rarely included in admission procedures, for example in the form of admission interviews (Croatia, Czech Republic, Romania), more so in the case of primary teachers where also musical abilities play a certain role. Interesting is the case of Estonia where beside academic results also personal characteristics are taken into account, such as interpersonal, communication and cooperation skills. In order to evaluate those, the applicants are given group discussion exercises. At another extreme is Poland where it is against the law for universities to hold additional examinations to test candidate's pedagogical abilities.

In view of these differences, there is certainly still a lot of thinking and research to be done to find the optimal solution and combination of selection and admission procedures. Another problem is how to motivate more able young people to decide and apply for studies in TE.

## **Curriculum renewal according to Bologna process**

One of the consequences of Bologna process is a more unified and **better defined professional part** of TE which consists in most cases of 60 ECTS (equivalent of one study year) and includes beside the more

traditional components (psychology, didactics, subject teaching methods) increasingly also elements of sociology, philosophy of education, ICT, communication. In some countries, the research methodology, with the stress on action and qualitative research is being included to enable teachers to develop a research orientation to their professional work (Finland, also Slovenia).

This means in many cases also a better **balance between academic and professional parts** of curricula also for future secondary teachers, where the professional part has been traditionally neglected, sometimes to the point of complete deprofessionalisation – mentioned in case of Czech Republic. The process of »professionalisation« of TE in traditional academic institutions is slow as it requires changes in conception of identity and mission.

Another common feature of renewed curricula is strengthening of **practical school based training**, in qualitative and quantitative terms. Many regard this as the central issue of curriculum renewal (see the report from Russia). The practice comprises between 15 and 20 ECTS (which means from 5 up to 15 weeks), but is in many cases still longer and better organised for primary than for secondary teachers. Some countries have already a long-term tradition of an intensive confrontation with the future profession during the studies, from the first year on; others are developing it anew. The practical part has a different focus in different phases, like: initial, observational, subject, research, complex practice in Czech Republic, observation, active teaching under supervision of some lessons and finally independent teaching in Slovenia (better defined for primary than for secondary teachers) or in The Netherlands. In the last case, students have an independent teaching practice for half a year at the end of the study.

The practice is being supervised by university lecturers jointly with mentors from cooperating schools; the partnership of faculties and schools has been strengthened also by the corresponding EU projects, like in Slovenia. In some countries there exist special training schools. In the evaluation of the practice, the portfolio is increasingly being used.

### **Who are teacher educators?**

In accordance with the process of »universitisation« of TE, teacher educators have to comply to university regulations for appointment and

promotion; the criteria are in most cases based entirely on scientific publications, sometimes only in the academic subject field; pedagogical qualifications or practical experiences in teaching (at primary or secondary level) are not required. Also the quality of work with students is rarely taken into account. The Netherlands represents a positive example by defining teacher educators as a separate profession and supporting their professional development. Hopefully, other countries are going to follow this example. On the other hand, the importance of mentors at schools is being increasingly recognised in many countries; more and more attention is given to their status and training.

At the end of the studies, the candidate has usually to write and defend a thesis that is more or less orientated toward the area of teaching. For secondary teachers, it may be based entirely on the academic subject chosen. For primary teachers, the thesis may represent the proof that they can perform research on the problems of their own teaching.

### **Induction period, state examination**

Here, there is again a lot of variation among the countries concerned. In some, there is no induction or probationary period at all – the teacher gets the full qualification or licence at the moment of graduation (The Netherlands, Russia). In the case of The Netherlands, maybe the large amount of independent practice in school during studies does make a special induction period less necessary. In Russia, the teacher is fully qualified upon graduation, but gets a mentor to help him/her at the beginning.

But in most of the cases, the newly qualified teacher spends the first year, maybe two, as a probationer, under a close supervision of a mentor (sometimes also principal) at the school, with part-time teaching duties and a somewhat reduced wage. At the end of this period, there is a state exam which makes him/her a fully licenced teacher. The university institutions are usually not involved in this process, like in Sweden where the induction period is a question for the municipalities or the private schools. The mentor may have less teaching hours as a compensation for the mentoring work. The case of Estonia can be mentioned as an example of a very systematic attempt to give support to newly qualified teachers. In 2004/2005, the induction year programme was initiated for all teachers. They have to attend in-service courses

organised by university induction year centres. These centres also train mentors for their task of supporting novice teachers' learning. The evaluation research performed on this induction programme found three areas in need of improvement (this certainly applies also in other countries): to increase novice's readiness for reflection, to train mentors for their role and to increase school principals' readiness to support novice teachers. The training of mentors is being offered in many countries (The Netherlands, Sweden, Slovenia), but is not obligatory.

Also the **state exams** at the end of probationary period vary a lot in terms of scope and content. In some cases, the process is very demanding, comprising oral and written exams in subject matter, didactics, school laws etc., like a »second diploma« (Romania). In some cases, the candidate has to prove his/her teaching abilities by performing a model lesson before a committee (Croatia). In Slovenia, the candidate has to present documentation of a certain number of observed lessons which were positively evaluated by the mentor and principal and has also to pass exams on the legal system of EU and Slovenia, the legislation in the area of education and in Slovene language.

In most of the countries, **postgraduate studies** are being offered to teachers, some at the doctoral level, some to qualify to teach another (second or third) subject or to be able to perform special duties (like school counselling, working with children with special needs).

### **In-service training and promotion**

In-service training is being organised and offered by universities and numerous other public and also private institutions. The amount of structure and obligations for teachers and schools vary a lot. For example in Romania, every teacher has to collect 90 points from in-service courses every 5 years, half of those from formal in-service; there is a similar situation in Russia that has 100 centres for in-service training of teachers. Also in Poland there is a strong institutional basis, consisting of a national and many local centres. In Slovenia, teachers collect points in accordance with the duration of courses (in-service training seminar that lasts 8–15 hours is rated with 0.5 points, a seminar that lasts 16–23 hours is rated with 1 point etc.) and those points count toward promotion.

On the contrary, in The Netherlands, there is no national programme or obligation; full responsibility for in-service stays with schools and

teachers, there is also a lot of school-based in-service in accordance with school needs. In many countries (France, Croatia, Russia, Slovenia...) the courses in information communication technology and the use of computers in teaching are becoming one of the priorities, set by the governments. Other areas in which teachers express wishes for in-service training are teaching students with special needs, mastering discipline and behaviour problems and class management. Also projects, carried out by school teams, sometimes with international cooperation, represent an excellent way to promote teachers' professional growth and affect deeper changes in thinking and teaching (see examples from France, Slovenia, Finland).

It is interesting to note that the **system of teacher promotion** with the help of special titles is mentioned only in the reports of former socialist countries, like Poland, Czech Republic, Russia, Croatia, Slovenia, Estonia, Romania. The system is usually quite elaborate. Some examples: in Estonia, there are four consecutive levels – junior teacher, teacher, senior teacher and teacher-methodologist. The first promotion is being performed by the principal, for the next, the teacher has to apply and perform a self-evaluation. In Poland, the titles are trainee teacher (first year), then contract teacher, appointed and chartered teacher. Titles are awarded by special committees, the highest by the Ministry of Education.

In Slovenia, the teachers can be awarded the titles of Mentor, Adviser or Consulter, according to detailed regulations. For example: for promotion into the title of mentor, the teacher needs to get at least 4 points from in-service training (points depend on the length of the training) and 3 points from the area of professional work (mentoring students, organizing different activities for colleagues, students, parents, doing research, writing articles or textbooks, etc).

All the titles are awarded by the Ministry. In Romania, there are three didactic degrees that are linked to a training programme and formal evaluation. In Russian Federation, there is a national system of grading teachers based on their experience, tenure and level of education. Besides, for very special achievements, teachers can be awarded titles, like Honoured teacher.

The weak point of these systems, mentioned in some of the reports, is an excessive formalisation and bureaucratisation, while the quality of teaching is not being given the proper attention.

In other countries, career promotion does not consist of titles, but of new or expanded professional tasks and responsibilities, linked to the newly acquired competencies, like leading teams or projects, becoming a special needs teacher or counsellor. There are many plans to create master programmes for teachers to expand or create new career opportunities for them.

### **Open problems and suggestions for improvement**

Let us list here only some of the typical problems and issues, raised in reports:

- a decreasing level of motivation and cognitive abilities of candidates for TE,
- a low social status and self esteem of teachers
- a shortage of qualified teachers for certain subjects,
- employment of unqualified teachers,
- lack of systematic monitoring and research in TE,
- research results (on teaching, learning...) are not being put to practice,
- teachers are not able and motivated to analyse their performance, participate in team work and learn from each other,
- lack of balance between theory and practice and between academic and professional parts of TE (especially for secondary school teachers)
- occupational burn-out of teachers,
- inability to cope with behavioural problems of students and excessive expectations of parents,
- low level of professional autonomy in face of government control,
- lack of clear policy in this area.

Some suggestions for improvement:

- TE should be based on internationally recognised research,
- a radical change of the philosophy of TE from quantity-oriented to quality-oriented.

What else is needed?

- formulation of clear professional standards and also criteria to assess them,
- a revision of procedures for accreditation of TE institutions and programmes,
- allocation of sufficient resources,
- improving the flow of information (on didactic recourses, multimedia...) also on international scale,
- increase teacher mobility and different (also international) partnerships.

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### **The final word**

Let us conclude with an important suggestion from Estonia: there should be focus on **coherence and cooperation** between actors that enter into this field: state, higher education institutions, responsible for TE and teachers themselves and their associations.

At the moment, diversities seem to be larger than similarities. What about the future? Are national perspectives in TE going to be adapted to and give way to a European perspective? Is it a desirable process? The Swedish report concludes: With knowledge and a comparative perspective our discussions and suggestions probably will be more informed, pragmatic but also critical. There is a similar statement from Romania: »The efforts of harmonisation of teacher training policies and structures in the EU member states should be continued ...«. But not everything can be regulated, as: »Teaching is more than an occupation, it is a mission.«





# TEACHER EDUCATION IN FINLAND

Hannele Niemi

Faculty of Behavioural Science, University of Helsinki, Finland

Ritva Jakku-Sihvonen

Finnish National Board of Education, Finland

## 1 The national context

Teacher education for teachers in comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools, as well as for those teachers who teach general subjects in adult education and vocational education, is provided at eight Finnish comprehensive universities around the country. In addition, vocational teacher education is also provided by five institutions of vocational higher education in close cooperation with polytechnics. The comprehensive school consists of a primary level (1–6) and a lower secondary level (grades 7–9). The upper secondary school covers three years and is streamed into programmes that are either of a more theoretical or vocational nature.

Universities have a high degree of autonomy in designing their curricula. Therefore, no detailed “curriculum of teacher education” covering all universities in Finland can be presented. However, there are some principles and general outlines followed by all institutions of teacher education. These are partly due to recommendations by the Ministry of Education and partly to an agreement of the Deans of the Faculties of Education and the Directors of the Departments of Teacher Education who are supposed to have regular contact with each other and with the Ministry. The Ministry of Education has full confidence in the departments and faculties involved in teacher education. (Meisalo 2007, p. 163)

When Finnish universities prepared new curricula for Bologna process degrees (2003–2005), they had much national cooperation. All universities responsible for teacher education established a national

network for Educational Sciences and Teacher Education (Vokke project 2005, <http://www.helsinki.fi/vokke/english.htm>). Its main task was to coordinate the implementation of the two-tier degree programmes and to activate interaction and knowledge sharing between teacher education units. It organized seminars and sub-networks where representatives of the universities had opportunities to discuss, argue and reach a consensus concerning the common national components and structures of teacher education. It created a joint forum to analyse and develop the teacher education curriculum taking new challenges in the Finnish society and global world into account. The teacher education network had also active contacts with the Mathematics and Science groups as well as with the humanities group. As a consequence of the cooperation, all universities will share a common structure of teacher education. A rather good consensus has also been reached concerning the core contents of the curriculum, although each university will have the autonomy to develop its own curriculum based on its current research profile.

## **2 The required teacher education for teachers' qualifications**

According to old decrees issued in 1979 and 1995, all teachers had to attain Master's degree for a teacher qualification. In terms of the Bologna process, the degree of qualified teachers was equivalent of the second cycle degree in the European higher education area. As part of the Bologna process, teacher education in Finland moved to a two-tier degree system on 1 August 2005. The combination of a three-year Bachelor's degree and a two-year Master's degree in appropriate subjects qualifies teachers to teach subjects in primary and secondary schools or general subjects in vocational institutions. Since moving to the Bologna process, the kindergarten teacher's degree has to be a Bachelor in Education (180 ECTS); all other teachers must attain a Master's degree (BA 180 + MA 120 = 300 ECTS; 1 ECTS is about 27 hours work). Teachers for vocational schools study their vocational subjects in higher education institutions (e.g. technological universities) which are specialized in vocational content areas. All other teachers are educated in comprehensive universities.

The main elements of all teacher education curricula consist of studies in:

- **Academic disciplines.** These can be whatever disciplines are taught in schools or educational institutions or in the science of education. Academic studies can be a major or minor, depending on the qualification being sought. Class teachers have a major in educational sciences and minors in other disciplines.
- **Research studies** consist of methodological studies, a BA thesis, and a MA thesis.
- **Pedagogical studies** (min. 60 ECTS) are obligatory for all teachers. They also include teaching practice.
- **Communication, language and ICT studies** are obligatory.
- The preparation of a **personal study plan** is a new element in university studies in Finland since 2005. Its main function is to guide students to develop their own effective programmes and career plans, and to tutor them in achieving their goals.
- **Optional studies** may cover a variety of different courses through which students seek to profile their studies and qualifications.

## **2.1 Pedagogical studies**

The traditional distinction between class teachers and subject teachers has been retained but the structures of the respective degree programmes allow them to take very flexible routes to include both in the same programme or permit later qualification in either direction. The pedagogical studies (60 ECTS) are obligatory for qualification as a teacher and are approximately the same for both primary and secondary teachers as well as vocational and adult education teachers. These studies give a formal pedagogical qualification to teachers of all levels in the Finnish educational system regardless of the programme in which they are provided. According to legislation, pedagogical studies must be studies in the science of education with an emphasis on didactics. The pedagogical studies can be part of the degree studies, or they can be taken separately after the completion of the Master's degree.

As a part of the Bologna process, teachers' pedagogical studies (60 ECTS) were reformed in all Finnish universities. Jakku-Sihvonen et al. (2009) have analysed the core elements of the pedagogical studies in 12 teacher education departments of Finnish universities. The following

main elements were found: (1) theoretical substance in education, (2) supervised teaching practice, (3) studies for research competence, and (4) optional studies. The results by credits were as follows:

1. The main element of the curricula is theoretical substance in education. Credits vary from 25 to 40 ECTS.
2. The amount of supervised teaching practice varies from 12 to 25 ECTS.
3. The amount of the studies in research readiness varies from 3 to 12 ECTS.
4. The optional studies are included only in four curricula. The amount of the optional studies is in all cases less than 10 ECTS.

The research group (Jakku-Sihvonen et al. 2007) also analysed how the amount of the theoretical substance in education in those 12 curricula was divided into following the traditional definition of sub-disciplines of the science of education: didactics, educational psychology, sociology of education, philosophy of education, history of education and comparative education (see Jakku-Sihvonen 2007, p. 218); didactics forms the largest content area of studies in most of the curricula. The amount of studies in didactics varies from 9 to 20 ECTS. The number of credits in educational psychology varies from 3 to 11 ECTS. The number of credits in sociology of education varies from 1 to 12 ECTS. In eight curricula, there are obligatory studies in the philosophy of education (Jakku-Sihvonen et al. 2007, pp. 10–13).

The goal of pedagogical studies is to create opportunities to learn pedagogical interaction, to learn how to develop one's own teaching skills, and to learn how to plan, teach and evaluate teaching in terms of the curriculum, the school community and the age and learning capacity of the pupils. Students should also learn how to cooperate with other teachers, parents and other stakeholders and representatives of the welfare society.

Teachers' pedagogical studies include also guided teaching practice (approx. 20 ECTS). The aim of guided practical studies is to support students in their efforts to acquire professional skills in teaching, developing and evaluating teaching and learning processes. In addition,

students should be able to reflect critically on their own practices and social skills in teaching and learning situations. During guided practical studies, students should meet pupils and students from various different social backgrounds and psychological orientations and have opportunities to teach them according to the curriculum.

Pedagogical studies also consist of basics in educational research with a purpose to provide a reflective and research based orientation to new teachers. An important aim of pedagogically oriented studies is also to educate teachers who are able to study and develop their own researched-based practices. For this reason, the modules on behavioural research methods are also obligatory for subject teachers. The structures of primary and secondary school teacher education are described in Tables 1 and 2.

## **2.2 Class teacher education**

Class teachers' educational studies include pedagogical studies (60 ECTS) plus a minimum of 60 ECTS of other studies in the science of education. An essential part of these educational studies is the Master's thesis (20–40 ECTS including seminars and individual guidance, in most universities 40 ECTS). The topic of the thesis may be highly school-related, and very often they are action research projects. Various research methodologies are studied in seminars. Thematically, the Master's thesis deals with problems linked to general didactics, psychology of education, and sociology of education or subject-matter didactics. Theoretical studies consist of obligatory and optional modules. The curricula for class teachers and studies leading to a Master's degree in the science of education open opportunities for doctoral studies in education.

Class teachers have obligatory studies in subjects taught in the Finnish comprehensive schools (60 ECTS).

**Table 1.** The main components of the teacher education programmes for primary school teachers (class teachers) (Niemi & Jaku-Sihvonen 2006).

Primary school teacher education programme	Bachelor's Degree 180 ECTS	Master's Degree 120 ECTS	TOTAL 300 ECTS
Class teachers' pedagogical studies (as a part of a major in education)			
– basics of teaching methods and evaluation	25	35	
– support of different kinds of learners	(Including supervised teaching practice)	(Including a minimum of 15 ETCS supervised teaching practice)	60
– latest research results and research methods of teaching and learning			
– cooperation with different partners and stakeholders			
<b>Other studies in a major in education</b>	35	45	
– research methods	(including BA Thesis, 6–10)	(including MA Thesis, 20–40)	80
– scientific writing			
– optional studies			
<b>Subject matter studies for comprehensive school teachers</b>	60		60
<b>Academic studies in a different discipline</b>	25	0–35	25–60
– a minor			
<b>Language and communication studies, including ICT</b>			
– Practice in working life	35	5–40	40–75
– Preparation and updating a personal study plan			
– Optional studies			

### 2.3 Subject teacher education

The degree programmes of subject teachers include one major subject (at least 120 ECTS) plus a Master's thesis in their own academic discipline. In addition, they must complete one or two minor subjects comprising 25–60 ECTS each. The educational studies of subject teachers (60 ECTS) can be completed either as a one-year block or concurrently with

their academic studies in their major field. Teachers of vocational subjects usually study pedagogical studies consecutively after their Master's degree in vocational content area.

**Table 2.** The main components of the teacher education programmes for secondary school teachers (Subject teachers) (Niemi & Jaku-Sihvonen 2006).

Secondary school teacher education programme	Bachelor's Degree 180 ECTS	Master's Degree 120 ECTS	TOTAL 300 ECTS
Subject teachers' pedagogical studies (minor)			
– basics of teaching methods and evaluation	25–30 (Including supervised teaching practice)	30–35 (Including a minimum of 15 supervised teaching practice)	60
– support of different kind of learners			
– latest research results and research methods of teaching and learning			
– cooperation with different partners and stakeholders			
<b>Academic studies in different disciplines</b>	60 (including BA Thesis, 6–10)	60–90 (including MA Thesis, 20–40)	120–150
– major			
<b>Academic studies in different disciplines</b>	25–60	0–30	25–90
– 1–2 minors			
<b>Language and communication studies, including ICT</b>			
– Practice in working life	35–40	0–30	35–70
– Preparation and updating a personal study plan			
– Optional studies			

### 3 Institutions that carry out teacher education in Finland

In Finland, the responsibility for providing education to prospective teachers at primary and secondary schools has been transferred to universities already in 1971–1973. For decades, the Finnish orientation toward teacher education has committed itself to the development of a research-based professional culture. The critical scientific literacy of

teachers and their ability to use research methods are considered to be crucial. The aim of TE studies is to train students to find and analyse problems they may expect to face in their future work. Research studies provide students with an opportunity to complete an authentic project, in which students must formulate a problem in an educational field, be able to search independently for information and data related to the problem, elaborate on them in the context of recent research in the area, and synthesise the results in the form of a written thesis. The aim is that teachers learn to study actively and to internalise the attitude of researchers as they do their work.

Qualifications of teacher educators are the same as qualifications in general in Finnish universities. The only exception is that those teachers who are responsible for teaching practice must also have a pedagogical teacher qualification. A structure of a university teaching staff consists of (1) professors with a high standard research competence, (2) university lectures with doctoral degree, (3) post doctoral researchers and (4) doctoral students. The structure of teaching staff members in Finnish teacher education departments is approximately: 20–25% professors and others are lecturers. Post-doctoral researchers and doctoral students are also staff members but with a very small teaching duty.

Universities also have teacher training schools where student teachers have their teaching practise periods. Teachers of a training school have MA degrees as a basic qualification as all teachers in Finland. However, many of those teachers have much higher qualifications. Many of them have a doctoral degree or they are studying it as part-time doctoral students.

Professors in TE departments have the responsibility to guide students in the research-oriented aspects of their education. The main object of this guidance is not the completion of the Master's thesis itself, but actually to further the process by which students come to see themselves as actively studying and working subjects. In this aspect of the degree programme, the processes of active working and thinking are integrated in various complex and sometimes unexpected ways. The aim of the guiding process is to help students discover and tap their own intellectual resources and to make them better able to utilise the resources of the study group the student is working with (Nummenmaa 2004, p. 117).



## **4 Entry conditions for teacher education**

In Finland, all universities have Numerus Clausus system. It means that the universities accept only a certain number of applicants and it is related to the amount of degrees negotiated with the Ministry of Education. The universities are accountable for their results and funded according to it. Usually, less than one fourth of applicants can be accepted into universities. Teacher education, especially class teacher education, is one of the most desired study programmes. Because of a big amount of applicants to class teacher education, only 10–15% can be accepted. Also secondary teacher education has become more and more popular in most subjects. In general, admission to the university is difficult for young people wishing to pursue a career as a subject teacher as only a small percentage of the applicants is granted admission to studies in the relevant faculties. This is true particularly for biological subjects, but there have recently been problems in recruiting talented students in Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry, and in some foreign languages. There have been many efforts to attract new students and this has resulted in the change from the “elimination approach” to a “recruitment approach” in the organisation of student admission programmes of the faculties. These efforts include utmost flexibility in timing of studies and arranging entrance tests in some faculties occasionally as often as three times a year (Meisalo 2007, p. 172). Pedagogical studies of subject teachers are normally put in the individual study plans of teacher students between the middle of subject studies, e.g. during the third and fourth study year. However, it is possible to take first a Master’s degree studying at the subject faculty only and apply for entrance to pedagogical studies afterwards. All students applying for teacher education programmes are tested and interviewed personally (Meisalo 2007, p. 172).

Table 3 describes the amount of applicants to class teacher education in the past four years. It gives an overview of the numbers of applicants in 7 universities. They have a joint national selection to teacher education. Åbo Akademi, the university that has Swedish as the main language, is not included in the table because it has its own selection system. The revised national selection system has been in use since 2007. We may see from Table 3 that the pressure to get an entrance is very high, only 10–15% can get an entrance (see also Kansanen 2003). The number of

applicants has increased from 2007 to 2010. In the years of 2008 and 2009, there is a small decline because of changes in criteria of selection procedures. During the last ten years, getting an entrance to teacher education programme has been one of most demanding routes to universities. As a conclusion, we may say that there is a strong interest to become a teacher in Finland. The national quotas have been decreased a little in 2010. The Ministry of Education has a prognosis of the need of new teachers. Because of decreasing of age cohorts in schools, the quotas have been decreased. Taking into account the increasing number of applicants and decreasing quotas, we may conclude that it is harder to get entrance to teacher education than ever. Students who are selected are highly motivated and multi-talented.

*Table 3.* Applicants to class teacher education in different universities.

	The applicants' first choice to the TE unit				The number of accepted students= the quota of places agreed with the Ministry of Education			
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Class Teacher Education</b>								
University of Helsinki	1373	1254	1432	1578	100	120	120	120
University of Jöensuu: Dept. in Jöensuu	367	371	359	467	80	83	81	80
Dept. in Savonlinna	192	142	149	146	69	45	41	40
University of Jyväskylä	1006	964	1020	1103	96	93	86	80
University of Lapland	317	296	316	345	68	67	66	64
University of Oulu Dept. in Kajaani	305	305	293	295	72	60	69	60
Dept. in Oulu	629	604	554	677	24	22	22	20
University of Tampere Dept. in Hämeenlinna	808	679	789	774	64	64	53	64
University of Turku Dept. in Rauma	435	312	427	438	65	62	58	60
Dept. in Turku	635	586	660	763	88	83	74	73
<b>TOTAL</b>	6067	5513	5999	6586	726	699	670	661

The joint national selection system has the following phases:

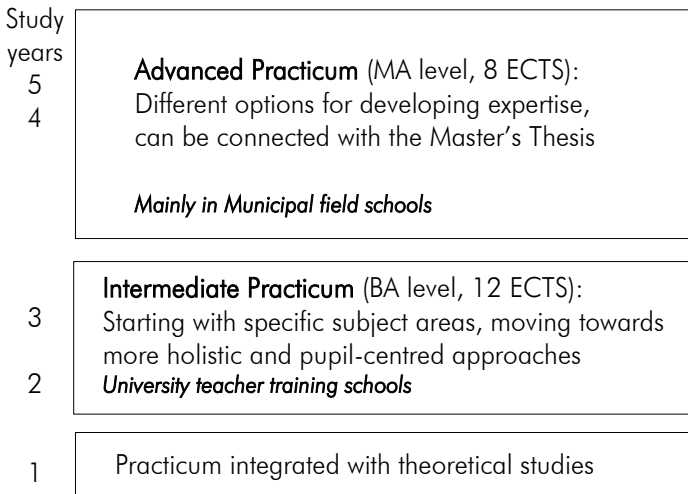
1. The common national academic examination assessing academic study skills needed in educational studies. An applicant can take part in examination in any teacher education unit in Finland. The test is the same for all. Applicants inform what their preference of TE units is if s/he passed the examination.
2. If s/he passed the examination, s/he will be invited to an aptitude test of the university that has been his/her first choice. The test is an interview which is based on a written material given to applicants 20 minutes before the interview. In the interview, the following qualities of the applicant are assessed: aptitude to the teaching profession, motivation, interaction skills, and abilities to present well-grounded opinions and perspectives on the text the applicant got before the interview.

## **5 The practical training of future teachers**

Teachers' pedagogical studies include guided teaching practice (approx. 20 ECTS). Each university has 1–2 teacher training schools which are specialized in supervision of student teachers. The funding of teacher training schools comes from the Ministry of Culture and Education. The training schools also have the task of developing good-quality teaching and curriculum planning. They provide innovative training periods for university students who study teacher education programmes.

Universities are autonomous in planning teacher education curricula and how they are implemented in teaching practice. National legislation only gives major guidelines for teacher education and does not regulate for how many hours student teachers engage in practice. In some universities, e.g. the University of Helsinki, all student teachers have the first periods of practice in university training schools and the last periods in schools of local municipalities. The universities make a contract with local schools and pay rewards to supervising teachers.

Teaching practice is integrated into all levels of teacher education time. It is supervised by university teachers, university training school teachers or local school teachers depending on the phase of practice (Jyrhämä 2006) (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Teaching practice in Finnish teacher education curriculum.

The main principle is that practice should start as early as possible and support student teachers' growth towards expertise. Another important principle is an integration of theoretical studies and practice. In the beginning, practical studies guide student teachers to observe school life and the pupils from an educational perspective, and then they focus on specific subject areas and pupils' learning processes. Finally, they support student teachers as they take holistic responsibility in their teaching and schools. This final period can be tightly connected with their research studies and Master's thesis.

## **6 Teachers' opportunities for further training**

Teachers' further education is financed by the employers of teachers, which are usually municipalities. Municipalities organize training for their own staff and also send teachers to take part in courses offered by further education centres. State money is used to support the further education that has been seen as important for implementing acute education policy. This kind of further education is developed mainly by the continuing education centres of universities and offered for all teachers and principals in the country. The employers of the teachers have the right to decide if a teacher has need and right to take part in

further education. There is no official national induction or mentoring programme. Some municipalities have arranged pilot programmes (Jokinen Välijärvi 2006; Jokinen & Sarja 2006) and see mentoring as very useful and necessary. Both induction and mentoring are the major tasks that should be solved in the future in Finland. In the Finnish educational system, teachers do not have any probation time. A new teacher has all the rights and obligations that senior teachers have. Teachers coming from universities after graduation have good competences but they would need support in their professional development.

During and after moving to the Bologna process degrees, teachers' needs for further education were analyzed by a national working group. The themes in 2007 that seemed to be important were:

- Network pedagogy, media and science education;
- Promoting basic skills of learning, and subject and topic-based skills;
- Development of entrepreneurship education and working life cooperation of learning institutions;
- Student counselling and development of support services;
- Development of special education;
- Development of work-based learning as well as development of evidence of professional skills;
- Multilingual and multicultural teaching in schools and learning institutions;
- Training of institutional management and development of work communities;
- Development of well-being in schools as well as pupil and student services.

To support teachers' opportunities, The Ministry of Education has increased the economical resources in order to support the further education of teachers. Since 2008, there has been an Advisory Board for Professional Development of Education Personnel, which has the following tasks:

- To estimate coming changes in the learning needs of education personnel;
- To follow the state and development needs of continuing education;

- To make proposals and give statements about the direction and realisation of continuing education;
- To follow continuing education planning of education personnel in other countries;
- To activate discussion, development work and research in the field of professional development and continuing education of education personnel;
- To prepare reports and initiatives concerning work conditions and access to continuing education of education personnel;
- To assist education authorities in the planning of the continuing education agenda for the years 2009–2011, and in development of quality assurance criteria.

There is no system for changing the titles of teachers because of further education. Still, there are teachers who continue their academic studies at universities and can get higher academic degrees. These studies are voluntary and lead usually to the degree of doctor of education.

There are also opportunities if teachers want to widen their qualifications. The flexible structure of teacher education allows teachers to seek new competence areas in their work after their MA degree, e.g.:

**Study counsellor programmes** (60 ECTS) qualify teachers to support pupils in their learning paths and career planning;

**Special education programmes** (60 ECTS) qualify teachers to work with students with special needs;

**New minors** in subject matter (minor 25 ECTS and large minor 60 ECTS) qualify teachers in academic subjects by either supplementing their earlier studies or providing a new subject matter into their repertoire. Secondary school teachers may also study 60 ECTS of class teachers' multi-disciplinary subject matter module and get a full class teacher qualification.

## **7 Open questions in the area of teacher education in *Finland***

The Finnish teacher education has been reviewed systematically during the last 20 years. There have also been many research projects and smaller studies which describe strengths and weaknesses of teacher education programmes (e.g. Niemi & Kohonen 1995; Niemi 1996; Tella 1996; Niemi 2002; Niemi & Jakku-Sihvonen 2006; Hämäläinen-Väljjarvi 2008; Väljjarvi 2009; Niemi 2010).

In the Finnish teacher education, pre-service programmes seem to function very well. In the new teacher education project (Niemi 2010 – forthcoming), student teachers assess their teacher education. They seem to have good competences needed as basic skills in the teaching profession. Teacher education also provides them with critical and reflective approach and ethical commitment to their work. They have good skills in planning teaching and using different teaching methods. They are aware of their own teaching philosophy and their responsibilities. However, there are also areas where teacher education should be more effective. These are e.g. teachers' competences to collaborate with parents and other stakeholders, e.g., representatives of culture, livelihood and working life. They also would need more support and guidance in pedagogical applications of ICT and social media. Creating these new learning environments is challenging to new teachers.

We may identify some specific areas that should be the focus when developing teacher education for the future:

### ***Quality in teacher education as a career long development***

Quality in teacher education is a multi-layered process involving many participants and which **cannot be promoted only by pre-service teacher education**. If we want to have changes in learning ethos in schools, e.g. towards more active and collaborative learning, it is a serious challenge for in-service teacher education and those who are responsible for curriculum planning. It is necessary **to create a strong cultural change** that ensures quality culture from student admission to teacher education and all the way to students' learning in schools. We need a continuum of career-long education for teachers. The

effectiveness of teacher education depends on teachers' capacities to learn new methods in their work and primarily to be ready to reassess their working culture. We need to assess what kinds of QA methods (e.g. feed-back systems, quality management procedures for teaching, research and societal interaction of TE programmes) are used at a HE institutional level (universities or other HE institutions) and what kinds of consequences they have on teacher education curriculum, organizational culture, resource allocation and infrastructure, teachers' professional development and their competences. We also need to investigate how national and institutional QA methods ensure teachers' competences in certain critical areas such as active and collaborative learning and knowledge creation, ICT pedagogical applications, and inclusive education. And finally, we need to explore how QA methods are applied to the continuum of teacher education as life-long learning? How are teachers' competences supported and promoted in induction phase and in-service training and what kinds of QA methods are used after pre-service TE?

In addition, we need strategically focused development areas which aim at improvement of learning and competences in schools and through education in the whole society. One important area is teaching and learning in multicultural schools and society. In this task, Finnish universities and their TE departments are in the pilot phase. We have good experiences at the University of Oulu as well as at the University of Helsinki but nationally we still have many challenges to face. Another development task is technology and social media in education. Even though Finland is a modern high-tech country, teaching and learning in schools do not utilize all those opportunities which would be available through technology and social media. As an example, a big new national ICT project is described:

### ***ICT at School's Everyday Life***

This project (<http://blogs.helsinki.fi/oppiailoakouluun/in-english/>) is a national development project. It is included in the Finnish government platform for 2007–2011 and National Information Society Policy of Finland 2007–2011. The project is carried out by the Ministry of Transport and Communications (co-ordination), Ministry of Education and National Board of Education and in cooperation with industry and commerce. The operational work is carried out by CICERO Learning of



University of Helsinki (<http://www.cicero.fi/sivut2/>). The vision of the project is that by 2011, Finnish schools will have innovative and creative ICT models and practices for wide dissemination to all Finnish schools. The goal is to produce new knowledge and know-how for schools and educational administration about the latest developments in ICT, but more importantly to also develop the educational use of ICT in a multi-dimensional way. The project aims at advancing teachers' pedagogical knowledge and teamwork, the structural and pedagogical development of teaching and technological innovations and infrastructure. These aspects are studied and elaborated in order to obtain models and practices of pedagogical use of ICT in the future school of Finland.

This project is closely linked with the research project Educational technology at school's everyday life, that develops research-based models, processes, and contents which will enable the efficient use of ICT in the study and learning environments of schools. The project is funded by Tekes (Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation), private companies and the participating universities: 12 research units and the Technical Research Centre of Finland, with industry and commerce (28 private companies), pilot schools (12 projects) and municipal education departments.

Teacher education and schools are in a close relationship. There is a mutual reinforcing process between and in the cultures of teacher education and schools. These maintain the status quo in educational settings, but they can also act as supporting forces in a positive way. We are an integral part of our contextual cultures and traditions, and we reproduce them through our own acts. Culture is a social structure, and it can be changed by social interventions. This is a great challenge to quality assurance methods and practices. We must seek new values and practices creating quality culture in TE and schools at the same time. It means that we see teacher education as a continuum that covers the whole career-long learning in teachers' work.

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# TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

## Balancing between autonomous institutions and a steering government

Marco Snoek

School of Education, University of Applied Sciences Hogeschool van  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

### 1 Introduction

The Netherlands has a long-standing tradition in teacher education. The first structured forms of teacher education date from the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the first institutions for the education of primary teachers were established (Swennen & Beishuizen 2005). A broad range of part-time courses were created at the beginning of the twentieth century, offering the opportunity to get a teaching qualification for secondary education. In the 1970s and 1980s, the wide variety of courses and institutions were harmonized and brought into the system of higher education. This resulted in a coherent system for teacher education in The Netherlands. There are three main types of teacher education courses:

- Teacher education for primary education (pabo)
- Teacher education for lower secondary and vocational education
- Teacher education for upper secondary education.

While the general policy of the Dutch government is focused on deregulation and increasing the autonomy of schools, this does not seem to be the case in the area of teacher education. Over the years, there has been strong government interference in teacher education, motivated by the special responsibility of the Ministry of Education for the quality of education in Dutch society. As this quality largely depends on the quality of the teachers, this justifies a strong interest in teacher education, an interest that has been translated into numerous policy initiatives and government-initiated innovation programmes focused on improving the quality of teacher education.

The first part of this paper will start with an introduction of the general context of the education system in The Netherlands. This is followed by a presentation of the general characteristics of the teacher education system, of the balance between school autonomy and government control, and of the general policies concerning teacher quality. The second part will give an elaboration of the system of teacher education by introducing five major developments that have shaped teacher education in the past twenty years, and by giving a more detailed description of each type of teacher education. In the third part, I reflect on the role of the government in steering innovations and quality improvement in the area of teacher education.

## **2 The educational system in The Netherlands<sup>1</sup>**

In McKinsey's report on the world's best performing educational systems, the Dutch system was ranked among the top 10. This ranking was based on the outcomes of PISA 2003. In the PISA 2006 and TIMSS 2007 studies, The Netherlands ranked fourth in Europe. Dutch students also outrank students in many other countries in Mathematics. And it is not only in school results that Dutch children perform well: a recent study conducted by UNICEF concluded that children in The Netherlands ranked the highest with respect to child well-being (UNESCO 2007).

Although these outcomes could justify deep satisfaction with the educational system and the quality of schools and teachers in The Netherlands, opinion leaders and newspapers continuously express their concern that the level of education and the skills of pupils with respect to Mathematics and the Dutch language are deteriorating and that strong policy actions are necessary (e.g. Parliamentary Committee for the Evaluation of Curriculum Innovations 2007; KNAW 2009).

Both the high performance of Dutch pupils and the concern about the ability of Dutch schools to maintain this performance have to be seen in the context of an educational system whereby the school career of most children in The Netherlands starts at the age of four, when they first attend primary school. The first two years are mainly dedicated to the

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<sup>1</sup> See also: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture/Eurydice (2007). *The Education System in The Netherlands 2007*. Eurydice, Brussels.

development of creativity and motoric and social skills. Cognitive skill development in these first years is focused on counting, comparing and oral language. The systematic schooling in reading, writing and arithmetic starts in year 3 of primary school. Schools follow a national curriculum but can choose which pedagogical approach to use. While this creates a large degree of freedom and leads to a wide variety of schools, the focus on learning results tends to uniform the actual teaching, as the development of children is monitored through standardized tests.

At the age of 12 (after 8 years of primary schooling), all pupils take a national exam, the outcome of which is decisive in defining the type of secondary education they can follow.

In The Netherlands, secondary education is split into three types:

- Pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO) (ISCED 2), which takes four years and prepares students for secondary vocational education;
- Senior general secondary education (HAVO) (ISCED 3), which takes five years and prepares students for higher professional education;
- Pre-university education (VWO), which takes six years and prepares students for university education.

After leaving primary school, around 60% of pupils enter VMBO or special needs programmes.

Students at all secondary schools conclude their schooling by taking national exams. Passing these exams is conditional to entering tertiary education.

After finishing VMBO, students can enter secondary vocational education (MBO) (ISCED 3), which prepares them for professions at various levels or can allow entry to higher professional education.

The higher education system consists of two types of institutions (ISCED 5A):

- Universities of applied sciences (*hogeschole*), which provide higher professional education. These institutions offer 4-year, profession-oriented bachelor's programmes.
- Research universities, which offer academic studies consisting of a 3-year bachelor's programme (BA or BSc) followed by a 1- or 2-year master's programme (MA or MSc).

The introduction of the Bologna structure did not create many problems within the Dutch education system, as it did not require a fundamental change in the general structure (the traditional 4-year *doctoraal* studies at the research universities were split into a 3-year bachelor's programme and 1-year master's programme).

Research was traditionally not part of the portfolio of the universities of applied sciences. In 2003, research funding was made available for the hogescholen, which gave the opportunity to create research groups that could focus on practice-oriented research. These research groups are centred on *lectoren* (professors at the universities of applied sciences).

### **3 Autonomy and government control**

In The Netherlands, a centralized education policy is combined with the decentralized administration and management of schools. Over the last twenty years, a gradual process of deregulation took place in which the autonomy in management and organization of schools increased. The central government focused its role on creating enabling conditions for education through legislation and financing systems, which apply to both publicly and privately run institutions. At the same time, the role of the central government is to safeguard the quality of education through constant monitoring. The Inspectorate (for primary, secondary and vocational education) and the Dutch–Flemish Accreditation Organization (for higher education) play an important role in this monitoring process. Additionally, the outlines of the content of the curricula, the number of teaching hours and the qualification requirements for teachers in primary and secondary education are defined by the government.

School boards are financed through a system of block grant funding, implying that school boards can decide how they spend their money. This gives them freedom in defining the pedagogical principles underlying the teaching in school, the structure of the curriculum, the organizational structure of the school, the personnel policies, etc. Schools can differ considerably in these areas. During deregulation, much attention was paid to the development of professional leadership and competent school authorities. However, the roles in the process of deregulation and the growing autonomy of schools are not always clear,



leading to discussions and negotiations between the minister and the national councils for primary, secondary or higher education. The responsibility of the minister of Education for the quality of education can easily lead to direct measures from the minister in areas where school boards consider themselves responsible.

A parliamentary committee that recently evaluated innovations in education over the last twenty years concluded that there has been too much government influence on the actual teaching in the classroom. The main advice from the committee, which was supported by the main political parties, was that the government should decide on the content of education (the ‘what’) and allow schools to decide on the way in which they want to teach this content to their students (the ‘how’) (Parliamentary Committee for the Evaluation of Curriculum Innovations 2007).

The division of roles and responsibilities between school boards and teachers has also led to intensive discussions. The growing autonomy of school boards leads to stronger pressure on school leaders to account for the teaching in their schools. As a result, school leaders are pressed to take decisions in areas that were traditionally the domain of teachers. Therefore, teachers feel that the growing autonomy of schools has led to a decrease in the professional autonomy of teachers. This has been expressed by a teacher pressure group that conveys the opinion of many teachers to the media (Verbrugge & Verbrugge-Breeuwsma 2006).

As a result, advisory reports from both the Dutch Education Council and the national Committee on the Teaching Profession have emphasized that teachers should have a stronger role in developing school policies (Dutch Education Council 2007; Committee on the Teaching Profession 2007).

A consequence of the growing autonomy of schools is that schools must have leeway to set their own policies and cannot be forced into policies defined by others. This has consequences not only for the relation between schools and the government, but also for the relations between schools and other actors in the educational infrastructure, such as teacher education institutions (TEIs), school support institutions and developers of learning materials. In 2002, the minister of Education declared that schools should be considered the core of the education infrastructure (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2002). The needs of

individual schools should be leading for the programmes and support offered by the support institutions. In many of the initiatives from TEIs and other support institutions and in applications for project funding, schools need to be an explicit partner as a condition for funding. This has recently also resulted in new research funds<sup>2</sup> that are focused on research questions that explicitly concern the needs of schools.

## **4 Teacher quality**

### **4.1 Teacher policy**

As the Ministry of Education is responsible for the quality of education and teachers are the most important factor influencing the learning of students, governmental policies pay special attention to the quality of teachers.

A policy focusing on improving the status of the teaching profession and reducing the professional isolation of teachers has emerged since 1993 (Committee on the Future of the Teaching Profession 1993; Committee on the Teaching Profession 2007). The main elements of this policy are:

- Developing professional profiles for teachers that emphasize the professionalism of teachers;
- Developing career paths for teachers and incentives for lifelong learning;
- Focusing on teaching as a collaborative profession and on schools as learning communities;
- Increasing the attractiveness of the profession by raising salaries;
- Developing coherent human resource policies in schools, including the involvement of schools in initial teacher education;
- Supporting novice teachers by redesigning teacher education in order to reduce the praxis shock and by introducing induction programmes;
- Strengthening the profession by creating professional bodies that take responsibility for the quality of the profession by developing professional standards and a professional register.

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<sup>2</sup> Research programmes Durven, Delen, Doen (Daring, Sharing, Doing) and Onderwijs Bewijs (Education Proof).

Considerable steps have been taken in some of these areas, while other areas are still in an embryonic phase.

#### **4.2 Competence profiles for teachers**

In the area of teacher profiles, national standards have been developed in a number of steps, with close involvement of teachers and teacher educators. In 2004, a new law on the teaching profession was enacted (Dutch Parliament 2004). This law defines the minimum requirements for teachers: teachers at all levels (primary and secondary) need to be ‘not only qualified, but competent’. Seven key competences that all teachers are expected to meet were identified (SBL 2006). These competence requirements focus on:

1. Interpersonal competence in creating a pleasant, safe and effective classroom environment;
2. Pedagogical competence to support children’s personal development by helping them to become independent and responsible;
3. Subject knowledge and methodological competence that demonstrates substantial knowledge of their subject and appropriate teaching methods (including pedagogical content knowledge);
4. Organizational competence in organizing curricula that support student learning;
5. Competence to collaborate with colleagues and thus contribute to a well-functioning school organization;
6. Competence to collaborate with those in the school environment who also play a role in students’ well-being and development (i.e. students’ parents or guardians, colleagues at educational and youth welfare institutions);
7. Competence to reflect and to develop as professionals over the long term.

The competence requirements act as a frame of reference for teacher education programmes, for personnel policies in schools and for teachers in their lifelong learning.

#### **4.3 Lifelong learning and career opportunities**

Lifelong learning of teachers is the responsibility of both teachers and school boards. Given the autonomy of schools, there are no national

programmes for in-service learning. However, schools have to keep track of the professional development of their teachers in competence dossiers. Schools can decide on school-based schooling programmes for staff teams, mostly in connection with development themes that have priority within the school. As a result, course-based and individual subject-oriented in-service learning have virtually disappeared, and in-service training is offered by a very wide variety of commercial and non-commercial institutions in an open market. Individual professional development wishes of teachers need to be negotiated with school leaders, as they decide on professional development budgets. Examples of in-service courses are courses on special educational needs, pupil counselling, leadership, new activity-based teaching methods and the use of ICT in education. Some of these courses are linked to a formal master's qualification. Professional development and qualification in these themes can in some cases lead to new roles within the school as an SEN teacher, pupil counsellor or head of a subject department.

Apart from such specific roles in schools that are related to special salary scales, professional development activities are not stimulated, as they do not lead to an increase in salary or status. This lack of an incentive for teachers to get involved in professional development courses and the lack of career paths for teachers are recognized as a problem in the Dutch educational system. Teachers can change from school type (from primary to lower secondary or from lower secondary to upper secondary), from generalist to specialist (as special needs teacher or counsellor) or from teacher to school leader, but career paths within the teaching profession within one school type hardly exist. A recent proposal to create stronger incentives by linking teacher salaries to qualifications (Commissie Leraren 2007) was rejected by the school boards, as they felt that this would interfere with their autonomy in personnel (and salary) policies.

To reduce the dependency of teachers on the willingness of their school leaders to support their professional development ambitions, the government recently created a bursary system whereby individual teachers can apply for a grant to take master's courses (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2007).

Initiatives have recently been taken to create some possibilities for teacher career paths by introducing job profiles at different levels that are

linked to different salary levels. In 2010 schools are still working on criteria that they can use to select and nominate teachers for those different levels.

One of the criteria could be the qualification level of the teacher. New master's programmes have recently been developed in order to enable teachers to become experts in their primary role as classroom or subject teachers. The government-funded master's programme Learning & Innovation has created new opportunities for career development and professional development for bachelor teachers in primary or lower secondary education. The development of these masters' programmes fits in with ambitions to raise the quality of teachers, not by upgrading initial teacher education to the master's level, as is done in some other European countries, but by stimulating teachers to qualify as master during their career (AOB 2006; LPBO 2006; HBO-raad 2006). These master's programmes also give schools an objective criterion for selecting teachers for higher job profiles.

Again, the dichotomy of the system balancing government initiatives and school initiatives can be recognized in this area. In 2008, the national board for secondary schools established the Dutch Institute for Master's in Education (NiME<sup>3</sup>). The institute invited TEIs to submit proposals for master's programmes that met a clearly defined set of demands. From the proposals, the NiME selected four master's programmes that are supported and funded by the schools. This initiative reverses the traditional roles whereby the TEIs were held accountable by the government, as in the NiME case the TEIs are also held accountable by the schools.

#### **4.4 Teacher induction**

The dilemma of government steering versus school autonomy is also visible in the area of supporting novice teachers. Coherent and systematic induction programmes are seen as essential in supporting novice teachers in the first years of their careers and in retaining them in the teaching profession (European Commission 2010). Within the Dutch context, induction programmes are seen as a part of the personnel policy of schools and therefore are part of the autonomy of institutions.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.mastersineducatie.nl](http://www.mastersineducatie.nl)

However, the extent to which individual schools take that responsibility varies.

This has led to a situation in which coherent system-wide induction programmes are lacking and not all teachers have access to induction programmes of high quality. The involvement of TEIs in induction programmes is also limited, as the funding of induction programmes (as part of the funding for personnel policies of the school) goes to the schools. As a result, the feedback loop that uses the experiences of novice teachers to improve the quality of teacher education curricula is weak.

In the Dutch education system, it is not fitting for the government to introduce nationwide induction schemes, so it can only use indirect steering measures by creating incentives for schools to implement coherent induction programmes and by strengthening the role of the inspectorate to evaluate personnel policies in individual schools.

#### **4.5 Development of a professional register**

The creation of professional bodies that take responsibility for the quality of the teaching profession by developing professional standards and a professional register is intended to increase the professional self-awareness of teachers and strengthen the balance between autonomous school boards and teachers as employees of the schools. The proposals made in 1993 by the Committee on the Future of the Teaching Profession resulted in a professional standard and professional register for teacher educators, but not in a professional body, standard or register for teachers. The 2007 Commission on the Teaching Profession took up the proposals from 1993, and professional standards for subject teachers are currently being developed by associations of teachers. An important question in this process is how a quality system that is maintained by the teacher profession itself relates to the autonomy of school boards in matters of staff policy.

## 5 Teacher education in general

Teacher education in The Netherlands is part of the higher education system. Within this system, there are three main types of teacher education courses:

- Teacher education for primary education (pabo): a 4-year bachelor's programme that is offered by the universities of applied sciences (hogescholen) and that prepares class teachers for 4- to 12-year-old pupils;
- Teacher education for lower secondary and vocational education: a 4-year bachelor's programme that is offered by the universities of applied sciences and that prepares teachers for a grade-2 teaching qualification in one specific subject;
- Teacher education for upper secondary education: these courses prepare students for a grade-1 teaching qualification in one specific subject. This can be obtained by taking a 1-year postgraduate MSc/MA programme at a research university in combination with a subject master's, or, for teachers who already have a grade-2 teaching qualification, by taking a 3-year part-time postgraduate Master of Education at a university of applied sciences.

The number of applicants entering each type of teacher education is indicated in the table below.

**Table 1.** Applicants entering teacher education in 2009 (SBO 2010).

<b>Applicants in 2009 entering:</b>	<b>No.</b>
Primary teacher education	8940
Lower secondary and vocational teacher education	7672
Upper secondary teacher education (universities of applied sciences)	2082
Upper secondary teacher education (research universities, 2008)	606
Special educational needs (post-initial master's)	3214
Learning & Innovation (post-initial master's)	150
Other	263

The acceptance rate of students applying for teacher education is 100%. The only selection criterion for entering teacher education is that students need to have the proper qualification: students entering teacher

education at universities for applied sciences need to have finished their secondary education successfully. Students entering the upper secondary teacher education programme at research universities must have completed their bachelor's programme and must follow a subject master's programme at the same time. Students applying for upper secondary education at universities for applied sciences need to have a teaching qualification for lower secondary and vocational education and at least three years of experience working in schools.

When students have finished their study, they are fully qualified. There is no probation period.

The design of teacher education programmes can vary between institutions with respect to the approach and learning concept that is used and to the actual structure and planning of the curriculum, given the autonomy of the institutions.

The quality assurance is organized through accreditations that take place every 6 years. These accreditations are organized under responsibility of the Dutch–Flemish Accreditation Organization (NVAO).

The following five developments have strongly influenced teacher education in The Netherlands.

*1) The need to close the gap between theory and practice*

The concern to reduce new teachers' 'practice shock' has become the focus of substantial changes in the curriculum of teacher education in The Netherlands (Verloop & Wubbels 2000).

The didactic approach in teacher education in The Netherlands can be characterized as a 'realistic approach', whereby the key idea is to bring relevant theory into the curriculum in such a way that it is closely related to the particular concerns that new teachers have as they begin to practice teaching (Hemmerness, Tartwijk & Snoek 2010).

The learning goals for student teachers have been linked more closely to the future profession by defining competences that are related to the tasks and working context of teachers. The importance of the involvement of student teachers in an authentic and realistic learning environment has been emphasized (Korthagen et al. 2001). As a result, great emphasis has been put on teaching practice in schools and even on



school-based teacher education, in which a considerable part of the curriculum takes place in the school. This intensive confrontation with the future profession stimulates the learning focus of students, helps them to relate the content of the curriculum to the reality of the teaching profession in schools and helps them to develop a professional identity as teachers. This process starts already in the first year of the teacher education curriculum.

An important development is the introduction of a 6-month independent teaching practice at the end of their study. During this teacher-in-training phase (*Leraar-in-opleiding; LIO*), students work within a school with almost full responsibility and are considered full members of the staff team (and are sometimes paid a salary by the school). They are supported by a supervisor, who keeps his or her distance. This LIO phase closely resembles the future profession, thus bringing the practice shock into the curriculum of initial teacher education, where support from both teacher educators and trained mentors is available.

## 2) *Shared partnerships with schools*

The need to bridge the gap between theory and practice is an important reason for TEIs to seek close cooperation and partnerships with schools. In these partnerships, new roles and responsibilities are developed. Experiences with partnerships between schools and TEIs in The Netherlands have shown that stronger, structural partnerships covering the pre-service education of new teachers, the in-service education of school staff, the innovation of the curriculum and research vitalize both schools and TEIs (van der Sanden et al. 2005).

The benefits for schools lie in the new ideas and energy that student teachers bring with them. This promotes the professional development of the teachers who are already at the school, introduces new challenges for senior teachers (e.g. in mentoring student teachers and novice teachers), and increases the capacity for innovation and research. Teacher educators working alongside teachers can use their expertise to contribute to curriculum innovation, and student teachers can be seen as additional capacity for school improvement and research activities. Especially in situations where students spend a considerable amount of time in the school, their contributions are seen as worthwhile (Bergen et al. 2009).

At the moment, 25% of the bachelor's programme of hogescholen and 50% of the master's programme at research universities take place in schools. Although the involvement of schools in the education of new teachers has increased in the last few years, the formal responsibility for qualifying teachers remains with the TEI.

As the school environment is such an important part of the learning environment of students, special attention is paid to the quality of this learning environment. The responsibility for this quality is shared between school and the TEI. Quality criteria have been established (e.g. Kallenberg & Rokebrand 2006; NVAO 2009a) and schools that want to gain the formal status of training school (*opleidingschool*) have to undergo a formal accreditation procedure with the Dutch–Flemish Accreditation Organization. Schools that pass that accreditation receive additional funding from the ministry, provided that 40% of the teacher education curriculum will be school based.

Many schools do not have the formal status as training schools. In those cases, the safeguarding of the quality of the training school is element in the partnership between the school and TEI, but ultimately the latter has to account for the quality of the learning environments of the schools that are used for teaching practice. As the offering of training places by schools is not regulated by law, and schools do not receive additional money for offering practice places, TEIs have no means to enforce high quality training places at those schools that do not have formal status as training schools.

The quality criteria apply not only to systemic conditions but also to the teachers and teacher educators involved in these partnerships. As the involvement of schools in the education of teachers increases, mentors in schools need more knowledge in the area of teacher learning (van Velzen & Volman 2009). Many schools and TEIs have developed courses for their mentors. In The Netherlands, mentors in schools who support student teachers are considered 'teacher educators'. Mentors in schools can even apply for listing in the professional register of teacher educators of the Dutch Association for Teacher Educators (Snoek & van der Sanden 2006). In most schools that have a close cooperation with TEIs, one or more of their mentors are registered in the professional register for school-based teacher educators. These school-based teacher educators usually team up with teacher educators from the university to

coordinate the activities that take place within the training school. Those school-based teacher educators often work not with individual students, but with groups of students, while they support those mentors who are mentoring individual students.

Although the governmental push for a stronger responsiveness of TEIs to the needs of the schools could have been seen as threatening the autonomy of teacher education, most TEIs in The Netherlands were proactive in their response and started partnerships, also because they believed that it would reduce the practice shock for novice teachers and increase the quality of the teacher education curriculum. This has led to exciting partnerships with schools, to new roles and responsibilities, to fascinating experiments with new models for teacher education, and to a renewed trust of schools in the contribution and quality of TEIs (Dietze & Snoek 2005).

Verloop and Wubbels concluded in 2000 that The Netherlands still had a long way to go before TEI-school partnerships would meet the criteria of Professional Development Schools, which are characterized by a sense of self- and mutual interest, mutual trust and respect, shared decision making, clear focus, a manageable agenda, commitment with top leadership, fiscal support, long-term commitment, a dynamic nature and efficient communication (Robinson & Darling-Hammond 1994). Now, ten years later, these criteria have largely been met in today's accredited training schools.

### *3) The need to meet a growing shortage of teachers*

The involvement of schools in the education of new teachers has been stimulated by the severe shortage of teachers resulting from the retirement of a large group of 50+ teachers (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2008b). By 2014, about 75% of the present teachers in secondary education will have left the profession through retirement or attrition (Commission on the Teaching Profession 2007). Serious teacher shortages are predicted, because the influx of new teachers from TEIs will not be able to compensate for the substantial attrition. To cope with this expected shortage of teachers, schools have become increasingly aware of their qualitative and quantitative needs with respect to school staff. In many schools, the awareness of these needs has led to active policies for recruiting, developing and retaining teachers. As

a former Dutch minister stated: teacher education policy must be a part of a school's human resource policy (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2000). As a result, schools have become much keener on cooperation with TEIs and on the placement of students teachers in their school.

The shortage of teachers has also led to new government policies to attract new groups to the profession. Special attention has been paid to workers in other professions who might be interested in a mid-career switch to teaching. For these groups special flexible tracks have been developed with tailor-made programmes based on the outcomes of an assessment (Ministry for Education, Science and Culture 1999; 2000; see also Tigchelaar, Brouwer & Korthagen 2008). Such programmes have led to a growing diversity of programmes that focus on various target groups (Brouwer 2007).

#### *4) The need to strengthen the knowledge base of teachers*

As mentioned in the introduction, there is general concern about the quality of education in The Netherlands. In the past few years, this concern has changed into criticism of the quality of teachers. Newspaper headlines state that the quality of teachers is questioned by national committees, student associations, the inspectorate, parents, etc. The general impression is that teachers lack basic language and Mathematics skills and do not make efficient use of the available learning time. Teacher education is partly blamed for this. The Dutch–Flemish Accreditation Organization concluded that on the whole the institutions for primary teacher education show a lack of quality (NVAO 2004). This has resulted in the government initiating a number of quality improvement programmes to ensure the quality of teacher education (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 1995; 1998; 2004; 2005; 2008a). An important element of the most recent quality improvement programmes is the focus on strengthening the knowledge base of novice teachers. To support this process, the TEIs within the universities of applied sciences have been pressured to develop explicit knowledge bases for the various subjects. These knowledge bases were presented in December 2009 (e.g. van Zanten et al. 2009; van der Leeuw et al. 2009). The next step in strengthening the transparency in the knowledge of novice teachers will be the development of national knowledge tests, in order to safeguard the level of knowledge and skills of each new teacher.

### 5) *Focus on the quality of teacher educators*

In The Netherlands, teacher educators are seen as a separate profession. Teacher educators have organized themselves in a professional body: VELON (Association for Teacher Educators in The Netherlands). The main aim of VELON is to support the professionalism and the professional development of teacher educators. The main instruments to achieve this aim are national conferences, a professional journal, publication of professional books (e.g. Willems et al. 2000; Gommers et al. 2005; Bergen et al. 2009) and the development of a professional standard for teacher educators. This standard is the basis for a professional register. Through a process of peer assessment, teacher educators can opt to be registered in the professional register of VELON (Koster & Dengerink 2008). At the end of 2009, about 300 teacher educators were included in the professional register. These teacher educators represent about 10% of all teacher educators.

VELON has also become a formal partner in policy processes concerning teacher education, where the initiative is taken by either the ministry or VELON itself (Snoek & van der Sanden 2006).

## **6 Teacher education curricula for primary education and lower secondary and vocational education**

The curriculum that prepares teachers for primary education and the one that prepares teachers for lower secondary and vocational education are both offered by the universities for applied sciences. Both curricula have more or less the same structure, as both are at the bachelor's level and offer a 4-year integrated programme, combining both the pedagogical and didactic competences as a teacher and the knowledge and skills related to the content of the school curriculum.

### **6.1 General characteristics**

#### ***Reflection based***

Most curricula in primary teacher education are reflection based. In group mentoring sessions, students are supported in the development of

meta-cognitive reflection skills, which focus on self-knowledge and the development of a professional identity. These meta-cognitive skills are developed in a number of ways in the programme, often during frequent meetings with supervisors. During this process, students reflect on their professional development in relation to the seven national key competences that are expected from qualified teachers. These reflections are documented in a personal portfolio and are supported by evidence (such as pupil assessments and videos of lessons) that demonstrate the classroom teaching or subject teaching of the student teacher. This portfolio plays an important role in integrative assessments, during which students have to show that they have mastered the necessary level of competence.

Most institutions have an optional part in the curriculum that allows students to deepen or broaden their knowledge. Such minors are typically worth 30 ECTS credits and may focus on inter-cultural education, special needs education, school leadership, international education, youth care, science and technology in primary schools, ICT in education, mastering a second subject, etc.

The universities for applied sciences have recently started to implement a research component in the curricula at bachelor's level. This research component is focused on introducing students to the outcomes of education research and to the methodology of practice-oriented research that is relevant to schools. Examples of research types are action research, design research, etc. In their fourth year, most TEIs expect their students to do a research study that is linked to their LIO placement.

### ***School-based training***

About a quarter of the curriculum is dedicated to practice-based learning within a school setting, through internships and a final independent teaching practice. In their first two years, all student teachers spend one day a week in school, working on their assignments, observing and giving lessons. In the third year, students are in school for a day and a half each week. In the fourth and final year, all student teachers are in school full time for six months, or spend three days a week throughout the year for their LIO phase. Students are placed in different schools each year.

The design of the school-based training mirrors the underlying concept of realistic teacher education and the need to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

The gradual increase in complexity and responsibility during the internships is designed in such a way that the students get the opportunity to be involved with real tasks in school, while at the same time getting a step-by-step introduction to the complexity and responsibility of the tasks that teachers have to perform in school.

### ***Teacher educators at universities of applied sciences***

As primary teacher education and lower secondary and vocational teacher education are part of the universities of applied sciences, the main focus for the teacher educators is on teaching student teachers. Given this focus, teaching competences are the main criteria for selecting teacher educators. Therefore, some teacher educators have only bachelor's degrees, the majority of staff within the departments responsible for primary teacher education have master's degrees, while a very small minority of the teacher educators have qualifications at doctorate level.

As research has only recently been added as one of the tasks of TEIs, teacher educators are now stimulated to engage in doctoral studies in order to earn PhDs. This, however, is a slow process.

## **6.2 The curriculum in primary teacher education**

In The Netherlands, some forty universities for applied sciences offer initial courses for primary teacher education. These courses provide students both with a bachelor's degree (Bachelor of Education) and with a teaching qualification for primary education, which is a precondition for working in a primary school. The study covers 240 ECTS credits over a period of 4 years, during which students are prepared as classroom teachers.

Students entering primary teacher education have just finished their secondary school. This can be five years of general secondary education (havo) or vocational education. No other entry requirements before starting primary teacher education exist. However, given the concerns about the language and Mathematics skills of teachers, the need was felt to guarantee the skills level of students by introducing a language and

Mathematics skills test at the end of the first year of the study. Students who do not pass this test before the end of their first year have to abandon their study.

As students will get a teaching qualification to teach 4- to 12-year-old children, the programme has to cover a wide variety of topics: both the pedagogical and didactic competences as a primary school teacher and the knowledge and skills related to all contents of the primary school curriculum. As this creates an overloaded programme, the students have to specialize as teachers either in lower primary education (4- to 8-year-olds) or in upper secondary education (8- to 12-year-olds). This specialization starts during the second year of their study.

The curriculum is focused on the seven national competences. The focus in the primary teacher education programmes is both on the acquisition of the knowledge and skills of the disciplines to be taught in the primary school and on the acquisition of the general and specific knowledge or skills of the teaching profession. Both elements are programmed parallel throughout the curriculum and at intervals integrated in projects, tasks and assignments.

About 40% of the curriculum<sup>4</sup> is dedicated to learning the content of the primary school curriculum (e.g. reading, writing, Mathematics, Social sciences, Natural sciences, Physical education and Music, Arts and Creative education). This includes the pedagogical content knowledge that is related to those subjects, focusing on learning problems with specific complex disciplinary concepts, alternative approaches to teaching Mathematics, etc. The disciplinary content is based on the knowledge bases that are nationally defined for teachers for each of the school subjects.

About 25% of the curriculum is dedicated to pedagogical and didactic/methodological courses and practices. This part of the curriculum is focused on the acquisition of general knowledge and skills of the teaching profession, including pedagogy, learning psychology, classroom management, methods of assessment, teaching in multicultural classrooms, educational use of ICT, etc.

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<sup>4</sup> Percentages are subject to local variation, as institutions are autonomous in the design of their curriculum.



### **6.3 The curriculum in lower secondary and vocational teacher education**

Seven Dutch universities for applied sciences offer initial courses for lower secondary and vocational teacher education (grade 2). These courses provide students both with a bachelor's degree (Bachelor of Education) and with a teaching qualification for one specific school subject in lower secondary and vocational education. This qualification is a precondition for working in a secondary school, although schools are allowed to temporarily employ an unqualified teacher if they cannot find a qualified one.

The study covers 240 ECTS credits over a period of 4 years, during which students are prepared as subject teachers.

Students entering lower secondary and vocational teacher education have just finished their secondary school. This is typically five years of general secondary education (havo). No other entry requirements before starting lower secondary and vocational teacher education exist. However, given the concerns about the specific subject that the student will study, in most cases the student applying for a specific course will have passed the exam in that subject.

The focus in the lower secondary and vocational teacher education programmes is both on the acquisition of the knowledge and skills of the subject to be taught in the school and on the acquisition of the general and specific knowledge or skills of the teaching profession. Both elements are programmed parallel throughout the curriculum and at intervals integrated in projects, tasks and assignments.

As students will get a teaching qualification to teach one specific subject, the programme has to provide an extensive understanding of this subject. About 40% of the curriculum<sup>5</sup> is dedicated to learning the content of the subject. This includes the pedagogical content knowledge that is related to those subjects, focusing on learning problems with specific complex disciplinary concepts, alternative approaches to teaching the subject, etc. The disciplinary content is based on the knowledge bases for teachers that are nationally defined for each of the school subjects.

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<sup>5</sup> Percentages are subject to local variation, as institutions are autonomous in the design of their curriculum.

As the pupil characteristics and the teaching approaches in general lower secondary education and in vocational education differ considerably, students have to specialize either in general lower secondary teaching or in vocational teaching. This specialization starts during the third year of their study.

About 25% of the curriculum is dedicated to pedagogical and didactic/methodological courses and practices. This part of the curriculum is focused on the acquisition of general knowledge and skills of the teaching profession, including pedagogy, learning psychology, classroom management, methods of assessment, teaching in multicultural classrooms, educational use of ICT, etc.

## **7 Teacher education for upper secondary education**

Seven Dutch research universities offer postgraduate master's courses for upper secondary teacher education (grade 1). These courses provide students both with a master's degree (MA or MSc) and with a grade-1 teaching qualification for upper secondary education. This qualification is a precondition for working in a secondary school, although schools are allowed to temporarily employ an unqualified teacher if they cannot find a qualified one. The study covers 60 ECTS credits over a period of 1 year, during which students are prepared as subject teachers.

The seven universities of applied sciences offer part-time courses for those students who already have a grade-2 teaching qualification for lower secondary and vocational education and who wish to upgrade that qualification. These courses provide students both with a master's degree (Master of Education) and with a grade-1 teaching qualification for upper secondary education. The study covers 90 ECTS credits over a period of 3 years, during which students are prepared as subject teachers.

### ***Entry conditions***

Students entering the postgraduate master's courses at research universities need to have a master's degree in their subject (MA or MSc) or to study for such a degree while doing their teacher education master's. Students entering the part-time master's courses at universities

of applied sciences need to have a grade-2 teaching qualification for lower secondary and vocational education.

### ***Curriculum***

The two curricula for upper secondary teacher education are structured around six teacher roles: subject teacher, classroom manager, *pedagoog* (educationalist), member of the school organization, colleague and professional. Although they both lead to a grade-1 teaching qualification, the two curricula have fundamental differences as a result of the different profiles of the students applying for the courses.

The curriculum in research universities focuses on pedagogical and methodological/didactic competences. No attention is paid to subject knowledge, as students already have a master's degree in their subject. However, attention is paid to the pedagogical content knowledge related to teaching and learning a subject.

Half of the curriculum is dedicated to teaching practice, which starts in the very first week of the course with small teaching and observation assignments, and culminates in an independent LIO phase. The other part of the curriculum focuses on educational theory, classroom management skills, pedagogical content, knowledge, inter-cultural education, etc.

Within the curriculum in universities of applied sciences, the focus is on subject knowledge, as grade-1 teachers are expected to have a higher level of knowledge and skills in their subject, and they already have the teaching skills based on their grade-2 teaching qualification. The curriculum includes no teaching practice, as the part-time students are already working as (grade-2) teachers in school. However, part of the curriculum is focused on teaching methods that fit the age group of upper secondary education, thus stimulating a stronger active involvement of students.

Given the focus on the master's level, both curricula pay substantial attention to the development of research skills (12–20 credits). In both curricula, students are expected to prepare a thesis based on research in their school.

As in the bachelor's courses, the curriculum in the master's courses is reflection based, whereby the six teacher roles provide structure for reflection. These reflections are documented in a personal portfolio and

are supported by evidence (such as student assessments and videos of lessons) that demonstrate the subject teaching of the student-teacher.

## **8 Balancing between autonomous institutions and a steering government**

As indicated in the first part of this text, there is a delicate balance between institutional autonomy and government control. In the deregulated policy context of education in The Netherlands, the government tries to restrict its role to the ‘what’ – defining learning goals, competence profiles, etc. – and to give schools the freedom to define in what way they will help pupils or students to achieve these goals.

However, teacher education seems to have a unique position. The minister of Education feels a special responsibility towards teacher education, as the quality of teachers is considered crucial to the quality of the whole of the education system. A recent report from the Dutch Education Council (2009) states that there may not be any doubt in society about the quality of newly qualified teachers. This justifies interference by the minister in the curriculum of teacher education.

This interference can concern three elements of the teacher education system:

– *The qualifications of the students who graduate from teacher education*

This interference takes the form of the pressure exerted by the ministry on the development and implementation of the knowledge base that teachers need to have mastered upon graduation. The next step in the process to make the knowledge base of teachers more explicit will be to develop national tests to assess whether students have indeed mastered this knowledge base (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2008a).

The development of this knowledge base was initiated by the universities as a result of pressure from the minister. As a result, the involvement of teachers themselves in defining their knowledge base has been minimal. However, Korver (2007) emphasizes how

important it is that such a knowledge base be defined and owned by teachers: if the knowledge base is developed by persons other than the members of the profession, it will not only have a negative influence on the quality of education but will also mark the end of the pretence that the teaching profession is a ‘real’ profession.

From this point of view, it is positive that VELON – as the professional body of teacher educators – has decided to develop its own knowledge base to underlie and support the professional work of teacher educators.

– *The quality of the curriculum*

Government interference is felt in the plans to create a national examination council to evaluate the quality of exams in the various institutions (Dutch Education Council 2009). The minister thus plans to interfere with the traditional autonomy of the universities.

A second way to reduce any possible doubt about the quality of teacher education is to intensify the accreditation procedures. The regular accreditation procedures carried out by the Dutch–Flemish Accreditation Organization in order to check the quality of higher education programmes have been intensified for teacher education programmes by extending the site visits and the number of students and theses that are evaluated. Although the Dutch–Flemish Accreditation Organization recently concluded that the primary teacher education institutions have drastically improved their curricula and meet the quality criteria (NVAO 2009b), the minister has suggested that the regular six-yearly accreditation procedure should, in the case of teacher education, be repeated every three years.

– *The quality of teacher educators*

The third possible area of government interference is the quality of teacher educators. As teachers are generally considered the most important factor influencing the learning of pupils, it seems reasonable to assume that teacher educators are the most important factor influencing the learning of student teachers (Snoek, Swennen & van der Klink 2009). Therefore, explicit policies on the quality of teacher educators could help to stimulate the professionalism of

teacher educators and therefore the quality of teacher education. From that point of view, the Dutch government has supported the development of the professional standard and registration of teacher educators by VELON. In recent policy papers issued by the ministry, the intention is expressed to have the master's level as the minimum requirement to be appointed a teacher educator (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2008).

The strong pressure from the government has put the TEIs (especially the universities for applied sciences, which suffer the strongest effect of society's criticism of the quality of teacher education), in a reactive position. The board of the universities of applied sciences (the HBO-raad) is forced to take measures to counter the criticism, to keep the initiative and to prevent direct measures being imposed by the government.

This has resulted in intensive measures, such as the development of the knowledge base and the development of the first-year test on language and Mathematics, and in measures within the institutions to make quality criteria much more explicit. This in itself is a positive effect. The risk, however, is that the driving forces in this process will stimulate a limited perspective on teacher quality, based on the concerns of politicians and the media about the knowledge level of teachers (VELON 2008). The quality of a teacher is a rich and complex quality, one that cannot be reduced to lists of subject knowledge. The present emphasis on the knowledge base of teachers might easily lead to a restricted view on the profession of a teacher. The complexity of schools and the multifaceted expectations that a rapidly changing society has of teachers call for teachers who are change agents in their schools and who have an extended professionalism.

This is not something that can be regulated by government measures and through extensive knowledge bases. In that respect, the Dutch education policy seems to be based on the implicit view that society and its educational system can be constructed through government measures that can reduce any doubt about teacher quality and that can ensure the quality of teacher education. This can be recognized in the way in which the competences of teachers in The Netherlands are described. While other countries have defined the competences that are expected of teachers in formal documents of one to six pages, in The Netherlands

they are defined in a formal document that is twenty-one pages long (Snoek et al. 2009). The new knowledge bases for teachers add a large number of pages to this. Thus, although the Dutch policy seems to be based on deregulation and autonomous institutions, it appears that this deregulation is based on extensive control through long lists of criteria that teacher education programmes have to meet.

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# TEACHER EDUCATION IN RUSSIA

**Irina Obukhova**

Department of International Relations, Moscow State Pedagogical University,  
Russia

**Olga Oleynikova, Anna Muraveva**

Centre for Vocational Education and Training Studies, Moscow, Russia

## 1 Introduction

Pedagogical education is the system of training staff to be involved in education and training activities (teachers, tutors, etc.) – pre-service teacher training – and staff already in employment at educational institutions – in-service teacher training. The target groups comprise teachers of secondary general schools, special schools (for children with special needs), vocational schools (lyceums, colleges and technicums) and higher education establishments. In-service teacher training programmes are offered at pedagogical institutes, colleges and universities.

## 2 Historical overview

Secondary school teachers in the pre-revolutionary Russia were as a rule, graduates of universities and of some non-pedagogical higher education institutes, as well as of clerical academies.

Year 1804 is traditionally considered as the year of the birth of higher pedagogical education in Russia. It is then that, under a new university statute, pedagogical institutes were opened within universities, first in Moscow (1804), then in Kharkov (1811), Kazan (1812), Dorpat (1820) and Kiev (1834).

In these institutes, usually about 20 students studied who were selected from among the best university graduates who have decided to devote

themselves to the teaching profession. The duration of studies was 3 years and the programmes were subject-based. These programmes provided “instruction in the art of teaching in a clear and systematic way.” Those students who graduated with honours were awarded a master's degree and were to teach at the university, the rest were entitled to work as junior and senior teachers at secondary schools.

In 1835, the duration of the programmes was extended to 4 years to address the goal "of preparing teachers for high schools (gymnasiums) and for county regional schools. The programmes were multidisciplinary, enabling graduates to teach 2–3 subjects (for example, a graduate of the Physical-Mathematical department could teach Mathematics, Physics and Geography).

The first independent pedagogical institution of higher education was St. Petersburg Pedagogical Institute, established in 1804 on the basis of the teachers' seminary and turned into the Central Pedagogical Institute in 1816.

In 1859, pedagogical institutes were abolished to be replaced by two-year teacher training courses that existed up till 1863.

In 1867, in connection with the establishment of a network of gymnasiums, a new type of higher pedagogical education institution was set up, namely the Historical-Philological Institute in St. Petersburg, to be followed by a similar institution opened in Nezhin in 1875 on the basis of a Law Lyceum of Prince Bezborodko. Until the 1917 Revolution, the above two institutions were the only public higher pedagogical institutes training teachers for classical grammar schools. The duration of training was 4 years; with the awarded certificate having a status equalling a university diploma. The first 2 years were devoted to the general academic disciplines; while in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year courses the specialization and practical training were provided.

In the 60s and 70s of the XIX century, another new type of in-service teacher training institutions appeared, namely higher courses of the university type for women students that trained teachers mainly for secondary schools for girls and for primary schools for boys. The best-known example is the Guerrier Higher women's courses, Women's Pedagogical Institute and Frebel courses in St. Petersburg.

In the early twentieth century, along with public institutions, the in-service teacher training of teachers was provided and carried out in the voluntary public higher education institutions of the university type and by 6 specialized colleges. In 1914, Russia had 208 teacher training seminaries and 53 Teacher Training Institutes. The faculty of the above education establishments comprises about 280 thousand teachers.

The Revolution of 1917 radically changed public education at large, including in-service teacher training. In 1918–20s specialized school-, preschool- and other pedagogical institutions and courses were organized, which were later transformed into pedagogical institutes. Teachers' seminaries were converted into 4-year institutions of public education, others into teacher training courses for primary school teachers. The following system of in-service teacher training was established: teacher training schools (since 1937 – teacher-training colleges), teacher training institutes and pedagogical departments of universities. The Krupskaya Academy of Communist Education was opened, along with the Second Moscow State University (on the basis of the Guerrier Higher Women's Courses), and State Pedagogical Institute in St. Petersburg. In the 20s, the Academy of Labor Education (1920–21) and Industrial and Pedagogical Institute named after Karl Liebknecht (1923–42) were opened in Moscow. Pedagogical departments were established at universities in Vladivostok, Voronezh, Irkutsk, Nizhny Novgorod, Perm, Rostov-on-Don, Saratov, Kazan, etc. In the 30s, municipal and regional teacher training institutes were opened in Moscow. A network of pedagogical institutions of foreign languages was created on the basis of the relevant university departments. In 1939, Leningrad Northern State Pedagogical Institute was opened, in the republics of Central Asia and in Trans-Caucasian Republics women's teacher training institutions were set up.

In 1974, in-service teacher training was conducted at 400 teacher training schools, 199 pedagogical institutes and 63 universities offering both full-time and part-time courses. Annual intake at these institutions amounted to 227.5 thousand people, total participation rate was about 1105.2 thousand, and the graduates cohorts were about 188.1 people.

By the mid 90s, the system of higher pedagogical education in Russia included 97 public universities. In 1996, there were about 40 public in-

service teacher training universities, with the participation rate of over 430 thousand students, including over 280 full-time students.

### **3 Overview of teacher education in the Russian Federation**

Today, school is the key segment of the education system of the country.

#### **3.1 Teacher training schemes**

In the recent past, in accordance with the state standards, a future teacher was to complete a 5-year course at an education institution of the university level (such as a pedagogical university or a pedagogical department of a classical university). After graduating from a pedagogical university and sitting a state examination, the graduate was awarded a qualification of a "teacher" that comprised an indication of the awarded specialization. All in all there are about 30 pedagogical specializations.

After Russia joined the Bologna process, the old 5-year one-cycle scheme of education is at present being replaced by the 2-cycle system (generally, 3+2 years).

Teachers in preschool education institutions are usually trained at pedagogical colleges.

#### **3.2 Network of education institutions**

Teacher training in Russia is performed within a complicated framework that includes over 600 different education establishments, including approximately 150 universities, half of which deliver teacher training curricula, about 350 professional pedagogical institutions (including 250 pedagogical colleges), some 30 further teacher training departments at universities and about 100 regional centres for upgrading teachers' skills.

#### **3.3 Entry conditions**

There are 5 federal and municipal pedagogical universities, the oldest and most well established of which is Moscow State Pedagogical University (MSPU). In the recent years, the entrance competition to this



university has been relatively high – on average 3-4 candidates per vacancy, and at some departments it was as high as 15–17 candidates per vacancy.

Every year, MSPU admits over 2.000 new students. In the past, admission was based on the results of the entry examinations.

Recently, the new enrolment scheme has been introduced that is based on the results of the Unified State Examination (USE) that comprises tests that every general school-leaver has to sit. This examination is conducted simultaneously at all Russian schools at the end of the final year of complete general secondary education. In addition to the USE, a pre-selection process takes place at specialized pedagogical classes that exist in a number of schools and gymnasiums affiliated to the pedagogical universities.

The pupils at these specialized classes are offered basic occupational knowledge in pedagogical subjects and professional orientation. About 70 per cent of them go to universities to continue their pedagogical education to ultimately become teachers and return to work in schools.

The average student cohort at Russia's pedagogical education establishments is about 550 thousand people (this number varies from year to year). Annual enrolment rate is about 120 thousand people (2/3 of which are full-time students), and about 90 thousand people graduate every year.

### **3.4 Practical training**

Practical training for future teachers is organized differently at different universities. Taking MSPU as an example, since 1980s, the students are obliged to do practical training (work placements) at general schools. The practical training is supervised and assessed by the staff of the university together with the school authorities. The duration of practical training is different for bachelor, master and specialist (5 years education) students and also depends on the programme. Below, there are some examples:

#### ***Specialist, "Pedagogue and psychologist"***

Summer teaching practice – 8 weeks

Practice at school – 3 weeks

Practice at a teacher training college – 4 weeks

Comprehensive psychological and pedagogical practice – 5 weeks

***Specialist, "Teacher of Fine Arts"***

Practical training – 14 weeks

***Specialist, "Teacher of History"***

Practical training – 12 weeks

***Bachelor of "Philology"***

Practical training – 4 weeks

***Bachelor of "Linguistics"***

Practical training in the English language – 4 weeks

Practical training in the Russian language – 4 weeks

***Bachelor of "Psychology"***

Orientation practice – 3 weeks

Practical training – 5 weeks

Work placement – 5 weeks

Research practice – 2 weeks

***Master of "Psychology"***

Research and teaching practice – 8 weeks

***Master of "Philology"***

Practical training – 6 weeks

***Master of "Pedagogy"***

Practical training – 5 weeks

During the work placement at school, an appointed school mentor monitors and evaluates students' work. Moreover, students must produce a report and present it to a supervisor from the University. Finally, students are graded according to the scale from 1–5. These grades are included in their diploma.

Currently, the role and the value of mandatory practical training/work placements is debated by the pedagogical community. Improvement and updating of forms and content of practical training is one of the most important current problems to be addressed under the on-going modernisation of the education system of the country. Currently, MSPU is performing a study of the experience in work placements at regional pre-service teacher training institutions aimed at reviewing the schemes used and at proposing recommendations to optimize them. One of the key issues is to maintain a balance between the theoretical and fundamental content of the curricula and the development of practical skills.

### **3.5 Young teachers**

A young teacher who comes to work at school after graduating from a university is already licensed to teach, once she/he has been awarded a respective diploma/qualification upon sitting a final state examination. Usually, during the first year, every young teacher is supported by a mentor who is an experienced teacher. The main mentor's task is to provide advice and consult young teachers on professional and psychological issues.

### **3.6 Options of post-graduate degrees**

Like all university graduates, teachers with a higher education qualification in teaching who are keen on performing research, can do post-graduate courses and write a thesis. Successful defence of the thesis leads to the award of the qualification/degree of the candidate of pedagogy (an equivalent of the doctoral degree in western systems of education). In terms of the number of graduates opting for postgraduate programmes upon completing the 5 years of the traditional one-cycle higher education, or the master courses of the 2-cycle programmes, the lead is taken by MSPU and Herzen Pedagogical University at St. Petersburg. Holders of the candidate's degree can later engage in a profound research project leading to the doctoral degree (equivalent of postdoctoral studies in western systems).

MSPU ranks third in terms of the number of students engaged in doctoral and postdoctoral research (after Moscow State University and St. Petersburg State University) among all higher education institutions

in Russia. There are about 30 specialized academic councils at MSPU that award research degrees in pedagogical sciences (for information – there are all in all 150 such academic councils in Russia). As a result, about 75% of the staff at MSPU are candidates and doctors of science.

At MSPU, annually about 300 graduates enrol to programmes leading to the award of the degree of the candidate of pedagogical sciences, with approximately 400 theses defended every year at the level equalling the PhD level. In order to support the prospective students, MSPU has a system of scholarships for best doctoral and postdoctoral students. These students actively take part in international and regional research collaboration programmes, and are supported by the federal research grants.

### **3.7 Counselling for students and teachers**

At secondary schools, there are usually one or more psychologists employed along with teachers, who are responsible for psychological counselling, support and guidance of students. Practically all in-service teacher-training institutions have departments of pedagogy and psychology which prepare staff for school counselling services.

## **4 In-service training and promotion**

### **4.1 In-service teacher training**

In 2003, the Government of the Russian Federation introduced (within the framework of the Federal Programme of Education Development) as a priority "development of a system of pedagogical education, improvement of qualifications and upgrading skills of staff engaged in pre-service teacher training." Corresponding Programmes of modernization of pedagogical education were developed subsequently by the Ministry of Higher Education. As a response to the current demand in the country for highly qualified teachers, a Research-Methodological Centre for Staff Development was established at the Institute of General Education. The main purpose of this institute is to coordinate the interaction of the Ministry of Education and Science and educational institutions providing training on pedagogical specialties in the framework of the Programme of modernization of pedagogical education.

Among other innovative initiatives, regional resource centres for distance learning are under development to make in-service teacher training sustainable and more flexible, and to broaden access of teachers to it. The latter is especially relevant, given the size of the country and the number of distanced areas from which teachers find it hard, if not impossible, to go to in-service centres for upgrading teaching skills, often – for lack of funds.

Besides these ODL centres, the traditional system of continuing pedagogical education comprises about 100 institutions that specialize in upgrading of skills and retraining of teachers (they are called differently, e.g. institutes of teacher's upgrading, institutes of retraining of the pedagogical staff, institutes of education development, etc.). Many of them have branches. Over 30 departments of pedagogical universities provide upgrading programmes for primary and secondary school teachers and for education administrators of all levels.

There are both free-of-charge and paid upgrading opportunities. The costs are covered from various sources at the federal and local level. Pedagogical universities are developing different assessment systems to evaluate the outcomes of the upgrading. Schoolteachers can do an upgrading course every year should they wish so; however it is mandatory every five years. Usually, upgrading of skills leads to improved salary rate and a promotion in the grading system (see below).

#### **4.2 The system of teacher promotion**

There is a national system of grading teachers based on their experience, tenure, level of education comprising the "second", "first", and "highest qualifications." It should be stressed that these are internal grades that do not co-relate with the European qualifications system, and qualifications of education. For special achievements, a teacher can be awarded the title of an Honoured Teacher of the Russian Federation, Honoured Worker of General Education of the Russian Education, Distinguished Education Worker. These titles affect the size of the salary and may result in additional social benefits.

## **5 Open questions in the area of teacher training**

### **5.1 Current discussions and suggestions for improvement of teacher training**

In his National Address in 2008, the President of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, came up with an initiative of "Our new school." In 2009, he specified the main aspects of this initiative.

According to the President, the main task of contemporary school is to bring out each student's abilities and develop their personality to prepare young people for life in a high-tech, competitive world.

As a follow-up of this initiative, year 2010 is declared as the Year of the Teacher. Among other steps planned in immediate future, there is also enhancement of the quality of education. The key focus of the initiative is to ensure addressing of individual learning needs and abilities of each child.

In line with the above, a comprehensive system of monitoring and assessment of students' academic achievements, competences and abilities will be introduced. Special attention will be given to high school students. Programmes for this level will contain elements directly related to the choice of future occupation.

It is also envisaged that school should become a centre of creativity and information, offering opportunities for intellectual development and engagement in sports. To back this up, the above schools will have to have appropriate premises and physical facilities. Hence, a competition has been launched for projects of school buildings that will incorporate diverse learning environments offering opportunities for intellectual development, technology training, health education, sports, etc.

In 2010, a new standard for physical training will be introduced, providing a minimum of three hours of sports a week.

Another focus of the new initiative is to address the needs of children with disabilities. In 2010, a five-year Programme "Accessible Environment" will be launched.

To enhance efficiency and quality, the autonomy of schools will be expanded, both in developing curricula, and in the dispensing of funds. Starting next year, the increased autonomy will be granted to the schools

– winners of the National project "Education" and to schools that have changed their legal status to become autonomous legal entities. The increased autonomy of such schools will also mean enhanced transparency and accountability in terms of achieved outcomes.

Under the new initiative, public and private schools will enjoy equal status, which will give families wider possibilities to choose schools.

To make the above changes possible, a major modernization of teacher training is envisaged. Thus, mandatory refreshing / upgrading courses will be introduced at best Russian universities and schools, and funds for professional development will be provided. Also, the network of pedagogical universities will be reorganized to transform some of them into major centres of teacher training, while others will be turned into departments of classical universities.

In order to address the shortage of schoolteachers, retain teachers at schools and attract young teachers, a comprehensive system of incentives is going to be used.

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# **TEACHER EDUCATION IN SWEDEN**

## **The organization of today and some challenges for tomorrow**

Laila Niklasson

Mälardalen University, Sweden

### **1 Introduction**

Pre-service Teacher Education in Sweden is offered on a national basis and regulated by national documents such as law, ordinance and spending authorization. In-service Teacher Education is most often offered on a national basis similar to the pre-service education, but there are some differences, which gives an opportunity also for offers from private organizers.

In this paper Pre-service Teacher Education, In-service Teacher Education and some current issues concerning Teacher Education will be presented and discussed. As the paper is mainly descriptive, there will be few references to results from scientific research.

### **2 Teacher education**

Since 1977, Pre-service Teacher Education is considered as vocational education but on academic level, that is, the programme is offered at 26 Universities located all over the country. The programme is directed by The Higher Education Act for (Högskolelag, SFS 1992:1434) which regulates most of the organization and the content of the Teacher Education. The regulation continues in The Higher Education Ordinance (Högskoleförordning 1993:100). Lastly, the dimension of the Teacher Education is regulated in spending authorization presented each year by the government. In the spending authorization each University gets directives about how many Student Teachers they are allowed to admit,

in which subjects, and how the administration concerning Teacher Education should be organized. In the spending authorization it is emphasized that the Universities shall recruit teachers for younger ages and for subjects like Mathematics, Technology and Science. Each University has to report which measures they have taken to secure that they recruit teachers for younger ages.

Even though there are national directives and goals, there is a high degree of freedom for the Universities to design their programmes. The exam regulation where the expectations of the teacher are described in The Higher Education Ordinance is in fact the ultimate steering document (The Higher Education Ordinance 1993:100). The indented text below is a quotation from regulation of the Teacher Exam. The entire organization that is presented in the first part of this paper aims at creating a learning environment for the Student Teachers so that they can achieve their exam degree.

### **3 Qualifications awarded in the first or second cycle**

#### **Teaching qualifications**

##### *Scope*

A teaching qualification is awarded in the first or second cycle depending on the number of credits attained, the degree of specialisation demanded in a subject or a disciplinary domain and the extent to which second-cycle study is required.

A teaching qualification is awarded after the student has completed the courses required to gain either 180 or 210 credits (first-cycle) or 240, 270, 300 or 330 credits (second-cycle). A requirement for a teaching qualification awarded in the second cycle is inclusion in the programme of at least 60 credits of second-cycle study. Otherwise a first-cycle qualification is awarded.

The programme shall consist of the following three integrated fields that may comprise both first and second-cycle courses: studies in general education for 90 credits consisting of interdisciplinary courses, one or more specialisations of at least 60 credits in a subject or subject area and

advanced study for at least 30 credits. At least 15 credits for the studies in general education shall be awarded for a placement. At least 15 credits for each specialisation shall also be for a placement.

At least 180 credits are required to teach vocational subjects in the upper-secondary schools. Instead of a specialisation and advanced study, extensive vocational experience and a relevant higher education qualification of at least 90 credits or the equivalent is required.

At least 210 credits are required to teach or undertake other educational tasks in the early-years education and extended school programmes as well as for teaching home languages. A specialisation of at least 90 credits in a relevant subject area is required for teachers of home languages.

At least 210 credits are required to teach at primary level. For the award of a second-cycle qualification at least 240 credits are required, including second-cycle courses for at least 60 credits.

At least 270 credits including one or two specialisations of at least 90 credits in a relevant subject, subjects or subject areas are required to teach at secondary and upper-secondary level, although not, however, to teach vocational subjects. For the award of a second-cycle qualification the inclusion of second-cycle courses for at least 60 credits is required.

To teach Swedish or social sciences at secondary level, at least 90 credits in subject areas which are relevant for these subjects are required and at least 120 credits to teach at upper-secondary level.

### ***Outcomes***

For a teaching qualification, the student shall have demonstrated the knowledge and skills required to attain the objectives of early years education, extended school programmes, the school system or adult education, and also to participate in the development of the appropriate educational area in accordance with the applicable regulations and guidelines.

### ***Knowledge and understanding***

For a teaching qualification the student shall have:

- demonstrated the knowledge in a subject or a subject area required for the field of education concerned, including knowledge of the disciplinary foundation of the subject or subject area and relevant methods in this field, and also demonstrated insight into current research issues;
- demonstrated knowledge of learning and teaching;
- demonstrated knowledge of the significance of learning to read and write and of Mathematics for the acquisition of knowledge by children and pupils, and
- demonstrated knowledge of the significance of gender perspective in educational activities and the presentation of subject matter.
- Moreover, to teach or undertake other educational tasks in early years education and at primary level, the student shall have:
  - demonstrated a high degree of knowledge of the acquisition of reading and writing skills and of the acquisition of basic mathematical skills.
  - Moreover, to teach at primary, secondary or upper-secondary level, the student shall have:
    - demonstrated a high degree of knowledge of analysing and assessing pupils' learning and high-degree knowledge of grading.

### ***Competence and skills***

For a teaching qualification, the student shall have:

- demonstrated the ability to apply the knowledge in subjects or subject areas and about learning and teaching required in the educational activities in which he or she is involved so that all children and young people learn and develop;
- demonstrated the ability to convey and establish basic social and democratic values;
- demonstrated the ability to convey, establish and apply applicable regulations intended to prevent and counteract discrimination and other demeaning treatment of children and pupils;
- demonstrated the ability to plan, undertake, evaluate and develop teaching and other educational tasks autonomously and together with others and also to participate in managing these activities;
- demonstrated the ability to analyse, assess, document and evaluate the learning and development of pupils in relation to educational

objectives and also to inform and cooperate with parents and guardians;

- demonstrated the ability to use information technology in educational activities and realise the significance of the role of various media in this respect, and
- demonstrated the ability to apply, systematise and reflect on, critically and autonomously, both his or her own professional experience and that of others as well as relevant research findings in order to contribute to the development of the profession and the formation of knowledge in subjects or subject areas.
- For a second-cycle teaching qualification comprising 240, 270, 300 or 330 credits, the student shall have:
- demonstrated specialised skills in applying, systematising and reflecting on both his or her own experience and that of others as well relevant research findings critically and autonomously.

### ***Judgement and approach***

For a teaching qualification the student shall have:

- demonstrated self-awareness and the capacity for empathy;
- demonstrated the ability in his or her educational practice to make assessments informed by the relevant disciplinary, social and ethical aspects and taking particular account of human rights;
- demonstrated the ability to adopt a professional approach to children, pupils and their parents or guardians, and
- demonstrated the ability to identify the need for further knowledge and professional development as teachers.

### ***Independent project (degree project)***

A requirement for the award of a teaching qualification comprising 180 credits or 210 credits is the student's completion of an independent project (degree project) for at least 15 credits.

A requirement for the award of a teaching qualification comprising 240, 270, 300 and 330 credits is the student's completion of an independent project (degree project) for at least 30 credits or two such projects for at least 15 credits each." (end of quotation)

The quotation can be interpreted as the goals for the Teacher Education. As there are goals an evaluation is more or less implied. In this case the Teacher Education is evaluated by The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education since 2000 (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education 2008). The Universities are also expected to evaluate their courses and their organization for the Teacher Education. These evaluations are part of a quality system.

Teachers for different ages and different subjects have a common core area which is called general education in the exam degree, further on in this paper it is called general teacher knowledge. The difference is which subjects the Student Teachers study and how long they study subjects. Even though there are differences, the similarities are such that it is convenient to present the Teacher Education in one section. The differences are described for each section below. There are varieties in the local designs of the Teacher Education and the Student Teachers also make individual choices; the presentation does not aim to cover all varieties; but gives an overall framework.

The Student Teacher most often participate in a parallel Teacher Education model; that is the student gains a professional competence in subjects and pedagogical expertise at the same time. But there are also other possibilities. One possibility is a successive model where the student first studies subjects to the level that is required for teaching and then continues and studies the common core (90 ECTS).

### **3.1 Required Teacher Education**

All Student Teachers that complete their studies can apply for an exam degree where they are titled as teachers, but teachers with a profile, such as “Teacher for younger ages, profile in science.” All studies are registered and the exam degree is supplemented with a copy of the studies that are registered. If the headmaster of the school judges that the teacher is qualified then the teacher can teach all subjects. The only exception is that teachers with a profile in needlecraft and wood-and-metal work teach in their profiles and no other teachers.

Teachers for *younger ages* teach in pre-school, pre-school class (6 year olds), in year 1 to 7 (ages 7 to 13) or at leisure time activities (often in the same building as compulsory school). The program comprises a minimum of three and half years. Each term comprises 30 ECTS credits,

that is, the teachers get 210 ECTS credits on First cycle level (Bologna). Most of the programme is devoted to studies of subjects, 110 ECTS; 90 ECTS is devoted to teacher training. The teacher training content is pedagogy, didactics and practicum in the field. The teacher training components are carried out parallel to subject studies. The subject courses are expected to include didactics. If a subject course comprises 15 ECTS, the didactic part can comprise 3 ECTS and is most often carried out by a visit to the practicum school where the student either carries out observations, interviews or practices a certain method in the class.

The programme for younger ages includes basic courses in language development and mathematic development for all students. In pre-school and in the leisure time centre there are no subjects defined, only themes; so the teacher is qualified in general to teach. In preschool class and year 1 to 7 the teacher is qualified to teach according to the profile she or he has.

Teachers for *older ages and adults* can be divided in those who teach in compulsory school year 7–9 (ages 13–16) and those who teach in upper secondary (ages 16–18). The programme for teachers in year 7–9 comprises 270 ECTS on a First Cycle level (Bologna). 180 ECTS is for subjects and 90 ECTS is devoted to teacher training; same as for the younger ages. At least one subject has to comprise 90 ECTS. The teacher training component is carried out in the same way as in the programme for younger ages. As in the younger ages the teacher is qualified to teach according to the profile she or he has. Also in this case the headmaster of the school can decide that a teacher is qualified to teach a certain subject.

The programme for teachers in upper secondary also comprises 270 ECTS on First Cycle level (Bologna). 180 ECTS is devoted to subjects and 90 ECTS to teacher training for the younger ages. Teachers in upper secondary have to have at least 90 ECTS in two subjects. The teacher-training component is carried out in the same way as in the programme for compulsory school. As in the compulsory school, the teacher is qualified to teach according to the profile she or he has. Also in this case the headmaster of the school can decide that a teacher is qualified to teach a certain subject.

There are two subjects that have certain requirements for years 7–9 and upper secondary, Swedish and Civics. Student Teachers that want to

teach Swedish in years 7–9 have to attain 120 ECTS, for example a combination of 60 ECTS in Literature and 60 ECTS in Nordic language; Student Teachers in upper secondary have to study 150 ECTS, for example a combination of 90 ECTS in literature and 60 ECTS in Nordic language. Teachers in years 7–9 teaching Civics have to attain 90 ECTS and teachers in upper secondary have to attain 120 ECTS, that is, have a Master in Civics.

In summary, teachers for younger ages teach “all subjects”, teachers for older ages teach mostly two or three subjects. All are called teachers, also the staff in the leisure time activities. In general, they have three and a half or four years of training, on First Cycle level (Bologna).

### **3.2 Where is Teacher Training carried out**

There is a close collaboration between the institutions that work with subjects and those who work with didactics in subject or didactics in general. Therefore the teachers in the Teacher Education can have a doctoral degree in English or be a qualified teacher from the compulsory school that have a First Cycle or preferably a Second cycle degree in didactics, pedagogy or a certain subject. For the subject teachers there are no requirements for school practice. For the teachers in subject didactics or general didactics or pedagogy, it is preferred that they have school practice. Most teachers in the programme for the younger ages have a teacher exam themselves. As the teachers in the programme for the older ages are more oriented towards the subject, they do not necessarily have a teacher exam themselves. This can also differ between the institutions that offer Teacher Education. During the latter years, the expectations from the national authorities are that most teachers in the Teacher Education should have a PhD in a subject or pedagogy or didactics, and not necessarily a teacher exam.

### **3.3 Entry conditions for Teacher Education**

The numbers of applicants to Teacher Education differ between the terms. The numbers are presented below:



**Table 1.** The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, 2009.

	Applicants	Accepted	
Autumn 2007	14 805	9 922	1,5
Spring 2008	3 812	2 610	1,5
Autumn 2008	12 505	8 917	1,4
Spring 2009	3 980	2 786	1,4
Autumn 2009	16 075	11 554	1,4

As seen in the table, many of the applicants are accepted. Application for higher education is organized via a pooled admission system so the student can apply for several courses and study programmes at different universities by submitting one application via a website called Studera Nu (~Study Now). This website is managed in cooperation between the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education and The National Admissions Office to Higher Education. There are general entry requirements and specific entry requirements. The general entry requirements consist of having successfully completed upper secondary education (post-16) and are able to demonstrate proficiency in English by means of an internationally recognized test, e.g. TOEFL or the equivalent. The specific entry requirements vary. As an example, in general the specific entry requirements for Teacher Education are that your upper secondary studies include English B level (two years) and Civics A level (one year). If you want to have a profile in science, the specific entry requirements also include studies in science from upper secondary level (Studera Nu 2009).

After the application is sent to Studera Nu, the The National Admissions Office to Higher Education sorts among the applicants according to certain rules, most often credits from formal education. 30% of the applicants are selected by the credit criteria. There is also a possibility to take a special test; 30% are selected by the test criteria. If there are some applications that are not possible to sort via the computer system, the Universities get the applications and judge if the applicant can be accepted or not. After the selection, the students get a letter to which they have to respond, stating whether they are interested in the studies or not. If they say yes, the Universities get the answer and further on, the

Universities take care of the students. Some private Universities do the selection themselves (Verket för högskoleservice 2009).

Most Universities offer Teacher Education for both younger and older ages. What differs most often is the offer of subjects for older ages. The choice that the Universities have made about offering course creates also an indirect selection of Student Teachers. The possibility of getting access to placement in practicum schools, can also affect what a University offers.

### **3.4 The practical training of future teachers**

The Teacher Education comprises subject, subject profile and subject specialization and general teacher knowledge (pedagogy, didactics and practice). The 90 ECTS general teacher knowledge for all shall include ten weeks of practice in schools. Then the Student Teacher shall have at least 60 ECTS subject profiles and each profile shall include 15 ECTS of practice. In summary, the Student Teachers shall have at least 30 ECTS of practice at schools (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education 2009).

The University and the municipality (or a private school) has a contract where it is clarified how the cooperation shall be carried out. There have to be representatives from both the University and the municipality/schools that work with the placements and meet regularly. The extension of the organization and how the work is carried out varies depending upon the size of the Teacher Education at the University. In the contract, it is also stated how the mentors are offered courses in mentoring. Most often the University offers courses.

The students are introduced to the school placements during the first term in Teacher Education (one-week placement). After that, it differs for each Student Teacher when the practicum takes place. There are no required numbers of guided lessons, observations or assessed lessons taught by the Student Teacher. Instead, Student Teachers have work to do during each visit to the practicum schools. The expected work is described in the course plan for the course the Student Teachers participate in. The course teacher at the University assesses if the expected work is carried out. The mentors can comment.

At the practicum school, there are mentors. They report to the municipality and / or the University whether the Student Teacher participates in the work at school or not. The mentor can report that a student e.g. is not paying enough attention to the pupils in the class or is not present at all. Then there is an extra meeting and a dialogue between e.g. a representative from the University, the mentor and the Student Teacher. Most of the time some changes can be carried out and the Student Teacher can continue. After each practicum period, short or long, the Student Teachers fill in a written report about the practicum. This document is read by course teachers at the University as every practicum period is included in a course.

The University pays the municipality for the placements. Then the municipality decides how to pay the schools. Often the schools get a lump sum and the headmaster pays either a team of teachers or individual teachers. Sometimes, the payment is used for further education of the teachers in the school. The University can also pay private schools for placements.

### **3.5 Completion of teacher education programme, induction period and professional license exam, entering the profession**

When the Student Teacher has completed the Teacher Education and got the exam, the responsibility for the University is fulfilled. The Student is now a qualified teacher. There is no further relation between the University and the Student Teacher. That is, the induction period is a question for the municipalities or the private schools.

The new teacher can apply for a job e.g. in a school in a municipality. There is an agreement between the labour unions for teachers (there are several) and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions that it is possible with a so-called trial employment (that is the closest to induction/introduction we come in Sweden) of one year. During the trial employment it is understood that the teacher shall have a mentor. The headmaster of the school appoints a mentor. The mentor is financed by the school, e.g. by less teaching hours. There is no mentor programme required to become a mentor, but mentor courses are offered by Universities and private organizers. The difference after the trial employment is that the teacher can get a fulltime and permanent position

in the school. The role of the mentor, the salary and the workload for the teacher during the trial employment is possible to negotiate between the teacher and the headmaster at the school.

The result of the trial employment (the induction/introduction) is that the tasks for the beginner teacher most often are the same for the new teacher as for a more experienced teacher. What can vary is the amount of hours the teacher works, the workload can be a little easier. There is no extra exam or diploma when the trial employment ends. The reward is the fulltime and permanent position, if the employer and the employee agree about such a position.

### **3.6 The options of post-graduate degrees**

Depending upon the chosen study profile in the Teacher Education, the teachers have several possibilities for further studies. The teacher can continue to study certain subjects, e.g. language or didactics. Depending upon their profile, they can continue their studies on First cycle level or Second cycle level (Bologna). At present, teachers with an exam degree based on ordinance from 2001 have a possibility to apply for studies on Second cycle level, and even on Third cycle level (doctoral studies) in pedagogy or didactics.

Often, there are national initiatives from the government where the Universities are given directives to offer certain courses that the teachers can apply for.

### **3.7 Study counselling**

There is staff for guidance and counselling at each University and most often at schools in the municipalities. There is sometimes also a social worker employed for counselling in municipal schools. The staff has an academic exam at first cycle level (Bologna). Every school, or rather headmaster, decides if there should be any counselling for the teachers. Often, there is a central support group in a municipality where the headmaster can apply for counselling for teachers, sometimes the headmaster needs to buy the counselling from a private consultant, if the central team is too busy.

## **4 In-service training and promotion**

### **4.1 Further teacher training possibilities**

Both Universities and private organizers offer further teacher training. The Universities often design courses with subject content, while the private organizers design courses with general didactic themes like ethics, bullying, conflict management, quality assurance and supervising. The Universities often offer Master Programmes that are especially designed for teachers such as studies in management or special needs assessment.

### **4.2 In-service opportunities and requirements for teachers/counsellors**

If the University is organizing further education, the education is free of charge for the teacher. If there is a private organizer; the employer pays. Sometimes the teacher has to participate during their leisure time; sometimes the employers reduce the teaching hours. Each teacher has to negotiate with his or her manager. The participant gets a diploma or credits, depending upon earlier studies, the level of the current course, and the organizer. There are courses offered at Second cycle level (Bologna) at Universities, so teachers can get a Master Degree if they complete the studies.

Whether training credits count towards job promotion is a question for the headmaster to decide. The teachers are supposed to participate in further studies a certain amount of days each term, these days are often organized by the municipality. A typical example of content of these study days is latest news about European studies of results in Math education in combination with a lecture about methods in Math teaching. Study counsellors and social workers have other, additional courses they can attend.

### **4.3 Professional titles and wage brackets**

What title the teachers have, depends on when they got the exam. The title teacher is given to the participants in today's Teacher Education. Teachers with older exam have other titles. In general, the title "teacher" cannot be changed. Instead, the teacher can have additional

responsibilities. The teacher can get an additional title like manager for a team or responsible for a certain subject. The additional title is open for discussions (competition) each term. If the teacher wants to work with administration the teacher can apply for different administrative positions, such as headmaster for example.

The wages for a teacher in compulsory school and upper secondary for each month are not public. They are negotiated individually. But it is possible to get some information through a website called Skolporten (2009), which uses sources like public statistics. According to them, the wage brackets below are current for spring 2009:

**Table 2.** Wage brackets for teachers in Sweden, spring 2009, Skolporten (2009), exchange rate according to Forex (2009).

	Lower 10 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	Higher 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Teacher upper secondary	24 000 Skr (2 224 Euro)	28 500 Skr (2 642 Euro)	32 500 Skr (3 013 Euro)
Teacher secondary	23 000 Skr (2 132 Euro)	26 000 Skr (2 410 Euro)	30 500 Skr (2 827 Skr)
Teacher younger ages, year 1–7	23 000 Skr (2 132 Euro)	26 000 Skr (2 410 Euro)	30 000 Skr (2 781 Euro)
Teacher younger ages, pre-school	21 500 Skr (1 993 Euro)	24 000 Skr (2 224 Euro)	26 500 Skr (2 456 Euro)
Teacher younger ages, leisure time instructor	21 000 Skr (1 947 Euro)	23 500 Skr (2 178 Euro)	26 000 Skr (2 410 Euro)

## 5 Current discussions in the area of teacher education today

Some years ago, a report suggested that an organization for a career development should be constructed locally and nationally. The suggestion included several levels for teacher promotion. Different titles and certificates were suggested to be tied to the levels. Several actors were suggested to decide upon the career, such as headmasters at local level and a special organization on national level (SOU 2008:52). This suggestion implies changes in Teacher Education (not qualified until trial

employment), implementing a certificate to teach and new titles. The suggestion has not been taken further by the government completely, but the issue of trial employment is promoted in various ways.

In December 2009, the Swedish Government will present a bill for a reformed Teacher Education. The suggestion is preceded by a report where suggestions are made (SOU 2008:109). Compared with the current Teacher Education, there is one important difference – there will no longer be one title, teacher. Instead, it is suggested there be two exams, one for younger ages and one for older ages (subject teacher). This change can be interpreted as an adaptation to Teacher Education in other countries in Europe and to the Bologna process. The Teacher Education will still be national and have national directives. What is emphasized with the new exam is e.g. that the teachers for upper secondary will have a degree on Second cycle level (Bologna), not only a First cycle level (Bologna), which was possible earlier.

The new Teacher Education will probably be launched autumn 2010. Compared with the current Teacher Education which was launched in 2001, this reform has been somewhat more prepared. With repeated evaluations by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, all Universities that offer Teacher Education have already carried out changes in their programmes. In 2001, the Student Teachers were able to have several choices; the idea was that the Teacher Education should not resemble a programme, free choice was important. The students choose combinations that turned out to be not accepted by the employers and the universities had a problem with planning education (Niklasson 2005). Another problem that turned up was that the teachers for younger ages were criticized for not having enough knowledge about teaching language and Math. As an answer to that, it became compulsory for teachers for younger ages to study at least 15 ECTS language and 15 ECTS Math. Due to the Bologna process, there have been changes in what level the degree project shall be written. When the current Teacher Education started in 2001, the degree project was on Second cycle level (Bologna). Today (2009), it is possible to write a degree project either at First cycle level or at Second cycle level (Bologna).

The preparations have been carried out already; so what is at stake now is e.g. what degree level the Universities shall apply to give exam in. Before the University reform in 1977 (when Teacher Education became

an academic education), there was a division between Universities and University Colleges regarding exam degrees. Now, there is a question whether two teacher exam degrees will create a situation where big, old universities will have Teacher Education for older ages and smaller and younger University Colleges will have Teacher Education for younger ages, like in “old times”.

Also reforms in schools will affect the teacher education. In 2010, Sweden will have new national curricula for pre-school, leisure time, compulsory school and upper secondary. There will also be new syllabuses for subjects (about twenty subjects in compulsory school) and programmes and subjects (at upper secondary). The work is in progress and the suggestions will be presented to the government during 2010 (The Swedish National Agency for Education 2009). As soon as the changes are decided by the parliament, the teacher trainers in the Teacher Education have to decide what changes shall be made in the teacher education as the course plans for each subject have to be updated.

## **6 Conclusion**

Since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the teacher education in Sweden has been based upon what education system and values the parliament is given priority to regarding the citizens. Based upon these political decisions, a national Teacher Education was, and is, created. But the national perspective seems to be more and more adapted to a perceived, or actual, European perspective. A comparative perspective upon Teacher Education is therefore needed. With knowledge and a comparative perspective, our discussions and suggestions will probably be more informed, pragmatic, but also critical.



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# TEACHER EDUCATION IN ESTONIA

Eve Eisenschmidt

Haapsalu College, Tallinn University, Estonia

## 1 Introduction

Estonia is the northernmost of the three Baltic States with the population of 1.4 million people. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004, Estonia joined the European Union.

Throughout their history, the people of Estonia have always valued learning and good education. Even despite the forced sameness during Soviet period, the Estonian education system was able to preserve certain differences compared to the general system; a lot of attention was paid to preservation of the Estonian language and culture in the conditions of a totalitarian state.

In the academic year 2007/2008, 15 039 teachers were employed in 589 Estonian general education schools. Of those teachers, 13 939 worked in 528 comprehensive schools<sup>1</sup>. 3 214 teachers worked in 81 Russian general education schools. 7 096 teachers were employed in pre-schools (kindergarten). 2 383 teachers worked in vocational schools. In total, schools employed 24 518 teachers in 2007/2008 (The Estonian Teacher Education Strategy for 2009–2013). The comparative data on the age structure shows that average of teachers' population is 46, 40% of Mathematics teachers are aged 50 or more and 75% of teachers of natural sciences are older than 40 (ibid). The higher proportion of older teachers is especially noticeable among vocational teachers, while in Russian comprehensive schools, younger and older age groups are quite well balanced. Young teachers mostly work in comprehensive schools

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<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive schools – full-time basic and upper-secondary schools. Does not include secondary schools for adult learners, schools for children with special needs and general education classes in vocational schools.

and pre-schools in and around bigger cities, but recruiting new teachers for rural schools is a big problem.

The general level of education and the quality of teacher training indicate that teachers in Estonia are well educated. About 75% of basic school and upper-secondary schoolteachers have trained as teachers in universities, while 25% of teachers are unqualified to teach their subject or are still in higher education. The need for new teachers is partly due to older teachers leaving and partly due to changes in the number of pupils.

Teacher education is seen as the key issue in the large context of development of society. In 2009, new strategy of teacher education was launched (Estonian Teacher Education Strategy for 2009–2013). The strategic vision for 2013 is that in 2013, schools in Estonia have dignified, motivated and competent teachers who work and plan their professional development in line with the following principles:

- Teachers enjoy a dignified social position. Teachers are fully aware of their role in the society and their responsibility for supporting their pupils' development as decisive and responsible citizens of Estonia and Europe. Teachers help to promote local culture and the culture of their profession.
- Teachers are learners who can evaluate and plan their professional development. Teachers use analytical thinking and empirical problem solving methods. They are familiar with and make use of the most recent research on teaching and learning. They can evaluate the efficiency of their working methods and participate in research. They can evaluate and plan their training needs.
- Teachers support the development of their pupils. Pupils' development is a performance indicator of teachers' work. Teachers consider the individual development needs of their pupils. They analyse every learning situation, motivate pupils, choose suitable learning activities and methods and analyse how these affect pupils' performance. Teachers can successfully cope with a multicultural group of pupils. They notice and take into consideration the special needs of their pupils.
- Teachers offer guidance and teach learning skills. Besides passing on knowledge and skills, teachers offer more and more guidance and advice to their pupils. They direct pupils' development and the learning process through a supportive learning environment. Teachers

are familiar with modern information sources and informal ways of learning. They use up-to-date information and communication technology in their work and help their pupils to gain independent learning skills and to select and process information. Teachers can also offer guidance to adult learners (parents, colleagues, student teachers).

- Teachers are experts in their subjects and integrate different fields of knowledge. Teachers are experts in their subjects. They are familiar with new trends in their specialised field and link them to other disciplines. They can differentiate between what is important and what is less important, linking the content of their subject to other subjects, to the surrounding environment and to the experience of their pupils.
- Teachers use the help of their colleagues and parents in supporting their pupils' development. All teachers are ready to work in teams, give and get feedback and initiate and guide group processes to support pupils' development. Teachers cooperate with parents, colleagues, community representatives and specialists.

In order to achieve these aims, teacher education should be treated as an integrated entity consisting of pre-service teacher education, induction year and lifelong in-service training to ensure teachers' constant professional growth.

## **2 Initial teacher training in Estonia**

Teacher education is offered at the universities. Every year there are approximately 500 applicants to teacher training programmes. There are 4.5 applicants per one place to pre-school and primary school teacher training programmes but more places than applicants to subject teacher-training programmes. Universities determine the requirements for selection of applicants. There are two main criteria for selection: (1) academic results and (2) personal characteristics necessary for becoming a teacher, such as interpersonal, communication and cooperation skills. In order to evaluate the latter, the applicants are given discussion exercises that are to be executed in groups.

## 2.1 Design of the training programmes

A teacher's professional development begins with pre-service teacher education, which provides basic professional knowledge and skills. Currently, two universities – Tallinn University and the University of Tartu together with their colleges and institutions of higher education, provide programmes leading to the award of teacher qualification in Estonia, subject to the general guidelines for teacher education established by the Ministry of Education *Framework Guidelines for Teacher Education* (2000) and the *Estonian Standard of Higher Education* (2002).

Teacher education for all school levels consists of three parts: (1) general studies; (2) special studies; (3) general studies in educational science, psychological and didactical studies and practical training.

General studies focus on the development of the teacher's overall cultural, communicative, and social competencies based on the teacher's presumed vocation, profession and occupation.

Subject studies aim at: (1) providing subject or specialty-related knowledge and skills based on up-to-date requirements for the vocation, profession, and occupation; (2) providing a systematic understanding of the human being, the surrounding environment and society, and the skill of viewing them from the angle of the subject or specialty.

The aim of general studies in educational science, psychological, didactical studies and practical training (pedagogical studies) are to: (1) develop didactical mastery of the subject or specialty, including the ability to respond to changing educational needs and adjust to them; (2) provide skills of applying the kind of psychology-based study methods that foster individual growth and coping in a multicultural environment, including a multicultural learning environment; (3) support teachers' coping, including providing knowledge and skills of organization, classroom, and group management as well as team work.

Currently, two teacher pre-service education models are used in Estonian universities: the mono-phase integrated model (class teachers in primary school level), in which subject and educational studies take place concurrently, and the two-phase or consecutive model (for subject-teachers and pre-school teachers), in which a 2-year course of teacher education is passed by students after the completion of their subject

studies. In the case of the two-phase teacher education model, educational studies (including pre-service school practice) must extend over at least 40 study weeks i.e. 60 ECTS. This equals one year of studies in Estonian higher education.

Estonian higher education system has been reformed according to the Bologna regulation since 2006 into 3-year bachelor level studies and 2-year master level studies.

The volumes of the curricula for comprehensive schoolteachers and upper-secondary schoolteachers as well as those teachers, who teach general subjects in a vocational school, are as follows.

Pre-school teachers receive a Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS) with education as a major. This degree provides the kindergarten teacher's or pre-school teacher's qualification. Those, who continue studies towards the Master's degree, acquire the early childhood educator's and counsellor's competence.

Class teachers receive a Master's degree (300 ECTS) with education as a major. This degree provides the class teacher's qualification for practicing in a comprehensive school from grade 1 to 6, and teaching all subjects on that level. This is an integrated bachelor and master education programme.

Subject teachers receive a Bachelor's degree in subject (180 ECTS) and a Master's degree (120 ECTS); their major is usually the subject they will teach in school. A qualified subject teacher has to attain a Master's degree and complete the teachers' pedagogical studies. The teachers' pedagogical studies (60 ECTS) are included in the degree studies. Mainly subject teachers are prepared to teach two subjects on lower secondary (7–9 grade) and upper secondary levels.

Special-education teachers receive a Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS) and a Master's degree (120 ECTS) in special education. This degree provides the special-education teacher's qualification for practicing in a comprehensive or special school.

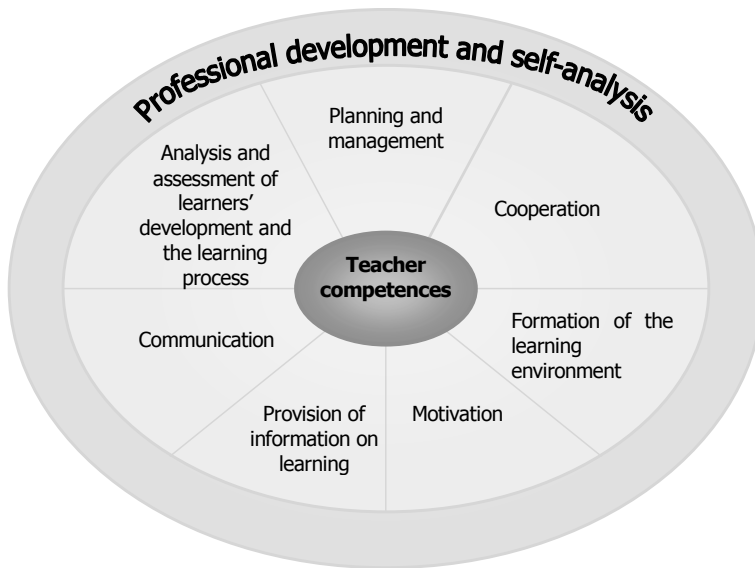
Vocational school teachers acquire a degree at a university, higher education institute or vocational school in a profession and usually participate for some years in the labour market. After that, they complete the teacher's pedagogical studies at a university.

**Table 1.** Teachers' qualifications by school levels.

Age	School forms	Teachers' qualification
0–7	Kindergarten	Pre-School teacher (BA)
7–15	Comprehensive school: primary school (1–6 forms), and lower secondary (7–9 forms), 9 years	Class teacher (MA) and subject teacher (MA)
16–	Upper secondary school, 10–12 forms, 3 years	Subject teacher (MA)
16–	Vocational school	Subject teacher (MA) and vocational school teacher (BA)

Teachers' competences have been the core question in Estonian education policy in recent years. The competence expectations for teachers were first described in the Teachers' Professional Standard (2005). In the Teachers' Professional Standard, the teachers' competences are described in eight areas (Figure 1). The first blocks are related to formation and leading of learning processes (including planning and management, formation of the learning environment, provision of information and learning, analysis and assessment of learners, development and the learning process). Interpersonal competences, such as communication, cooperation, and motivation form the second block of competences. Professional development is based on the presumption of self-analysis.





*Figure 1.* Teachers' Professional Standard (2005).

The Estonian Teachers' Professional Standard emphasizes the building of an attitude and understanding of the teacher as a reflective practitioner and a life-long learner. In practice, the Estonian teacher is responsible for his or her own professional development and for identifying and planning personal learning needs. The goal of facilitating life-long learning and reflection among teachers is very similar to what is envisioned in the European policy paper. The teachers' status and role expectations, however, are influenced by values and attitudes in the society, and this may be a point where other European countries face different challenges.

## **2.2 The practical training of future teachers**

According to the *Framework Guidelines for Teacher Education* (2000), the teacher-training curriculum should include at least 60 ECTS of general studies in educational science, psychological and didactical studies, including practical training of at least 10 study weeks.

Every university is autonomous to design the curriculum according to this regulation. For example, in Tallinn University, a subject teacher's teaching practice involves three stages: observation practice (3 ECTS), first teaching practice (6 ECTS), and second teaching practice (6 ECTS).

The students who study a minor subject must also complete a teaching practice in the minor (3 ECTS). The observation practice, which is closely connected to the general pedagogical and psychological studies, is done in the first year of the Master level studies. Observation assignments are based on theory provided in lectures and the results are analyzed in seminars guided by supervisors.

The main purpose of the observation practice is to make the students see the connections between studies of educational sciences and real school life. The first stage of teaching practice is conducted in the fall semester of the second year of the Master's level studies and the II stage in the spring semester.

In class teachers' 5-year programme, the importance of practical training is remarkably bigger. Teaching practice is a spiral process continuing throughout the studies, starting from theoretical studies and acquisition of professional skills and moving towards the more complicated levels. The practice period starts with the observation practice in the II year and ends in the V year with the teaching practice in a minor subject. The total amount of practice is 30 ECTS. Such an arrangement has become possible due to a very well integrated Master's curriculum where completion of teaching practice in stages ensures application of theoretical knowledge in practice at once. In each stage of the professional practice, supervisors from the university provide students with professional methodological advice. In addition, teacher-mentors (practicing teachers who have completed a special training course) appointed by practice-schools support student teachers in developing assurance in the teacher profession throughout the stages of practice. Completion of various courses of development psychology, pedagogy and didactics during pre-service studies ensures that students cope well during the teaching practice and provides a strong basis for the development of professional skills as well as communication and cooperation skills for working with learners, colleagues and parents.

The main responsibility for practical training of student teachers lies on university staff, but actual supervision takes place in the school context where teacher-mentor supports lesson planning and gives feedback. University lecturer and teacher-mentor exercise close cooperation in assessing student teacher's practice and improving preparation programmes. The teacher-mentors have no special status in cooperating

schools, but they get additional salary for supervising student-teachers practice from the university, but a relatively small sum.

### **2.3 Completion of teacher education**

According to the *Framework Guidelines for Teacher Education* (2000), the teacher training at higher education level is completed under the conditions and following the procedure established for the completion of the corresponding level of higher education. In teacher training, this means the writing and defence of master theses in the amount of 10–20 ECTS (class teacher, subject teacher) or bachelor theses in the amount of 6–10 ECTS (pre-school teacher, vocational school teacher) in education. There are options of post-graduate degrees, but this is limited and only few of in-service teachers use that.

### **2.4 Teacher educators**

Teacher training in the university is carried out according to the Estonian Standard of Higher Education (2002). This regulates the requirements for candidates for university staff positions. It is required that at least 50% of lecturers on bachelor level and 75% of lecturers on master level must hold doctoral degrees and must be active researchers. Additionally, the *Framework Guidelines for Teacher Education* (2000) defines special requirements for teachers in teacher training. In the case of a teacher-training curriculum with a one-year standard period, lecturers should hold a doctoral level degree and be active in their field of study and research or with equivalent qualifications should teach at least 40 per cent of the volume of subjects. Teachers teaching didactics should have at least a 3-year experience in teaching the corresponding subject or specialty in an educational institution at the corresponding educational level. Teachers providing didactical studies for pre-education teachers, class teachers, subject teachers in the basic school and upper secondary school, teachers in subjects of general education in a vocational school or vocation teachers should, within every three years, teach at least 100 lessons in the corresponding subject or specialty in an educational institution at the corresponding educational level.

### **3 Induction period – entering the profession**

In Estonia, there has been particularly strong development in the area of supporting novice teachers in the early stages of their career. In 2004, the induction year programme was initiated as part of the teacher education programme. After the first stage involving all novice teachers who started work in comprehensive schools, it was extended in 2005 to include novice pre-school and subject teachers. The purpose of the induction year is to support novices' adaptation to the educational institution in which they work, and to promote the development of their professional skills through continuous analysis of practice and learning. The launching of the induction year in the entire country included the evaluation of the implementation model and empirical analysis. The outcomes of the evaluation provided identification of problems in the theoretical foundations of the model for the induction year, and the planning of activities to overcome these challenges (Eisenschmidt 2006).

About 150–250 novice teachers, who start their career annually, get their initial education mainly from two major universities: Tallinn University and the University of Tartu. These universities provide in-service teacher education and are actively involved in the induction programme and its continuous monitoring. The focus of the Estonian induction programme model lies in the professional development of novice teachers supported by schools and university support seminars. The aims of the induction programme as a one school-year programme are: 1) to support the adjustment of novice teachers to a school as an organisation; 2) to further develop the competencies acquired by initial education; 3) to provide support in solving problems, including those related to the novice teachers' lack of experience (Eisenschmidt 2006). There are four parties involved in the induction year programme: (1) school principals, who create the environment that supports the novices' professional development and appoint mentors; (2) mentors, who are partners for novice teachers, supporting their professional development and socialisation in a school context; (3) novice teachers themselves, who are ultimately responsible for their professional development; (4) university induction year centres, where mentor training and seminars of the support programme for novice teachers (10–15 novices per group) take place. In Estonia, the mentor's role is to foster a novice teacher's development and learning through dialogue and reflection. All mentors

have an opportunity to participate in training to support their mentoring roles. This course, financed by the Ministry of Education and Research, includes the following goals: 1) to facilitate the acquisition of mentoring competences and attitudes necessary for analysis and development of pedagogical practice; 2) to present skills necessary for supporting teachers' professional growth and a culture of cooperation. In addition to mentors, whose main task is to support novice teachers' learning through work, universities organise support seminars, which include group sessions four times a year. Mentoring is part of the school culture and mentors' work is regulated by the headmaster and could be part of normal workload like participation in school development work. In some schools, the mentor has few lessons to work with novice teacher, in some schools it is considered as additional work and the mentor gets some extra payment. As induction programme is a support programme based on constructivist learning approach, induction period is formally completed by completing support programme at the university and composing self-analysis for further professional development together with mentor's feedback. There is no formal evaluation or exam at the end of the induction year. In some schools mentor – novice teacher relationship continues in the following years as collegial professional learning process. There are discussions that the induction programme period could be expanded up to 2 or 3 years, but in ideal situations, mentoring is part of organizational learning and not only organized for beginning teachers.

There are no school counsellors (e.g. psychologists, special educators) employed at central level. Schools are autonomous to employ support staff or to offer special training for some staff members. Many schools employ psychologists, social workers, and speech therapists. The recent state initiative is to establish regional counselling centres for students with learning difficulties. In long-term, it is a responsibility of the municipalities to offer counselling on local level. In these centres, special educators (psychologist, speech therapist, social pedagogue) will work with pupils, parents and teachers, consulting and offering special learning support for pupils. The psychologists and speech therapists are prepared at the university; they have 5-years' master level education.

## **4 In-service training and promotion**

Teachers' professional competences must be developed and updated by continuous in-service training. In Estonia, teachers must complete professional in-service training in the volume of at least 160 academic hours (6 ECTS) every five years. Three per cent of the teachers' salary fund is used, according to governmental regulation, for the purposes of in-service training. This is a part of the school's budget and the principal is responsible for using these finances. The teacher financing his or her training courses is quite rare, but it could happen if teacher's personal aims and school's needs are different.

Teachers' lifelong learning and in-service training are essential components of school development and most schools draft teachers' in-service training plans. Such plans include in-school group training sessions but teachers are also offered opportunities to attend out-of-school training courses based on their individual training needs. Many schools use this funding for in-school trainings courses like team building, school self-evaluation and to improve teachers' self-reflection skills. Main teacher in-service training providers in Estonia are the universities that offer teacher education but there are some private or non-governmental organizations, too. The Ministry of Education and Research evaluates the quality and keeps a register of most extensive (with the volume of more than 2 ECTS) courses.

In-service training courses do not automatically lead teachers to promotion or higher salary level; this is considered as part of teachers' professional development and the duty of every teacher to improve his or her competences. There are some qualification in-service courses which give teaches the right to fulfil some extra tasks at school, like to work with students who have learning difficulties.

### **4.1 The system of teacher promotion**

*Conditions and Regulations for the Certification of Educational Personnel and Requirements for the Career Ranks* (1997) establish four consecutive levels of professional qualifications for teachers: junior teacher, teacher, senior teache, and teacher-methodologist. These career ranks are related to salary levels but the differences between levels are not remarkable. Junior teacher's salary is 76 % of teacher-

methodologist's salary, teacher's salary is 80% of teacher-methodologist's salary and senior teacher's salary is 92% of teacher-methodologist's salary.

The teacher will start from the level of junior teacher and after 1–3 years teaching experience, the school principal has the right to promote the junior teacher to the teacher level. To be promoted to the position of a senior teacher or a teacher-methodologist, the teacher herself/himself must apply for the position and perform a self-evaluation. The promotion to senior teacher level is decided at school; the headmaster forms the board who evaluate the candidate's suitability. The promotion to teacher-methodologist is decided on state level; the candidate should compile the self-evaluation report and the headmaster gives the letter of recommendation. The promotion to senior teacher and teacher-methodologist levels is for five years. If the teacher after five years does not apply again to these levels, she or he will stay on teacher level.

These levels reflect a range of minimum official requirements regarding teachers' professional competence and the official conception of the stages of teachers' professional development. A shortcoming of the regulation is a lack of content analysis of teaching practice and too high a level of formality. In recent years, more attention has been paid to creation of opportunities for thorough analysis of the teaching practice and fostering professional growth. The newly implemented Teachers' Professional Standard (2005) supports teachers both in analysing their professional skills and in setting goals for development.

## **5 Research-based findings and open questions in the area of teacher education**

In recent years, Estonia has done remarkably well in two major international comparative studies: TIMSS 2003 and PISA 2006. In TIMSS 2003, Estonia was among the top performers, ranking on the fifth place in science and eighth place in Mathematics. In PISA 2006, Estonia ranked fifth in science, 13<sup>th</sup> in reading and 14<sup>th</sup> in Mathematics. However, according to TIMSS 2003, the Estonian teachers were most dissatisfied with their job and the same trend appeared in PISA survey, which showed that teachers do not feel well in the school environment.

Estonia participated in an international teachers' OECD survey Teaching and Learning International Survey TALIS (2009) and again it became evident that Estonian teachers' self-efficacy is low and they evaluate their relationships with pupils to be negative. Although, according to the TALIS Estonian teachers' self-efficacy is rather low, especially compared to other countries, Poom-Valickis (2007) has studied the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and professional development among first year novice teachers in Estonia and found out that by the end of the first year, novice teachers had increased their self-efficacy beliefs and these beliefs correlated with some aspects of professional skills like classroom management skill and planning.

Recently, two large research topics in teacher education have been carried out. In the research of *Teachers' Professional Development in a Rapidly Changing World*, teachers' classroom practice and indicators of professional development were analyzed. The main outcomes emphasise that there is a correlation between teachers working experience and competence (Krull et al. 2007). In comprehensive research of *School as Developmental Environment and Students' Coping*, the results show that teachers consider schools to be bad working environments, they feel lack of colleagues and headmasters support (Veisson et al. 2007).

Research has also been conducted in the implementation of the induction year and professional development of teachers during the first working year (Eisenschmidt 2006; Poom-Valickis 2007). The comparative monitoring of the first three years of the Estonian Induction Year Programme shows that colleagues were supportive and ready to help novices and that there was a strong correlation between colleagues' support and teachers' readiness for self-reflection, and that perceived mentor support correlates with collegial support. Mentoring appears to be more efficient in schools where the whole organization supports the novice (Eisenschmidt, Poom-Valickis & Oder 2008). Some novice teachers felt that the mentor was their only contact, or one of few contacts with colleagues at the school, and teachers are left alone to deal with challenges. Attention needs to be directed towards school leaders as it is in their interest to promote a collaborative culture in which knowledge is shared and developed together (Löfström & Eisenschmidt 2009). Based on the results of the monitoring period of induction programme that lasted for three school years, there are three areas of importance that can be targeted as improvement areas for the induction



year programme: novices' readiness for reflection, mentor training on mentors' roles and skills, and school leaders' readiness to support novice teachers' professional development (Eisenschmidt et al. 2008).

Analysing the results of recent research results, *The Estonian Teacher Training Strategy For 2009–2013* emphasises several problems, which need attention: (1) Teachers' social status does not match the expectations set for them. The reputation of their profession is low and there is a clear discord between their levels of responsibility, pay and recognition. Reputation building work is weak and inconsistent. Even teachers do not think very highly of their jobs. (2) Teachers' professional organisations have played a minor role in promoting and representing the profession of a teacher and satisfying the teachers' need to belong to an organisation. (3) There is a shortage of qualified teachers of certain subjects in schools. The age structure and regional distribution of teachers are alarming. (4) The number of qualified candidates for teacher training Master courses and the recruitment of young teachers have been insufficient for years, and are falling. (5) The initial and continuing education of teachers and support of teachers' development in an environment in which survival demands a wide variety of skills have been insufficient and inflexible in responding to the changes in the education system. (6) Teachers lack the skills and motivation to analyse their performance and plan their development, participate in teamwork, support their pupils' development, learn from other teachers and contribute to school development. (7) Management skills, including personnel management skills are insufficient in many schools. The organisation culture in schools does not always support teachers' professional development. (8) Planning and evaluation of continuing education is inconsistent across different educational institutions. The national quality assurance system for continuing education is incomplete.

## **6 Further trends**

In general, the regulations of teacher education in Estonia support similar goals as the EU policy documents. However, often teachers' working conditions, school contexts, leadership, and organisational culture do not sufficiently support teachers' professional development. Policies outlining educational initiatives for school leaders and local

administrators are needed (Eisenschmidt & Löffström 2008). Teachers' working conditions, school contexts and schools as organisations often do not support teachers' professional development strongly enough to fully live up to the expectations on developing the teacher profession as outlined in the European policy document. From this, it can be concluded that there is a need to support school development and school leadership as a whole for individual teachers to be able to fully develop their potential.

In Estonian Teacher Education Strategy for 2009–2013, the focus is on coherence and cooperation between actors. The state and the school owners must ensure that we have young people who want to become teachers and that the profession of a teacher enjoys a higher social status. Institutions of higher education that carry out teacher training programmes must raise the standard of teacher training and support the professional development of teachers who need to work in an environment that requires a wide variety of skills. Special attention must be paid to teachers' self-reflection, and to fostering professional development and teamwork skills. It is important that teacher training courses are flexible on who they accept, candidates' previous study and work experience, the structure of degree programmes, and academic recognition of qualifications. Teacher education must be based on internationally recognised research and give students plenty of opportunities to apply their theoretical knowledge in practical work in schools.

Schools must support and promote teachers' professional development. Headmasters must promote a school culture based on the principles of the learning organisation by facilitating peer-to-peer learning, mentoring and the participation of teachers in professional organisations. The role and importance of professional organisations in supporting teaching as a profession and in building up its reputation must be increased. In order to strengthen the identity of the community of teachers, both regional networking and national cross-organisational content development must be enhanced. Teachers and student teachers must be fully aware of their responsibility to support the development of their pupils, and must analyse their own training needs and plan their professional and personal development to fit the professional standards for teachers, national education reforms, the needs of their schools, and what they want to be like as teachers.

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# **TEACHER EDUCATION IN POLAND**

## **The state of “permanent reform”**

**Dorota Zdybel, Jacek Bogucki, Beata Głodzik**

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland

### **1 Introduction – the national system of education in Poland**

For the last 10 years, Polish educational system has been undergoing crucial changes. These were initiated in 1999, when a major reform was carried out, involving profound changes in the school structure, curricula, grading system, and requirements towards students, but also the system of teachers' professional development and promotion. The initiative for that reform derived from a combination of a number of significant social and political events:

- The first and most important of these was the transformation of the Polish political system, which began in 1989. Legislative solutions introduced during that period enabled the creating of the first non-public (private) schools and universities. At the same time, they exposed the weaknesses of the Polish education system and its extreme subservience to the short-term political interests of consecutive Governments. A national debate on the quality of education system in Poland, which was then initiated, could not be separated from reflecting on the state of the teacher's trade and the question of whether teachers were prepared to work in the Europe of the day;
- Another important reason for introducing these reforms was the acceptance of the Bologna Declaration by the Republic of Poland and the process of adjusting higher education to the requirements specified in this document, i.e. developing such methods of cooperation between academic circles in Europe that would account

for the differentiation and autonomy of particular countries and schools (Kraśniewski 2004). In this way, Polish higher education was included in the trend of thorough structural and content reforms, a process which has not yet ended.

In order to produce a sensible description of teacher training in Poland, pointing to both its advantages and drawbacks, one should start with a short introduction of the school system structure, together with its formal foundations. The functioning of schools and teachers in Poland is regulated by two groups of laws. The first is only concerned with compulsory education, and encompasses the period from pre-school to the Matura examination. The most crucial Parliamentary Acts for the organisation of this area of education are:

- The Education System Act of 7 September 1991 (with further amendments);
- The Act of 8 January 1999 on the Implementation of the Education System Reform (with further amendments);
- The Act of 26 January 1982 – Teachers’ Charter (with further amendments).

A separate group of Acts specifies the functioning of education on higher level. Of these, the following are especially:

- Act of 27 July 2005 – The Law on Higher Education;
- The Act of 14 March 2003 on Academic Degrees and Title and on Degrees and Title in the Area of Art;
- Act of 8 October 2004 on the Rules of Financing Research;
- The Act of 17 July 1998 on Loans and Credits for Students (with further amendments).

The responsibility of designing educational policy rests on two ministries – the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (since 5 May 2006). Officials from both ministries participate in the proceedings of the Commission of National Education in the Sejm, the lower chamber of the Polish Parliament. The directions of national education policy, as well as the financing of education, are in the domain of the Parliament. Teachers’ Unions have a considerable role in shaping current educational policy. The Minister of National Education is obliged to consult Teachers’ Unions on the most important decisions, and in certain cases he/she must have their approval. As a

result, there is a large number of legislative Acts regarding teachers and schools, both on the level of legislative and more detailed ministerial regulations. At the moment, the number of such Acts totals over 40. An obvious disadvantage of the system is a certain degree of legislative chaos, which makes it difficult for teachers to follow successive amendments to the law. On the other hand, excessive rigidity and bureaucracy of legislative solutions do not leave much space for schools to decide for themselves and shape their own identity.

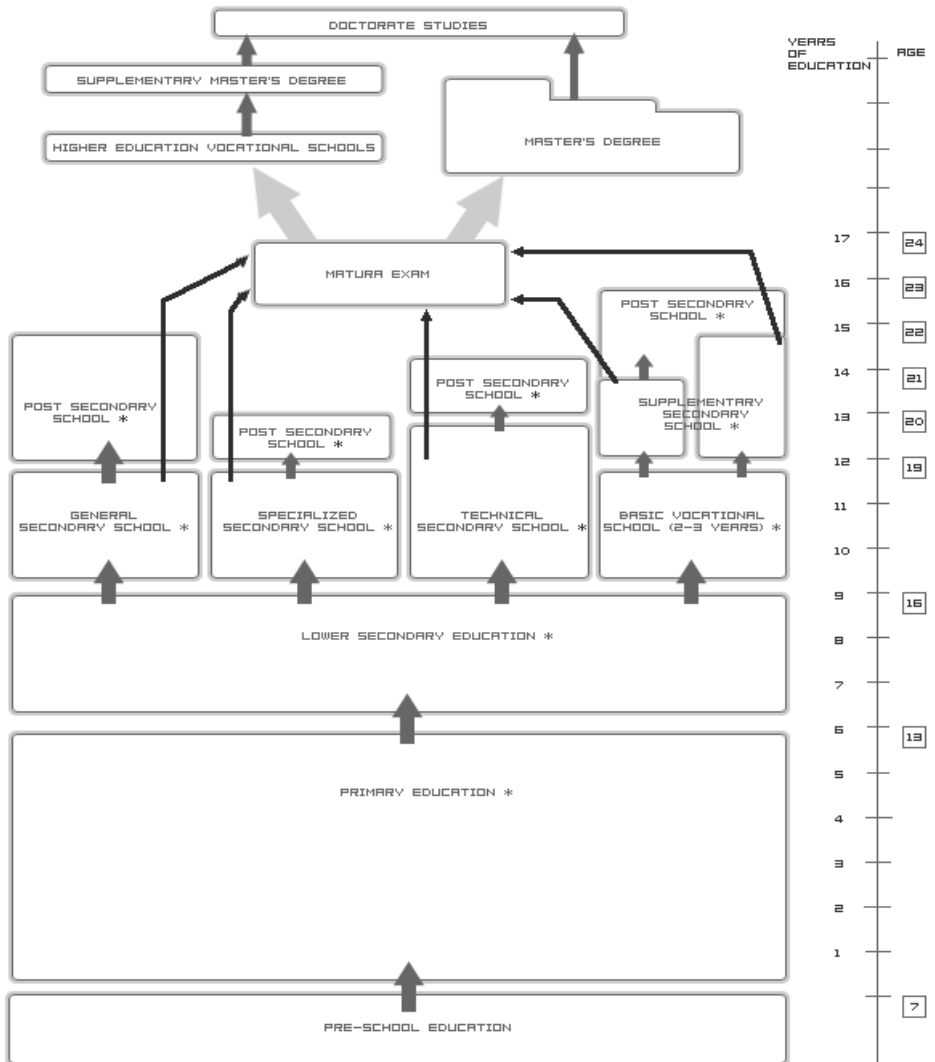
A short history of educational reforms is depicted in the figure below. The reform from 1999 introduced four vital changes:

1. An entirely new structure of the education system, based on the “6+3+3” model. An 8-grade primary school was replaced by a 6-year basic school and a 3-year lower secondary school (called “gymnasium”), the purpose of which was to provide a preliminary vocational pre-orientation, and to prepare pupils for further education. The next step is 3-year upper secondary school – “lyceum” – which is a type of grammar school, designed as a general preparation for further studies.
2. This new structure made it necessary to create new curricula and course books. A homogenous programme, obligatory in all schools, was replaced by the so-called core curricula, which serve as frameworks for more advanced and detailed author’s programmes. Such manner of curriculum compilation has led to the creation of many contradictory programmes, including the field of methodology and teaching aids (course books, workbooks, worksheets, teachers’ guides on methodology, etc.). Theoretically, each teacher has the right to choose his or her own curricula and course books before the school year starts. In practice, however, to avoid excessive internal differentiation, the decision is made by the Board of Teachers (or School Council).
3. Part of the reform was an attempt at reducing and modernising curricula. For instance, the former rigid division into subjects was replaced by holistic (integrated) education at the 1–3 grade levels (so-called “elementary education”) and introducing blocks of subjects with the possibility of building cross-subject paths in the upper grades of the primary school.

4. Radical changes were introduced into the vocational education, by creating new types of schools and new programmes designed to serve the current needs of the labour market, mainly in the sector of economy, banking, management, and administration. A range of professional trainings based on „modules of employable skills” were expected to create the possibility to change a profession very quickly or to improve one’s own qualifications according to the needs. At the same time however, all vocational schools were expected to provide the students with a possibility to continue their education on higher level.
5. A very important element of that reform was also the external system of evaluation (examination) – standardized and comparable, which was expected to result in better internal coherence of the schooling system, better diagnosis of both the quality of schoolwork and the students’ achievements, and the possibility to compare results of education in different areas of the country. Such tests of competencies, prepared on the central level and verified by independent experts, were implemented at the end of basic school, lower secondary school (gymnasium), and upper secondary school (lyceum). In all these cases, exam results are the only formal basis for promotion to the next level of education which means schools do not have the right to organise their own forms of exams and should refer to school diplomas in admitting students. A special institution (Central Examination Commission and 8 Regional Commissions) has been created, the task of which is to prepare such tests of competencies. The tests are prepared for all levels of education, with consideration given to regional differences within the country (i.e. every year students’ results in a particular region determine the level of difficulty in the year that follows).
6. In 2009, a new reform was executed – to promote pre-school education in Poland, the Ministry of Education decided to lower the age of school duty (from 7 to 6). Due to its complicated character, that change will be discussed later.

School structural and curriculum reform as described above necessitated a change in teacher training.





**Figure 1.** National system of education in Poland (source: <http://www.buwiwm.edu.pl>).

## **2 Teacher training system in Poland – an overview**

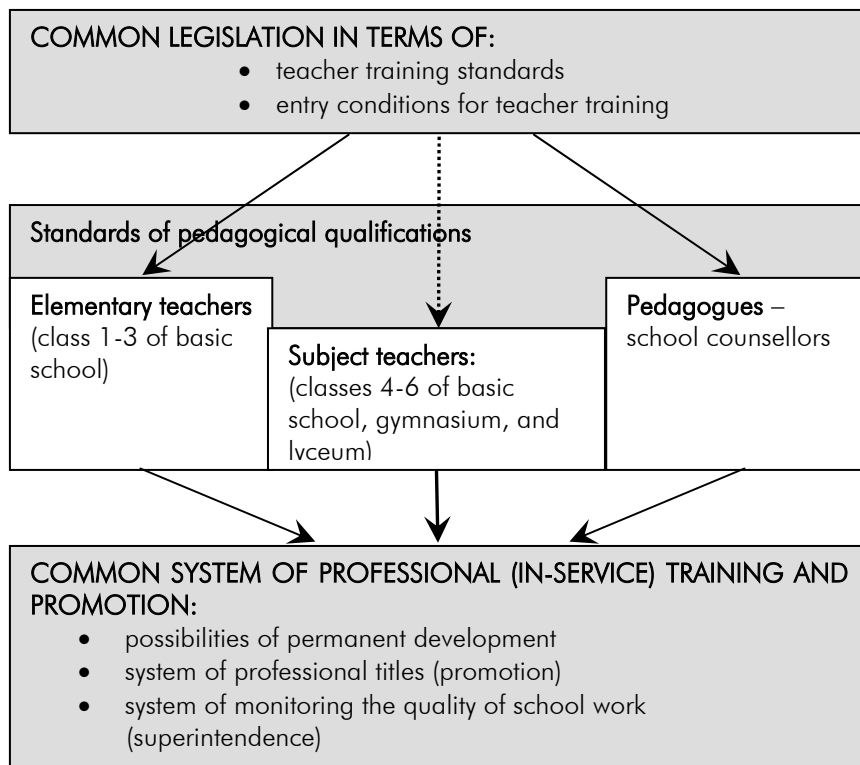
The teacher-training system in Poland is characterised by internal variety or even inconsistency. Its legal framework is based on the Bologna system on one hand, and internal legislative Acts on the other. The most general guidelines are included in the Teacher's Charter, which states that the position of a teacher can be taken by a person who: a/complies with basic moral principles (has no criminal record); b/ meets the health conditions necessary for working as a teacher; c/ has a university degree and an appropriate training in pedagogy. Strictly, to be employed at a school, only a Bachelor's degree is required. For professional promotion, however, one needs to complement his or her education, which is understood not only in terms of obtaining Master's degree, but also in terms of permanent professional development, specifically completing post-diploma studies.

A detailed list of qualifications can be found in a separate regulation regarding standards of teacher training, passed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education on 12 July 2007. It includes a detailed description of the profile of a university graduate teacher, along with skills that are expected from him or her, and the principles behind the organisation of studies. According to this regulation, the institutions entitled to train teachers are public and non-public higher schools and universities all over the country. Teacher training, irrespective of the field in which one specialises, should result in the acquisition of competencies with regard to the following aspects (Dz.U. nr 207, p. 14553):

- 1) didactic – manifesting itself in the ability to conduct classes and their delivery in practice, making use of various teaching methods and learning styles;
- 2) social – related to the ability of recognising students' needs and participating in teamwork;
- 3) creative – perceived through the capacity for self-training, being innovative, and acting in a non-conventional manner, combined with adaptation skills, mobility, and flexibility;

- 4) praxeological – assessed on the basis of one’s effectiveness at planning, implementation, organisation, control and evaluation of educational processes;
- 5) communicative – manifested in the effectiveness of verbal and non-verbal behaviours in educational contexts;
- 6) media and informational – being familiar with information technology and making use of this technology in teaching particular subjects (conducting classes);
- 7) linguistic – having a very good command of at least one foreign language.

A very characteristic feature of the Polish teacher-training system is the fact that only part of it is organised and monitored by pedagogical departments at universities. Pedagogical studies encompass pre-school training, elementary training, and special education for teachers who work with exceptional children with special educational needs. Subject teachers, working at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools, are prepared at other departments, depending on the discipline they major in. What is more, pedagogical departments train specialists such as school counsellors (pedagogues), social workers, and job counsellors, who support schools in cases where difficult situations emerge. Their tasks include diagnosing the special educational needs of a child, recognising difficulties in learning, diagnosing the reasons for problematic behaviour, and youth-crime prevention. In order to ensure the clarity of this article, these 3 trends of pedagogical preparation will be described separately, pointing to similarities and differences (which have been briefly overviewed in Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** The system of teacher training in Poland.

The basic common elements of that system are entry conditions for teacher training. All issues related to the conditions of enrolment to universities are defined in the Government Regulation of 27 July 2005 – the Higher Education Law – which states that a university’s senate sets out entry conditions and procedure in the form of a regulation. The regulation is made publicly known no later than 31 May of the year prior to the academic year. Requirements which a candidate should meet are precise: the basic criterion of admittance is the result of the Matura exam. The highest organ of every university in Poland, the Senate, determines the manner in which the score gained from each subject is converted into points. Moreover, every candidate is obliged to provide a special medical testimonial, which is to prove that there are no objections to his or her studying at a given department (interestingly, this pertains to the studying process only, not to the teacher work a candidate intends to

exercise afterwards). Generally, it is unlawful for universities to hold additional examinations in order to test candidates' teaching potentials (pedagogical abilities). The consent on the part of the Ministry is required for such examinations to be conducted – only if a candidate's knowledge and skills could not be checked by the Matura exam (or the candidate took this exam abroad). The ministerial consent, e.g. allows the verification of drawing skills during entry exams to faculties such as architecture. Unfortunately, in the case of pedagogy, requests for additional tests checking teaching predispositions are consistently declined.

To summarize, entry conditions for pedagogical studies in Poland are not very strict, based on the assumption that everyone has a right to study. The pedagogical potential of a particular candidate, as well as real skills and abilities acquired during studies should be verified rather by labour market than by entry conditions to the university.

It is worth mentioning that for the last few years pedagogy, according to the general number of applications, belongs to the most popular academic disciplines to study in Poland. According to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the usual number of applicants to different pedagogical majors exceeds 3 people per place. However, precise statistics on the national level are not available due to the fact that it is possible to apply for several different majors and/or to several different universities. The highest number of applications available for one person is not restricted by law, and the electronic system of registration allows candidates to apply without the duty to deliver the original Matura Certificate. After being accepted, the candidates have 2 weeks to deliver this certificate and sign the list of students. Therefore, the list of finally admitted students can be quite different from those of originally applying. According to the official statistics provided by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, in the academic year 2008/2009 over 32.000 of candidates applied for pedagogical majors in Poland. That number was even higher in the academic year 2009/2010, exceeding 33.000 applications. However, only one candidate out of 3 was actually admitted.

To illustrate the problem, a few numbers are presented in the tables below. The first table shows a ranking of the most popular study

disciplines in Poland (Table 1), as compared with the general number of actually admitted students (Table 2).

**Table 1.** The national rankings of the most popular university majors according the general number of applicants (source: [www.nauka.gov.pl](http://www.nauka.gov.pl)).

Major (university discipline)	General number of applicants	
	In academic year 2008/2009	In academic year 2009/2010
1. Business Management	34.706	35.388
2. Pedagogy	32.019	33.094
3. Law	27.471	26.581
4. Building Construction	21.200	24.637
5. Information Technology & Computer Science	19.488	24.055
6. Economy	23.278	22.025
7. Administration	20.159	21.565
8. Psychology	17.702	20.293

**Table 2.** The general number of students in Poland – different disciplines (source: [www.nauka.gov.pl](http://www.nauka.gov.pl)).

	2008/2009	2009/2010
<b>General number of students admitted to the university programmes in Poland</b>	<b>591.096</b>	<b>575.363</b>
Including:		
– BA level and unified 5-year MA programmes	465.602	436.732
– 2-year MA programmes	125.494	138.631
<b>Number of students admitted to public universities and higher schools, including:</b>	<b>381.675</b>	<b>399.278</b>
– Regular, daily programmes	229.559	258.012
<b>Number of students admitted to private institutions, including:</b>	<b>209.421</b>	<b>176.085</b>
– Regular, daily programmes	30.474	27.845

## **2.1 Standards of teacher training – obligatory for all teachers**

Following the Bologna system, teacher studies incorporate two stages, irrespective of the field which one majors in: the first degree studies (the Bachelor level), and the second degree studies (the Master's level). The organisation of studies along with minimal content requirements is defined in the regulation on the standards of education in particular disciplines passed by the Ministry of National Education on 7 September 2004. These standards serve as an important factor uniting the Polish teacher-training system, comparable to other European systems of this kind. The standards define five groups of subjects, which are (Dz. U. Nr 207, poz. 2110, p. 14555):

- A. Major subjects – following the standards of teaching for particular fields and levels of education;
- B. Teacher-training subjects – psychology, pedagogy, subject methodology, and supplementary subjects, the range and set of which are specified independently by the university (including voice production, education law, safety regulations, first aid and teacher's liability, ethics, language culture, history and the culture of a region, art, etc.);
- C. Teaching practice;
- D. Information technology;
- E. Foreign language.

This regulation specifies in detail the minimal number of hours for each subject and on particular levels of teacher training. All these requirements are summarised in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Standards of teacher training – minimum requirements.

Area of curriculum	Minimum number of teaching hours	
	BA level	MA level
1. <b>Subjects of major discipline studied</b>	According to standards set for a discipline (major)	According to standards set for a discipline (major)
2. <b>Subjects of additional teacher-training specialization</b>	No less than 400 hours	No less than 150 hours
3. <b>Subjects of teacher training (pedagogical qualifications)</b> Including:	360 hours in total, including:	75 hours in total, including:
– <i>Psychology</i>	<i>No less than 60</i>	<i>No less than 15</i>
– <i>Pedagogy</i>	<i>No less than 60</i>	<i>No less than 15</i>
– <i>Didactic and methodology of 2 different teacher specializations (main and additional one)</i>	<i>No less than 150</i>	<i>No less than 45</i>
– <i>Complementary subjects – (including the voice emission)</i>	<i>No less than 60</i> <i>No less than 30</i>	No requirements
4. <b>Teaching practice</b>	No less than 180	No less than 45
5. <b>Information technology</b> – the amount of hours depends on the level of student's knowledge, but enough to ensure the ability to use information technology in conducting classes (teaching a particular subject)	To be decided by school	No requirements
6. <b>Foreign language</b>	B2 ESOKJ	B2+ ESOKJ

It should not be difficult to notice that standards formulated in such a manner leave a relatively large scope for universities, allowing them to freely shape curricula and adjust them to their academic staff potential, as well as to the financial situation. Equally significant is the fact of considerable competition between public and non-public schools, which encourages amendments to the curriculum to fit the current situation on the job market on one hand, and students' individual interests and needs on the other.

An integral part of teacher-training standards are the requirements regarding the practical aspect of professional preparation. Apart from general specifications as to the minimal length of the practicum, central



legislative Acts also regulate its objectives and forms. Accordingly, the general part of the teacher practicum, with regard to two teacher specialisations (the major and the supplementary), should amount to no fewer than 180 hours. These are the crucial objectives of the teacher practicum:

- 1) getting acquainted with the organisation of a variety of institutions and schools, with special consideration given to students' prospective work places;
- 2) acquiring the ability of planning, conducting, and preparing class documentation;
- 3) acquiring the ability of observation of children's behaviour and of documenting it;
- 4) acquiring the ability of analysing the work of the teacher and the class during discussions with the internship supervisor and fellow students;
- 5) acquiring the ability of analysing one's own work and its effects, as well as the work of the pupils.

The practicum should involve the following activities: visiting schools, observing classes, assisting the teacher who conducts the classes, running the classes together with the teacher, unassisted conducting of classes, planning and discussing the classes conducted on one's own and by others (teachers, fellow students). At least 30 percent of teacher practice should be devoted to unassisted conducting of classes. At least 40 percent of teaching practice should be implemented during the final year of teacher training. Additionally, at least 30 hours of the teacher practicum should be combined with psychological and pedagogical training.

Universities that train teachers are obliged by law to systematically contact schools and institutions at which their students have their practicum. Few pedagogical higher schools or universities can afford to build their own cooperating schools for implementing teacher practice (or set a status of cooperating school by signing a special contract) – not only does it involve vast amounts of money, but a good venue too. In most cases, the only option is a practicum at a regular school, usually a public one. A university employee who is a specialist in the methodology of a given subject fulfils the role of an internship

supervisor. Among his duties are preparing a comprehensive schedule for the teacher practicum, specifying objectives which students are expected to meet (listing the exact number of inspections and unassisted classes), monitoring and evaluating students' activity, and, finally, assessing and acknowledging students' achievements during the practice. Teachers at schools serve as mentors for students, support them and provide them with advice, specify topics for classes, watch over the students while they conduct classes unassisted, and help in adjusting the level of difficulty to a particular group. Students' appraisal written by teachers at the end of their practice is its important element. It takes a teacher with profound experience and knowledge (having a university degree) for this role, but the choice of such a professional rests with the head of a given school, who should consult the university teacher beforehand.

## **2.2 Standards of pedagogical studies**

A supplementary part of teacher-training standards are the criteria pertaining to pedagogical studies, the meeting of which regulates one's becoming a pre-school teacher, an elementary teacher, or a pedagogue. In accordance with the regulation of 12 July 2007 passed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, first-degree pedagogical studies (BA level) cannot be shorter than 6 months. The number of hours should not amount to fewer than 1800. The ECTS score should not be lower than 180.

The subjects are divided into two main groups: the group of basic contents (330 teaching hours which equals 45 ECTS points) and the group of major contents (including 210 teaching hours which equals 28 ECTS points). Training standards define specifically which contents are to be implemented in every group – details are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Standards of pedagogical training – minimum requirements for BA level.

Area of teaching (curriculum content)	Minimum number of didactic hours	Number of ECTS
<b>BASIC (GENERAL) CONTENT</b>	Total: 330	
<i>Including:</i>		
Philosophy	75	45
Psychology	90	
Sociology	90	
Pedagogical concepts and systems	75	
<b>MAJOR CONTENT</b>	Total: 210	
<i>Including:</i>		
The history of pedagogical thought		28
Theoretical backgrounds of upbringing	To be decided by training institution	
Theoretical backgrounds of teaching and learning		
Social pedagogy		
<b>Total</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>73</b>

Training standards define specifically not only which contents are to be implemented in accordance with the subjects seen in Table 4, but also the expected results of their implementation (skills and competencies acquired by students). Additional guidelines are specified:

- 1) Curricula should include the following range of activities:
  - Physical education – 60 hours (max. 2 ECTS points)
  - Foreign languages – 120 hours (5 ECTS points)
  - Information technology – 30 hours (2 ECTS points)
- 2) Curricula should include contents that expand general knowledge, in terms of biomedical foundations of development and education (at least 60 hours and 3 ECTS points).
- 3) Curricula should incorporate classes devoted to copyright laws, occupational health and safety, and ergonomics.
- 4) Training should include all basic and major contents, from at least three areas of training (60 hours each).
- 5) For preparing for the diploma exam (and preparing of the diploma thesis), a student will gain 10 ECTS points.

The remaining teaching hours are devoted to training in a particular specialization. The name of this specialization and the detailed guidelines pertaining to it are determined by each university. The first-degree studies end with a Bachelor's degree (the title of "*licencjat*" – license in teaching is awarded with graduation).

Similarly, the regulation defines the structure and the content scope of the second-degree pedagogy studies (MA level). They should comprise at least 4 semesters and no fewer than 800 teaching hours. The number of the ECTS points must amount to at least 120. Again, at this level of pedagogical training, the subjects are divided into two main groups: the basic, general contents group (180 hours, which gives 24 ECTS points) and the major contents group (120 hours, 16 ECTS points). A comprehensive description of the teaching contents is presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Standards of pedagogical training – minimum requirements for MA level.

Area of teaching (curriculum content)	Minimum number of didactic hours	Number of ECTS
<b>BASIC (GENERAL) CONTENT</b>	Total: 180	
<i>Including:</i>		
Cultural anthropology	30	
Logic	30	
Methodology of social research	30	24
Contemporary philosophical and ethical concepts	30	
Contemporary problems in sociology	30	
Contemporary problems in psychology	30	
<b>MAJOR CONTENT</b>	Total: 120	
<i>Including:</i>		
Pedagogy of adults (andragogy)		
General pedagogy		16
Comparative pedagogy		
Pedeutology (the science of teacher professional development)		
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>40</b>

Training standards specifically define the contents which are to be implemented in accordance with the subjects seen in Table 5, as well as effects in teaching which result from them (skills and competencies acquired by students). Additional guidelines are specified:

- 1) Training should include all the basic and major contents (30 hours for each field of training).
- 2) Curricula should incorporate classes devoted to health education and health promotion.
- 3) For preparing for the diploma exam (and preparing the diploma paper) a student will get 20 ECTS points.

The remaining teaching hours are devoted to training in a chosen specialization. The name of this specialization and detailed guidelines pertaining to it are determined by each university. The second-degree studies end with a Master's degree, the title of „magister” is awarded with graduation.

### **2.3 Becoming an elementary teacher in Poland**

The main possibility to acquire the qualification of elementary teacher (responsible for grades I–III, called “integrated education in Polish educational system”) is completing pedagogical studies with elementary education as a main (or additional) specialization at least on BA level<sup>1</sup>. Every university or higher pedagogical school in Poland offers 2 streams of pedagogical education:

- Teaching-oriented: giving full teaching qualifications in the area of: Preschool Education; Elementary Education and Special Education;
- Non-teaching oriented: preparing students for educational work in different organizations and institutions, but without teacher's qualifications: Social Work, Cultural Management, Welfare Education, Health Education, and Adults Education with Vocational Counselling.

The construction of pedagogical studies is based on a model “1 major – 2 specializations.” At the end of the first semester, each student entering pedagogical studies will be expected to choose 1 of those major

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<sup>1</sup> Bachelor degree is enough to start teaching career (to be hired at a school at the lowest position – trainee teacher), but not enough for professional promotion. For professional promotion, permanent training is obligatory. That problem will be explained later on.

specializations and then, at the beginning of the second year, he/she will be asked to choose the 2<sup>nd</sup> additional specialization, connected with a particular area of education or the age of a child (the table below presents the general structure of studying programme in the area of pedagogy). The range of additional specializations may be much differentiated and depends mainly on a particular institution (or their ability to recognize students' interests).

**Table 6.** The general idea underlying the structure of curriculum: "1 major – 2 specializations."

I year	1st Semester	Pre-orientation time - (general studies, including pedagogical standards)
	2nd Semester	Decision – main specialization (?)
<b>SHORT TERM PRACTICUM – ASSISTANT TEACHER</b>		
II year	Decision – additional specialization (?)	Special education (oligo-/ tyflo-/ reso-) Preschool Education Elementary Education Arts and Crafts Music Education Therapy in Education etc.
<b>LONG TERM PRACTICUM – 4 or 5 WEEKS OF TEACHING</b>		
III year	Working on diploma thesis	

A student graduating from elementary education is qualified: to organize a stimulating environment for child's development, to design a didactic process of teaching and learning and to execute it in an efficient way, to behave as a reflective practitioner using different methods to stimulate the child's creative activity, to solve the problems occurring in the classroom. He should also be prepared to cooperate effectively with parents and other teachers in teamwork.

Teaching practices play an important role in the curriculum structure. There are two possible forms: group or individual. During an academic year, every week each student would go to a school for 3–4 hours, to observe a teacher's work, discuss and analyze pupils' activities, possible

problems, methods used, etc. Such mid-term practicum is strictly interconnected with a particular subject (e.g. methods of teaching languages), and supervised by an academic teacher – a specialist in the discipline. Another form of practice is the one of individual character, called “long-term” or “permanent,” due to the fact that the student would stay in a particular school and class, under the support of mentor teacher, not only observing, but also conducting classes. There are 2 such long practicums in the study programme: after the 1<sup>st</sup> year of studies (students work as an assistants or supportive teachers) and after the 2<sup>nd</sup> year (when students are more independent and can give classes unassisted).

According to the Ministry of Education (decision from 12 March 2009), for a person qualifying for the position of elementary teacher, it is obligatory to complete:

- 1) Bachelor’s studies in the field of pedagogy, with specialisation in elementary education or pre-school education;
- 2) Master’s studies in any field and additional post-diploma studies in respect of elementary education, and having teaching credentials (pedagogical preparation).

## **2.4 Becoming a subject teacher in Poland**

There are three possible ways of becoming a qualified subject-teacher in Poland:

- A student may choose to major in teaching during 3-year Bachelor’s and 5-year Master’s studies, in a particular discipline (Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, History, Geography, etc.). Such a choice implies that the student acquires knowledge on the subject matter, while at the same time, acquiring pedagogical qualifications in one subject related to the discipline which he or she studies. Teaching qualifications are specified in a regulation regarding detailed qualifications expected from teachers, passed by the Ministry of National Education on 12 March 2009. It states that pedagogical qualifications should be understood as possession of skills and knowledge on psychology, pedagogy, and methodology, taught in combination with teaching practice and the discipline one majors in (one specialization) – the minimum number of hours is defined as 270 (with 350 being maximum). An additional requirement is getting the credit for the teaching practice (at least 150 hours).

- Secondly, there are cross-discipline studies with specialization in teaching two subjects (e.g. Mathematics with Computer studies, Biology with Chemistry, Philosophy with History, etc.). Studies of this kind may take the form of a 3-year Bachelor's course or a 5-year Master's course, and their curricula include (apart from subjects connected with a discipline studied): a/ subjects of additional teacher specialization (at least 550 hours), and b/ pedagogical preparation (min. 270, max. 350 hours).
- Thirdly, qualifications of a subject-teacher can be obtained after completing a Master's course in any discipline; by taking post-diploma studies in pedagogy (such studies realize pedagogical standards, giving the preparation in teaching area).

In the case of teachers preparing for specific subjects (e.g. Physics, Mathematics, languages, Biology, etc.), teaching practicums are divided into two types. The first practice (no less than 30 hours) is of a general pedagogical nature and principally includes class observation and assisting the teacher in his/her educational activities. To complete this, students are prepared by academic teachers – lecturers specialising in pedagogy. Usually, it is the same lecturer who conducts pedagogy classes. The remaining 150 hours are made up of methodology practice in a particular discipline, for which students are prepared by academic lecturers – experts in the field of detailed didactics, i.e. the methodology of teaching a specific subject.

## **2.5 External support and counselling**

External support for schools and teachers is mainly provided by the National In-Service Teacher Training Centre, by regional centres and by educational advisors. There are 559 public centres for psychological and pedagogical support in Poland (including 29 specialized ones). Their tasks include as follows: support to children, youth, parents, and teachers in learning difficulties and behaviour problems also connected with drugs, alcohol, therapy in the case of development problems and prevention of addictions. The second field of activity of these centres is focused on counselling and guidance when a child chooses a post-gymnasium school or his/her future profession.

Some large schools employ special teachers, psychologists, speech therapists or career advisers who organize special classes and contribute



to the solving of individual or internal school problems. Employing such specialists is obligatory for schools exceeding 2000 pupils. For others, the decision is usually made on the basis of financial conditions – not every school can afford it.

In the light of the “Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 12 March 2009 on specific qualifications required from teaching and specification of schools and cases, when teachers without higher education or completed teacher-training school can be employed”, for a person qualifying for the position of teacher-educator, it is obligatory to complete:

- 1) Master’s studies in the field of pedagogy, specialisation according to the classes completed, and having teaching credentials (pedagogical preparation), or
- 2) Master’s studies in any field, and additional post-diploma studies in respect of classes completed, and having teaching credentials (pedagogical preparation).

In the opinion of the Ministry of National Education, expressed in the letter DNS2-1012/104/98 of 31 March 1998, graduates of Welfare Education, Youth Crime Prevention in Education, Social-Preventive Pedagogy, and Therapeutic Pedagogy have the qualifications required for being employed in the position of a school pedagogue (pedagogical counsellor). The final decision on one’s employment in the position of pedagogical counsellor is made by the head of the institution, after having assessed the qualifications of the applicant for the job. The assessment consists of comparing the curriculum of the completed major (specialisation) of the studies with the tasks to be completed by the employee in his/her position.

In any case, the main obstacle in consulting particular problems in child’s learning or behaviour is the fact that schools have to get a clear, written permission from parents. Without parents’ agreement, the teacher is not allowed to ask any specialist for additional diagnosis or suggestions for work. This may cause many problems in everyday life – for some parents do not wish to hear that their child is “problematic.” The social prejudice against mentally retarded people is still so strong that some parents refuse to carry out a psychological diagnosis.

### **3 Permanent professional training and promotion**

#### **3.1 Further In-Service Training Possibilities**

Since 1991 and establishing the possibility to organize non-public educational institutions, there are plenty of possibilities for permanent teacher training and improving pedagogical competencies. These are summarized in Figure 3.

First of all, every school is obliged by law to organize “self-educational teams” of teachers in different disciplines. The role of such teams is to stimulate the motivation for professional development, and refresh teachers’ knowledge, by sharing new literature, giving examples of good practice, inviting colleagues to “open lessons”, organizing workshops and seminars for other fellow teachers. The teams are supported in their activities by both, local In-service Teacher Training Centre (which appoints a didactic advisor to give workshops and seminars, often on special request of the team members), and academic teachers who cooperate with a particular school.

The key role in permanent teachers’ development is played by the National In-Service Teacher Training Centre (NSTTC), whose responsibilities are (<http://www.codn.edu.pl/>):

- designing and executing courses, workshops and seminars, especially those including the newest trends in didactics;
- translation of materials and teaching aids recommended by EU, including scientific reports;
- diagnosing teachers’ needs and conditions on the central level;
- supporting and promoting initiatives in pedagogy (alternative methods of teaching, creativity of both teachers and students etc.).

There are many local divisions of In-Service Teacher Training Centres (ISTTC). Their responsibility is to support teachers’ work by organizing workshops and seminars for teachers, based on diagnosing particular needs in a region. Specially appointed “methodological advisors” would cooperate on a regular basis with a particular school, and with a particular team of teachers. A wide range of offered programmes cover a variety of topics, depending on teachers’ interests, e.g.: stimulating creative abilities in children, Montessori pedagogy, early intervention

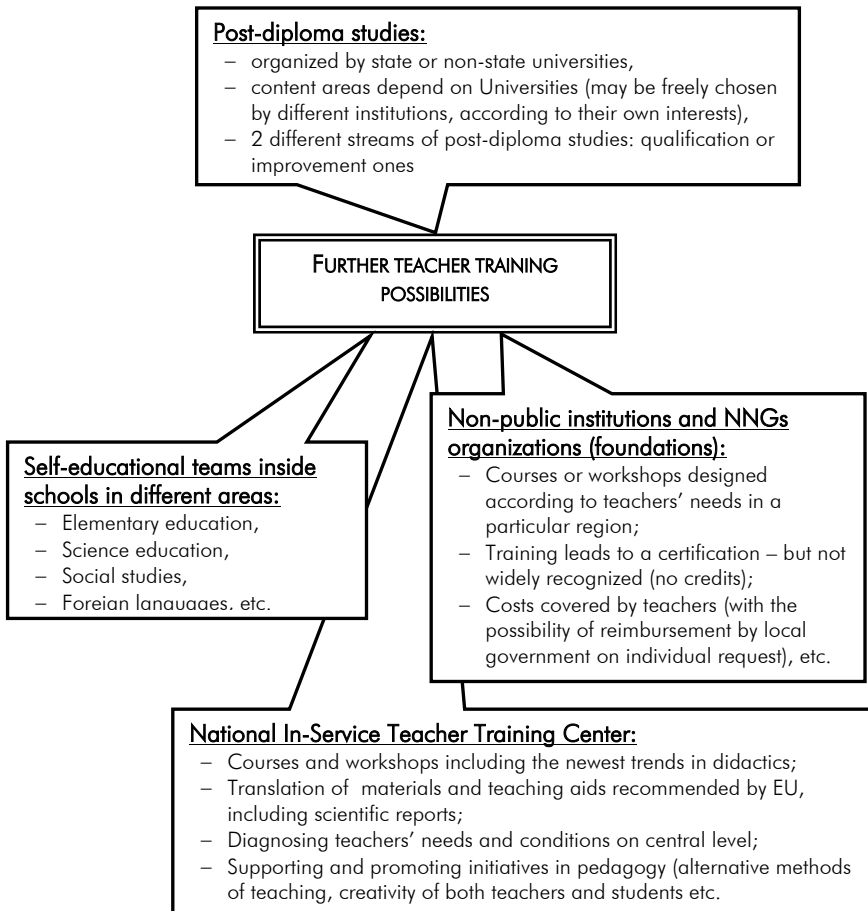
and diagnosis, dealing with youth aggression, difficulties in learning Mathematics, etc. Some of the courses may be specially ordered by a particular school. The average length of a course or seminar may vary between 2 hours and few months, depending on the topic. An important task of ISTTC is also to invite widely recognized specialists in the area of pedagogy, cooperate with pedagogical publishers, organize pedagogical conferences, etc. Most of the activities offered by such centres are charged, but the amount of money is not very large (depending on the number of teaching hours, the prize may vary from 10€ to 50€).

One of the most appreciated paths of permanent teacher training are post-diploma studies offered by public and non-public higher schools and universities. There are two different kinds of post-diploma studies:

- Giving the qualifications for teaching a particular subject area – such studies encompass at least 3 semesters and no fewer than 350 didactic hours. Examples of such studies are: “Teaching Biology in secondary schools”, “Teaching Mathematics with information technology”, “Teaching Polish as a foreign language”, “Diagnosis and therapy in difficulties in learning on elementary level”, “Integrated teaching on elementary level”, “Inclusion in education”, “Early intervention in child’s development”, etc.
- Improving qualifications in a particular area of pedagogy, psychology or didactics of teaching a particular subject – such studies are shorter, usually lasting 2 semesters and including at least 270 didactic hours. Examples of such studies: “Art therapy in elementary school”, “Administration and management of school”, “Psychology of social communication”, “Psychology and pedagogy of creativity”, “Therapy through music and music education”, etc.

The range of topics offered in a form of post-diploma studies is widely differentiated and depends mostly on the potentiality and interest of academic staff in a particular university, but also on teachers’ needs recognized previously in the diagnosis of the job market. All post-diploma studies in Poland are quite expensive and their costs in the area of pedagogy may vary from 400€ to 1000€ per one semester (depending on the topic and the institution). There is however one exception to that rule – these are post-diploma studies organized by Polish Ministry of Education and financed from the Operational Programme „Human

capital” (National Strategic Reference Framework 2007–2013) or European Social Funds – ESF (Sectoral operational programme – Development of Human Resources).

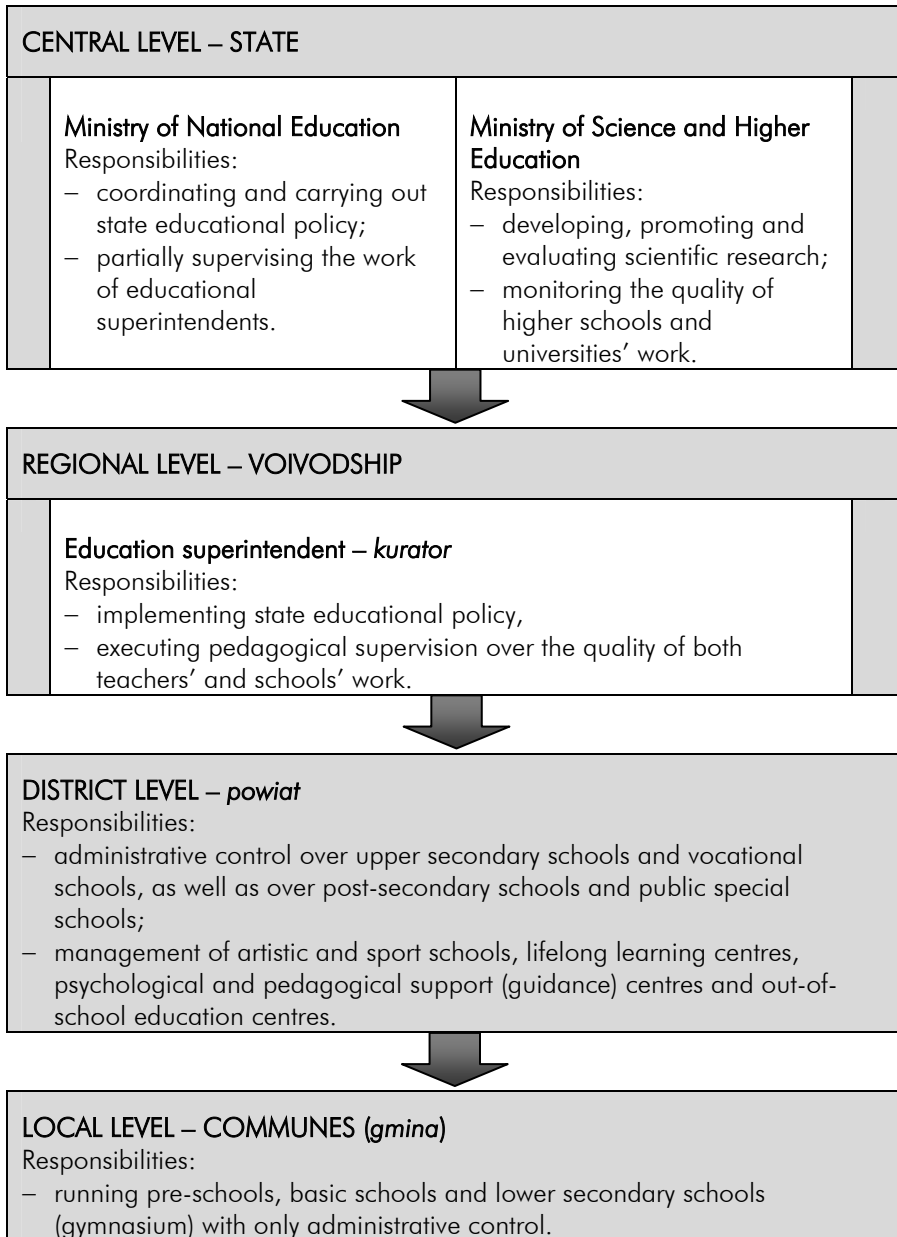


**Figure 3.** Possibilities of further development and in-service training (please note: permanent training is an important requirement for professional promotion in teaching career in Poland).

### **3.2 The System of Teacher Promotion in Poland**

Polish system of teachers’ professional promotion is slightly complicated, and closely interconnected with the system of monitoring and evaluating the quality of schoolwork. To make this description comprehensible it is important to understand how the responsibilities for

organizing and administrating the education are distributed on different levels. The figure below illustrates the structure of that system.



**Figure 4.** The system of administrative and pedagogical supervision over Polish schools.

Only the national policy is developed and carried out centrally (on the state level), while the administration and running of schools are decentralized. It is worth noticing, however, that administrative and pedagogical supervision over Polish school are separated. Pedagogical supervision is exercised by regional education authorities: superintendents (*kurator*), while general supervision (organizational, administrative, and financial) is carried out by the school running bodies (communes, districts, and voivodship – local government authorities).

On a central level, the main role in initiating and executing control over current and long-term educational policy is played by two Ministries: the Ministry of National Education (with the respect to schooling system on primary and secondary level) and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (with the respect to tertiary level of education). Main responsibilities of the Ministry of National Education are, among others, determining (Eurydice 2008, p. 10–11):

- core curricula for pre-primary, primary and secondary education (including vocational schools);
- conditions and procedures for the approval of curricula and textbooks for school use, as well as the recommendation of teaching aids;
- rules for assessing and promoting pupils and for conducting tests and examinations (as well as setting standards and requirements for such tests);
- types of records keeping methods concerning the teaching process and other educational activities;
- rules and conditions for implementing innovations and experiments by schools or other institutions;
- rules for national subject competitions (so called “Olympics”);
- rules and conditions for organizing psychological and pedagogical assistance for pupils;
- procedures for organizing care for pupils with special educational needs.

The Ministry of Science and Higher Education is responsible for institutions providing BA, MA and PhD level of education, as well as for development of scientific research in Poland (including rules of evaluating the quality of universities’ work).

The regional level of administration in Poland is voivodship (since 1999 there have been 16 of them in the whole country). On this level, the national educational policy is implemented by officials responsible for general administration and pedagogical supervision over public and non-public schools and other educational institutions, including centres of in-service training and pedagogical libraries located in a given region. Such officials are called “education superintendents” (*kurator*), and their responsibilities include among others:

- cooperation with school heads and school councils;
- cooperation with territorial self-government units in creation and implementation of the local and regional educational policy coherent with state one (e.g. issuing opinions on documents regarding organization of school, evaluating work plans for in-service teacher training earmarked in the regional budget, preparing plans for the use of funds for in-service teacher training earmarked in the regional budget);
- organization of subject “Olympics” and other competitions or contests for pupils in a given region;
- cooperation with regional examination commissions;
- diagnosis of teachers’ needs in terms of in-service training, promotion of in-service teacher training, especially those related to innovative educational approach (in cooperation with school running bodies);
- supporting the organization of external test and exams;
- cooperation with relevant bodies on the matter of conditions for children’s development including prevention of pathologies;
- coordination, support, and supervision of organization of school holidays in a given region.

The district level of public administration in Poland is called “*powiat*” (these were established in 1998 and there are 379 of them in the whole country now). Their main responsibility is administrative control over upper secondary and post secondary schools of different types, as well as public special schools. Their task is also creating and managing the lifelong learning centres for adults, out-of-school education centres, and centres of pedagogical and psychological support for teachers and students. Their role is strictly administrative with no power to exercise pedagogical supervision over teaching quality.

The last, local level of administration, is commune (“*gmina*”), with 2.478 of them functioning in the country. This level is responsible for running educational institutions on pre-school, primary and lower secondary school level. Again, pedagogical supervision is excluded from their tasks, due to the fact that both, districts and communes, are administrative bodies under a strong influence of politics.

The legal bases for professional promotion of teachers were defined in the Act of 1999 on the Implementation of Education System Reform (with further amendments). The Act introduces four main levels of professional promotion (presented in Figure 5), all of them being permanent with no necessity to be refreshed or renewed. Consecutive levels are strongly interconnected and based on a set of important requirements, among which the following 4 seem to play the key role:

- the basic condition for any professional development is the ability to create and execute (follow) a good plan of self-development;
- it is highly important for any teacher to refresh his/her personal pedagogical and psychological knowledge (and competencies) on regular basis, not only by seeing good examples of practice (by observing other teachers work), but also by following the newest didactic literature, taking part in workshops, lectures etc.;
- it is crucial for any development to take care of permanent, lifelong learning – increasing ones’ own competencies by going outside the narrow, local environment to meet other people and new, creative and alternative ideas of teaching – not to close yourself in a narrow environment of own habits, activity scripts or even stereotypes;
- finally, a good system of teachers’ promotion should be based on the requirement of a permanent formal training – on achieving new levels of professional competencies certified by institutions which specialize in teacher training.

The system of teacher promotion in Poland has been grounded on those presumptions, with the last being the most important one: permanent training, an active participation in post-diploma studies and other forms of self-improvement, is an important requirement for getting promoted in teacher’s career in Poland.

An important role in that system (or rather on two lower levels of the system) plays a mentor – a more experienced teacher, more competent

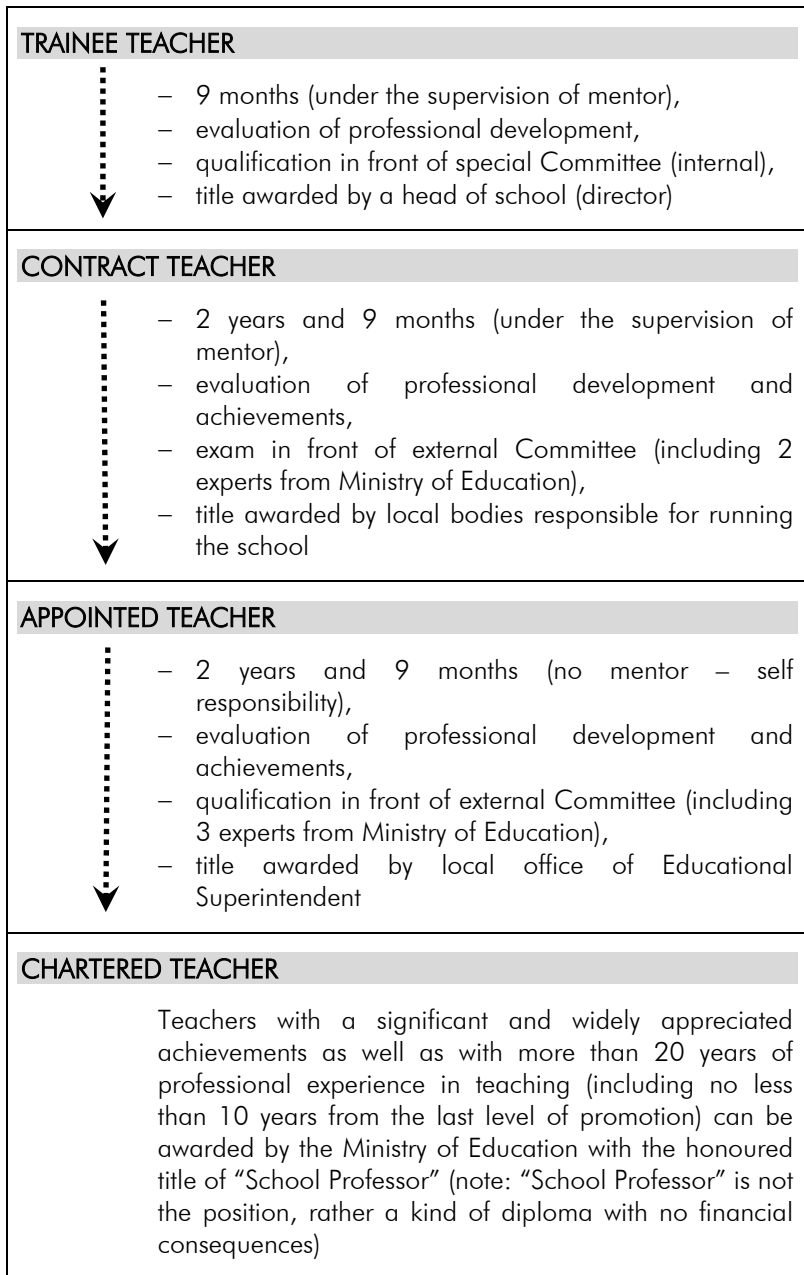


colleague, whose responsibilities are, among others (Teachers Charter 2004):

- a) to explain the official regulations concerning teacher promotion system;
- b) to help in the practical part of preparing a plan and timetable for personal professional development;
- c) to monitor the process of executing that plan, especially by:
  - presenting examples of good practice (both, by inviting to observe one's own lessons and by organizing the so-called "open days" in other classes – an invitation to observe other teachers' work;
  - evaluating the classes given by the trainee teacher and suggesting possible ways of improvement;
  - meeting with the trainee teacher at least once a month to diagnose his needs and interests, to consult lessons plans and possible methods of conducting them, to present new and valuable literature and to give workshops in a particular area of interest;
- d) to prepare a first draft of trainee's professional development evaluation;
- e) to help in preparing all the necessary documents required for the legal process of promotion.

The role of a mentor, although difficult and time-consuming, is considered to be highly prestigious, and therefore it is additionally paid. According to special regulations prepared by the Ministry of National Education, mentor is entitled to monthly allowance, which should be defined and paid by the organ running the school (local government). No particular value of this allowance is defined in national regulations, being rather dependent on country region and financial possibilities of the local government – on average it is around 25–30€ a month.

It is also important to notice that a particular relationship between a trainee teacher and his mentor should be regulated by a special contract, examples of which are available at the Ministry of Education as well as the regional In-service Teacher Training Centres.



**Figure 5.** Polish system of teacher promotion (professional titles and requirements).

Note: all these titles are permanent and they do not have to be renewed.

A teacher who just begins his/her professional career can be employed by a school at the position of a trainee teacher (although his contract can be only temporary, no longer than 1–2 years). The most important responsibilities of a beginner teacher/pedagogue are the following:

- 1) to get acquainted with the school's internal structure, tasks and rules of daily functioning, including especially:
  - a) educational acts, as well as other regulations (on national and local level) concerning school work;
  - b) documentation of school work – official reports, plans, scenarios, etc., that are used to prove the quality of education;
  - c) rules of ensuring safe and healthy learning environment;
- 2) to observe classes conducted by their mentor and/or other more experienced teachers (at least 1 hour a month) and discuss their structure and quality afterwards;
- 3) to conduct his own classes under the supervision of the mentor or/and the Head of school, and actively discuss/ evaluate their quality with the supervisor (again, at least 1 hour per month);
- 4) to participate actively in the school's internal system of permanent professional training, forms of which should be strongly connected with the type of his work.

The internship lasts for nine months and is supervised by a specially selected mentor, from whom a relevant professional experience is required (it can be an appointed or chartered teacher). It is important to notice, that trainee teachers' responsibilities are very similar to a regular teacher's job: he conducts 18 class hours a month and only a small part of those would be closely monitored and supervised. Other than conducting classes, however, the trainee teacher is obliged to prepare and consistently implement a plan of his/her own professional development. The assessment of the teacher's professional achievements for the period of internship is made by the Head of the school, having acquainted himself/herself with the assessment project prepared by the mentor, and having consulted with the parents' council. The assessment should be in written form and include an instruction on how to appeal against it. Should the final assessment of professional achievements be negative, a re-assessment can be made only after completing an additional period of nine months of internship. After receiving a positive assessment, the trainee teacher has fourteen days to file an application to the Head of the school for qualification procedures before a commission especially

appointed for this purpose. Members of the commission include the Head of the school, the head of the subject team, the internship mentor and a representative of the teachers' union. If the teacher is approved by the qualification commission, he/she receives the act of granting a promotion in rank to a contract teacher from the Head of the school. In the case of a negative assessment, the trainee teacher may apply for permission to repeat the internship in the same school (available only once), otherwise his contract would expire.

Another promotion in rank is that of an appointed teacher. Qualification procedures at this stage last two years and nine months. They are also based on the plan of personal scientific development and under the supervision of a more competent mentor with greater professional experience. The principal difference in the procedure consists of the necessity to take qualification examinations before the commission especially appointed for this purpose, whose members include a specialist outside the school. These are: a representative of a local body running the school, the Head of the school, three experts from the list of the Ministry of Education, and a representative of the teachers' union. Passing the examination results in the acquisition of the rank of an appointed teacher, which is granted by the authority of local bodies responsible for running the school.

The highest rank in professional promotion is that of a chartered teacher, the acquisition of which is conditional on completing post-graduate studies and re-assessment of the teacher's professional achievements by the qualification commission. The title is awarded by the local office of Educational Superintendent.

The system of teacher promotion described here is more and more frequently under criticism. Its major setback is a high degree of formalisation and bureaucratisation. The number of documents which the teacher must prepare at each stage of professional promotion is very large and the requirements regarding their content and layout are very detailed, but its usefulness in practice is very small. In addition, too much documentation leads to a situation where the most important issues, that is the child and its development, become hardly noticeable. The basis for the assessment of the teacher's professional achievements is neither the quality of classes provided by him/her nor what is going on in the classroom, but the quality of the academic achievements of the

pupils. Furthermore, the system has little influence on providing remuneration for teachers, and differences between particular stages of the teacher's career are small (Table 7). Teachers themselves criticise the fact that the promotion route is too short – opportunities are available only for a short period of time, and after the acquisition of the rank of chartered teacher, there is in principle no possibility for further development, neither in terms of professional titles, nor in terms of financial profits. Although permanent training is an important condition for professional career, after achieving the highest rank of chartered teacher, further training has no impact on wage grades. This has a detrimental effect on the motivation for professional improvement and is conducive to the phenomenon of occupational burnout.

**Table 7.** Monthly payment in teaching career\*  
(wage brackets – in Polish money 1€=4,12PLN, data for the end of December 2009).

Professional title The level of education	Trainee teacher	Contract teachers	Appointed teacher	Chartered teacher
MA with pedagogical qualifications	1906	1962	2227	2616
MA with no pedagogical qualifications BA with pedagogical qualifications	1677	1718	1941	2278
MA with no pedagogical qualifications BA with pedagogical qualifications	1480	1516	1703	1991
Others	1274	1302	1450	1689

\*According to Teacher Charter (art.30, ust.3), an average salary for teachers is defined in respect to "a basic level" guaranteed and ascribed every year in a state budget. In 2009, this basic level was defined as follows: 2177.86 PLN from January to August, and 2286.75 PLN from September to December. Then, particular salaries for different level of promotion are defined as follows:

- Trainee teacher – 100% of basic level;
- Contract teacher – 111%
- Appointed teacher – 144%
- Chartered teacher – 184%

## **4 Some open questions in the area of teacher training**

### **4.1 Current discussions and persisting problems**

One of the most important discussions concerning teachers and teacher training in Poland nowadays has been started by the newest reform moving 6-year-olds from pre-school to grade I of basic school (since September 2009). The change was widely criticized, especially by parents strongly afraid that Polish schools are not prepared to accept such young children and provide them with a proper care, neither in terms of daily work organization, nor in terms of methods used. A very strong resistance on the parents' side resulted in a very unusual situation – the Ministry of National Education resigned from a radical change and introduced a transition period: between 2009 and 2012, parents can make a decision on their own where they want their 6-year-old children to be educated – in school or rather pre-school. The solution, though slightly calming down the social opinion, brought a certain level of chaos to schools and elementary teachers, by gathering in the same classroom two groups of children with a totally different level of reading and writing competencies. Universities were forced to adjust elementary teacher training to such situation, dealing at the same time with new core curricula and textbooks. On top of that, trying to sort out the problem of sudden increase of the number of elementary teachers needed, the Ministry of National Education decided that since 1 September 2009, all the teachers with BA diploma in pre-school education will be recognized as qualified to teach at elementary level. The fact that the content of their studies did not include such subjects as methods of teaching Mathematics or Social sciences simply escaped officials' notice. The national discussion on that problem not only revealed serious antagonisms between these two groups of teachers, but also made a public opinion bitterly aware of a great level of interdependency between the schooling system and current political interests of leading parties. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Polish school is still treated as a "political plunder" (Sielatycki, after: SME 2008, p. 116).

A painful problem of teacher training in Poland is the lack of proper balance between theory and practice: Polish teachers are well equipped with general, scientific knowledge, but their ability to put that knowledge

into practice is rather low (Konarzewski 1996). The problem grows into a critical level in secondary school. While elementary education is far more advanced in building the connections in students' minds between theoretical concepts and practical skills, the training of subject teachers obviously fails to fulfil its aims. The source of that phenomenon is neither the lack of methodological preparation, nor the ability to use modern, innovative methods, or construct lessons plans with respect to students' needs. The problem is rather grounded in a great shortage of "psychology in practice", e.g. understanding psychological sources of pupils behaviour, ability to deal with "difficult" students, etc. Subject teachers are often aware of this gap in their qualifications; when searching for educational support, they often come to their maternal universities for counselling in a particular case. Overly theoretically oriented training results in a great deal of academic, declarative knowledge which, unfortunately, is not embedded in procedural and context knowledge (Kruszewski 2005, p. 117). In everyday school life, when put in front of aggressive student's behaviour, Polish subject teachers often become unable to react in a quick and effective manner. Trying to save their own identity, they would take an escaping or self-protective attitude; activate "survival rituals;" becoming the unhappy prisoners of their own occupation (Woods, after: Kruszewski 2005, p. 143–144). In secondary school, where students are in a risky stage of psychological development, being able to sense intuitively the fear or weakness of pedagogues, such teacher's attitude may cause many additional problems.

A wide and emotional public debate on that topic started in 1999/2000 in Poland with the reform introducing 3-year lower secondary schools. A dramatic increase in problematic behaviours, such as aggression, truancy, sexual abuse, mobbing directed against other students, as well as teachers, and other violent behaviours appeared damaging for class discipline. A kind of breakthrough for social opinion was a tragedy in November 2006, when a 13-year-old girl was violently abused by a group of teenagers (being forced to simulate sexual activity in public, during a short teacher's absence in the class). A day after that, she committed a suicide. The national discussion started in the media turned into a kind of lynch – shocking for the society were both thoughtlessness and cruelty of teenagers' behaviour, as well as teachers' helplessness against it (SME 2008, p.30). This public discussion brought into daylight

many similar cases of in-school violence, with surprisingly high level of aggression against teachers. The question “Who is responsible?” was accompanied by a bitter conclusion: Polish teachers are not prepared to tackle the process of upbringing, shaping personalities and core values in young people. They do not have key competencies in that area. Unfortunately, the effective solution for that situation has not been found yet. On the contrary, a current trend towards cutting funds for higher education in Poland has a negative effect on the practical part of teacher training (with theoretical lectures being much easier and cheaper to organize). Due to a great shortage of decent funds, all the academic suggestions and ideas of a new, more effective profile of practical teacher training have to be put on hold.

Another widely discussed problem is poor transfer of knowledge between Universities (as research centres) and schools. A great body of educational research results stays if not unknown, then at least irrelevant for teaching practice. The research proves that in their daily work the majority of Polish teachers use mainly intuitive “naive knowledge”, which is often too general, superficial, shallow, filled with stereotypes and prejudices. This kind of knowledge could be metaphorically called a “naive psychology from teachers-office” (Konarzewski 1996). Scientific research results, even those accompanied by teaching aids, are left forgotten in academic textbooks. It is very hard to explain and justify this lack of interconnections between research and school practice. On the one hand, research results in pedagogy in pursuit of a proper level of academic standards in terms of methodological and statistical correctness are often presented in difficult, hermetic language, incomprehensible to teachers. This kind of literature rarely enters school libraries and even less rarely – teachers’ minds and professional awareness. On the other hand, in academic environment, didactic books, articles and research are not appreciated enough, and considered to be something of a “lower quality” (“second genre”). In the system of academic promotion, these would not be valued at all. At the same time, schoolteachers are very reluctant to conduct or participate in any survey, considering this kind of action as an additional, unnecessary evaluation. The lack of trust and cooperation between schoolteachers and academics in this area only deepens the negative distance between pedagogical theory and teaching practice. Unfortunately, neither legislative nor administrative solutions exist to stimulate such cooperation.



Another serious problem of great importance is the occupational burnout – the rate of teachers suffering from that is constantly increasing, and this does not only seem to be a Polish problem (see: OECD 2008, p. 34). Teaching profession requires deep, emotional involvement in social relationships with students, their families, and local environment. Exposure to many negative social phenomena is an unavoidable part of this job – slightly metaphorically, one may even say that a certain level of wilderness is an immanent context of education (Nalaskowski 2006). Dysfunctional families, antisocial behaviours and other pathologies experienced by teachers almost every day, not only make their profession very stressful, but also turn into a low level of self-efficacy observed among Polish teachers (Kwiatkowska 2008, p. 233). On top of that, the range of duties required from teachers is constantly increasing, too. Both, the system of occupational promotion and permanent changes, “improvements” or amendments offered by the Ministry of National Education or school administration, oblige teachers to engage in many activities which are not strictly related to teaching. No other professional group is under so many compulsory obligations in respect to lifelong learning, planning their own occupational development and “producing” a number of administrative documents. At the same time, the teaching profession has considerably lost its social prestige. Populist comments on teaching as being a supposedly easy and privileged profession are not only hurtful for teachers, but also cause additional, overwhelming strain. The Polish teacher becomes more and more tired, bitter, and depressed. Not surprisingly, over 52% out of 1000 active teachers seriously considers leaving the profession (according to the survey published on [www.edunews.pl](http://www.edunews.pl)). Almost the same number expressed the opinion that nowadays it is not worth to be a teacher. The lack of professional advice and help for teachers suffering from occupational burnout is severe in Poland. The only way of supporting teachers in dealing with permanent stress and tiredness is a sabbatical year guaranteed by Teachers’ Charter (once every 5 years of teaching work).

Another growing problem is constantly decreasing the level of cognitive competencies and motivation of incoming students. Every year, Polish universities are getting more and more students willing to study pedagogy. The usual number of applicants to different pedagogical majors exceeds 3 people per place. At the same time, however, most of the candidates admitted openly declare a very low or non-existent

motivation to start a teaching career in future. The reasons they started pedagogical studies may differ: from an obvious lack of future life-  
vision, to the “naive” opinion that this should be an easy programme to  
follow and complete (Pracuj.pl 2009). The system of higher education  
itself partly stimulates such attitudes due to the fact that it is free of  
charge – there are no financial consequences of dropping the university  
programme and therefore no clear feeling of responsibility in planning  
one’s own academic career. As a result, Polish universities observe an  
increasing number of graduates who never enter the teaching career.

#### **4.2 Important research studies**

Although “pedeutology”<sup>2</sup> is considered in Poland to be an important  
dimension of scientific pedagogy, the description of research conducted  
in that area is slightly problematic. The main obstacle for such a task is  
the fact that research results are widely scattered, often incomplete or  
even inconsistent, rarely representative for the whole population of  
Polish teachers, and as a result difficult to synthesize. An additional  
problem is caused by the fact that a vast majority of pedagogical  
literature is published only in Polish, and rarely translated into other  
languages. On a central level, the basic source of data about the  
condition of Polish teachers and effectiveness of their training is the  
Institute for Educational Research – the agenda of the Ministry of  
National Education (<http://www.ibe.home.pl>), responsible for planning,  
coordinating, monitoring and executing systematic scientific research on  
Polish education. According to reports presented by that Institute, the  
most dynamically developing streams of research are the following:

- a) Psychologically oriented research – tackling the problems of  
teacher’s personality, his educational abilities, the attitude towards  
pupils, teacher-student interpersonal relation in which the  
effectiveness of social influence is grounded.
  - One interesting example can be the research of I. Kawecki (2004)  
on the practical dimension of teachers’ knowledge. How is the  
practical knowledge of teachers shaped and developed? What are  
its sources and possible paths of growing and crystallizing? To  
which extend is this knowledge filled with scientific concepts and

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<sup>2</sup> Pedeutology – Greek „paideutes” – teacher, „logos” – word, science.

to which extent is this knowledge just based on “naïve” theories? Is the process of shaping that knowledge assisted by a reflection on one’s own thinking (metacognition)?

- Another valuable example is the book by Z.B. Gaś (2001): *Self-developing teacher* which presents not only the results of a survey on self-efficacy level among Polish teachers in the context of 1999-reform, but also builds an interesting picture of a teacher’s personality, self-image, and vision of professional development.
- b) Sociologically oriented research – defining the teacher as a member of a social group; such research is concentrated on the social status of the teacher’s job, its role and function in a particular environment, as well as the process of selecting candidates for the teaching career, etc. A good example of such research can be found in the book by H. Kwiatkowska (2008), dealing with the problem of contemporary teachers’ identity. What are the characteristics of contemporary Polish teachers’ identity? How is it shaped? How, in what way, and to which extent does a teacher’s identity change under the influence of growing occupational experience? To which extent do Polish teachers identify themselves with their professional group? The book brings some interesting results of the survey in that area.
- c) Didactically oriented research – interested in the effectiveness of teachers’ work.
- d) Comparative research – on systems and curricula of teacher training in different countries; the basic point of interest in such a research are contemporary trends in the development of administrative and programme tools in that area. The most important and valuable source of such comparative data are the reports published by EU agendas, like EACEA, which are then translated into Polish and popularized by the Ministry of National Education. An interesting example of such work is the book by A. Zamkowska (2004) comparing European systems and methods of inclusive education. A good and effective system of inclusive education is not easily built, most of the methods used to create it have many advantages, as well as drawbacks or risky elements.

On top of that, in Polish pedagogical literature, many examples of after-conference books can be found. Their content, however, though inspiring, is rather difficult to present in a brief way. Most of the chapters provide a description of a narrow piece of research, often conducted with self-constructed, not standardized methods, and based on small group of respondents. Here are few examples of such material:

- Adamek and Żmijewska (ed.) (2009) – “The teacher in educational system. Present and future”. The book presents the most updated picture of pedagogical research in Poland. Apart from the examples of surveys on the level of teachers’ competencies or effectiveness of their work in classroom, possible methods to improve the system were selected and described. How to support teachers in realizing their own scripts, schemas of activities or stereotypes? How to stimulate the attitude of a reflective practitioner? How to develop the teachers’ ability to reflect on their own thinking? How to modernize the system of elementary teachers’ training to fulfil the requirements of the newest reform? These are the questions brought up during the conference. The authors stress that it is a higher education responsibility to prepare teachers of high level of professionalism who will be able to act effectively in future, more advanced school.
- Bartkiewicz, Kowaluk and Samujło (ed.) (2007) – “Competent teacher – the present and future of the profession.” The book presents a set of key competencies necessary for an effective teacher. What kind of competencies are expected and required in contemporary Europe from a professional teacher? To what extent do teachers use information technology in a classroom, and how it may be used in teaching? The book combines the survey results with didactics, making the content comprehensible and useful not only for academics, but also for primary and secondary school teachers.
- Grabowiec, Bogucki and Bochniarz (ed.) (2008) – “Healthy school – healthy pupil. Education in respect to contemporary threats against wellness”. The book presents selected pieces of research on the state of health among Polish students and teachers. What kinds of leisure activity patterns are most popular among pupils and teachers? How to promote a healthy style of life? What do teachers know about hygienic style of intellectual work and what do they do to keep a proper level of it in a classroom? What other indicators of wellness

are important for teacher's work and self-image? These are only some of the points discussed.

### **4.3 Suggestions for improving the system**

In authors' opinion, crucial factors influencing the structure and functioning of Polish educational system in a strongly negative way have political and economical backgrounds. The Minister of National Education is still a position appointed by the Prime Minister, according to the "political key". Every election then brings a totally new administration on a central level and a new direction of development. Instability of Polish political life and its profoundly polarized character result in many reforming ideas which are then not fully introduced into the system or changed very quickly. On top of that, education is usually the first sector of the country to suffer from financial cuts in the state budget. According to the Ministry of National Education, in 2008 the total funds used for education exceeded 5% of GNP, including less than 1% for higher education (and compared with 4.6% in 2001, 4.14% in 1995). At the first glance, such indicators do not separate Poland from other European countries.

However, digging into the data a bit more, we would find out that the amount of money spend for 1 child is considerable lower than in Europe. In 1999 it was:

- 1,900\$ at primary level;
- 1,600\$ at secondary level (comparing with 6,200\$ in EU on average);
- and 3,900\$ at a higher education level (comparing with 8,500\$ in EU).

Polish education is chronically under-funded and permanently unsure about the future.

In spite of all these negative phenomena, new legislation is in the course of planning and discussion in the Polish Parliament. The new Act of Higher Education System aims at improving the quality of higher education, and introducing a profound change in the system of funds distribution. The plan is to isolate a few leading universities as research centres, with a considerably better level of financial support from state. All the rest of the higher schools would be expected to concentrate their efforts on the process of educating students. Changes planned in the new

legislation would include regular monitoring of the teaching process quality, control of its effectiveness and correlation with the current needs of job market. Such reform is expected to improve also teacher training quality and efficiency. The changes, however, cannot embrace only the structure of higher education system, they need to incorporate also the content of teacher training curricula, the dimension of teaching practice and the system of selection, both for pedagogical studies, and teacher profession. The negative trends toward reducing costs and length of teacher training (especially subject teachers) have to be diverted. To create modern and competitive system of training professionals in the area of education, teachers cannot be treated any longer as “necessary evil”.

Highly important and widely discussed is the issue of the recruitment process for teaching oriented studies. Nowadays, unfortunately, the process of “negative selection” for pedagogical studies can be observed in Poland (and it is getting stronger, due to the fact that most of the applicants are admitted without additional process of selection in respect to their cognitive and social abilities). To solve the problem, some kind of test would be needed to evaluate candidates’ predispositions and abilities necessary for a future teacher, e.g. communicative competence, divergent thinking, flexibility, etc. Graduates should be required to take a national exam to enter the profession (this solution is known in many countries as helping to avoid unemployment among teachers or systematic overproduction of teachers by universities). Such tools could possibly result in enhancing the prestige of the teaching profession. To conclude, the main change should embrace the philosophy of teachers’ education: from the quantity-oriented to quality-oriented process.

It is very hard to avoid a slightly bitter ending – the situation of the Polish teacher at the beginning of XXI century still resembles the one described by Kobo Abe, a Japanese writer in his famous novel “The Woman in the Dunes” (1953):

*„Rarely will you meet anyone as jealous as a teacher.*

*Year after year students tumble along like the waters of a river.*

*They flow away, and only the teacher is left behind, like some deeply buried rock at the bottom of the current. Although he may tell others of his hopes, he doesn’t dream of them himself as worthless and either falls*

*into masochistic loneliness or, failing that, ultimately becomes suspicious and pious, forever denouncing the eccentricities of others. He longs so much for the freedom and action...*"

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# TEACHER EDUCATION IN FRANCE

## Persistent tensions

Marina Sacilotto-Vasylenko, Marie-Françoise Fave-Bonnet

CREF, University Paris Ouest Nanterre la Defence, France

### 1 Introduction

During the past two decades, France has experienced a major change in teacher education institutional structures. This process can be understood in its historical and political contexts of development. France presents an interesting case because real changes are difficult to carry out due to the strong corporatist organisations of professors, teacher trainers and teachers. French researchers often describe educational reforms as form rather than quality changes. It is stressed that education is viewed as an instrument to attain the desired objectives of often changing policy-makers (Vaysse 2001; Cros & Oban 2003).

### 2 The roots of teacher education

#### 2.1 Separate preparation for primary and secondary school teachers

In France, teacher-training system started to develop at the end of the eighteenth century. It evolved progressively but, until 1989<sup>1</sup>, pre-service teacher education was different for primary and for secondary school (*collège* and *lycée*) teachers. This particular organisation, despite the late changes, influences the contemporary system where the gap between practical and theoretical components still presents a problem for teacher education.

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<sup>1</sup> Loi d'Orientation, 1989.

Since 1879, colleges for preparation of primary school teachers, the ENIs (*Ecoles Normales d'Instituteurs et d'Institutrices*), were opened progressively in all counties, *départements*<sup>2</sup>, to take in charge pre- and in-service training. The separation of Church and State (1905) confirmed the *laïque* character of schooling and the values of the Republic in teacher training. Future teachers of nursery and primary schools were recruited by competitive examination. They acquired subject knowledge and also received pedagogical and didactic training in the ENIs and in the schools. The preparation finished with the qualification, *titularisation*, and teacher placement in post at schools of the county.

On the contrary, secondary school teachers did not receive any professional training until the middle of the 20th century. For long years, the academic preparation at university and high level of subject knowledge were considered as sufficient to become a teacher in French *collèges* and *lycées*. The situation changed in 1952, when regional pedagogical centres were created (*Centres Pédagogiques Régionaux*, CPRs) in each *académie*<sup>3</sup>. The trainees of the CPRs were recruited by competitive examination taking place after the *licence* (3 years of university education). Then, during a year, all future teachers attended trainings focused on didactics and pedagogy in schools and in the centres. After the successful completion of that professional stage in preparation and *titularisation*, teachers could take a post anywhere in France. In the 1980s, a new structure *Mission Académique à la Formation des Personnels de l'Éducation Nationale* (MAFPEN) was opened in each *académie* to develop in-service training for secondary school teachers and to introduce research-based activities.

## **2.2 Common education and training for all teachers**

The law, *Loi d'orientation*, of 1989 brought a major change in the French education system emphasising global education, learner-centred approach, and competence development. At the same time, it was decided to create a single institution for teacher education and training *Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres* (IUFM). The main idea was to offer the same preparation, the same qualification and the same

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<sup>2</sup> *Département* – a county level of National Education services.

<sup>3</sup> *Académie* – a region level administrative entity represented State.

status for all teachers of primary, secondary and vocational schools. The main missions were identified as follows:

- to prepare all candidates for the competitive examinations of the recruitment, the *concours*;
- to provide the professional preparation for the teacher trainees who have passed the *concours*;
- to organise and offer in-service training for all teachers (since 1999);
- to develop research in the field of education.

The creation of the IUFMs could be considered as a revolution in teacher training in France because, for the first time, the common framework of training procedures was set up for different categories of teachers at pre- and in-service stages. It also marked a shift from the “Normal school” tradition in teacher education. The previous institutions (ENI, CPR, MAFPEN) disappeared and their personnel was integrated in the pedagogical teams of the new IUFMs. The trainers, coming to the IUFMs from the diverse institutions, brought educational culture and experience that could guarantee a logical evolution of previous training practice. However, the cooperation between those actors was difficult during the first years and the “conflicts of power“ were noticed by French researchers. Thus, the IUFMs were isolated from universities and the educational system. Professors and trainers from universities were rarely presented in teacher education and training activities, on the contrary, *inspecteurs d'académie* played a dominant role in the in-service training.

Compared to before, the process of teacher preparation at the IUFMs focused on **professionalization** of training. This concept concerns the development of professional identity of beginning and experienced teachers. The professional training aims to (Deane 2003, p. 117).:

- “Engage teachers to deepen their subject knowledge;
- enable them to identify resources and constraints in situations they may encounter;
- enable them to analyse their practice;
- help them gather and exploit the knowledge acquired through experience“.

Pre-service teacher education in France corresponded to a **consecutive model**: 3 years of education at the university followed by 2 years of training at the IUFMs. To submit an application for the place in an IUFM, all trainees had to hold a *Licence*<sup>4</sup>. The IUFMs developed their own selection procedures, which could include an application dossier, interviews, and tests in French, Mathematics, and General Culture. The participation in *pre-professionalization* modules at the university and some pedagogical experience gave an additional value to the dossiers of applicants. The number of applicants was about 50 000 per year. This number varies according to the periods and it depends on the evolutions in economic situation. Since 2005, the drop in the number of applicants has been about 10% to 30% according to the *académies* and it has concerned mostly future teachers of secondary schools. The number of posts opened for national competitive examinations has diminished too (due to the government's policy of reduction of civil-service employment). In 2010, only about 16 000 were recruited as teachers.

The first year at the IUFM was devoted to preparation for the national *concours*. The competitive examination evaluated academic skills of candidates and took place at the end of the first year. It included two parts: written tests of subject knowledge and an oral exam with the discussion of a professional topic. During the first year, students had placements in schools taking the form of "accompanied" practice supervised by the class teachers. They were encouraged to observe pedagogical situations in different classes and to have short teaching experience.

The students who passed the *concours* were admitted in the second year of training at the IUFMs and became trainee teachers, *stagiaires*. They had a status of civil servants and received a salary. They had to attend the training sessions in the IUFMs and in schools; to prepare a professional thesis, *mémoire*, and defend it in a *viva voce*; to take part in school practice. During the second year of school experience, trainee teachers were appointed in schools by the *Rectorat* to fill in the vacant posts or to stand in for the teachers participating in the in-service training activities. They were fully responsible for the teaching during a period of

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<sup>4</sup> *Licence* is the first university degree corresponding to 3 years of education, equivalent of the British *Bachelor*.

time, advised and evaluated by experienced teachers and trainers from the IUFMs. The three types of activities (training, practice and *mémoire*) were examined by a panel at the IUFM, which could suggest the *validation* of the second year. The last stage of the process, *titularisation*, was supervised by the *académie* commission which decided whether the trainee teacher could pass the professional qualification examination and be appointed to a permanent post.

In France, the framework for TE curricula and its content is decided at the national level. The last national specifications have introduced the notion of teacher competences, “*Socle commun de connaissances et de compétences*” (2006), in teacher education and training. Therefore, the curriculum and programmes developed at local/institutional level must consider them because the government’s funding depends on the respect of the national framework. Ten key competences for future teachers are defined as follows:

- To act as a civil servant, be responsible and to respect ethic principles;
- To have master French language for teaching and communication;
- To have a good knowledge of the subject(s) of teaching and to have a good general culture;
- To plan and organise his/her teaching;
- To organise class work;
- To take into account pupils’ diversity;
- To evaluate the pupils;
- To use new information and communication technologies;
- To work together with his/her teacher team, parents and school partners;
- To innovate and to be responsible for his/her own training.

These competences could be developed through participation of trainees in the modules of training in the IUFMs and school practice. For example, the training plan for the trainee teachers of secondary school at the IUFM could contain the following components:

- **YEAR 1**
  - **Subject training** (preparation of *concours* 200 – 400 hours)
  - **Professional training** (90 hours)

- ***Practice in schools*** (30–50 hours)
- **YEAR 2**
  - ***Modules of training:***
    - Professional subject training* (111–141 hours)
    - Professional generic training* (96 hours)
  - ***Practice in schools:***
    - Placement in responsibility* (288 hours)
    - Accompanied practice* (40 hours)
  - ***Dossier of competences:***
    - Personalised accompaniment* (16 hours)

Teachers of secondary schools can take some optional training in order to be qualified to teach several subjects. Recently, teachers of the first degree (who already teach all subjects of primary school) are prepared to teach foreign languages and they take an exam called “*habilitation*”. The demands of the State, the “teachers’ employer”, towards the teacher qualifications has considerably increased but the amount of hours for their preparation is unchanged and sometimes it is diminished. Especially, it concerns practical training of teachers and its future is uncertain (see next paragraph). In fact, during the five years of undergraduate training, students could benefit from different types of practice at the university (observation) and later at the IUFM (accompanied practice and placement in responsibility). The problem is that there are few links between them and they are not really connected with the theoretical studies. In addition, practical studies are not obligatory, and there are future teachers who can pass “*the concours*” without any professional preparation. Another problem concerns trainers responsible for practice. It can be supervised by university teachers, by trainers of the IUFM, by class teachers depending on the phase of practice. The cooperation between them is very weak and there isn’t any official framework describing how teacher trainers must be prepared.

This brief presentation of the content of professional preparation in the IUFMs confirms that it addresses mostly subject matter. In France, some teachers and educators, especially in secondary schools, tend to think that their role is related to expertise in subject area. They feel less responsibility for pedagogical or pastoral care compared to teachers in other countries who value these sides of profession more highly. It seems

that this dominant “subject orientation” has evolved towards more professional orientations thanks to the new models of training developed by the trainers of the IUFMs, e.g. the model of “*alternance*”. However, the future of this fragile evolution is uncertain because the new reform called “*Masterisation*” could change the understanding and practices in pre-service teacher education.

### **2.3 The Bologna reform in teacher education in France: *Masterisation***

Until recently, the IUFMs functioned as autonomous institutions depending on regional educational authorities (*académies*). They developed the four-year Institutional Project, including teacher-training plan, which was submitted to and approved by the Ministry of Education. The IUFMs set up the evaluation procedures to review their practice and tried to coordinate the work of different actors participating in teacher preparation.

In 2005, the French government passed a new law<sup>5</sup> stressing the importance of high quality teacher education of at least five years located in higher education. Therefore, it was decided to integrate the IUFMs in the universities (before 2008) and to adapt the teacher education system to the Bologna process. The main point of the current reform is that all future teachers are supposed to have Master degree to pass the national *concours* and to be recruited. The universities (with or without IUFM) are invited to develop the Master training programmes and submit them to the Ministry. The content of these “Masters” offers, place and duration of school practice are the new challenges for teacher education. At present, the French system is continuing its progressive development and our analyses must be as careful as possible.

Will the “*masterisation*” of teacher education in France bring radical changes and, as stated by French policy makers, improve the quality of teacher preparation? Will the professionalizing training models developed by the IUFMs survive and find their place in the new Master programmes? What we could affirm today is that some aspects of the old system are carried over into the new one:

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<sup>5</sup> Loi d’orientation et de programme pour l’avenir de l’école du 23 avril 2005 (JO n° 96 du 24 avril 2005).

- the consecutive scheme of teacher preparation with the acquisition of subject knowledge at the first cycle (Licence) and professional training in pedagogy and teaching at the second cycle (Master);
- the status of teachers as “civil servants” remains and the *concours* of recruitment are preserved;
- the progressive character of preparation to teaching with some pre-professional courses at *Licence* and school practice at Master level;
- two types of school practice are maintained: “accompanied and guided practice” (108 hours in the first year of Master level) and “placement in responsibility” (108 hours in the second year of Master level).

However, today’s reform called “*Masterisation*” is contested by the actors (universities and IUFMs) as the Ministry wants to go quickly and has not negotiated the key points of the reforms with these partners. It seems that the Ministry tries to reduce the number of posts invested in teacher education. Moreover, the new reform enables the Ministry to do some economies because the future teachers in the second year of professional preparation will not receive salaries as their older colleagues having had the status of *stagiaires* in the former IUFMs. Besides, one doubts whether universities would be able to offer a real professional preparation and to collaborate with a number of actors presented in TE. Compared to before, any university, with or without IUFM and with or without the department of Education Sciences, could develop and submit the Master offers to the Ministry. The question is to know what consequence it could have on professional competences and on pedagogical abilities of future teachers. In addition, the future of the IUFM, internal university structure for teacher education, is uncertain and some people think they will disappear soon.

### **3 Further professional development of teachers**

The **induction period** of teacher training was introduced in France in 2005. The Ministry of education suggests organisation of young teacher support activities during the two years of independent practice. These activities include training sessions: four weeks in the first year and two weeks in the second year. In addition, academies are invited to develop



other forms of teacher support like tutoring, mentoring, individual and group consultancies (including its virtual form), short seminars, etc. New qualified teachers have the same duties and responsibilities as their older colleagues. Different actors can participate in teacher induction: inspectors of the *académies*, teacher trainers of the IUFM, schoolteachers, school administration, etc. Only the experienced teachers of primary schools “*professeur maître formateur*” (who accompany beginners) are selected and receive some special preparation. The work with beginners is considered as a part of the teachers’ service.<sup>6</sup>

In France, **in-service teacher training** was introduced in 1972 for the teachers of primary schools and only in 1982 for the teachers of secondary schools. It is not obligatory and it is free of charge for teachers. The participation in the in-service training does not lead to any formal title and does not have any influence on teachers’ careers. At the same time, 90% of teachers think that in-service training is important and they would like to contribute to its development. In general, only half of the teachers participate in the in-service training during the period of three years (Ministry of Education 2006).

The Ministry describes a national framework for the in-service training and defines the policy priorities. The forms and content of in-service training are decided at the regional level, *académie*, and presented in annual plans of trainings called PAFs, *Plan Académique de Formation*. That is why the policy of in-service training depends on the decisions of educational authorities (academy’s inspectors) even if the IUFMs have an official mandate for it. The majority of modules’ offers are subject based and they are performed by the experienced teachers chosen by inspectors, by teacher trainers of the IUFMs and by a very small number of external partners.

In France, in-service training of teachers remains at a low level of policy interest. Thus, different stages (pre-, in-service, induction) for teacher professional development exist but the process is not coherent and

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<sup>6</sup> In the new reform of TE “Masterisation”, the induction period will be changed. According to the official texts (2009), new qualified teachers will spend one third of the working time in a continuing professional preparation in order to set up tutoring and some additional training. Universities will be responsible for the piloting of the actions in partnership with schools and other educational institutions. This increase in training time for beginners can be explained by the shortage of practice in pre-service TE.

coordinated. What is more, the provision of in-service training has been reduced considerably in the recent years because the government cuts posts in teaching and there are fewer possibilities to replace a teacher participating in training sessions. The programmes of in-service training are rarely related to the needs and the involvement in the upgrading of skills is not taken into consideration in teachers' careers.

However, despite the rigidity of the system, some new models of organisation, more cost-effective, have been introduced to accompany teachers and teacher teams. A few of the examples are described below.

### ***School-based training***

School-based training becomes very popular in pre- as well as in in-service professional training. The French IUFMs have introduced the model of “*alternance*”, combining theoretical preparation at the institute and supervised practice in schools during the two years of pre-service professional training. Gradually, school-based activities have been introduced in the in-service training plans (“*PAF*”). In some academies, their offer can constitute up to 50% of all provision.

Clearly, professional collegiality and collaborative professional development culture is something difficult to introduce in schools. Moreover, teachers are often suspicious about the issues imposed through administrative decisions. However, they appreciate if these activities concern their everyday problems and give time for a detailed study and analysis of pedagogical practice.

### ***ICT in teacher training and development***

The use of ICT in education and training is considered as the main priority by the French government. The ICT skills must be acquired by the future teachers in pre-service courses. On the one hand, the use of ICT in class contributes to learners' autonomy and cooperation. On the other hand, the ICT facilitates teachers' access to information and training. 59% of French teachers say they use the Internet to complete or to renew their knowledge. In addition to the official web sites of the Ministry of Education, every academy develops its own on-line teacher resources.

Furthermore, the easy access of the population and teachers to the Internet in France opens new possibilities for teachers. The informal

exchange of ideas and problems through the Internet is becoming more and more popular especially among the young teachers. This part of teachers' professional life, less known and studied, takes an important place in teacher professional development. For example, more than 400 teachers can regularly communicate and share ideas through the web site called "*le web pédagogique*". This example shows the strong potential of the ICT for the networking and teachers' involvement in informal learning.

### **3.1 Teacher development through "school projects" ("projet d'école/établissement")**

One of the goals of the decentralisation process in French education was to give more autonomy and responsibility to local educational authorities and schools. This involved the introduction of the "school project" for better professional organisation and development of schools and teacher teams. The school teams have received a major role in defining the education priorities of their institution. Therefore, every school designs a project, which focuses on a specific theme or problem. Teachers evaluate the school's performance, identify difficulties, and propose the actions to improve the situation. They distribute roles and functions for every person of the team. It is evident that this professional activity contributes to teacher professional development and can be interpreted as a form of lifelong learning because it is constructed within the profession. On the other hand, it can become useless if there is no organisation in school that gives enough time for teachers to participate, and if this important part of work is not taken into account in teachers' careers.

## **4 Teachers: between professionalism and civil service**

The major concern of the French government is to maintain teaching as a well-qualified and respected profession. However, this discourse is not related with general opinion saying that the experienced teachers become more depressed and the beginning ones are low paid. The study of the Ministry of Education (2009) points out that 97 % of teachers admit the ill-being, *malaise*, in the profession and 67 % feel personally concerned by *malaise*. This number has increased by 14 % compared to the study done in 2005. They explain this phenomenon by the absence of

recognition of the profession in the society, difficult working conditions and low salaries.

The number of candidates passing the competitive examination to become teachers has decreased by 36 % between 2005 and 2009. In addition, the new reform, *masterisation*, which extends teacher education to five years, will not improve this situation. It is possible that less young people would be able to follow such a long education without any financial support because the scholarships will be offered to some students only in the second year of Master. Moreover, the fifth year of education seems very intensive as students are supposed to prepare both the *concours* and the Master degree. Many French academics think that students will privilege the preparation of Master first and only the following year they will pass the competitive examination, i.e. six years of teacher pre-service education!

Another problem is the low income of French teachers: the starting salary is about 23 642 \$ per year compared to 29 000 \$ of the average salary in the OECD countries. The government promises to change this situation and particular attention is given to newly qualified teachers with Master degree. Their salaries may be increased; they already receive an allowance of installation in post (1500 EUR) and could benefit state loans for housing projects. In addition, teachers having extra hours or duties can receive bonuses. For example, a teacher at a secondary school having worked three extra hours per week during a year could get 500 EUR of a special bonus.

The French system is achievement-oriented where individual performance is strongly encouraged. The cooperation between actors remains limited, especially in secondary schools. In fact, French teachers must stay at school only for their classes, in general 18 hours per week, and their investment in extra “pedagogical” work with pupils depends on motivation and “good will”. The “collective” dimension of teacher work, diversification of professional functions and participation in school development are strongly encouraged in the official texts. Teachers are invited to work more with other colleagues: school psychologists, counsellors of education and supervisors. These educators receive formal education and pass national competitive examinations to be employed in *Education Nationale*. Nearly half of teachers admit to have a “good relationship” with the staff at their school. However, they confess not to

have contacts with the school doctor (77%), social assistant (59%), counsellor in orientation and psychologist (44%), and student nurse (36%) (Ministry of Education 2005).

Teacher profession in France offers few possibilities for promotion in professional career. There is little difference in salaries of beginners and senior teachers<sup>7</sup>. What is more, the variety of posts for teacher promotion is limited (school director, teacher trainer, inspector, etc.) and it leads to a change in the nature of work where contacts with students are sometimes lost. Besides, teacher careers are constructed according to a very formal and complex system where the main criterion of promotion is the length of service<sup>8</sup>. The system of national competitive examinations “*concours*”, does not allow teachers to change their corps<sup>9</sup> according to their professional experience or success in practice. There is also isolation between different levels of education: primary, secondary, and higher education.

There are serious difficulties regarding the professional autonomy of teachers and educators in France. The status of a civil servant imposes a national purpose, a strong social identity, and a sense of the mission to teachers. The government continues to regard teachers as “servants of the state” and not as professionals. On the one hand, the government wants teachers to apply educational reforms *à la lettre*, and takes disciplinary actions against those who contest its meaning and effectiveness (for example, there are teachers who refuse to apply the Ministry’s recommendations: to teach reading using “*méthode syllabique*”). On the other hand, it lengthens their pre-service preparation to make them feel and act as independent professionals, having acquired reflexive and research competences. These important contradictions lead to pessimism toward the new reform and devaluation of teachers’ professional autonomy.

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<sup>7</sup> The minimum salary of beginning teachers is 1 342 EUR per month. After 30 years of service they can get 2 530 EUR per month.

<sup>8</sup> There are 11 grades “*échelons*” in main corps of teachers. The promotion in grades mostly depends on the length of service and the mark given to teachers after inspection.

<sup>9</sup> The main corps of teachers in France are: primary school teachers with CRPE certificate; certified teachers with CAPES working in secondary education; “*agrégés*” teachers working in upper secondary and higher education; teachers of vocational *lycée* with CAPLP certificate; educators of secondary school with CPE certificate, etc.

## 5 Conclusion

At present, teacher-training system in France is changing its organisation and its structure. One strategic goal is to develop a university located pre-service education and Master degree programmes. It appears that building links between Licence and Master cycles and cooperation of different actors (academics, trainers, school authorities) are the major challenges of the coming decade. The same is true for the content of programmes, where the balance between theory and practice must be found and the purpose of a university teacher education determined. How could the gap between the world of university focusing on research and the world of school focusing on practice be bridged? Partnerships and collaborative research involving academics, students preparing Master degree and school practitioners could be one of the new models of teacher preparation.

The accompaniment of new teachers in the first two years of their careers was recognised as an important issue. At the same time, the present government reduces the time of practice in pre-service education and extends continuing training for the beginning teachers. Does it mean that future teachers will have the real field experience only after the *titularisation*, i.e. after five years of university preparation? This idea is much criticised and contested by teacher unions.

The new orientations, approved in 2005, promote the competency approach in teacher education and training. However, the recent reform, “*masterisation*”, gives little attention to possible pathways for mastering these competences at induction and in-service stages of teacher career. Consequently, the transformation of the system from the “teacher training” to “teacher professional development” or “teacher lifelong learning” conception is not achieved.

Teacher education remains more regulated than the other sectors of higher education. The Ministry of Education feels a strong responsibility towards TE because it influences the quality of primary and secondary education in general. The retention of central control over the qualification process and teacher recruitment through *concours* allows supervision and “political” influence on TE in future. In addition, it clearly appears that the IUFMs will not have a monopoly in teacher education and their fate remains uncertain. The future providers of

teacher education will be those who will succeed best in preparing the candidates for national *concours*. In the context of constrained resources and concurrence between higher education institutions, the development of partnership and professional learning approaches in TE seems problematic.

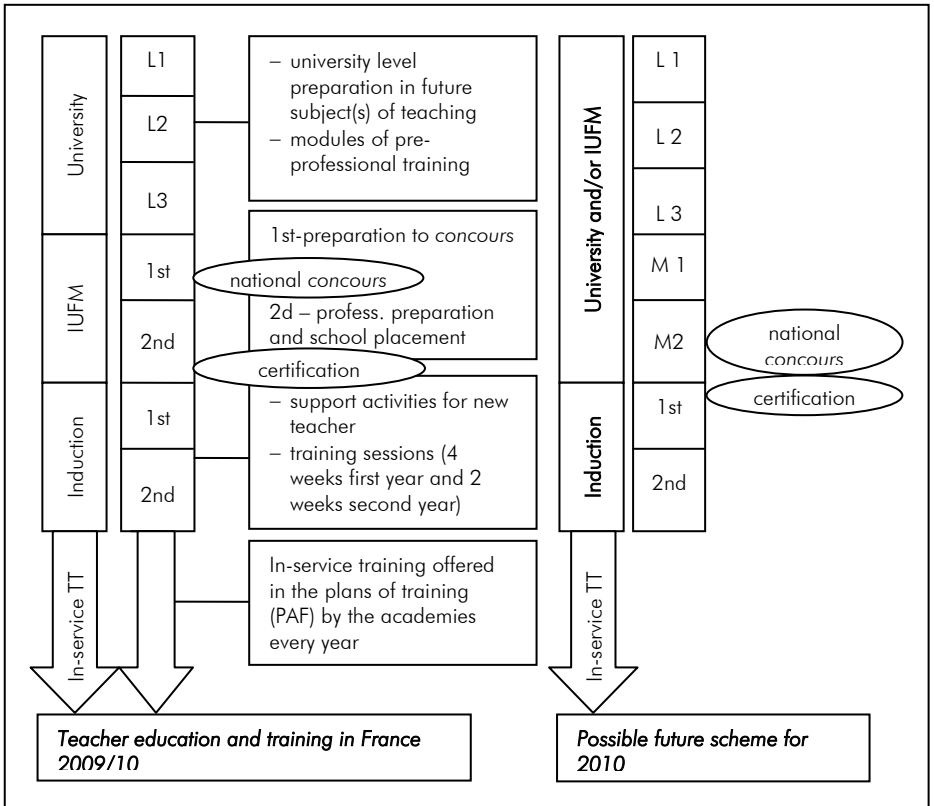


Figure 1. The scheme of teacher education in France.

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# TEACHER EDUCATION IN CZECH REPUBLIC

Jaroslava Vašutová, Vladimíra Spilková

Faculty of Education, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic

## 1 Introduction

Since the 1990s, teacher training in the Czech Republic has undergone changes that have been immediate reactions to new educational circumstances and societal demands. They have been reflected in the following processes: democratisation of education, universities and faculties becoming autonomous and institutional diversification. The trend of curricular liberalisation has enabled institutions carrying out teacher training to conceive the preparatory training in various ways. The existing diversity of contents and approaches to teacher training and educational demands has led to outcomes, i.e. graduates, of varying quality, which has had an unfavourable impact on practice at schools.

The system of primary school teacher training, on the one hand, has undergone a very different development from that of lower and upper secondary school teacher training on the other hand. During the 1990s, the conception of primary school teacher training was modified significantly in a close relationship with the reform of the conception of aims and content in primary education. The key feature of the new conception of the training programme is its marked professionalisation. Pedagogical-psychological disciplines, subject didactics, and teaching practice followed up by reflection, form the centre of the study programme. The key stages of the transformation of primary school teacher training had been completed at all nine Faculties of Education in the Czech Republic by the end of the 1990s. The intense collaboration of the Faculties of Education resulted in a nationwide agreement on the framework conception of the programme, the pillars of which are, apart from professionalisation, constructivist and reflective conceptions of teacher training.

As for secondary school teacher training, the trend of deprofessionalisation has been and still is noticeable. As a consequence of increasing criticism of graduates of teacher training programmes since the mid-1990s, doubts have been raised as to the importance of the pedagogical component in teacher training programmes. The state examinations in the pedagogical-psychological part of the programme have been abolished at some faculties. This overall critical state has given rise to a need to reconsider the present-day conception of secondary school teacher training in the Czech Republic and to aim at bringing closer the curriculum and educational demands on trainee teachers. At the same time, partial innovations at individual faculties have been introduced in order to support the quality of the study programmes in accordance with new trends in education and with current needs of practice at schools.

The National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic (i.e. White Paper), which was promulgated in 2001, has become the fundamental document declaring the new quality of teachers. What ensued was the Act No. 563/2004 on Pedagogical Staff, which determines the qualification demands for performing activities of a teacher and other pedagogical staff. The act codifies educational paths, which take into consideration the bachelor's and master's degrees resulting from the Bologna system. Nowadays, the conception of the teacher training programmes is influenced not only by the demand on their structuring, but also by the so-called curricular reform of school education, which was enacted (Education Act no. 561/2004).

## **2 The required teacher education**

The Act on Pedagogical Staff defines 16 categories, of which the teacher category includes 10 basic positions; however, the secondary school teacher is defined in further four subcategories. Moreover, each category defines the teacher for pupils with specific educational needs. The structure of the basic/main categories of the teacher copies the structure of the education system and comprises the following categories: nursery school teacher, teacher of the first level of basic school (primary school teachers), teacher of the second level of basic education (lower secondary level teacher), secondary school teacher (teacher of general

educational subjects, teacher of vocational subjects, teacher of practicum, teacher of vocational training). Other categories of teachers relate to schools with a specific specialization or to specific education: teacher of artistic vocational subjects at basic artistic schools and conservatories, higher professional schoolteacher, teacher of language schools, teacher at institutions for further education of pedagogical staff, teacher of Religion, teacher of vocational training in a facility providing social care.

The Act on Pedagogical Staff determines the prerequisites for performing activities of the profession (including performing the office of headteacher) based on the definition of professional qualification, which are, in fact, demands on acquired education in a specific field. It is a crucial demand for entering into the profession, which at the same time protects the teaching profession from unqualified workers. What is understood by the professional qualification is acquiring the relevant type of education, i.e. master's degree, bachelor's degree, final examination called *absolutorium* or school-leaving examination. In most categories of teachers, there is a demand for the master's degree.

The professional qualification may best be acquired directly, through higher education in an accredited study programme in a specific field, i.e. nursery school teacher training, primary school teacher training, lower secondary and/or secondary school teacher training in general educational disciplines, secondary vocational school teacher training, special pedagogy for teachers.

Professional qualification may also be acquired by the combination of a higher education study programme in a related or even different field, a higher professional study programme or possibly a secondary school study programme with other study programmes focused on pedagogical sciences related to specific categories of teachers. Some categories of pedagogical workers may acquire the required education through higher professional education or secondary education (nursery school teacher, educator, teacher responsible for leisure activities).

Teacher training can be carried out at higher education institutions in the full-time or combined mode of study in bachelor's or master's programmes. The bachelor's degree may be terminal for some categories (nursery school teacher training) or the first degree (i.e. bachelor with specialization in education), after which the follow-up master's

programme ensues, leading to a fully specialized professional qualification. Primary school teacher training is conceived as a fully integrated programme whose outcome is the master's degree. Teacher training in vocational subjects is conceived either as consecutive or parallel specialization with the branch of study.

The study programme primary school teacher training is a non-structured one-phase parallel model with marked constituents of integrating the academic and professional components as well as the theoretical and practical parts of study. It contains five basic modules – academic studies, pedagogical-psychological studies, subject didactics, the so-called fields of university core, chosen specialization (art, foreign languages). Similarly, teaching practice is represented significantly in the forms of block and continuous practice, the latter often being referred to as clinical days.

The basic model for initial teacher training for lower secondary and secondary schools is nowadays a structured consecutive model. It consists of the bachelor's study programme whose centre is in academic studies and of a follow-up master's study programme where professional studies (pedagogical-psychological and methodological components) dominate. It also includes teaching practice. The extent of individual constituents of study programmes varies according to individual faculties training teachers, since the unifying standard of education is merely of a recommendatory value. The total number of ECTS credits is 180+120 in order to achieve full qualification.

**Table 1.** Recommended minimum standards for teacher training as a whole (bachelor's and follow-up master's study programme or integrated master's study programme)  
(Source: <http://www.msmt.cz/Files/AK/koncepce1.htm>).

Type of component	Percentage of overall lesson allowance	Number of credits
academic studies: (1 <sup>st</sup> subject of teaching qualification) + subject didactics	60 %	180 credits
academic studies: (2 <sup>nd</sup> subject of teaching qualification) + subject didactics		
professional studies: pedagogical – psychological	minimum of 15 – 20 % of the total duration of teacher training	45 – 60 credits
component of the university core, e.g. Biology, IT, Philosophy	7 % of the total duration of teacher training	20 credits
teaching practice	4 weeks, i.e. about 3 % (the semester has 14 weeks)	10 credits
<b>subtotal</b>	<b>85 – 90 %</b>	<b>255 – 270 credits</b>
free part for the need of faculties	10 – 15 %	30 – 45 credits
<b>total</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>300 credits</b>

The minimum standard of education was created at the Ministry of Education and serves higher education institutions as an orientation quantitative criterion when preparing teacher training programmes, and Accreditation Committee when evaluating them.

We cannot give a satisfactory reply on the number of subjects in teacher primary and secondary education. It calls for a deep analysis of bachelor's and master's programmes at the faculties of teacher education in Czech Republic. The programmes include obligatory and facultative subjects or modules in every component. An arrangement of subjects is different and names of subjects are various. In every case, the

recommendation on the structure of curriculum given by the Accreditation committee is accepted.

## **2.1 Educational Paths and Required Degrees of Education for the Category of Teachers**

The Act on Pedagogical Staff codifies various paths for individual teacher categories leading to acquiring the professional qualification.

### **Nursery School Teacher:**

- higher education focused on education of pre-school age, required degree: bachelor or master;
- higher professional education focused on training teachers of pre-school education (final examination called *absolutorium*) – secondary education focused on training teachers of pre-school education (4-year study including a school-leaving examination).

### **Nursery School Teacher for Children with Special Educational Needs:**

- higher education: master's study programme focused on special educational needs;
- the above-mentioned type of education for nursery school teachers and a study programme focused on special educational needs at a higher education institution or a programme of life-long learning focused on special educational needs.

### **Teacher of the First Level of Basic School (Primary School Teachers):**

- master's study programme at a higher education institution focused on training teachers of the first level of basic school;
- pedagogy of pre-school age and life-long learning focused on primary school teacher training (the first level of basic school);
- teacher training at the second level of basic school and life-long learning focused on primary school teacher training (the first level of basic school).

### **Teacher of the First Level of Basic School (Primary School Teacher) for Pupils with Special Educational Needs:**

- master's study programme at a higher education institution focused on special educational needs;

- study programme primary school teacher training (the first level of basic school) and life-long learning focused on special educational needs;
- study programme primary school teacher training (the first level of basic school) and life-long learning focused on special educational needs.

**Teacher of the Second Level of Basic Education (lower secondary level teacher):**

- master's study programme at a higher education institution focused on teacher training for the second level of basic education;
- master's study programme at a higher education institution for the second level of basic education and for secondary education;
- a higher education study programme (in the field corresponding to the subject) and life-long learning focused on teacher training at the second level of basic education;
- higher education study programme primary school teacher training (the first level of basic education) and life-long learning focused on teacher training for the second level of basic education.

**Teachers of the Second Level of Basic Education (lower secondary level teacher) educating pupils with special educational needs** have to have the same education in the field of special educational needs as the category of the teachers of the first level of basic school.

**Secondary School Teacher of General Educational Subjects:**

- higher education master's programme focused on secondary school teacher training in general educational subjects;
- higher education study programme (in the field corresponding to the subject) and life-long learning focused on secondary school teacher training;
- teacher training at the second level of basic education and life-long learning focused on secondary school teacher training.

**Secondary School Teacher of Vocational Subjects:**

- higher education master's study programme focused on teacher training in vocational subjects;

- higher education study of the subject and bachelor's study programme secondary vocational school teacher training;
- higher education study of the subject and life-long learning focused on teacher training in vocational subjects.

**Teacher of Practicum:**

- higher education study of the subject corresponding to practicum in its character and life-long learning focused on secondary school teacher training;
- higher professional education corresponding to practicum in its character and life-long learning focused on secondary school teacher training;
- secondary school education including the school-leaving examination in the subject corresponding to practicum in its character and life-long learning focused on secondary school teacher training;
- 3-year practical experience in the field and study of pedagogy in one of the above-mentioned programmes.

**Secondary school teachers educating pupils with special educational needs** have to be educated in the field of special educational needs in accordance with the above-mentioned categories.

In fact, the Act on Pedagogical Staff enables choosing various educational paths, yet in reality, only some options are realised: those corresponding to possibilities of higher education institutions. Apart from the main direct path, the option of life-long learning tends to be offered the most often to enable acquiring the professional qualification in the given categories. It is the least demanding in the aspects of time, finance, and staff. Life-long learning enabling to acquire the qualification always has to be organized by a higher education institution.

**2.2 Components of Study Programme Primary School Teacher Training (First Level of Basic School)**

The study programme comprises five components: general educational, subject (academic) studies, subject didactics, pedagogical-psychological content and specialization. Practical preparation forms an integral part of subject didactics, pedagogical-psychological content and specialization



components of the programme. The presented components are incorporated in the profile of the graduate.

**The general educational component** has a personality-cultivating dimension. It provides the student with knowledge and skills, mainly in the areas of humanities and social sciences, but partly even in the areas of natural sciences and IT. The main disciplines of this component include Philosophy, History, Sociology, Ethics, IT, and foreign language. It is incorporated in the first two years of the programme.

**The subject component** comprises the professional basis of individual subjects taught at the first level of basic school (Czech language and literature, Mathematics, Homeland study, General science, Music, Art, PT, and foreign language). It is incorporated in the first two to three years of the programme.

**The pedagogical-psychological component** includes a system of theoretical and applied disciplines belonging to the area of pedagogical sciences and psychology. Its profiling subjects are general didactics focused on primary education (at some faculties, general didactics including theory of education is called primary pedagogy), history and philosophy of education, personal and social science, methodology of research in pedagogy, comparative pedagogy, alternative pedagogy, special pedagogy, developmental psychology, educational and social psychology. These disciplines are incorporated during the five years of study and most of them are integrated with practical preparation.

**The subject didactics component** comprises courses, which contribute to the development of didactic skills to transform educational contents with regard to individual and age specifics of very young learners. This module introduces students to both theory and practice of teaching individual subjects in primary school. It is executed during the last two to three years of the study programme.

**The specialization component** includes courses, which enable individual study profiles. The component forms a complete system of courses within the frame of the chosen specialization (existing specializations – music, art, PT, drama, special pedagogy, teaching a foreign language in primary school). In the case of specializing in a foreign language, the courses are incorporated during the whole study

programme; in other cases, they are executed in the last three years of the study programme.

### **2.3 Components of Study Programme Lower Secondary and Secondary School Teacher Training**

The teacher training comprises four components: general educational, subject (academic) studies and subject didactics, pedagogical-psychological and practical. The following characteristic corresponds to the curriculum of public higher education institutions. The presented components are incorporated in the profile of the graduate.

**The general educational component** has a personality-cultivating dimension. It provides the student with a general overview in the areas of social sciences, humanities, natural sciences and IT. The main disciplines of this component are Philosophy, Sociology, Ethics, IT, foreign language, PE and sport. In the structured study programme, it tends to be situated mainly in the bachelor's curriculum.

**The subject component** is composed of scientific disciplines related to subjects of the teaching qualification in the extent and depth which correspond to the level and type of school for which the teacher is prepared. The teacher-to-be of general educational disciplines taught at basic and secondary schools qualifies in two subjects the combinations of which are determined by the institution. What is closely linked to the study of the subject is didactics focused on teaching in the given subject. The extent of the subject preparation is the greatest in the bachelor study and it culminates in the master study, whilst didactics and practice related to it are concentrated in the follow-up master study. Teachers of vocational subjects study the discipline for their teaching qualification only when they have completed their study of pedagogy and didactics.

**The pedagogical-psychological component** is linked to the teacher's educational work. It involves a system of theoretical and applied disciplines belonging to the area of pedagogical sciences and psychology. The profiling subjects are school pedagogy and didactics, social pedagogy, theory of education, philosophy of education, ethics for teachers, educational and social psychology. It forms a theoretical basis of competencies necessary for forming the profession and carrying out pedagogical activities. A small part of this component is comprised in

the bachelor programme; most of the disciplines are part of the master study.

**The practical component** leads to gaining experience in the school environment in a guided way and forms the basis for practical mastering of professional teaching skills. Moreover, it teaches self-reflection by means of which the student develops and identifies with his/her future profession. The basis of the teaching practice is not only training of concrete professional activities in a dynamic and variable environment of schools and school facilities, it also concerns finding the context of the theoretical basis of the curriculum and innovating the theoretical reflection on practical experience.

### **3 Institutions carrying out teacher training**

In the present-day system, training of teachers and other educators is carried out at four types of institutions. Faculties of Education and university faculties with teacher training programmes are traditional. Secondary schools of education may also be considered as traditional institutions. What is new is that higher professional schools are involved in preparing educators. Apart from public higher education institutions, higher professional schools, and (upper) secondary pedagogical schools; preparation for pedagogical categories is also offered by private and religious institutions the programmes of which were accredited.

**Faculties of Education**, which are part of public higher education institutions, offer nursery school teacher training, primary school teacher training, lower secondary level teacher training in general educational subjects; some also secondary school teacher training. In the present-day structured study programmes, they ensure both the bachelor and the follow-up master study programmes. The graduates obtain the degrees of Bc. (bachelor) or Mgr. (master). Furthermore, these faculties run programmes of life-long learning, which lead to obtaining qualification according to the law. In the Czech Republic, there exist nine Faculties of Education, out of which some are accredited for PhD study programmes or enable taking the state doctoral examination (*rigorosum*).

**Faculties of public higher education institutions** offer accredited teacher training programmes, mainly for teaching general educational

subjects at secondary schools or for teaching vocational subjects at secondary schools. The study is structured; the graduates of the master programme receive the title of Mgr. (master) or Ing. (engineer) (technical schools, schools of economics or agriculture).

**Higher professional schools** provide 3- to 4-year programmes for selected categories of pedagogical workers, e.g., nursery school teacher training. The study is more practically oriented and is completed by a specific final examination called *absolutorium*. The graduates may continue studying at a higher education institution.

**(Upper) Secondary pedagogical schools provide** education in 4-year programmes for selected categories of pedagogical workers. The study is completed by the school-leaving examination. Many graduates continue studying at a higher education institution.

### **3.1 Teacher educators (trainers)**

**Teacher educators (trainers)** who prepare teachers-to-be at higher education institutions have to satisfy the qualification demands on academic workers determined by the Higher Education Act (Act 111/1998) on the one hand, and by internal regulations of the higher education institution or the faculty on the other hand. Moreover, they have to satisfy professional demands related to the fields and disciplines that they teach at the faculty. University standards do not exist. Pedagogical qualification for university teaching is not required and the demand for practice at schools and schools' premises is generally not issued either; however, it might be a local condition.

The so-called supervising teachers from the school environment, who teach at schools affiliated with the faculty (selected nursery, basic and secondary schools) and who are not employed by a higher education institution, participate in the practical training of student teachers. They obtain this position at their affiliated school based on presupposed professional qualities, good reputation and personal interest to guide the student teachers.

Higher professional schoolteachers have to be qualified in the field; however, the law does not require teacher education for this category. Teachers at secondary pedagogical schools have to be qualified for teaching their discipline, yet even teachers who did not study the

programme of teacher education, but just majored in the subjects teach here. Any other/further conditions are set out by the school.

### **3.2 Entry conditions for teacher training**

Nowadays, the number of candidates for studying the teacher training programmes has been decreasing and teacher training has become a second choice. The reason appears to be the current crisis of the teaching profession, the increasing lack of discipline or inadequate remuneration. For part of the candidates, teacher training is linked with real interest in their future profession. This holds true, almost without exception, for nursery school and primary school teacher training as well as for teacher training focusing on pupils with special needs. Some candidates are merely interested in obtaining a higher education diploma and will not teach in schools. The motives of such applicants cannot be identified in the beginning; it is impossible not to accept them either.

Applying for studying at faculties training teachers is traditionally associated with an entrance examination where selection takes place. The applicants show the level of their knowledge. What is also desirable is sociability, interest in work with schoolchildren, positive personal characteristics and positive attitude to the profession. These challenging expectations correspond little with the real character of the entry procedures and entry demands of teacher training faculties.

We can give an example of the number of accepted candidates for our faculty. Last year, the number of applicants at the Faculty of Education, Charles University in Prague was about 5 000 and about 1 500 of them were accepted. There is a difference between study fields, though. Applicants prefer for example teaching foreign languages, history and special pedagogy. There is little interest for example for teaching Chemistry.

The strategy for choosing the candidates at teacher training faculties is influenced by a range of factors. The decisive one is, for instance, the attractiveness of the subject, level of difficulty, employability of graduates, capacity of faculties and, nowadays, even financial interests of higher education institutions, which are preferred to the pedeutological basis of entrance procedures.

The entry examination for the programme of primary school teacher training, on the one hand, differs largely from that for the programme of

lower and upper secondary school teacher training on the other hand. In the case of the former, the conception of the entry examination varies at individual faculties and undergoes frequent changes in order to find the most suitable criteria for assessing the applicants' quality, mainly from the aspect of personality and aptitude for the profession. The entry examination very often consists of testing aptitudes for music, art and PT (or only one/some of them), written examination in the mother tongue verifying the level in this area, and an oral examination, which forms the core of the entry procedure. The aim of this interview with the applicant in front of the committee is to assess the level of verbal expression, general cultural overview, level of thinking about educational issues, orientation in the field and interest in it, previous work experience with children, etc.

In the fields of lower secondary and secondary teacher training, most faculties only admit students based on cognitive tests, which, however, just test the knowledge and competence in the subjects of the teaching qualification. Rarely is a wider general cultural overview of the applicant tested. At some faculties, aptitude for studying the profiling subjects (pedagogy, psychology) is not examined at all. Motivational and attitudinal areas, applicants' relations to children or candidates' personality dispositions are not taken into consideration either. Although many candidates have such aptitude, what is decisive for admitting the student is knowledge. In this way, faculties lose many individuals with pedagogical talent since the character of the entry examination does not allow them to show other aptitudes for the profession than knowledge about the subject of the teaching qualification.

Psychology tests are not part of the entry examination; professional phoniatric and logopedic reports on the candidate's speech competence which would be desirable for the future profession, are not usually required either.

The unwillingness to adapt the character of the entry procedures to the specific professional demands of the teaching profession has recently been documented even by the tendencies of higher education institutions when the entry examination for trainee teachers was replaced by universal selection criteria in which specific demands of the teacher-training programme are not taken into account.

In connection with structuring the study, the problem of selecting the candidates becomes even more complicated. Entry examinations are held both for the bachelor's degree and for the master's degree and they ought to correspond to the graduates' profiles. The double selection will bring no substantial change leading to the improvement of the selection. As for the bachelor study programme focused on education, universal aptitude will always be sufficient; as for the follow-up master study programme, orientation to the knowledge of facts and terminology will prevail again. The change in admitting is a question of a system change in the professionalisation of teacher training; it concerns the national system of qualifications and the professional standard for teachers.

### **3.3 The practical training of future teachers**

An efficiently elaborate conception of the teaching practice with systematic reflection is considered to be one of the key elements of quality teacher training. In Czech teacher education, training of practical skills is conceived as a specific model of practical preparation and is organically integrated into the undergraduate phase.

Models of practical preparation in primary school teacher training and in lower and upper secondary school training are considerably different. In the case of primary school teacher training, the conception of practical preparation is very similar at all Faculties of Education. The system of teaching practice is conceived as a continuous practical training during the whole five years of study. It is a graded system of activities, which the student ought to master in the course of acquiring the teaching qualification. It is possible to delimit four basic stages, phases developing students' professional competencies:

1. Personality and social training – mainly development of self-reflection, verbal and non-verbal communication skills;
2. Development of general didactic skills (communicative, managerial, diagnostic, etc.) under concrete conditions of teaching at school (from activities of observational character to students' own teaching activity);
3. Development of subject didactic skills, didactic skills to transform educational content with regard to individual and age specifics of pupils (stress is put on alternative didactic treatment of the content, development of thinking and acting in variants, development of creativity);

4. Formation of the basis of students' own teaching style, development of the skill to regularly reflect on the quality of students' own activity, to flexibly change approaches and teaching strategies.

Great stress is laid on integrating the theoretical and practical components of the study. Most pedagogical-psychological and all subject didactic disciplines are connected to the students' teaching practice. The overall extent of the practical training ranges from 10 to 15%. It has various forms: block, continuous, final ("certifying"); observation practice and students' own teaching activity. As early as the second year of their study, the students teach on their own and in groups under the supervision of "supervising teachers" or teachers of general or of subject didactics.

Nevertheless, models of practical training in the secondary school teacher training are different at individual Faculties of Education. Yet, at most faculties in the Czech Republic, it is possible to delimit and generally characterise common features of individual models of teaching practice:

- Teaching practice is carried out at all Faculties of Education; the accreditation criteria follow mainly its minimum range;
- All the models usually feature corresponding types of practical activities with a specific focus (e.g. initial, observational, subject, research, complex) in various combinations;
- Despite certain diversity, as far as the content is concerned, all the models aim at linking practical activities to reference disciplines, mainly with relevant subject didactics;
- Most models usually lack the practice of the "clinical type".

The concept and realisation of the practical training shows some quite important differences between individual faculties in the Czech Republic:

- The models of teaching practice correspond to the character of teacher training and the faculty's specialisation. That is why teaching practice varies according to the specifics of individual degrees of teacher training programmes;
- The structure of individual models is different at particular faculties. Faculties of Education have at their disposal more elaborate models



where teaching practice is more extensive, has a greater scope and as a system, it is more interconnected and compact;

- Partial parameters of the modules of teaching practice vary: degree of sequence; different extent; dissimilar proportion of teaching practice; different forms of practical activities, etc.

Thus, the faculties are held solely responsible for the quality of the training, including the practical one. University faculties intrinsically highlight rather “academic“ and subject-oriented study which does not provide sufficient room for teaching practice and does not facilitate interconnecting the theoretical and practical components into one integrated complex. The total extent of the teaching practice at most faculties exceeds the prescribed minimum of 3 % and ranges from about 4 to 12%. Also, the percentage of pedagogical-psychological disciplines is lower than it would be desirable for the quality of teacher training. Teaching practice usually accentuates subject-oriented activities. The training of activities focused on e.g. educational topics, social activities at school or class work represent a minor percentage.

The reality of structured teacher training brings about forced conceptual interventions in the conception of the teaching practice. The centre of professional training, and thus of the teaching practice as well, is situated in the master’s degree, where at the same time, academic study culminates. That is why the period of practical training is considerably shortened; there is less room for teaching practice. At the same time, the content of the subjects of the practice is condensed and “compressed“ in an inappropriate way. When structuring, it is significantly problematic to maintain graduality and sequence of the subjects in the model of practice, as well as to ensure the integrity of practical activities and other components of the training henceforth. These new conditions considerably complicate the possibilities of systematically developing students’ professional competencies.

The teaching practice is realised at training schools. Nonetheless, the Higher Education Act does not include the institution of the training school, the so-called faculty school. That is why close collaboration is based on the faculties’ initiative and bilateral institutional agreement between the faculty and the school without the existence of a higher legislative anchorage. Supervising teachers are not usually chosen by the faculty on a system-basis and they are not specially trained for their

mentors' activity either. Normally, it is up to them whether they will cooperate with the faculty during the teaching practice.

The mentor's role in practical training is based on leading the student teachers in schools. Mentors are experienced teachers from the staff of faculty schools who accepted this activity as a professional duty. Usually, they have no special training for it, but they are willing to work with students.

Faculties are fully responsible for expenses related to carrying out the teaching practice. In view of the funding policy of higher education institutions not taking into account the existence of the teaching practice, the faculties' possibilities to remunerate the supervising teachers are very limited. At many faculties, finance coming from grants has significantly contributed to the stability of relationships between the academic world and the school reality. Nonetheless, at the same time such resources depend on personnel's capacity and from the point of view of prospective calculation, they are not certain. This way of funding is not system-based.

At most Faculties of Education, teaching practice is run and coordinated by a special unit. First and foremost, it fulfils an administrative and partly even coordinative function. The conception of the teaching practice is developed mostly by the departments of Pedagogy and Psychology. It holds true without exception for primary school teacher training.

In spite of a series of the above-mentioned problems, when carrying out practical teacher training, most faculties, in the framework of their own models, aim at increasing functionality and efficiency of the teaching practice. It is a question of organisational and methodological interventions such as:

- sustaining and developing the principles of training schools, i.e. closer (mutual) cooperation between the faculty and the actual school (e.g. educational courses for the teachers from the training schools);
- introducing and developing clinical forms of practice (e.g. clinical semester, clinical days, clinical year);
- including students' above standard practical activities oriented to professional development (research and assistant students' activities);
- looking for other means of improving the quality of supervision;

- creating and making use of the portfolio;
- changes of characteristics and conception of state final examinations.

### **3.4 Completion of teacher education programme, introduction period and entering the profession**

The master study programme primary school teacher training is completed by a state final examination consisting of several parts:

1. Defence of diploma thesis;
2. Oral part in the fields of:
  - Pedagogy,
  - Czech Language and Literature with Didactics,
  - Mathematics with Didactics,
  - Specialisation (one of the subjects: Music, PT, Drama, English, French or German).

During the examination in pedagogy, the student is supposed to demonstrate the knowledge of theoretical basis of present-day primary education in wider contexts and the ability to reflect theoretically on his/her own experience acquired in the course of the teaching practice. The student is expected to be able to present his/her own conception of the teaching process as well as his/her arguments. Also, discussion on selected topics is based on a list of publications the student studied on his/her own and which he/she has to submit at the examination. An important basis for the discussion at the examination is a reflective diary documenting the student's practical experience. Students are offered an alternative to the traditional examination in Pedagogy having the form of the defence of a portfolio. Demands on elaboration and defence of the portfolio are delimited; nevertheless, stress is put on the author's approach and originality. State final examinations in other fields are focused on knowledge and skills in respective subject didactics. All the parts of the state final examination are held in front of an examining board.

In connection with structuring the study, teacher-training faculties organise two state final examinations: the bachelor one followed by the defence of the bachelor thesis (the outcome is becoming a bachelor focused on education) and the master one followed by the defence of the diploma thesis. Under the law, the outcome is a fully qualified teacher in respective categories.

So far, at many faculties, the conception of state final examinations has not sufficiently reflected the transformation of the Czech education system and demands on future teachers' teaching practice. Very often, it does not even correspond to the realized conception of teacher training and students' qualifications defined by the faculty in the graduate's profile.

From the perspective of future profession, the examination in pedagogical-psychological and didactic component is an important part. Apparently, the conception of the examination is little efficient when isolated knowledge in the form of traditionally formulated thematic sets of topics or questions in Pedagogy, Psychology or Didactics is tested. They delimit specifically presupposed knowledge acquired on the basis of studying the recommended reading list. A research probe carried out at three Faculties of Education in the programme of lower secondary teacher training in 2007, identified disciplines and areas of examining students at the state examination. These are: History of Pedagogy, Comparative Pedagogy, General Pedagogy, General Didactics, Special Pedagogy, Social Pedagogy, Educational, Developmental, Social Psychology, Individual Psychology, Psychopathology, specific topics, e.g. a talented pupil, school legislation.

In recent years, there has been an effort to change the conception of the state final examination. It has been manifested by integrating all the pedagogical-psychological and didactic components (professional studies), for instance in the form of complex problem questions or tasks. Exemplifying the student's development in the area of practical skills and experience has proved good. Students present the pedagogical diary or portfolio over which discussion takes place.

The diploma thesis, in which the student solves a scientific problem, may be written in the area of the study chosen by the student. The defence together with the examination comprising the subjects of the teaching specialisation, subject didactics, and pedagogical-psychological component is held in front of a board. The successful graduate obtains the master's degree.

Having obtained the diploma, the graduate looks for a job. The headteacher decides about hiring the graduate. When taking up a new job at a school, the novice teacher is not guaranteed to be introduced into the profession. In the Czech Republic, the institution of a mentor is not

enacted. Only some schools care about helping the novice teachers by appointing an experienced teacher as a mentor.

The mentor introduces the beginner into the teaching profession at the school. It is not a formal position given by legislation but an activity established by the headmaster. It is not part of professional career and professional exam is not demanded. The main tasks are to help, supervise, to improve professional experience, to give feedback, to be supportive.

### **3.5 The options of post-graduate degrees**

Having obtained the master's degree, the graduates of a teacher training programme can become candidates for a higher degree. They can obtain a doctoral degree (e.g. PhDr. RNDr.) having taken the state doctoral examination (*rigorosum*). Its basis is an examination in the subject of their specialisation and subject didactics and submitting the doctoral thesis on didactic or educational problems. Teachers can obtain the highest degree in a doctoral study leading to the PhD degree. The doctoral study is conceived as a scientific and research preparation and is only carried out in accredited fields for which the board holds responsibility (e.g. board for Pedagogy, Education in Chemistry, Didactics of Mathematics). Predominantly, new graduates or novice university teachers for whom a PhD degree is a professional necessity apply for studying in the PhD programme. There are fewer teachers with practical experience; exceptionally even employees from the areas of school inspection and school management study it. The study takes place either in a combined mode (5 years) or in a full-time mode (3–4 years). In the course of their studies, PhD students take individual examinations and write their doctoral dissertation. Each PhD student has their supervisor, who supervises their development. The study is completed by a state doctoral examination and defence of the dissertation in front of a board. The procedure follows internal regulations of a higher education institution.

A successful PhD student graduates. Teacher trainers are recruited among PhD students. That is why special attention is paid to PhD study programmes and there are very high demands and final requirements.

## **4 Guidance and counselling for students and teachers**

At Czech higher education institutions, there exist counselling centres for undergraduates, which specialise in study problems and failure. Student teachers can find support with training teachers, who fulfil the function of mentors during the teaching practice. Guidance and support of students are expected from supervisors of bachelor and diploma theses and supervisors in the doctoral study. When entering the profession, novice teachers miss a mentor if the headteacher does not decide about supervision by an experienced staff member.

Counselling for pupils at schools is ensured by an educational counsellor and a school psychologist, but both provide help and counselling for teachers, too. Each school must have an educational counsellor coming from the teaching staff of the school. He/she qualifies in the framework of further education. A school psychologist is a category of an educator defined by law. However, in school practice, the conception of the school psychologist's activity is not clear. A school psychologist is an employee of the school, yet schools are not obliged to employ this expert. This position becomes a financial burden for schools if it is not financed by grants or out-of-budget resources. Therefore, the school psychologist usually works at two or more schools at the same time.

Schools are also provided counselling by pedagogical-psychological centres, which deals with pupils having learning difficulties and behavioural disorders. They carry out clinical examinations and give recommendations to schools to place problematic pupils in special classes or facilities.

Teachers are provided important expert help by methodological associations and boards functioning at schools. They participate in creating school curriculum, provide methodological support, engage in methodological innovations (sample lessons), participate in assessing teachers (mutual observations), deal with didactic problems (choice of textbooks), etc. In the last 15 years, a prominent role in professional support of teachers has been played by a civic association "Friends of engaged learning". It set up a wide self-study net of schools and teachers who have engaged in internal transformation of the education system and have felt the need to mutually share their experience and examples of

good practice. They were trained trainers who carried out hundreds of inspiring workshops and seminars for teachers and headteachers.

## **5 In-service teacher training**

Further teacher training is codified in the decree No. 317/2005 resulting from the Act on Pedagogical Staff. Yet its functionality (or rather malfunction) and institutional organisation have been criticised in the long term, since there is no real system character interconnected with teachers' careers, quality assessment and remuneration. The system failed in the situation when the curricular reform had been introduced to schools since 2005 under Education Act No. 561/2004 and the necessary teacher training had not been secured. Centres for further education, which were supposed to support teachers preparing for the change, were abolished. Afterwards, new institutions with a similar function were constituted in a complicated way. On the nation-wide level, the National Institute for Further Education operates in Prague, its branches being in other regions. Moreover, regional facilities for further education of educationalists, which provide both education and service for schools were constituted. So far, they have only organised occasional educational activities lacking a premeditated system concept.

### **5.1 Further teacher training possibilities**

Further teacher education in the Czech Republic fulfils several functions. It leads to obtaining a full qualification, extended qualification, or professional development of each teacher. The act and the decree define three types of further training:

1. training leading to satisfying qualification prerequisites;
2. training leading to satisfying other qualification prerequisites;
3. training leading to deepening professional qualification (continuous education).

#### **5.1.1 Training leading to satisfying qualification prerequisites**

This training offers three types of qualifying education.

##### ***Training in the area of pedagogical disciplines***

The training is intended for unqualified teachers who teach in schools. Graduates of this training will obtain a full teacher qualification specified in the Act on Pedagogical Staff (details in section 1.1.1.). This training leading to professional pedagogical qualification must be carried out only by a higher education institution as a life-long learning programme and focused on a specific level and type of school (see the characteristic of categories).

***Training leading to extension of professional qualification***

Teachers have a chance to extend their professional qualification by further training. They can acquire teaching specialisation in further subjects; simultaneously, they have a chance to qualify for teaching at a different level or type of school, which would change the teacher's category. This training may only be carried out by a higher education institution as a life-long learning programme in the prescribed scope.

- The training leading to acquiring qualification to teach at a different type or level of school must be carried out in no fewer than 200 lessons.
- The training leading to acquiring further teaching specialisation, i.e. qualification to teach further subjects must meet the condition of the minimal scope of 250 lessons.

Both types of training are completed by a defence of a final thesis and a final examination in front of a board.

***Training for headteachers of schools and other school facilities***

To perform the office of headmaster, qualification training is required; graduating from it must take place in no later than two years after entering the office. This functional training provides the headteacher with the minimal amount of knowledge and skills necessary for running a school or a school facility and for the professional development of the teaching staff. The minimal scope of the training is prescribed to be 100 lessons; it is completed by a final examination in front of a board. It can be carried out by both a higher education institution and a facility for further training of educators.

**5.1.2 Training leading to satisfying further qualification prerequisites**



In the framework of the system of further training, teachers with certain experience may qualify in other specified specialisations or for a higher level and quality of performing a managerial function. Several training programmes are included; these can be carried out solely by a higher education institution as life-long learning.

- Further training for pedagogical managers in the scope of 350 lessons;
- Training for educational counsellors who work at elementary schools;
- Training leading to performing specialised activities, which are defined.

For instance, these are coordination in the area of ICT, creation and coordination of educational programmes for schools (i.e. school curriculum, which schools themselves design), which ensues from the Education Act; furthermore, prevention of socio-pathological phenomena or specialisation in the area of environmental education and specialised activity in the area of orientation in space of visually impaired individuals.

### **5.1.3 Training leading to deepening professional qualification**

This term designates continuous education, which is comprised in teacher's duties and supports his/her professional development. In the Czech Republic, the programmes of continuous further training for teachers and other educators can be prepared and offered by various legal and natural persons, whose activity is practically unrestricted. These are higher education institutions, facilities for further training of educators and other educational institutions, professional teacher associations, civic associations, foundations, companies, joint-stock companies, banks, and even private persons.

The person offering further education programmes creates them on his/her own and is their guarantor. Nonetheless, such programmes may be carried out solely based on accreditation granted by the Ministry of Education. Both the institution and the training programme must be accredited. The conditions of accrediting institutions and training programmes are laid down by the Act on Pedagogical Staff. Applications for accreditation are assessed by the accreditation commission, which is

appointed by the Ministry of Education as its advisory body. The accreditation commission assesses in particular whether the applicant satisfies the conditions for granting accreditation, how the content of the training programme is conceived and whether the required professional qualifications of trainers are ensured.

The accreditation commission is usually in session five times a year and every year it assesses about 600 – 700 applications from institutions for accreditation of programmes involving all educators. Each institution always offers several programmes, even dozens of programmes. In fact, every year, about 6000 programmes are handed in to undergo the accreditation procedure. The certificate of accreditation is valid for three years; the offer of current further training thus represents about 18 000 training programmes every year. All programmes of further training concerning not only continuous training, but also qualification training are subject to the accreditation procedure. Binding educational standards for the programmes of further qualification training are elaborated by the Ministry.

#### **5.1.4 Content focus of further teacher education programmes**

The content of further education leading to *satisfying qualification prerequisites* is focused according to the qualification to be achieved:

- Training leading to satisfying basic qualification prerequisites comprises disciplines and topics related to teacher's basic professional competencies (educational and psychological disciplines and subject didactics).
- Qualification training by means of which the teacher extends his/her teaching specialisation or acquires a qualification in another category of teachers, he/she studies a relevant new major. In the former case, he/she studies a subject to be taught and subject didactics; in the latter case, the contents specifying a new category.
- Functional training and further training of headteachers of schools is focused on school and personnel management.
- Training leading to performing specialised activities deals with issues related to these activities (educational counselling, ICT, creation of educational programmes for schools, prevention of pathological phenomena, environmental education, etc.).

**Continuous training** of teachers is focused on current theoretical and practical issues in education and supports the professional development of teachers, related to individuals and the whole teaching staff. The content of training programmes varies considerably. It reflects new knowledge of General Pedagogy, Educational and School Psychology, Theory of Education, General Didactics, and new knowledge of scientific, technical, and artistic disciplines and their subject didactics. Furthermore, what is offered are topical social issues, prevention of socio-pathological phenomena, environmental protection as well as training in educational methods and skills, language education of teachers and prevention of burnout, etc.. The offer from the area of IT is frequent; surprisingly, Art, Music, PT, and Drama courses are frequent; moreover, Mathematics, Czech Language and Literature, topics from the area of Special Pedagogy, and School Management. The main forms of these educational activities include seminars, workshops and courses of certain duration or lectures.

The educational activities may concern all educators no matter what category they are. However, they predominantly have a delimited target group, i.e. teachers of various levels and types of schools, novice teachers, educational counsellors, methodologists of prevention, educators, etc.; they are intended for specialised professional interests, too.

## **5.2 In-service opportunities and requirements for teachers**

Further education is laid down under law as a duty. Teachers must strengthen, renew and supplement their qualification. The headteacher is competent to care about the professional staff development. The school's headmaster makes a plan of further training of educators in cooperation with individual teachers. The exact scope of further training per year is not laid down.

Each time an educator completes a further training activity successfully, he/she must obtain a certificate, which is an official document. Nevertheless, participation in further training has no direct impact on job promotion. It may be taken into account based on a decision about remuneration made by the school's headteacher.

If the programme is not financially secured from the outside (e.g. grants, financial support ESF), the participants are always charged a fee. The fee

is paid by the school or by the participant. Teachers' participation in accredited programmes of further training may be fully or partly funded by the school's headteacher from specific resources allocated for this purpose. Sometimes, the teachers cover the expenses all by themselves. Moreover, substituting for a teacher who takes part in further training is a financial burden for the school. The number of days for training activities during the school year is not earmarked. In order for the teacher to take part in them, the headteacher must release him/her from work duties. Under law, self-education is considered as a form of further education, too. Nevertheless, 12 working days off are earmarked for the teacher's self-education in the course of the school year.

### **5.3 The system of teacher promotion and the rank of professional titles**

Advancement in the profession is comprised both in the act and in the decree as part of a career scheme. However, a career grade is specified rather by a description of performed activities than by the scope of undergone further training even though corresponding competence for performing the presented activities is a prerequisite. A specification of career grades is appended to the decree on further training. There are usually 5 to 6 for individual categories of teachers and other pedagogues. For each grade, there is a description of a required basic activity, specialised activity or specialisation in the field, moreover, required professional qualification and other qualification prerequisites (e.g. length of work experience). Inclusion in the wage bracket is linked to inclusion in the career grade.

Professional titles are permanent and do not present the wage grades for teachers.

## **6 Some research-based findings and open questions in the area of teacher training**

### **6.1 Current discussions**

The scientific community, teachers, teacher trainers, experts, and the Ministry of Education are faced with several issues that, for many years,

have been raised, discussed, and (not) solved. The urgent problems of today comprise:

- long-term lack of conception in education policy in relation to teachers and teacher education;
- structured teacher education the conception of which is in contradiction with a holistic perception of the teaching profession; it leads to de-professionalisation of teacher education;
- professional standards supporting the quality of the teacher who has not received a positive response from the target group;
- career scheme and further education which lack a system solution;
- legislative anchorage of the status of training schools;
- criticism of graduates of teacher training programmes being unprepared for the curricular reform;
- unqualified teachers whom the act enables to teach at schools;
- lack of financial resources for individualised training and teaching practice;
- the system of mutual support among colleagues, mentoring for novice teachers.

The Association of the Teaching Profession in the Czech Republic (APU), whose main objective is system support of professionalisation of the teaching profession, actively enters into discussions and solutions to topical problems. The association wants to activate teachers professionally in order to make them more interested in the quality of their profession, to make them develop their professional competencies and take part in elaborating professional ethics.

It wants to support professional autonomy and teachers' self-confidence, involvement in scientific discussions and formulation of expert opinions on aims of the educational policy, legislative changes and even topical problems in the education system. The association may be considered as the first step to establishing professional associations, which should care about the quality of the profession and its moral credit.

## **6.2 Important research and development studies**

In the recent years, research and development activities have focused on professionalisation of teaching and quality of teachers, innovations in initial and further training, specifically in new contexts (curricular reform of school education in the Czech Republic). The most significant

include research designs funded by the resources of the Ministry of Education. What follows are examples of projects carried out at Faculties of Education:

“New possibilities in educating teachers and pupils for learning society in the 21st century“ (1998–2002), “Development of national erudition and professionalisation of teachers in European context“ (1999–2004), “Teaching profession in changing demands on education“ (2007–2013).

In the framework of financial support ESF, several development projects contributed to improving the quality of teacher training, for instance:

“PEDPSY – Improving the quality of pedagogical-psychological training of teachers-to-be“ (2005–2007) or “Further education of educators of vocational schools for supporting preparation and realisation of school educational programmes“ (2006–2008).

What must not be omitted are the projects of elaborating professional standards for teachers requested by the Ministry of Education: “Support of teachers’ work“ (2000–2001) and “Standardisation of teacher’s professional activities“ (2008–2009). The results were discussed and accepted by the scientific community; however, they were not anchored legislatively and put into practice.

### **6.3 The suggestions for the improvement of the quality of teacher training**

#### **6.3.1 Suggestions for primary teacher education**

In order to further improve the quality of primary teacher training, it is necessary to intensify institutionalised cooperation with training schools, create conditions for training and preparation of supervising teachers for mentor’s work with students, improve the quality of subject didactics, in connection with the professional standard, create a system of assessing students’ professional competence at the end of their study (to establish criteria and procedures of assessing students during the teaching practice). Assessing professional competence should become an important part of the state final examination. More attention should be paid to how students prepare for carrying out action research in their own classes.

### 6.3.2 Suggestions for secondary teacher education

In order to ensure the quality of secondary teacher training, it is essential to be concerned with efficiency of the structured study and to empirically assess its suitability for the teaching profession. Creating and validating a new model of teaching practice is connected to structuring the study. It is necessary to aim at maintaining, or even better, at increasing the percentage of professional study in the requirements of structuring the study. When selecting the candidates, professional aptitude should be taken into account, not only knowledge of a given field. It is important to apply progressive forms of assessment of trainee teachers involving reflection, students' opinions and trainee teacher development. A fundamental requirement for the quality of teacher training is formulating the professional standard for teachers. Teacher trainers are an equally essential quality factor. That is why it is necessary to pay special attention to PhD students who represent a new generation of teacher educators at universities and to provide them with a possibility of receiving education in the field of Higher Education Pedagogy.

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# TEACHER EDUCATION IN NORWAY

## Between scientific ambitions and professional relevance

Elisabeth Nilsen

School of professional studies, Bodø University College, Norway

### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 The Norwegian context

Norway is a country with certain characteristics:

- A sparsely populated landscape with mountains and fjords (4.5 millions inhabitants);
- Until now, political priority has been given to community-schools, functioning as cultural centres in the local society, especially in the rural areas;
- More than 50% of the schools are small (few teachers, who must teach most of the subjects, they therefore have a need for generalists);
- According to this, most teachers in primary and lower secondary schools in Norway are educated in a concurrent 4-year-integrated TE-Program, offered in regional university colleges.

After the Second World War, Norway has had a social-democratic majority most of the time. Important values underlying the school-system have therefore been social justice, democracy, inclusive education and equal opportunities.

You need to know this context to understand the Norwegian school system and the context for Norwegian teacher education.

At the same time, Norway is a part of the European quality-system, with its tests and evaluation-initiatives for measuring quality in schools. For the past few years, this has influenced also the Norwegian debate.

## 1.2 Principles and concepts underlying teacher education

In Norway teacher **training** is called teacher **education**. This is an important differentiation in the use of concepts for us. **Training** in Norway means training of **skills**. However, to educate teachers means much more than that.

The European Commission has declared that the qualification of teachers should consist of the following elements (European Commission 2007):

- Extensive subject knowledge;
- A good knowledge of pedagogy;
- The skills and competencies required to guide and support learners;
- Understanding of the social and cultural dimension of education.

In the Norwegian political context, teachers should be professionals. A new white book from the Norwegian Ministry of Education to the Parliament in 2009 formulates the principles underlying the actual policy for teacher education in Norway (KD 2009).

At the same time, for years there has been an ongoing discussion among researchers working in teacher education, and inside the profession, about what standards and principles should be the fundamentals for teachers' professional competence. In the Norwegian context, also inspired by European policy and research, the main principles seem to be that teachers must meet the following standards (KD 2009; European Commission 2007; OECD 2005):

- Have an ethical standard, both individually and as a group, built on common fundamental values and ideas about knowledge and learning, man and society;
- Be able to see and understand the needs and potentials of every individual child;
- Be able to cooperate with parents, colleagues and stakeholders;
- Know the society we live in, today, in the future and in a historical perspective;
- Be able to select the right means for organizing, managing and stimulating democratic learning processes for the pupils they are responsible for;
- Be able to reflect upon own practice and to plan and select educational actions in a given context and situation with the given group of children;

- Be able to take part in quality-and-school-development in your school.

These standards cannot be reached only by training, in a narrow meaning. In this article, I therefore use the concept teacher **education**, when describing and discussing the Norwegian system for developing competent teachers.

### **1.3 The school-owners' role**

In Norway, the municipalities, with few exceptions, are the owners of kindergartens and compulsory schools for the primary and lower secondary levels. Most Norwegian children go to kindergartens from the age of one to six. They start primary school at the age of six and the lower secondary level at the age of thirteen. Primary and lower secondary schools in the same geographic area mainly have separate staff and leadership. Small rural schools can have both levels in the same building and with a common staff and leadership.

Schools at the upper secondary level are owned by the counties. In rural districts, pupils come from many municipalities, and they have to take a bus for up to one hour each morning and afternoon, or they must hire a room near the school during the week. Research shows that this is one of the factors explaining the big amount of dropouts in upper secondary schools in Norway (Galåen 2008).

As this article will show, the Norwegian system for educating teachers is both complex and flexible. The school-owners have a great freedom and the main responsibility for planning and recruiting the staff with the right mix of teacher competencies.

### **1.4 Two traditions in Norwegian teacher education**

In Norway, as in most European countries, there are two main traditions in teacher training or – education. One of them is the tradition settled in the universities, where students take a disciplinary degree, where scientific ideals and ways of thinking are main elements. To become a teacher in your subjects, you have to take a special TE-programme after your disciplinary degree. In Norway, this is now a one-year-programme (60 credits) named Practical Pedagogical Programme. It exists in two versions: one for candidates with an academic degree, another for

candidates with a vocational competence. This TE-programme is offered both in universities and in many regional university colleges.

The second tradition was in earlier years connected to special teacher-training seminars, often located outside urban areas, and with strong elements of cultural, religious and national ideals. According to this tradition, teachers were seen as cultural agents and leaders, responsible for leading new generations into the national culture and tradition. Personal development, social and national consciousness, and the ability to inspire and engage young people, were fundamental objectives (Kvalbein 2003). This tradition is especially connected to a 4-year concurrent TE-programme, often seen as the main TE-programme in Norway. Until now, this programme has been offered only in regional university colleges, but from 2009, due to institutional reforms, it will be offered at the university, too (Tromsø University).

Both regional university colleges and traditional universities are mainly owned by the state, but the universities have more academic freedom to decide which degrees they want to offer, and the content of these degrees. Regional university colleges must have a permission from the ministry to establish master and PhD programmes.

## **2 The teacher education system in Norway**

### **2.1 National frames and regulations for teacher education**

The teacher education (TE) system in Norway is regulated by

- The Higher Education Act,
- The Education Act,
- The National Core Curriculum for Teacher Education in Norway,
- The National Core Curriculum for the Compulsory School in Norway (The Knowledge Promotion).

The national core-curriculum for teacher education has a common general part, defining the teacher's role in the society, professional ideals, fundamental views on the child, learning and teaching.

In the Education Act, the main perspective is on the pupil's and the parents' rights, and on the society's mandate for the school owners and school leaders (KD 2008).

In the two National Core Curricula's, both for the schools (KD 2006) and for the teacher education, we find more concrete formulations describing teacher competencies that have to be developed (KUF 2003).

I will now describe the Norwegian TE system, with a variety of TE programmes.

## **2.2 The structure of teacher education in Norway**

Higher education in Norway is a part of the Bologna system since 1993, and teacher education is organized at bachelor (BA) or master (MA) level. One of the programmes at BA level for primary and lower secondary teachers is a 4-year programme.

The Norwegian TE system is organized to develop two main categories of teachers:

- **General teachers with a broad, integrated professional competence**, educated through concurrent TE programmes, primarily for the primary and lower secondary level. These can be:
  - *Preschool teachers* are educated with a three year programme (30 credits are selective) for positions in kindergartens. With a one-year supplement they can also teach at level 1–3 in primary school.
  - *General teachers* are educated with a four-year profession-oriented programme. For two of the years (120 credits), students can select and combine subjects with 30 or 60 credits. The compulsory subjects the first two years are: Educational theory (30 credits), Norwegian language and literature (30 credits), Mathematics (30 credits), and Religion and life-orientation (20 credits). They also have to take 10 credits in Basic skills in Mathematics, reading and writing, and computer-skills.
  - This 4-year-programme, often called the TE programme in Norway, will go through a new reform in 2010. It has until now given a general teacher competence for teaching all subjects from grade 1 to 10, also subjects the students have not studied. From 2010, there will be two separate programmes for grade 1–7 and 5–10. See more about this in chapter 3.

- **Subject teachers**, primarily for the lower and upper secondary level. They are educated to be subject specialists, but with a didactic competence
  - in two or three disciplinary subjects on bachelor or master level, or
  - in a vocational area.

To be a subject teacher, you have your disciplinary studies and after that, you must take a one-year TE programme (60 credits) with mentored practice in school and with studies in educational theory and subject didactics. The two parts of these teacher education programmes are consecutive. The disciplinary part may be at BA or MA level.

- Norway also has different **concurrent subject teacher education programmes (BA)**, for subject teachers in:
  - Music, Dance and Drama,
  - Practical and esthetical subjects,
  - Design, art and craft,
  - Sports.
- In addition, we have a special programme for subject teachers in mother-tongue-languages for immigrant children.

In the following chapters, I will go deeper into what characteristics you will find in the TE programmes for the different levels in Norwegian schools.

### **2.3 Required education for teachers at different levels**

Both general teachers and subject teachers can work at the same school, but the level will depend on their competence in subject-content. Most of the general teachers work in primary and lower secondary schools, most of the subject teachers in upper secondary school. It is seen as a positive element in Norwegian schools to have this multitude of competencies.

The required competence for teachers at different levels is regulated in the Education Act, §10–1, with regulations. At all levels, teachers must have both subject and pedagogical competences. As shown in the figure, it is possible to be a teacher in Norwegian schools by different routes and programmes (KD 2008, p. 50):

**Table 1.** Different routes and programmes.

TE-programme	Kindergarten Age 0–5	Primary level Age 6–10	Primary level Age 10–13	Lower sec. level Age 13–16	Upper sec. level Age 16–18
Preschool- teacher (BA)	*****	* \\\			
General teacher (BA – 4 years)	\\	****	***	***	\\
Subject teacher (BA – 4 years)	\\	****	***	***	\\
Subject teacher (BA – 3 years)		++++	\\	***	
Practical- pedagogical teacher exam (1 year)			\\	***	***
Lecturer (MA – 5 years)				***	***
Vocational teacher (BA – 3 years)			+++	+++	***

\*\*\*\*\* Mainly aiming at this level

\\ Possibility to get a job, depending on combination of teaching subjects

++++ Possible to teach a few specific subjects

## 2.4 Required competence for the primary and lower secondary level

To be a teacher at the primary and lower secondary level, you must have fulfilled one of the following programmes:

- At the primary level in general
  - Teacher certificate from a broad 4-year TE programme at bachelor level (240 credits). At this level, there are no regulations according to subject specialization.
- At grade 1–4 you can also be a teacher with
  - a certificate from the Preschool-teacher-programme (3-year-BA) combined with a 1-year supplement for teaching at this level;
  - a certificate from the Subject-teacher-programme in Practical/esthetical subjects (3-year-BA).
- At the lower secondary level (grade 8–10) you can be a teacher with

- The integrated 4-year-programme (see above) or one of the subject teacher programmes (BA) with at least 30 credits in the respective subjects.
- *To teach Norwegian language, Mathematics or English language at the lower secondary level (grade 8–10), you must have at least 60 credits in the respective subject. In other subjects, you must have at least 30 credits. The requirements for subject-knowledge will be stronger after the new reform in 2010 (See chapter 3).*

## **2.5 Required competence for the upper secondary level**

In general, teachers at this level must have a bachelor or a master, with at least 60 credits in the respective teaching-subjects. They must also have a pedagogical competence (60 credits).

Until recently, subject teachers with a disciplinary or vocational competence, had to take their pedagogical exam (60 credits) after their disciplinary or vocational exams. In the recent years, all the Norwegian universities also offer masters with the pedagogical study integrated. This is called a lecturer programme. It is also possible to be a teacher at the upper secondary level with the integrated 4-year-programme, if you have at least 60 credits in the subject you teach.

Most of the subject teachers are qualified to teach at both lower and upper secondary level. It depends on what type of education they have, and at which grade they work (see above). It is up to the school-owners to develop plans for the right mix of competencies in their staff, and to recruit teachers with the needed competence. The main principle at this level is that teachers must have at least 60 credits in their teaching-subjects. The school owners also wish to have a certain number of teachers with master degrees in their subjects. Norwegian schools at upper secondary level have a lack of teachers with subject-knowledge at master level, especially in Mathematics and Natural sciences (KD 2009).



## **2.6 Institutions for teacher education in Norway**

Norway, as a long and sparsely populated country, has an ever-lasting discussion about the need to have big and strong scientific milieus, and the need for regional educational institutions in the districts. As a part of the main reform in higher education in 1993, a great number of university colleges were integrated to 26 regional institutions for higher education. Goals for this reform were to develop bigger, stronger and more cost-effective institutions and stronger academic cultures with more focus on research. Former separate regional teacher education institutions, with long traditions (some of them more than 100 years), were now integrated into younger discipline-oriented regional institutions (regional university colleges). Different institutions chose different models for their organizing of teacher education-programmes. Some of them have a disciplinary structure today; others have a holistic, profession-oriented structure. The consequences for the academic cultures, and the way of managing teacher education in these regional university colleges are not, with few exceptions, evaluated in the follow-up research (Kyvik 1999).

## **2.7 Which institutions carry out teacher education in Norway?**

As said before, Norwegian teachers are educated both at disciplinary universities and at regional university colleges.

Before the reform in higher education in 1993, Norway only had four traditional universities. Today three regional university colleges have the status as universities, and one will probably get this status in 2010. All the universities have one-year teacher education programmes for subject teachers in disciplinary studies. Three of the new universities will also have concurrent integrated TE programmes.

All the regional university colleges with teacher education programmes have both TE programmes at BA level and profession-oriented master programmes. The universities mainly offer disciplinary BA or MA programmes, with a parallel or following TE programme (60 credits).

The teacher educators in both categories of institutions are academics with master degrees in their field, many of them also with a PhD. In the last ten years, the proportion of teacher educators with a PhD has expanded. In 1997, approximately 20 % of the teachers in teacher

education had a PhD (Kyvik 1999). Today, it is required to have this competence level to get a permanent job in teacher education. This must be seen as a part of the academic drift in higher education in general, but especially in professional studies in the regional university colleges. In a few years, we therefore will have 90–100% of the teachers in teacher education with a PhD.

The higher education institutions have the autonomy to organize their programmes in different ways. The tradition in the universities has been a disciplinary faculty structure. In the regional university colleges, the TE programmes were traditionally given in separate institutions for TE. After 1994, all former separate TE institutions are integrated in bigger regional university colleges. In some institutions, the TE programmes are organized in separate faculties for teacher education, with a profession-oriented academic staff and management. In other institutions, the subjects taught are spread in many disciplinary faculties. This creates problems in the management of integrated and concurrent programmes, and in the definition of the role of the teacher educators (Nilsen 1998). The logic behind a discipline- versus a profession-oriented structure is different, and has consequences for the development of cultural values and institutional power (Lynch & Plunkett 1973).

According to these differing values and logics, the criteria used in the recruitment of staff for the TE programmes will differ, too. In some institutions, the academic level of the staff is the only criteria, in other institutions they also ask for documented knowledge or experience from teaching in schools.

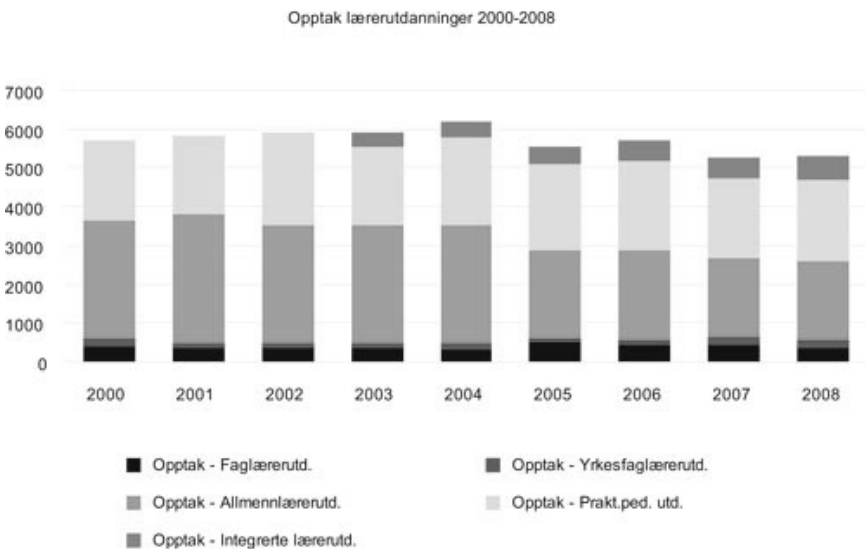
## **2.8 Entry conditions for students entering teacher education**

In the 1990s, teacher education had high priority in the Norwegian educational policy. From 1992 to 1997, the capacity for intake of students to the preschool-teacher education programme expanded with 71% and to the 4-year general teacher programme with 28% (Kyvik 1999, p. 84).

From 2005, The Norwegian Ministry of Education has decided that students, to get into the general teacher education, must have a minimum level with respect to marks in Norwegian language and literature, Mathematics and Social science. The number of applicants to studies in teacher education in Norway has declined after this. Since 2004, the

number of applicants especially to the 4-year TE programme has declined by 25%. This is partly the result of the mentioned restrictions on the intake criteria from 2005, partly because of a debate about teacher quality, salaries and status. The ratio of total qualified applicants given admission differs in different TE institutions, according to the number of applicants, from about 40% in the biggest cities, to 100% in smaller regional university colleges.

The following figure shows the development from year 2000 in the total entry to teacher education in Norway. The different colours illustrate the relative part from the different TE programmes (KD 2008, p. 87)



**Figure 1.** The development from year 2000 in the total entry to teacher education in Norway.

Today, Norway is facing a real recruitment problem in teacher education, especially in the rural areas. More than 50% of the teachers have passed the age of 50, and will be pensioners in the years coming. Together with the loss of applicants, especially to the general TE programme, the problem will grow. The ministry has estimated that the primary and lower secondary level can lack about 7000 teachers in the near future (KD 2009, p. 86). Therefore, in the last two years, they have run a special recruitment campaign for teacher education, called “Gnist” (Spark). Here, potential students take a simple test on the ministry’s

website to find out whether they have the “right” motivation and potentials to be good teachers (See <http://www.hardudetideg.no/nb> (only in Norwegian)).

This year, the number of applicants increased by 38%, so the campaign seems to give results, especially in institutions in the biggest cities. The TE institutions in smaller cities and rural areas have not had the same increase in applicants. This can have negative consequences for the recruitment of teachers to schools in rural areas; a situation that will strengthen the centralization and urbanization process we have seen in rural areas for many years.

### **3 The content of a new concurrent education programme for general teachers at level 1–10 in Norway**

#### **3.1 The profile of the curriculum**

Since 2003, Norway has had a common national curriculum for all teacher education programmes. According to debates going on in Norway, and inspired by changes going on in other European countries, there is now more focus on subject knowledge. The former integrated 4-year programme for general teachers for grade 1–10 will be succeeded by two new differentiated programmes for 1–7 and 5–10 from 2010 on. The changes will give the students the possibility to go deeper into a few selected subjects, especially, for grade 5–10. The differences between the general-teacher programmes and the subject teacher programmes will therefore be smaller.

The new programmes will develop competencies in the following areas:

- School subjects and Basic skills,
- The school in society,
- The school as an organization/ school management,
- Ethics and fundamental values,
- Educational Theory and Subject didactics,
- Management of the learning processes,
- Cooperation and communication,
- Change, innovation and school development.

The reform changes the required subject competences teachers need to have, differentiated after the level 1–7 and 5–10:

– **For level 1–7, teachers must have:**

- At least four school subjects (30+30+30+60 credits), educational theory (60 credits) + eventually subjects with relevance for teaching *up to* 30 credits.
- Main focus: The first steps in learning of reading and writing and Mathematics.
- Compulsory school subjects: Norwegian language and Mathematics.
- *At least one subject* with 60 credits.

– **For level 5–7, teachers must have:**

- *Normally* three school subjects (60+60+60 credits) + educational theory (60 credits).
- No compulsory school subjects.
- *May have* one subject with relevance for teaching (not a school subject) *up to* 30 credits.
- Possibility for selection of groups of school subjects.
- The Competence Legislation says that you must have at least 60 credits to teach Norwegian or Sámi language, Mathematics or English language. In other subjects, you can teach with 30 credits.

The following will be common for all subjects in these two concurrent programmes:

- All subjects must have subject didactics included (concurrent);
- All subjects shall integrate basic skills;
- Educational theory with knowledge about pupils (“*elevkunnskap*”) will have a responsibility to coordinate the integration of basic skills in all subjects;
- Practice in schools with a mentor;
- Bachelor thesis;
- Some thematic areas across subjects;
- A certain amount of common core content in the school subjects;
- Some modules can be common for the two specialized programmes.

The TE subject Educational theory (with developmental and learning psychology, general didactics, educational sociology, history, special education, the school as organization, school and society and school research and development) is given 30 credits today, but will be given 60 credits in these concurrent programmes from 2010 on. Practice in schools, with a mentor, gives no separate credits, but is seen as a part of every subject in the concurrent programmes.

### **3.2 The practical training of future teachers**

All teacher education programmes in Norway have, according to the national core curriculum, a regulation of the minimum number of weeks with school placements. It differs from a minimum of 12 weeks in the one-year programmes, 12–14 weeks in the 3-year programmes for subject teachers and a minimum of 20 weeks in the four-year programme. The institutions have the autonomy to organize the teaching practice, to decide how to organize the student groups and so on. All the prescribed weeks in practice have to be mentored. In addition, students can have more time in school doing fieldwork, observation, development or teacher-assistant work.

Normally, the first weeks in school practice are used for observation of the mentor's teaching. The students can have special observation tasks such as systematic, formal observation or writing a story or case, and then writing a reflective text using theoretical perspectives on the case.

When starting to teach, the students start with simple tasks, often working together with the mentor. In the end, they take full responsibility for teaching, and can get the experience of being alone with the class.

All mentored practice is also assessed by the mentor. The assessment system is based on the learning goals for practice, given in the national core curriculum. Teachers must have competence in the following areas:

- Educational and didactic competence,
- Subject knowledge and competence for developing basic skills,
- Cooperation and communication,
- Managing learning processes,
- School-development and innovation,
- Professional ethic.

The European qualification framework will be implemented in the new TE programmes in 2010 and mentoring and assessment in practice will be based on this. The students get the marks “Passed” or “Not passed”.

The mentors are ordinary, experienced teachers at the practice schools, but most of them have further education in mentoring (30 credits). They should also document the experience in school-development work. The mentors’ tasks are to help the students in their professional development; stimulate the students’ reflection in their planning, action and evaluation of their own teaching. They shall also take part in meetings at the TE institute for planning and development of the curriculum for practice.

The mentor’s duties, the amount of mentoring and minimum hours for every student teaching, observation, etc., is regulated in an agreement between the teacher’s union and the ministry, called “the mentor agreement.”

The TE institutions finance the costs from their budget. The TE institutions pay the schools for taking care of students in practice periods, offering them mentoring and assessing their work. The headmaster of the practice school is the person responsible for the quality of the students’ school-practice. In the new reform, there will be a system for quality-assurance of the students practice developed.

Depending on how mentoring is organized, the main part of the school’s payment is shared between the teachers who are mentors. A group of students (2–4) can be in a team of teachers with one or several mentors, or they can be in a class with one teacher who is the only mentor. The mentors are normally paid for their work by reduced teaching obligations, to assure that they have enough time to sit down with the students for a professional mentoring dialog.

Most TE institutions have partnership agreements with the main practice schools, and offer them further education and cooperation in research and school development. The partner schools are represented in working groups and seminars at the university, taking part in discussions about the strategy and development of the TE programmes.

In the last few years, the Norwegian Ministry of Education has financed special projects at the local level to strengthen the cooperation between TE faculties and school-owners and schools. Different models for this

cooperation are developed and tried out, and some of the universities have research projects following these partnership projects.

## **4 Entering the profession**

### **4.1 Completion of teacher education and entering the profession**

When students have finished their TE programme and passed all their exams and their school practice with acceptable results, they will get a teacher certificate and can start their career on ordinary terms. The school-owners are responsible for the development of systems for mentoring programmes for the new teachers. Many TE institutions have applied for project money from the ministry, to educate and advise the school-owners on how to fulfil their responsibility in this field. There are also several research projects following the new teachers in their first years of work.

We cannot say there is a formal induction system in Norway, but some induction elements are developed and implemented by the school-owners.

The mentors for the new teachers can be the same persons who are mentors for the teacher-students. However, there can also be others. The TE institutions who are engaged in mentoring projects for the novices will offer different ways of developing the mentors' competence.

### **4.2 Possibilities for further education and learning for teachers**

Further education for teachers is not obligatory in Norway. However, most teachers enter it in one way or another. They can pay it themselves, and see it as a part of their own career planning. Alternatively, they can be representing their school, and can get it partly funded by their school or municipality. The school owners can say to their teachers that they HAVE TO take a course. Then, the teachers are free from their teaching duties for a period, but keeping their salary, to do this. The school owners can also search to get this partly funded from the state. Every year, the Ministry of Education gives out money to the municipalities for this purpose.



In the recent years, the lifelong learning among teachers in Norway is mostly seen as a collective task, and as a part of the school development. Then short courses are given at school-level as a part of different school development projects. The courses can be given from teacher education institutions or from consultants.

If the teachers take an exam, it is called further education, if not it is called in-service training. Most of the courses with an exam are 30 or 60 credits. However, the teachers can also take two years fulltime study (120 credits) to get a master in one of their subjects or in education, on the top of their 3- or 4-year programmes at bachelor level.

Further studies on bachelor level will not give the teachers a new title. However, if they take a master they get the title Lecturer (lector).

### **4.3 The options of post-graduate degrees**

As said before, it is possible for teachers in Norway to take a variety of further education programmes after their graduation. They can go deeper in studies in pedagogy or in school subjects they already have, up to master and PhD level.

They can also study new subjects, to get a broader competence. Norwegian teacher education institutions have a long tradition of offering a broad scope of further education modules, often connected to reforms in the education system. Every year, the municipalities have to develop plans for school development and competence development for their teaching staff, and they will get money from the state, according to these plans. In this way, the TE institutions are able to develop new studies or to decide how many study places they have to offer in different areas in correspondence with agreements with the municipalities. With the focus on basic skills in the recent years, much of the capacity at the TE institutions has been used to offer studies in basic skills, in reading and writing in Norwegian language and in Mathematics. National priority has also been given to further studies in foreign languages and in the Sámi language. Every municipality can, by using the money they get from the state, select a number of their teachers for these programmes and can pay the TE-institution for the number of places they need.

Parallel to this system, the TE institutions offer further education as a part of their ordinary programmes, corresponding to their strategic

profile. These study places are mostly filled up with students taking further studies as a part of their individual career planning. These studies are free for the students.

#### **4.4 Guidance and counselling for students and teachers**

Norway has a counselling system, and according to the Educational Act, every municipality is responsible to finance and organize this system. Some years ago, most of these counsellors were organized in regional centres, serving many schools. In the last years, there was a tendency to decentralize these services to the schools, and the specialists integrated in the schools' staff. The former system was criticized from teachers and parents, saying that the counsellors were too far from the everyday-world of both students and teachers, and that they did not give the best hands-on-advice.

The counselling-system consists of different professions: psychologists, social workers and special pedagogues. They are specialized professionals at master or bachelor-level. In rural, sparsely populated areas, they will not be able to have all professions represented. Then they try to cooperate across the schools and regions and share their competence.

There has been a change of perspective in Norway over the last years, in the understanding of which professions the schools need. From a situation where the teachers were the only ones, we now see new professions coming into the set: social workers, child-care-workers, artists, cultural workers and so on. The schools also use non-professionals as assistants for the teachers, especially in the work with handicapped children, children with behavioural problems and so on. Still, it is the teachers, who are responsible for the teaching, the planning and evaluation of the pupils' learning, experiences, and the assessment.

#### **4.5 Career-possibilities for Norwegian teachers**

The salary-system for teachers in Norway has mainly been connected to the further education system for many years. You will get the title **Teacher** after a three- or four-year TE programme. The former title, called **Adjunct**, was possible to get after one or two years with further studies (five years altogether at bachelor level). After the masters, you got the title **Lecturer**.

In the new system, the titles adjunct and lecturer are taken away. The common title is teacher, and is not connected to the study level. Nevertheless, the salaries still are. Despite the fact that the only official title is teacher, the universities still call their master programmes with an integrated practical pedagogical programme, Lecturer programmes.

Teachers can also have special responsibilities, which will give them higher salaries, e.g. class coordinator, team leader or leader of special projects.

There is an ongoing discussion in Norway about the career and salary system for teachers. One argument is that the salary should be decided by the quality of the job you do, not by your level and number of studies. However, in a culture, where equality is a core value, it is difficult to go in this direction. The lack of objective quality criteria has also been used as an argument against a change in the system.

#### **4.6 The salary system for teachers in Norway**

In the primary, lower and upper secondary school, most teachers now will start with a 4-year BA programme, and will have the title teacher, but will get the same salary as an adjunct (an old title for 4-years at BA level)

From 1 August 2010, teachers in Norway follow the below salary system (all in Norwegian crones).

*Table 1.* The salary system in Norway.

	After 0 years	After 4 years	After 8 years	After 10 years	After 16 years
Without a teacher certificate	239.800	244.900	259.900	306.000	
Kindergarten teachers (3 year BA)	321.800	325.000	335.900	374.500	
Teachers with a 3-year BA	328.300	344.100	352.700	370.000	414.000
Adjunct (4 year BA)	361.400	372.400	384.500	398.000	439.000
Adjunct with further ed. (At least 5 years altogether)	377.900	389.500	402.800	419.000	462.000
Lector (with a master degree)	395.700	403.100	417.400	444.000	495.000
Lector (master) with further ed.	409.700	416.000	430.000	459.000	518.000

Teacher educators, mainly with a master degree, and most of them with a PhD, earn **less** than teachers in primary and secondary schools do.

## **5 Research and open questions in the area of teacher education in Norway**

From a former situation with relatively little research on teachers and teacher education in Norway (KD 2008), there have recently been some results gained from several research projects in this area. More researchers in teacher education are publishing internationally, and take part in international research networks and conferences. There are still many open questions in the area that need be explored scientifically.

### **5.1 Norwegian research programmes on education**

Norges forskningsråd (The Research Council of Norway) has two special programmes for research in education, where researchers in teacher education institutions, universities, or research-institutes can search for money.

One programme is called “The Programme for Practice-based R&D in Pre-School through Secondary Schools and Teacher Education” (Programme for Practice-based R&D). The programme has been going on for four years from 2005 and will get money for new projects in 2011. The aim of the programme is to *“generate new, research-based knowledge in areas of key importance to pre-school and basic education by promoting organized cooperation between institutions responsible for teacher education and school owners.”* The teacher education institutions will serve as project owners for the R&D activities to be conducted. Many researchers from the TE institutions are doing qualitative studies, follow-up studies, case studies or action-research projects together with practice schools financed by this programme.

Another research-programme is called “Education 2020”. The programme's primary objective is *“to strengthen educational research by promoting research of high scientific merit and to enhance the knowledge base for policy making, public administration, professional education and professional practice. A variety of subject areas and research communities will be encouraged to conduct research on issues*

*related to the education sector as well as areas of overlap in other sectors, including working life.*<sup>1</sup>

The programme invites projects within the following four thematic priority areas:

- Educational objectives, content, and teaching and working methods;
- Assessment forms, learning processes and learning outcomes in education;
- Management, administration and organization of educational and research institutions;
- Education and society.

Normally, applications for funding under the Research Council's research programmes and other funding opportunities are only accepted from Norwegian institutions and companies.

Researchers from abroad must as a rule have formal affiliation with a Norwegian institution to be eligible to seek Norwegian funding.

Three big or medium projects were given money this first year of the programme including research on teacher education:

- **Qualifying for Professional Careers**  
Project manager: Oslo University College  
Project leader: Jens Christian Smedby
- **Governance, Management and Performance in the Norwegian educational system.**  
Project manager: Norwegian University of Science and Technology  
Project leader: Torberg Falch
- **The Didactic Challenge of New Literacy in School and Teacher Education**  
Project manager: Oslo University College  
Project leader: Sylvi Penne

The projects have just started and will publish results in the next four years coming.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, see:  
<http://www.forskningssradet.no/servlet/Satellite?c=Page&cid=1224697819042&p=1224697819042&pagename=utdanning%2FHovedsidemal>

## 5.2 Relevant research studies in the area of teacher education in Norway

Many Norwegian teacher educators have lately fulfilled their PhDs or done other research projects focusing on problems in teacher education, e.g.:

1. Inglar, Trond (2009): *Erfaringslæring og yrkesfaglærere. En kvalitativ studie (Experience-based learning and vocational teachers. A qualitative study). PhD thesis.* Høgskolen I Akershus. Lillehammer.
2. Bulien, Tone (2008): *Matematikkopplevelser i lærerutdanningen. En fenomenologisk orientert narrativ analyse av studenttekster.* (Mathematical experiences in teacher education. A phenomenological oriented narrative study of student texts) PhD thesis. Tromsø University. Tromsø.
3. Skjelmo, Randi (2007): *Endringer i norsk allmennlærerutdanning – mot en sterkere enhetlighet. Desentralisert allmennlærerutdanning i Nord-Norge 1979–2006.* (Changes in Norwegian general teacher education – towards more homogeneity. Decentralized general teacher education in Northern Norway 1979–2006. ) PhD thesis. Tromsø University, Tromsø.
4. Helland, Synnøve (2007): *Erfaringer med den problembaserte læringsmodellen i lærerutdanninga.* (Experiences with the problem-based learning model in teacher education. Høgskulen I Sogn og Fjordane. Sogndal.
5. Andreassen, Roy Arne (2004): *Nye læringsformer og nye roller – lærerstudenten i IKT-støttede læringsprosesser. Sluttrapport for PLUTO prosjektet i Volda.* (New forms of learning and new roles of teacher students in ICT-supported learning processes. Closing report for the PLUTO project in Volda) ITU – Oslo University. Oslo.

At Oslo University College, we find a Centre for Professional Studies, also focusing on teacher education. Two of their projects are:

- 2000–2012 StudData – database for studier av rekruttering og kvalifisering til velferdsstatens yrker (A database for studies of recruitment and qualifying to professions in the welfare of the state.)
- 2006–2010 NYMY – Nyutdannede læreres mestring av yrket: om kvalifisering i høyskole og grunnskole (New teachers’

mastery of their profession; about qualification in higher education and primary and lower secondary school).

The centre has produced many research reports and articles based on the data about teacher students' attitudes, work and learning results. They have also included data from the same persons in their first years after finishing their graduation.

Bodø University College (my own institution) has a Centre for Practical Knowledge, with a new PhD programme called Studies of Professional Knowledge. The centre has several scholarships related to teacher education. Research in this centre is focusing on teachers' experience-based professional knowledge, and teachers' reflection on their own practice. In the centre, they meet colleagues from different professions, and therefore get a comparative perspective of their own professional knowledge.

### **5.3 Current discussions in the area of teacher training in Norway**

The research mentioned above focuses on different problems in teacher education:

- Recruitment/The intake-quality.
- Who are the students? What are their attitudes, qualifications, and motivation for going into TE?
- The quality of teachers and teacher education.
- Teacher-students' learning and professional development processes.
- Students' experiences in school-based practice and mentoring.
- Experiences as a new teacher.
- Mentoring teachers and teacher-students.

In many countries, research on teachers has shown that the professional development starts in the pre-service teacher education, but will get new dimensions in a working context. It continues with reflection on the experiences as a teacher. Service training, counselling, mentoring and further education programmes for teachers can stimulate this reflection and develop a more quality professional competence.

Nevertheless, in general terms, I would characterise the Norwegian teacher education system in this way:

- Most focus is laid on the pre-service teacher education and on the teacher certificate.
- We have no coherent formal system for induction programmes, but a national project is developing models for this, giving the responsibility to the school-owners. Norway has big budgets for further education for teachers, connected to the school reform: "A Culture for Learning" priority has for many years been given to competence development and school development in inclusive education (Learning for all), development of basic learning skills and strategies in core subjects (Norwegian language, Mathematics, Natural Science and a second Foreign Language).

Some are afraid that the "soft" subjects, e.g. creativity, art, music and so on, will be suffering. The future will show what the results will be.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for the improvement of quality in teacher education and professional training in Norway and Europe**

The educational policy in Norway is of course strongly affected by the development in the other European countries. In the Bologna Process, Norway is one of the leading countries. The implementation of European and national tests has strengthened the focus. For many years, it has been criticised that the general Norwegian teacher has a weak knowledge base in the school subjects. The last TE reforms therefore have given the possibility for more electives with individual possibility for deeper specialized subject studies. There is also more focus on learning outcomes, evaluation, competition and measuring, and comparison of quality between schools. Higher education (and teacher education) are evaluated and accredited from a national institution specialised for this function.

There is a need to develop the relevance in the teacher education programmes, and more focus on learning in the practice field, and the cooperation between the teaching in subjects and the students' experiences in the practice field.

In Norway, as in the other European countries, we are discussing how to develop teacher education programmes that can give us good, professional teachers for effective learning for all pupils. We see that we



need much more and better research on the pupils' learning in school. We also need more research on teachers; what they do when they are good, and promote good learning outcomes among their pupils. We also need more research on the students' learning and professional development in their pre-service teacher education and in their first years as teachers.

I truly believe that to do this, we need more cooperation between European teacher education institutions.

I have been lucky to have the possibility to cooperate with colleagues in teacher education in other European countries for many years, mainly through the organization ATEE. My institute has been a partner in many European projects, e.g.:

- “From takers to creators of jobs” – about entrepreneurship in schools;
- ”Docente Europeo” – about teachers' roles and duties in Norway, Italy and Slovakia.
- “Lærerforum” (Teacher forum): A Norwegian project developed in cooperation with the University of Lüneburg, who has their own project “Lehrerforum”. This is a web-based system for mentoring teachers, where the questions are used as data. Our researchers explore what problems are most common, how the teachers discuss their problems, and how their web-based mentors answer them.
- “Identifying teacher quality” – developing reflecting tools for teachers and teacher students in order to promote consciousness about teacher quality.
- “School-based teacher education” – a planned project on comparison of the goals, content and organizing of school-based practice in several European countries.

Based on these experiences, from my point of view, we need more exchange of students and teacher educators, more comparative studies and more research on teachers' professional knowledge and development. In other words, we need more contact and cooperation between European teacher educators.

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# **TEACHER EDUCATION IN CROATIA**

## **Recent Developments in Teacher Education (2005–2010)<sup>1</sup>**

**Vlatka Domović**

Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, Croatia

**Vlasta Vizek Vidović**

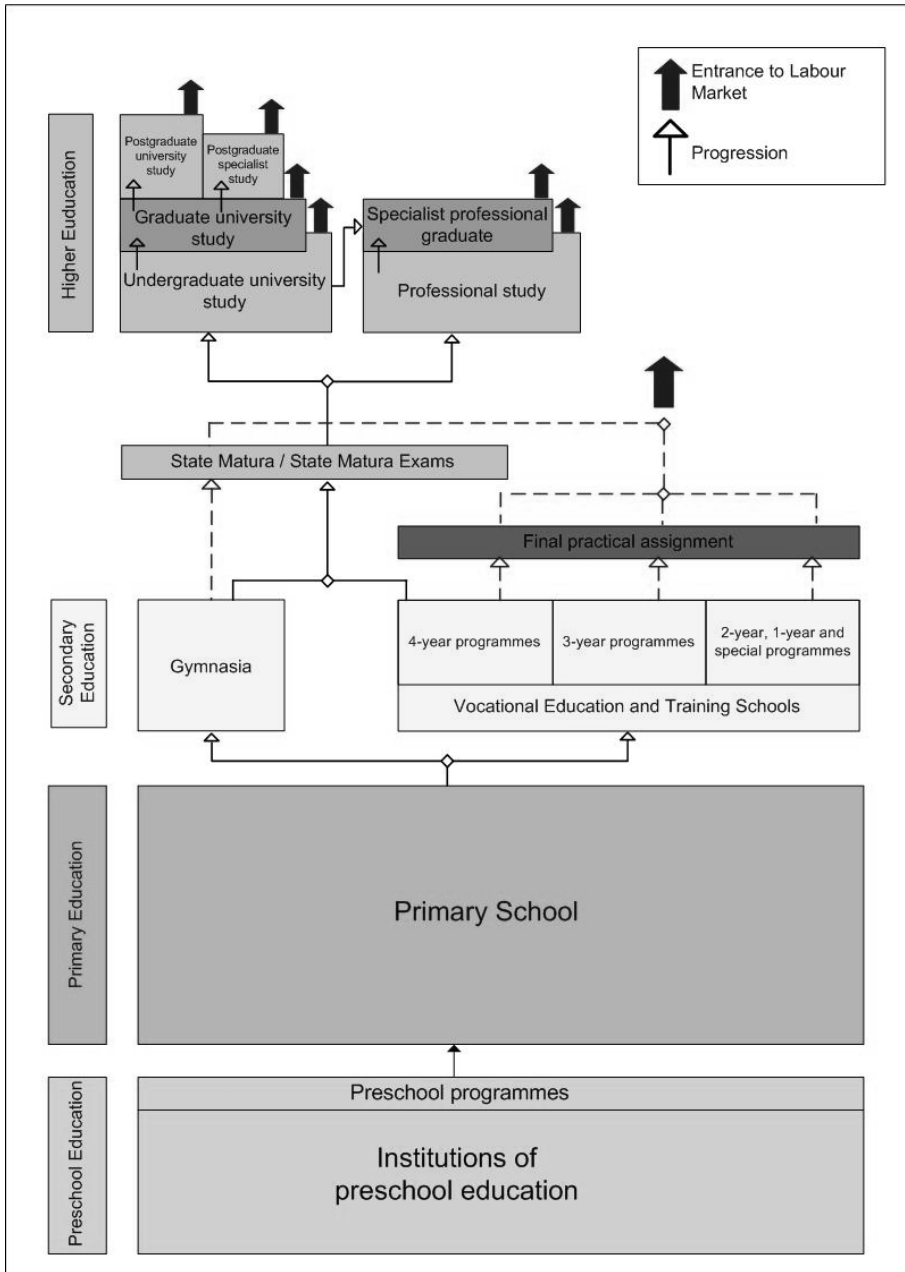
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, Croatia

### **1 Introduction**

In Croatia, there are different categories of teachers depending on the educational level at which they teach: preschool teachers, teachers in grades 1 to 4 of elementary school (class-teachers), subject teachers in grades 5 to 8 of elementary school, subject teachers in secondary academic schools (gymnasium), teachers of general education subjects in secondary vocational schools, and teachers of vocational subjects in secondary vocational schools (Figure 1: The system of education in Croatia).

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is part of the scientific research projects: MZOŠ RH no.227 – 2271168-1700 named: “Development of the National Standard for Professional Teacher Competences” and no.100-1001677-0880 named: “Professional development of teachers during initial education and induction”.



**Figure 1.** The scheme of the education system in the Republic of Croatia (Source: <http://www.aso.hr/default.aspx?id=180>).

In the last few years, the initial teacher education (ITE) system in Croatia has been radically reformed due to the implementation of the Bologna process in higher education. Whereas the education of each of these categories differed in many ways in the past, the recent trend seems to be the clustering of initial teacher education around university programmes. The credit for this development should be given to the implementation of the Bologna Process in the academic year 2005/06.

Some changes could be observed within in-service teacher education as well, because of the establishment of new agencies in the educational sector responsible for the coordination of continuing professional development of teachers. The basis of these reforms was The Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education (2003), The Act on education in primary and secondary schools (2008) and the national strategic document Education Sector Development Plan 2005 – 2010 (2005).

In order to better understand the scope of changes related to the Bologna process in ITE a short description of the “pre – Bologna” teacher education system will be outlined. Before 2005/6, the academic year when new Bologna programmes were launched, significant differences existed between the education of prospective pre-primary and lower elementary school teachers (grade one to four) in comparison to upper elementary (grade five to eight) and secondary school teachers. Lower elementary school teachers (class teachers) who teach from grade one to four attended colleges known as “Pedagogical academies” which were mostly part of university systems as higher professional schools. Those institutions offered higher level professional programmes for pre-primary and lower elementary school teachers. Education for pre-primary school teachers lasted for two years (4 semesters) and for lower elementary school teachers it lasted for four years (8 semesters) ending with a professional BA degree. On the other hand, prospective upper elementary and secondary school teachers (subject teachers) were educated at universities where academic contents and educational sciences and teaching methodologies were organised simultaneously. Such programmes lasted for four years ending with a university BA degree.

All novice teachers were supposed to get through one year of induction period after which they had to take the state exam.

In the following text, teacher education for different levels of educational system will be described in more detail.

## **2 An overview of initial teacher education in Croatia**

### **2.1 Education of pre-primary teachers**

#### **2.1.1 The required education**

Pre-school teacher education is now the only segment which is not uniformly treated across institutions for initial teacher education. At the beginning of the Bologna process, the duration of the study programme was raised from the previous two years to three years (180 ECTS), but it was kept at the level of professional studies leading to a professional BEd. In the academic year 2009/10 diversification among those programmes occurred. Namely, some universities offered new programmes for prospective pre-primary teachers as university programmes at undergraduate (180 ECTS) and graduate level (120 ECTS) compatible to the other categories of teacher education programmes (e.g. University of Rijeka and University of Osijek<sup>2</sup>).

At the B.A. level all programmes for pre-primary school teachers have a ratio of about 40 percent of academic content to 60 percent of educational studies and practice in kindergartens. The programme is organised according to the simultaneous model, i.e. teacher training components are parallel to content area studies. The professional title obtained after graduation from the undergraduate professional study is: Professional (Baccalaureus/Baccalaurea) Preschool Teacher and the title obtained after graduation from the undergraduate university study will be: University (Baccalaureus/Baccalaurea) Preschool Teacher. The future graduate students will receive the professional title of Master of Pre-school Education.

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<sup>2</sup> See: Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Osijek:  
[http://www.ufos.hr/DATA/studijски\\_programi/bologna.php](http://www.ufos.hr/DATA/studijски_programi/bologna.php)  
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka  
[http://www.ufri.hr/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=474&Itemid=76](http://www.ufri.hr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=474&Itemid=76)



### **2.1.2 Institutions which carry out teacher education**

Prospective pre-primary teachers are educated at teacher education faculties which are part of universities. Teacher educators are qualified university staff who are employed according to the requirements for university teachers defined by the legal regulations for higher education. It means that they should have teaching and research competences.

### **2.1.3 Entry conditions for pre-primary teacher education**

The admission requirement for prospective pre-primary teachers is a graduation certificate from a four-year secondary school. Since the number of applicants always exceeds the number of open places at teacher education institutions, the students have to take entrance exams.

### **2.1.4 Practical training of prospective pre-primary teachers**

The part of teacher education which is carried out in kindergartens (kindergarten-based practice) is supervised by specially appointed mentors from kindergartens.

### **2.1.5 Completion of pre-primary teacher education programme, induction period and professional licence exam, entering the profession**

The pre-primary teacher education programme is completed after three years of studying and submitting a BEd thesis.

Novice pre-primary teachers spend one year of induction period in the kindergarten supervised by their mentors. Mentors are experienced pre-primary teachers appointed by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. Mentors are not offered any specialised training in mentoring. Their role and tasks are regulated by a special act on induction and they are paid extra for this task.

After the completion of the induction period, novice pre-primary teachers take the professional licence exam. After this exam they get full responsibility as professional pre-primary teachers.

### **2.1.6 The options of post-graduate studies**

At the moment, pre-primary teachers have no possibilities for obtaining post-graduate degrees although some universities are considering opening such programmes.

### **2.1.7 Guidance and counselling for students and pre-primary teachers**

During the university studies no special counselling service is offered to students.

Guidance and counselling for pre-primary teachers is offered both by kindergarten and the central agency – Education and Teacher Training Agency.

## **2.2 Education of primary school teachers – class teachers (grade 1 to 4)**

### **2.2.1 The required teacher education**

Prospective teachers in lower elementary school (grade 1 to 4) are educated through study programmes at university level. The duration of this type of programmes in all Croatia is five years (10 semesters), leading to the award of a master degree in education (300 ECTS credits). In that respect, Croatia has opted for a unique degree system with integrated undergraduate and graduate level. The rationale for the choice of such a model have been the complex demands of teacher role in the first four grades of schooling, where one teacher teaches all subjects during all four years for the same cohort of pupils. In that respect, a teacher should have a wide range of subject (content) knowledge accompanied with teaching methodologies for these subjects, and should have deep understanding of the developmental needs and characteristics of pupils aged six to ten. It has been recognised that the simultaneous model of teacher education lasting continuously for five years would be best suited for the acquisition of necessary competencies.

After graduation from the teacher education, teachers are qualified to teach six subjects in the lower grades of elementary schools: mother tongue, Science and society, Mathematics, Visual arts, Music arts and Physical education.

### **2.2.2 Institutions which carry out teacher education**

Prospective teachers in lower elementary school are educated at teacher education faculties which are part of universities.

Teacher educators are qualified university staff who are employed according to the requirements for university teachers. They should have teaching and research competences. There are three levels of university teaching positions: assistant professors, associate professors and full professors. The basic requirement for entering university teacher profession is PhD, a certain number of published research papers, minimum of 90 teaching hours in higher education and public lecture for students which is assessed by the senior university staff.

The part of teacher education which is carried out in schools (school-based practice) is supervised by specially appointed school mentors employed at the respective schools.

### **2.2.3 Entry conditions for teacher education**

The general admission requirement for all university studies in Croatia is a graduation certificate from a four-year secondary school, meaning that all applicants should have twelve years of prior schooling. The number of enrolled students is determined jointly by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and higher education institutions (*numerus clausus* policy). Since the number of applicants at teacher education institutions always exceeds the number of open places, the students have to take entrance exams.

The ratio of the total number of applicants and admissions varies between teacher education institutions and academic years, with the highest ratio being 1 to 8. The selection of candidates is based on two criteria – school grades and results of entrance exams. Usually, the final score of the entrance exam is a combination of school grades, contributing 40 percent and the results of entrance exams, contributing 60 percent. The content of entrance exams is not the same at all teacher education institutions, but it usually covers a wide range of general knowledge and motivational interviews.

The entrance exams are conducted by university staff following strictly prescribed procedures.

In Croatia the model for university enrolment will be considerably changed in the academic year 2010/11 (introduction of the state „matura“), which will also influence the admission at teacher education institutions in the future.

#### **2.2.4 Practical training of future teachers**

The teaching practice has been incorporated into the programmes as an essential part of initial teacher education. Future teachers develop their teaching competences in two types of practical training: subject teaching methodological courses and school practice. Subject teaching methodological courses are developed for each subject which is taught in the first four grades of primary school. These courses are taught in the fourth and fifth year of the integrated teacher education programme, lasting from two to four semesters. The amount of the student workload differs across subject areas. For instance, at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, number of the ECTS ranges from 18 for Croatian language (mother tongue) to 10 for arts. Each methodological course has a theoretical and a practical part which are complementary. On average, the ratio between theoretical and practical part is 50 to 50 percent. The practical part is carried out in schools and consists of different tasks for students: observation of teaching, micro-teaching and teaching two or three complete lessons.

The other type of practical training is so called school practice. The number of hours and credits for school practice is not unified across teacher education faculties, ranging from 40 to 60 days. For example, at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, prospective class teachers spend 45 days in practical schoolwork (9 ECTS, 252 hours) during five years of study. The school practice is distributed evenly across the study programme (ten days each year except for the second year when students spend only five days in schools). Such a distribution gives students an opportunity to continuously observe and engage in creating teaching activities, facilitating learning and applying assessment techniques.

Practical training is guided by teacher mentors employed at the school, who are supervised by university teachers in respective curriculum areas. Mentors in schools are experienced teachers who do not receive any specific advanced training for mentorship.

Teacher education faculties define procedures for the organisation and assessment of school-based practice. For example, the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, requires that students who attend the practice in schools receive certificates of attendance from the school providing the practice. They are also obliged to write a diary on their activities in school and a final summary report. In the fourth and fifth year of study, students begin to teach full units and they are obliged to make a portfolio with their preparations for specific lessons. Diaries, reports, and portfolios are assessed by the faculty staff.

The practical training of students is financed by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports via teacher education faculties to the schools. The list of cooperating – practicing schools is proposed by teacher education faculties and is approved by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. The agreements between schools and faculties are renewed every year.

### **2.2.5 Completion of teacher education programme, induction period and professional licence exam, entering the profession**

The teacher education programme is completed after five years of studying, having passed all exams and submitted the MA thesis.

After graduation, students who start working as novice teachers spend one year of induction in schools, supervised by teacher mentors. After the completion of the induction period, novice teachers take a professional licence exam. After this exam they get full responsibility as professional teachers.

Novice teachers have a mentor who is an experienced teacher either from the same or neighbouring school. The role and the tasks of the mentor are regulated by the special act on the induction period. The novice teacher has to observe a certain number of lessons delivered by his/her mentor and the mentor visits and observes novice teacher's lessons on a regular basis. Together with his/her mentor, the novice teacher has to work out an activity plan for the whole induction year and has to keep a diary of his/her work. At the end of the induction period, the mentor writes a report on the development and achievements of his/her mentee. A positive report allows the novice teacher to take a licence exam. This exam is organised at the school appointed by the Ministry and the exam committee consists of five members – a university methodology teacher,

a representative of the Ministry and school subject counsellor, the headteacher of the appointed school and a teacher of Croatian. The licence exam has three parts – the written part – an essay about some educational topic, the practical part – holding a demonstration lesson, and the final, oral part where the candidate has to show knowledge about educational legislation and is asked to reflect on his/her practical demonstration lesson.

The school mentors as well as the members of the licence exam committee are paid for their work by the Ministry.

### **2.2.6 The options of post-graduate degrees**

The transformation of study programmes according to the Bologna framework brought about the possibility for the development of post-graduate degrees for class teachers. The first doctoral study programme of this kind has been established at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb in 2005.

### **2.2.7 Guidance and counselling for students and teachers**

During the university studies no special counselling service is offered to the teacher students and student educators.

Guidance and counselling for schoolteachers as a part of their professional development is provided both by the school and by the central agency (Education and Teacher Training Agency). The central agency is mainly concerned with school supervision and schools consult their supervisors when some specific issues arise. School-based counsellors (school pedagogues, school psychologists, school rehabilitators) are employed by schools and they work both with teachers and with students on a daily basis. The school counsellors are MA graduates in respective discipline and they acquire their professional licence after one year of induction period.

## **2.3 Education of upper primary school teachers (grade 5 to 8) and secondary school teachers**

### **2.3.1 The required teacher education**

In upper elementary and secondary schools in Croatia, the teaching is organised by subjects which are taught by specialised subject teachers.

Study programmes for subject teachers are organised in two cycles – BA level (180 ECTS credits) and MA level (120 ECTS credits).

Students who want to become teachers enter master's teacher programmes in respective fields. Subject teachers are educated according to the concurrent model, but there are some exceptions where five-year integrated programmes are offered. For example, integrated programmes based on the simultaneous model are offered for prospective Math and Physics teachers, Physical education teachers and Religious education teachers at the University of Zagreb.

At the BA level, students mostly take two disciplines (academic subjects), while educational studies, teaching methodologies and teaching practice are studied at master's level. These courses cover 60 ECTS credits, which are distributed across two years. In the first year students mostly take theoretical courses (educational and developmental psychology, pedagogy and general didactics) whereas in the second year students attend courses in teaching methodologies and have practical training in schools.

After graduation, students receive the professional title Master of Education in specific disciplines and are usually qualified to teach two subjects.

### **2.3.2 Institutions which carry out subject teacher education**

Subject teachers, for elementary and academic secondary schools (gymnasium) as well as for general academic subjects in vocational secondary schools are educated at university level at different faculties where the specific disciplines are being taught (faculties of science, faculties of art, faculties of social sciences and humanities).

Regarding other issues – entry conditions, practical training, induction periods, licence exam, counselling – subject teachers are exposed to similar models and procedures as class teachers.

### **2.3.3 The options of post-graduate degrees**

Subject teachers can enter post-graduate doctoral programmes of two types: education- or discipline-oriented.

## **2.4 Education of secondary vocational school teachers**

### **2.4.1 The required teacher education**

In secondary vocational schools there are three different types of teachers:

- a) secondary school general education teachers,
- b) teachers of theoretical parts of vocational subjects, and
- c) professional instructors in school workshops or in companies.

Secondary school teachers who teach general education subjects are educated under the above-described model, which means that they complete their chosen university study and within it they obtain their pedagogical education. Teachers of theoretical parts of vocational training are, as a rule, graduated professionals (such as engineers, economists, medical doctors, etc.), while instructors of practical work and exercises most often complete higher or secondary school in their relevant vocational branches (Domović & Matijević 2002).

In Croatia there are no studies at the graduate level available for teachers of theoretical vocational subjects or for vocational instructors. Consequently, they come to work in vocational schools after they have completed their university or professional vocational degree. They are obliged to complete the special programme of pedagogical training during their first year of service, which enables them to obtain teacher qualifications. This programme includes courses such as pedagogy, educational psychology, general didactics and teaching methodology of vocational subjects including practice. Other subject teachers who get employed in schools of general education without having obtained the necessary teacher qualifications earlier also enrol into these special courses.

It should be pointed out that this programme has not been yet transformed according to the Bologna requirements. This work is underway and the consensus has been reached among the institutions of higher education that they will develop new programmes with 60 ECTS credits comparable to similar programmes of subject teachers.



### **2.4.2 Institutions which carry out subject teacher education**

The education of vocational school teachers is not carried out at special institutions, but is organised at teacher education faculties as a type of lifelong learning programme.

### **2.4.3 Entry conditions for vocational teacher education**

Persons who enter the special programme of pedagogical training are supposed to already hold a BA or MA degree in the respective field. Most of these applicants are already employed and the schools cover the expenses of their teacher education.

Regarding other issues – practical training, induction periods, licence exam, counselling and options for postgraduate degrees – the vocational teachers are exposed to similar models and procedures as other subject teachers.

## **3 In – service training and promotion**

### **3.1 Further/ in-service teacher education possibilities**

Legal basis for in-service teacher education can be found in The Act on education in primary and secondary schools (2008). This Act defines continuous professional development as the right and obligation of all school staff. It also describes the areas of professional development which can be divided into four categories: education in various academic disciplines (subjects), in educational sciences and teaching methodologies, ICT and educational policy and management.

In– service teacher training is organised and coordinated by the appointed institutions, such as the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and the Education and Teacher Training Agency. The programmes can be offered by the agencies themselves as well as by the higher education institutions, and civil sector institutions. The offered programmes must be approved by the Ministry of science, education and sport.

Both agencies publish at the beginning of a school year catalogues of professional seminars offered to educational workers – teachers, professional assistants and schoolmasters. The teachers choose among

these programmes depending upon their interests and present their choice to the school board and headmaster. The approved professional development plans are financially supported by the school. The overview of the recent catalogues shows that topics are organised according to the specific academic subjects and teachers from each subject can choose around ten topics per year (Katalog stručnih skupova Agencije za odgoj i obrazovanje – <http://www.azoo.hr/kategorija/katalozi/6>). Special programmes are offered separately to the novice teachers, their mentors, school counsellors and headteachers.

Participation in approved programmes is verified by the certificate of attendance. Teachers are expected to attend several programmes per year, but the exact amount of hours is not specified.

### **3.2 System of teacher promotion in ranks / professional titles**

Schoolteachers can achieve three ranks – certified teacher, teacher mentor and teacher counsellor. A certified teacher is a teacher who has passed the state exam and acquired the first licence. At this moment the procedure of re-licensing does not exist but is widely discussed and will soon be introduced.

Teacher mentor and teacher counsellor are two levels of teacher promotion. The requirements are defined by the By-law on Teacher Promotion (*Pravilnik o napredovanju učitelja i nastavnika u osnovnom i srednjem školstvu 1995*). This act defines three groups of elements for teacher evaluation which are the basis for promotion: a) effectiveness of teaching, b) extracurricular professional work, and c) continuous professional development. The evaluation is conducted by the headteacher and agencies' counsellor. Based on their proposal, the promotion is approved by the Minister.

Average salary of licensed teachers ranges from app. 670 euros for beginners to app. 840 euros for teachers with 35 years of experience. The promotion is linked to the symbolic increase in the salary, ie. from app. 70 to 100 euros.

## **4 Research-based findings and open questions in the area of teacher education**

Recent developments in teacher education related to the Bologna process have brought about some important improvements, such as the universitization of all segments of initial teacher education, introduction of the concept of competence-based curriculum, ECTS as an indicator of student workload, emphasis on a student-centred teaching approach, the introduction of postgraduate specialization and doctoral studies in the area of teacher education and the introduction of some quality assurance mechanisms (i.e. student evaluation of teaching quality). In recent years, the increase in the quantity of scientific research in the area of teacher education could be observed. Some of these research projects were initiated by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports itself and others were supported by international programmes and organisations (EU – CARDS, World bank, OECD, OSI, etc.). The main topics in these studies were comparative overviews of teacher education systems in Europe, analyses of teacher competencies and surveys of teacher perceptions of the quality of their initial and in-service education and of their educational needs (Domović 2008; Vizek Vidović 2005; Vizek Vidović & Domović 2008; Domović & Oldroyd 2005).

The introduction of the Bologna requirements in teacher education was also supported by the participation of Croatian experts in EU projects. These projects also had a strong research component, providing indicators for comparisons and benchmarking.<sup>3</sup>

However, although significant changes have occurred in teacher education in the analysed period, there still remain some problems, „unfinished businesses“ and some controversies.

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<sup>3</sup> Examples of such EU projects in which Croatian representatives participate are *The Tuning Education Structures in Europe-phase III: Validation, Dissemination and Further Development and phase IV Curricular Reform Taking Place: Learning outcomes and competences in Higher Education (Education group)*.

Some of the projects in this category were aimed at regional cooperation, such as: *Improving of teaching quality in South Eastern Europe, Enhancing professional development of education practitioners and teaching/learning practices in SEE countries*, *Tuning Teacher Education Curricula in the Western Balkan*, and *Regional Tuning – Towards the European Higher Education Area in which Croatian experts have been participating* (from: Vizek Vidović and Domović, 2008).

1. In initial teacher education some relevant strategic and policy documents are missing, such as the national curriculum for primary and secondary education and agreed national standards for teacher education. Such documents are a useful frame of reference for the development of study programmes in initial teacher education. Specially, the lack of agreed national standards decreases the coherence of teacher initial education among the universities in the Republic of Croatia in the part of the programme regarding the mastering of professional competences of teachers.
2. A special problem in teacher initial education is the education of vocational teachers, since such programmes are not fully integrated in the university studies. Possible option would be to develop specialised departments at teacher education faculties with full time staff engaged in the education of prospective vocational teachers.
3. Within the initial teacher education we still see a lot of „unfinished business“ concerning quality assurance management. Besides general outlines of a quality assurance system which were developed in higher education within the Bologna reform, specific quality assurance mechanisms regarding initial teacher education should also be developed. Emphasis should be placed on the development of quality culture within teacher education institutions in order to build capacities for high quality teaching, reflective practice and teacher self-evaluation skills (Domović & Vizek Vidović 2009).
4. The general observation regarding in-service teacher education is that developments in this sector were not as systematic and coherent as in initial teacher education. This is mostly due to the lack of an overall strategic framework in the area of continuous teacher education, which would ensure coordination and cooperation among various providers. Consequently, the offered programmes do not fully take into account the results of the studies on teacher educational needs nor are based on learning outcomes. The division of in-service programmes according to school subjects also leaves little space for interdisciplinary programmes. Besides, it is possible to identify some other problems in this subsystem of teacher education, such as: the absence of quality assurance measures, the lack of development of connections among higher education institutions conducting teacher initial education and institutions providing continuing professional

development of teachers, a vague connection between continuing professional development and teacher advancement, the absence of the system of (re)licencing in the teaching profession (Buchberger & Kiefer 2007).

To sum up, it could be said that a lot of significant changes have occurred in the last five years, but predominantly in the area of initial teacher education which is now confronted with new challenges. It is planned that all university programmes in Croatia should be re-evaluated in the next five years. This process opens possibilities for the further improvement of teacher education curricula based on recent experiences and „lessons learned“ from the first five-year period of the Bologna reform. On the other hand, continuous professional development requires a much more systematic approach in its development and better coordination of all stakeholders in the field.

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# **TEACHER EDUCATION IN ROMANIA**

## **Recent Developments and Current Challenges**

Simona Velea

Institute for Education Sciences, Bucharest, Romania

Olimpius Istrate

Institute for Education Sciences, Bucharest and Faculty of Education Sciences,  
University of Bucharest, Romania

### **1 Introduction**

This article aims to present the current situation of initial and continuous teacher training in Romania, to highlight the main challenges and to prospect the future developments. The article is based on documents' analysis and data from recent surveys<sup>1</sup>.

The teacher training is the key of all the educational changes. The best curriculum and assessment measures do not have the expected impact at grass-root level if not being implemented by well-trained, motivated and responsible teachers. This is a vision expressed by important personalities – Jean Piaget, Gilbert de Landsheere, to mention just a few – insufficiently taken into account by today's decision-makers. In order for the teachers to be dedicated, motivated and well-trained, the society should confer the teaching profession a high social status and the corresponding remuneration.

During the past decade, the teacher training was often considered a priority for education reform. However, its renewal remained a step behind other components of the education reform. Two relevant research

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<sup>1</sup> Formarea profesională continuă în România (Continuous vocational training in Romania) (2008). Bucharest: Institute for Education Sciences; Birzea, C., Potolea, D., Neacșu, I., Istrate, O., Ionescu, M. & Velea, S., (2006) Teacher Training in Romania. Country report. In: Zgaga, P. (ed.), Prospects of teacher training in South-East Europe. Ljubljana, Slovenia.

reports disclosed the slow rhythm of the development and “a certain discrepancy of rhythm and efficiency as compared with the other elements of reform, particularly curriculum and instruction, evaluation and management.”<sup>2</sup> It has been revealed that a large majority of teachers did not consistently internalize and apply the concepts and the methodological principles of the education reform<sup>3</sup>.

## 2 Pre-service teacher training

Pre-service education and training of teachers is organized in two different routes, depending on the level of the education system where they are entitled to teach.

### 2.1 Initial training of teachers in primary and pre-primary education

Teachers in preschool and primary education are trained at *Bachelor level* in *Faculties of Education Sciences – Departments for Primary and Pre-primary Pedagogy*, corresponding to the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle of higher education, according to the Bologna structure. These departments are the former *Pedagogical University Colleges*<sup>4</sup>.

**The admission procedures** are similar to other higher education institutions. The minimum criterion is to hold a Baccalaureate degree (high school graduation degree). An eliminatory interview<sup>5</sup> aims to assess the communication skills and the motivation for the teaching profession. The next step of selection is done on different criteria established by each institution: the mark obtained at the Baccalaureate exam (50% of the final mark, in most cases up to 100%), the average mark of the high school studies (50% of the final mark in most cases) or a subject test (e.g. Psychology) also representing a percentage of the final mark.

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<sup>2</sup> Potolea & Ciolan 2003, p. 287-288

<sup>3</sup> Vlasceanu et al. 2002

<sup>4</sup> Before implementing the Bologna Process (starting with 2005), these colleges were short-term higher education institutions, with a duration of 3 years.

<sup>5</sup> The graduates of pedagogical highschool (older institutions for primary or preprimary teacher training) do not have to pass the interview, being assumed that they have the necessary skills already assessed.



**The duration of study** is 3 years, covering 180 ECTS. **Teacher training curriculum** in the *Departments for Primary and Pre-primary Teacher Training* is part of the core curriculum that is compulsory for all the students. It includes courses on education sciences, Psychology of education, subject-specific didactics and practical activities in schools. The curriculum comprises **compulsory and optional subjects**. The compulsory subjects include: a foreign language, fundamentals of pedagogy and curriculum, theory and methodology of instruction and assessment, theory of education, logic, the subjects to be taught and their specific didactics (e.g. Science and teaching Science, Music and teaching Music, etc.), practical work, methodology of education research, pedagogy for preschool education, psychological and pedagogical counselling, the education of children with special needs, sociology of education, computer-assisted instruction, pedagogical doctrines. The optional subjects include techniques of intellectual work, education policy, alternative education, legislation and children's rights, etc.

The studies are finalised through a graduation exam, based on the criteria established by the Ministry of Education and on the methodology elaborated by the university senate. Graduates may complete their studies in the second cycle – Master level.

The *Departments for Primary and Pre-primary Teacher Training* are organised as structures of the Faculties of Psychology and Education Sciences, having branches in different towns – all together summing more than 40 units at national level. The staff of the *Departments* is recruited and has the same opportunities for career development, common for all higher education institutions.

The teaching positions from pre-primary and primary education level (*schoolteacher, institutor or educator*) are gradually replaced with the position of “teacher” (used before only for secondary education level) – the title awarded to the graduates of *Departments for Primary and Pre-primary Teacher Training*.

## **2.2 Initial training of teachers in secondary education**

As in many European countries, the pre-service training of secondary school teachers in Romania is mainly based on a concurrent model: the theoretical and practical training for the teaching profession is provided in the same time with the instruction in a specific field of study. The

consecutive model is also available for entering the education system as a "locum tenens", following enrolment in the teacher training programme (within the Teacher Training Departments in universities) to obtain the teaching certificate<sup>6</sup>.

Teachers at the secondary level, including vocational education, are trained in higher education institutions. They study a specific domain, corresponding to the subject(s) they will be entitled to teach. They can be qualified to teach one subject (usually) or a maximum of two subjects. At the beginning of the university studies, students can decide upon attending the professional training for teachers provided by the Teacher Training Department of the respective university. Once they decide to attend the teacher-training programme, the training package becomes compulsory.

Teacher Training Departments are organized within universities<sup>7</sup>, based on specific regulations and having an independent curriculum. Their curriculum is integrated in the frame-curriculum of the faculties (concurrent training model).

The curriculum of the **Teacher Training Departments** is regulated by the MoE, through the Order no. 4316/2008. Compared to the previous similar order, it brings two levels of certification: graduates of the Bachelor level may teach at the secondary compulsory school (grades V–X), and graduates of the Master level may teach in the post-compulsory education (the last cycle of high school, post/high school studies, the higher education). Unfortunately, the Ministry Order stipulates that the prospective teachers have to attend a Master programme in the field of the subjects to be taught, without giving the possibility to attend a Master in the education field.

The Ministry Order established the core, extended and optional curriculum<sup>8</sup>, the time allocation and the number of credits. The core curriculum aims to ensure the basic pedagogical training: fundamentals of pedagogy, theory and methodology of curriculum, instruction and

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<sup>6</sup> In this case, candidates have to finance their own pre-service teacher education studies.

<sup>7</sup> Around 52 Romanian universities have teacher training departments.

<sup>8</sup> This frame-curriculum is designed through the consultation of the representatives of Teacher Training Departments. The aim of the frame-curriculum is to ensure the unity of the training and the mobility of students between higher education institutions, using ECTS procedures.

assessment, computer-assisted instruction, psychology of education, classroom management, didactics of the chosen subject(s), practical activities – summing 30 credits, plus 5 credits obtained from the graduation exam. The extended curriculum comprises the compulsory subjects for the second level of certification: psycho-pedagogy of teenagers, youth and adults, design and management of educational programme, didactics and practical activities (all together 20 credits). Two subjects compose the optional curriculum, each of them being chosen from a different package (each package comprising at least three subjects). These elective subjects are assessed with a total of 10 credits. The final examination also brings 5 credits, thus the total number of credits for both stages of teacher training is 70.

The **admission of students for Bachelor studies in a particular field** differs from one university to another or even between faculties within the same universities. The most usual admission procedure is the average of the Baccalaureate mark and the marks obtained during high school. Some faculties organize an admission exam and combine its results with the Baccalaureate score of each candidate.

The **admission to the teacher-training programme** is based on an interview organized by the Teacher Training Department within each university. All the students entering the Bachelor studies may enrol in the teacher-training programme, if interested. Usually, the students that register for the teacher-training programme are admitted.

The **final evaluation** is based on the personal portfolio and the mark obtained for practical training. The graduates receive a certificate that, together with the graduation diploma of a higher education institution, entitles them to teach. The issuance of the professional certificate is conditioned by the graduation of the university studies.

The **teaching staff** of the Teacher Training Departments follows the university/ academic recruitment and career development standards. They need to hold a Master degree in their field of specialization, the teacher training courses and must be selected through competition.

### **2.3 Practical training**

The practical training of prospective teachers (both for pre-secondary and secondary level) is performed within pre-university educational units under a double supervision: the tutors designated by the institution where

the students are enrolled, and mentor-teachers, designated from the best performing teachers of the school. The practical work can be organised either as distinct block-periods or as part of the current activities. Students observe lessons taught by a mentor-teacher, prepare lesson-projects and teach assisted by the mentor-teacher. After each lesson, the tutor and mentor-teacher should provide feedback, evaluate the performance and make recommendations. The mentor-teacher and the tutor accomplish the final assessment of each student after the practical training period. The mentor-teachers are experienced teachers, with good results in their work. They do not necessarily follow a specific training programme even if few opportunities for training of mentors are available. They are appointed by the school and the county school inspectorate, based on their professional portfolio.

**Cooperation between schools and Teacher Training Departments is usually based on a formal / written agreement.** The schools where students undertake the practical training have a partnership agreement with the universities. However, informal cooperation is possible, students choosing a school for their practical stage based on different criteria (for example, a school in their residence town).

For secondary education teachers, the duration of practical training during the Bachelor studies is two semesters, 3 hours per week (approx. 78 hours) and during the Master studies, 1 semester (approx. 42 hours).

Practical training is part of the initial teacher training and is financed the same as all the other courses. Public universities, the departments for primary and pre-primary education and the teacher training departments are financed by the Ministry of Education from the public budget. They can also receive supplementary financial support from different sources.

## **2.4 Entering the profession**

The initial training is followed by an insertion (probation) period of at least 2 years. During this stage, the *debutant* teachers are employed in similar conditions as the “definitive” teachers, having the same rights and duties. They can benefit of supervision and assistance provided by the school inspectors and/or by a mentor-teacher. In practice, the probation period can be performed without real monitoring and mentoring. In many cases, it is the school principal's decision to organize

the mentoring process at school level or the new teacher's option to ask for support.

The mentors are experienced teachers, nominated by the county school inspectorates. They do not necessarily benefit of specific training. However, there are few initiatives to develop training modules for mentors, in the framework of different projects, being just some punctual interventions. Mentoring activities are not paid, although they count in the personnel evaluations or when conferring different incentives.

This stage is finalised with a formal evaluation of professional competences and a certificate ("on-the-job confirmation" or "definitive degree"). The evaluation combines the internal and external procedures, distributed in several eliminatory steps: a) annual individual evaluation form of the professional performances to reveal at least the "sufficient" rating each year, b) an external evaluation, formed by a special eliminatory inspection (minimum passing mark – 7.00), a written examination in the subject-speciality and didactics, oral examination in the subject-speciality and subject-specific didactics, written examination in pedagogy and elements of psychology (minimum passing mark for the oral and written exams – 6.00). The class teaching inspection is carried out by the school inspector (with the same specialization as the candidate teacher), meanwhile the written and oral examination are organized by the higher education institution<sup>9</sup> and attested through a formal certificate.

This exam must be sustained after 2 working years. Teachers have three trials to pass this exam in a period of 5 years. If they do not succeed, they can no longer be employed as qualified teachers.

## **2.5 The options of post-graduate degrees**

Many teachers apply for further studies because a higher diploma means better chances to hold the job in case of personnel reduction and also because it brings a higher salary and a better teaching position.

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<sup>9</sup> This examination is organized by the institutions providing teacher training programmes for that specific level of teaching and specialization (Departments for Primary and Pre-Primary Teacher Training - for primary and pre-primary teachers, and Teacher Training Department for secondary teachers.

## **2.6 Guidance and counselling for students and teachers**

**School counsellors** are graduates of the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences. They provide school counselling, career guidance services for pupils, and also "pedagogical and psychological assistance" for pupils, teachers and parents in solving different learning difficulties or educational problems. In the schools with a large number of pupils, there are Offices for Pedagogical and Psychological Assistance (for primary and secondary education, the ratio of the counsellors is 1 to 800 students, and for preschool education 1 to 400 children).

School inspectors also counsel teachers. At school level, the headmasters can provide assistance and counselling to the teachers.

## **3 In-Service Training and Promotion**

While the pre-service training is provided in different institutions for primary/pre-primary and for secondary teachers, the in-service training and promotion follows the same principles, forms and regulations for all the teachers in pre-university education (including the school counsellors).

In 2001, the Order of the Minister of Education and Research No. 4796/2001 established the structure of the in-service teacher training programmes and the type of training providers. It has introduced the professional transferable credits system. In the same year, through a Governmental Decision (no. 604/2001), the National Centre for In-service Training of the Pre-university Education Staff (CNFP) was established. This institution is responsible for developing and implementing a methodology for accreditation of in-service training programmes proposed by different institutions (public, NGO's or private). Nowadays, there is a discussion concerning the integration of this centre within the structure of the Ministry of Education.

### **3.1 Types of in-service training**

Currently, there are two types of in-service training for teachers, one related to the itinerary of teaching career, and one concerning other situations (teachers that do not want to follow the full itinerary or have accomplished it).

### 3.1.1 The itinerary of the teaching career

There are three didactic degrees corresponding to three levels of professional competence, according to the Education Law:

- a) the definitive degree (“on-the-job confirmation”) – acquired after at least two years of teaching and confirming the status of “full teacher”; this degree is mandatory to be obtained for continuing the teaching career and it signifies the end of initial training;
- b) didactic degree II – can be achieved after four years<sup>10</sup> of teaching after getting the definitive degree certificate;
- c) didactic degree I – can be achieved only after four<sup>11</sup> years of teaching after getting the didactic degree II certificate.

In order to get a didactic degree, a teacher must attend a training programme and pass an evaluation. Only the definitive degree is mandatory for teachers in order to keep their teaching position. The other two degrees are optional, but many teachers apply for them because of the salary increase and the better professional status. Once a didactic degree is achieved, it is permanent (it does not need to be renewed).

### 3.1.2 Periodical training of teachers

Teachers that do not want to follow the full itinerary of the teaching career development on time, or have accomplished the 1<sup>st</sup> didactic degree, must attend a training programme at least once every five years<sup>12</sup>. According to the relevant Orders of the Minister of Education<sup>13</sup>, every five years, teachers should accumulate a minimum of **90 transferable credits**, distributed as follows: 45 credits for programmes providing the formal curriculum established by CNFP and 45 transferable credits for programmes that provide a curriculum proposed by various providers (also accredited by the CNFP). The training programmes are conceived in training modules, covering the domains indicated by the Minister Order:

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<sup>10</sup> It can be achieved after three years of teaching, if the previous degree was achieved with the highest performance.

<sup>11</sup> Idem.

<sup>12</sup> The condition is considered fulfilled for the teachers obtaining the “on-the-job-confirmation” or any didactic degree in the considered period.

<sup>13</sup> Orders no. 4796/2001 and no. 4611/2005

- module 1 – *designing, organizing and assessing teaching/learning activities*
- module 2 – *management and communication*
- module 3 – *computer assisted instruction*

Each module contains compulsory subjects and two categories of optional subjects: one is proposed by the National Center for In-service Teacher Training and the other one by the in-service training providers. In special circumstances, the 5-years interval established by the law for the periodic in-service teacher training can be reduced (for example, in case of curriculum reform or in case of teachers being appointed for management positions and not having attested training in the field of educational management, etc.).

### **3.1.3 Other in-service training activities**

The Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997) indicates a set of activities for in-service training – e.g., scientific seminars, meetings for exchange of experiences, distance courses, scholarships for in-service training in the country or abroad, doctoral or other post-university studies, activities organized at school level or local level addressing issues regarding teaching in specialty, psychological and pedagogical matters.

Teachers may independently choose a training programme, according to their needs and to the formal requirements for in-service training. However, in certain circumstances, the education authorities may guide teachers toward specific training programmes, providing national training programmes financed by the state budget and covering “hot topics” such as curriculum implementation, the use of ICT for teaching and learning, pupils’ assessment, etc.

## **3.2 Institutions of in-service teacher education and training**

Beside the consecrated training providers – higher education institutions (training in the subject-area), the Teacher Training Departments (subject-methodology area, Psychology and Pedagogy for teachers in secondary education), the Houses of the Teaching Staff and county school inspectorates (training for teachers and auxiliary staff) – various other institutions can deliver training for teachers. The national institutions are entitled to develop training programmes for teachers: the Institute for



Educational Sciences, the National Center for Curriculum and Assessment, the National Council for the Development of Vocational and Technical Training. The Children's National Palace deliver training activities for teaching and non-teaching staff that work in non-formal education contexts. Non-governmental institutions, professional associations and private companies having in-service training of teachers as object of their activity can conceive and implement training programmes. In order to be largely recognized, these training programmes have to be accredited by the National Centre for In-Service Teacher Training.

### **3.3 In-service training: right or responsibility?**

According to the legal provisions, the in-service training is the teachers' right. In this respect, different forms of financial support for the in-service training are envisaged by relevant laws: the state can cover the expenses related to transport, accommodation and daily allowance for teachers sent by the educational institution or authorities to participate in training programmes or scientific events. Teachers can benefit of 50% fare-discount for internal local transportation during participation to in-service teacher training programmes. However, this type of provisions is not applied in practice due to the poor financing of education and the permanent need to refrain the public expenses.

Usually, the training activities are organised either during the non-working hours/days or during holidays. In some cases, short training programmes or scientific events may occur during the normal school hours, and the school management has to ensure the replacement of the teachers.

The in-service training programmes organised by school inspectorates and the Houses of the Teaching Staff are financed by the Ministry of Education and Research. This means that there is no tuition fee, and the teachers cover their subsistence and travel expenses. Many training activities were implemented in the framework of internationally or nationally financed projects – Phare, LLL, etc. – implying lower costs for participants.

### 3.4 Teacher mobility

**The mobility of teachers inside the country** is regulated by specific normatives. Teachers may apply for changing the workplace for a limited time of one year, due to different reasons (for example, changing the residence or other personal reasons). They have the possibility to prolong the term to 2 years for personal purposes, or to 4 years, if objective reasons sustain their request. Each year, they also can apply for a permanent transfer to other school. The transfer takes into account the level of schooling, the area where the school is located, and the teachers' dossier. The transfer from urban schools to rural school is possible, while the opposite is very difficult.

**Teachers' mobility abroad** is recognized as an important part of the professional development and it is sustained through legislative documents, international or bilateral agreements of the Romanian government and other countries, and ratification of international conventions regarding the mutual recognition of diplomas. The use of ECTS for initial and in-service teacher training along with the Diploma Supplement represents a step towards the European harmonisation.

Teachers demonstrate high **interest and availability for international cooperation**<sup>14</sup> and they have used the existing opportunities to interact and work with other teachers – Lifelong Learning Programme (Socrates, Leonardo, eTwinning), Phare, Council of Europe programme for in-service training of education professionals, NGO's initiatives, etc. The available evaluation reports<sup>15</sup> of the LLL programme revealed the benefits of the international cooperation at personal level (new skills, improved communication, ICT skills and group work, changing attitudes and motivation, etc.) and institutional level (visibility, development of human resources, increased quality, etc). In 2007–2008, 1012 teachers applied and 343 received a grant for Comenius in-service training courses<sup>16</sup>. Fourteen grants were conferred for Comenius Language Assistants and 72 teachers attended preparatory visits and contact seminars. Besides that, Leonardo da Vinci and the study visits component of the LLL programme provided other mobility opportunities.

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<sup>14</sup> Birzea, C. et al. (2006). Teacher Training in Romania. Country report, p. 474.

<sup>15</sup> Fartusnic & Balica 2003; Velea 2008; Velea & Calota 2009

<sup>16</sup> Velea & Calota 2009, p. 20

However, the demand for international cooperation is higher than the existing offer. The major constraints derive from the restricted financial resources and the difficult procedures for obtaining a grant.

### **3.5 The employability of teachers**

The employment of teachers – for many years being coordinated by the Ministry of Education – is subject to a debate in the context of the decentralization of education system. Some voices claim the right of the schools and local authorities to hire teachers, while others expressed their concern towards maintaining the same professional standards all over the country and the transparency of the recruitment.

At present, teachers in the public pre-university education are employed on the basis of a competition organized by the Ministry of Education and the county school inspectorates. All the persons that accomplished the initial training requirements and the conditions established by the Teaching Staff Statute have the right to candidate for a teaching position. In private schools, the recruitment process is organized at local level, based on institutional regulations.

The management and guiding positions in pre-university education are appointed on a competitive examination opened only to the teachers that meet specific requirements (professional degree, seniority, overall performance, etc.).

The total number of teaching staff in the school year 2008–2009 is 275 426, from which 243 453 are employed at the pre-university level, which is very close to the number of the previous school year – 243 879.

*Table 1.* The number of teaching staff in 2008–2009<sup>17</sup>.

<b>Level of the education system</b>	<b>Teaching staff 2008/2009</b>	<b>Total staff 2008/2009</b>	<b>% of teachers (total staff)</b>
Preschool	38253	57148	66,94%
Primary and lower secondary	138560	180152	76,91%
High school (upper secondary)	60647	91615	66,20%
Vocational	5129	7301	70,25%
Post-high school	864	1304	66,26%
Higher education	31973	58207	54,93%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>275426</b>	<b>395727</b>	<b>69,60%</b>

<sup>17</sup> Current situation of the education system. Annual report. 2009, p. 20

The number of unqualified teachers employed in the pre-university education has a descendant trend, taking into account the increasing number of Bachelor graduates. The competition is very tight for the teaching positions in large cities, and lower for the rural schools, especially if they are located far away from big cities.

**Table 2.** The percentage of qualified teachers in 2007–2009<sup>18</sup>.

Level of the education system and school area	% qualified teachers	
	2007/2008	2008/2009
Preschool / Total	93,5	94,6
Urban	96,0	96,8
Rural	90,2	91,7
Primary / Total	97,1	97,7
Urban	98,8	98,8
Rural	95,9	96,9
Lower secondary (grades V–VIII)	94,2	96,3
Urban	97,7	98,3
Rural	91,0	93,5
High school (upper secondary) / Total	98,4	99,1
Urban	98,5	99,1
Rural	96,4	97,8
Vocational / Total	92,6	92,5
Urban	93,7	93,8
Rural	90,6	90,5
Post-high school / Total	97,9	99,0
Urban	97,9	99,0
Rural	100	100
Higher education / Total	100	100
Urban	100	100
Rural	–	–

In the school year 2008–2009, at almost all levels of the education system, the percentage of qualified teachers increased compared to the previous school year (1.1% in preschool education, 1.9 in lower secondary). The ascension is higher in the rural area (1.6% in preschool education and 2.5 for lower secondary), due to the training and qualification opportunities provided through the National Programme for the Development of Rural Education, co-financed by the Romanian Government and the World Bank, implemented in 2005–2009.

<sup>18</sup> *idem*, p. 22

### **3.6 Teachers' remuneration**

Teachers' salaries vary according to the level of initial education training, the level of school teaching (primary, secondary, etc.), the didactic degree, the length of service and other criteria. The average net salary of a novice secondary school teacher holding a Bachelor and/or a Master degree is around 900 lei, the equivalent of 220 EUR. The highest salary can be awarded to teachers having more than 25 years of experience, the 1<sup>st</sup> didactic degree and a management position. This net salary can reach up to 3400 lei, the equivalent of around 800 EUR.

## **4 Research-Based Findings and Open Questions in the Area of Teacher Training**

The **current discussions** in this area bring into attention the new roles and competencies of teachers, the need of national standards for the teaching profession, the evaluation of the teaching staff and different levels of remuneration, the employment procedures in the context of decentralization, the social status of teachers, the improvement of initial and in-service training, the incentives meant to stimulate qualified teachers to get employed in the rural areas, etc. This long list of current topics reveals the importance of teacher training, even though no concrete and coherent measures accompany the debates.

The new social and economic contexts, the new curriculum and the challenges of education system require **new roles and competences for teachers**. Today, teachers have to design and develop the school curriculum and cross-curricular activities, evaluate and select textbooks, initiate projects and international partnerships, work in a multicultural environment, use ICT for teaching and learning, etc. As the school enlarges its mission towards the parents and the community, teachers need to work with different groups, to act as trainers or facilitators. In this context, **new standards for the teaching profession** are to be developed, based on the previous experience and recent developments in this field<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup>In 2002, the Ministry of Education and Research published a material concerning the professional standards for the teaching profession, prepared by Romanian teachers and education experts in partnership with foreign experts, in the framework of the Project for Pre-university Education Reform, carried out by the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research with the support of the World Bank.

In the last year, the Ministry of Education and Research initiated a consultation process involving teachers' unions, professional associations and experts concerning **the evaluation of teachers**. It was proposed that teachers to be remunerated according to their individual performance, based on annual evaluations. This proposal raised many questions, especially related to the comparability of the working conditions and the criteria for evaluation. It is easy to understand the complexity of the teaching profession and the difficulty to evaluate it. The effort to get certain results, the access to resources, the pupils' characteristics are very different from one school to another and even from one class to another within the same school. And all of these factors influence the overall teaching performance. A working group developed pilot tools and final decisions are not yet made.

The Ministry of Education prepared a proposal for the Law of **decentralization** of the education system. This proposal brings new regulations or implications related to teachers' employment, promotion and remuneration. In the pre-university education, the prestigious schools claim the right to locally organize the recruitment of teachers. The law proposed is subject to a public debate before being approved by the Parliament.

A national programme initiated by the Romanian Government with the support of the World Bank was implemented in 2005–2009, aiming at the **improvement of rural education**. Two of its components targeted the professional development of teachers from rural schools and the career development through open distance training. The distance-training programme was developed on the basis of a national curriculum, in order to provide the necessary qualification for 4000 unqualified teachers from rural schools. Other projects financed by Phare programme delivered training for teachers in rural schools. Beside the training opportunities, other incentives are necessary in order to stimulate qualified and well-trained teachers to remain employed in rural schools.

The school inspection was subject to renewal at the end of '90. A new methodological frame was developed in order to transform the **school inspection** into a system of assuring, maintaining and monitoring quality in education. School inspectors participated in training programmes and a set of support materials was produced. However, at school level, this transformation is only partially achieved. The organizational culture at

school and school inspectorates level continues to promote the traditional model of the inspection, seen as control less than consultancy and support.

Another debate focuses on the need to **improve the teacher training**. Different voices raised the issue of insufficient training and poor motivation of teachers. **Teachers' performance is not related only to their training, but also to their motivation**, sense of responsibility and ownership. The teachers' social status is directly connected to their performance. In the last decades, the society in general has had high demands from the school system and from teachers, without providing them with tools and an appropriate context for meeting the social expectations.

#### **4.1 Recent research studies in the area of teacher training**

Teacher training system was systematically investigated through studies or national surveys. Articles and books concerning this topic synthesized the strengths and weaknesses and proposed directions for improvement. Dan Potolea and Lucian Ciolan<sup>20</sup> analysed recent actions to improve the training system and to correlate it with other components of the education reform. Romita Iucu<sup>21</sup> and Ovidiu Panisoara analysed the situation of teacher training and made a set of recommendations for change and improvement.

In 2005, a country report based on documents' analysis and on a survey were prepared in the framework of the international research project *Enhancing Professional Development of Education Practitioners and Teaching/Learning Practices in SEE Countries*, supported by Open Society Institute Education Support Programme-RE:FINE. The survey used a questionnaire for teachers and another one for teacher training institutions. 308 teachers in pre-university education filled in the questionnaire as well as did 41 representatives of teacher training institutions – deans, rectors, heads of departments, and directors. The country report described the teacher training system and the view of the practitioners. It was published, together with the reports from other SEE countries and a regional synthesis, in the book edited by prof. Pavel

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<sup>20</sup> Potolea & Ciolan 2003.

<sup>21</sup> Iucu & Panisoara 1999, 2000; Iucu 2004

Zgaga, *Prospects of teacher training in South-East Europe* (Ljubljana, 2006).

This study provided relevant data from the grass-root level, enabling the authors to formulate consistent recommendations. Teachers and representatives of training institutions agreed about the need to renew the pre-service training in order to stress the pedagogical competences and the practical training. The offer and quality of in-service training programmes also need to be improved. It should broaden the content and benefit of a higher public financial support. *There is a clear orientation of the training institutions toward enhancing teachers' practical competence (80%) as well as their competence to implement school curriculum and to use new teaching methods (80%). Almost in the same degree, both types of institutions are concerned with renewing the educational knowledge of teachers and fewer are interested in deepening and renewing the subject specific knowledge of teachers*<sup>22</sup>.

Teachers' motivation for in-service training is more related to their personal interest in professional development and to their concern for the future career. A small percentage of teachers did not participate in training courses in the last years, because of the lack of opportunities and resources. The majority of teachers prefer the courses provided by the institutions affiliated to the Ministry of Education – school inspectorates, Houses of the Teaching Staff. About a quarter of them prefer the courses delivered by higher education institutions, through Teacher Training Departments, and by specialized NGO's. The majority of teachers appreciated that in-service courses contributed to the enrichment of their knowledge and competences for a more efficient activity in school; while the other significant percentage found it difficult to transfer the new skills and knowledge into the daily school practice (the training was too theoretical, in their view). The most useful content of the in-service courses, according to the teachers' view, is related to the subject they teach, teaching learning and assessment practices, communication and ICT competences. The survey revealed the main obstacles for modernizing in-service teacher training: inadequate regulation(s), lack of financial support, lack of human resources and adequate skills.

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<sup>22</sup> Birzea et al., 2006., p. 460



In 2008, the Institute for Education Sciences developed a research project on continuous vocational training, with a special focus on in-service training of teachers. Teachers' participation in training programmes has an ascendant trend. However, there are still contradictions and constraints, synthesised below:

- the lack of periodical evaluation of training needs, in order to correlate the training offer with the real needs of the teachers;
- teachers' participation in training courses is not always properly valued and recognized;
- poor financial resources limit teachers' access to training courses, taking into account not only the tuition fee, but the collateral subsistence and travel costs;
- the training offer varies from one region to another, some teachers having a very restricted range of options;
- the implementation of transferable credits for in-service training determined teachers to be on the trot for collecting a sufficient number of credits; the need to reach a certain number of credits affected in a negative manner the participation to training courses and also the quality;
- training providers complain about the bureaucratic procedures of accreditation.

This study supplemented the information about the in-service training of teachers and confirmed the need for improvement and possible solutions.

#### **4.2 Towards a better training of teachers**

The influence of the quality of teachers towards the pupils' education and performance is well-known, being affirmed by many authors<sup>23</sup> and demonstrated through research. International evaluations (for example, TIMSS and PISA) and large scale studies have demonstrated the influence of human (especially the teachers') qualification and material resources in relation to students' performance. Despite the achievements and the efforts to improve the teacher training system, there is still a big demand for new and coherent solutions.

The recommendations for improvement are based on the analysis of the **main weaknesses of teacher training**: the poor pedagogical training,

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<sup>23</sup> Heyneman & Loxley 1983; Willms & Somers 2001; Istrate 2006

poor practical training, lack of real recruitment for pre-service teacher training (any student has the chance to attend the courses of the Teacher Training Department and to obtain a teaching certificate), lack of motivation for the teaching profession.

In addition to these aspects, **the teaching profession is confronted with a constant diminution of the social status and the social "prestige"**. This happens not only because of the low level of remuneration, but because of unclear social values. The society and especially the media promote and award recognition to "pseudo-values" like celebrity, notoriety, self-confidence, money and power. The importance of education for a better life and for social success is not as obvious as it used to be. The motivation to become a teacher has been permanently decreasing in the last decade. A negative influence in this respect has produced the aspects mentioned above, but also the poor procedures for teachers' recruitment. The fact that all students have the chance to become teachers and their option for the teaching profession as a "second specialization" (as a "life vest" for a short term) preserved the social perception that teachers have a poor social status. It also means a dissipation of resources, because during the Bachelor studies, a lot of students are trained for teaching, and only a few really enter the teaching profession.

Based on these observations, proposals to change the structure and the content of pre-service training have been made. Instead of the actual system, the pre-service training can be delivered through a **Master programme dedicated to teacher training**. This would allow a better selection of the prospective teachers; we can assume that registering for a 2-years study programme reflects a solid motivation for the teaching career. Another advantage of this structure is the efficient use of resources: instead of training a large number of students, only those who really want to become teachers will get specific training.

The curriculum for pre-service training has to be adapted to the new roles and competences required to teachers in the actual social context. It also needs to have a stronger dimension of practical training, in terms of the duration and content of the practical work (schoolwork, observation of teaching activities, probation teaching activities, participation in educational projects, in research projects, school and community

partnerships, etc.). The final/graduation exam should assess the teaching competences through practical and theoretical examination.

In 2009, two foundations launched in partnership a pilot-project and encouraged universities to include in their educational offer a Master programme for teacher training. The results of this pilot project will allow education specialist to evaluate the opportunity of dissemination.

Another suggestion for improving the overall quality of teacher training is to continue the efforts to train the unqualified teachers. Important progress has been done in this respect, especially in the rural area. Teachers' qualification is a pre-requisite for further professional development.

Concerning the improvement of in-service training, the main suggestions are also based on the findings of recent research papers:

- development of mechanisms to analyse the training needs in order to adapt the training offer;
- increasing the quality of training offer and its flexibility; it has to focus on practical skills and didactic experiences, on interaction and participation, and combine the theoretical issues of education sciences with practical training;
- encouraging the offers of distance courses, e-learning platforms providing quality courses and pedagogical materials; this can be accessible also for teachers in isolated locations;
- revision of the legal provisions, in order to ensure the unity and coherence of all the regulations;
- all the evaluations of teachers, as well as the exams for becoming titular teacher or for obtaining a didactic degree must focus on relevant teaching competences;
- re-thinking the itinerary of the teaching career;
- revision of the procedures for accreditation of training courses in order to diminish the bureaucracy; creating the context for real competition;
- development and implementation of an authentic mentorship period when entering the education system;
- allocation of sufficient financial resources for teacher training.

The **flow of information** remains a problem even now when the information and communication technologies are well developed and

accessible at a large scale. An internet platform would be very useful to distribute up-to-date information to all educational institutions, to provide online courses and to make didactic resources available to teachers (movies, multimedia encyclopaedia, tapes, etc.). Several websites partially address these objectives, but they face the usual Internet problems: non-reliable information, not regularly updated, a huge amount of materials the pedagogical value of which is questionable, etc. The national and local authorities can ensure the educational institutions' subscriptions to specialised periodicals. For this purpose, schools must be equipped with IT resources (computers, Internet access, etc.).

Several suggestions target at the **improvement of the social status of teachers**, through a solid financial investment in education and the quality of teacher training. The public image of teachers needs to be promoted through mass media and other social events (for example, the Education Gala, an annual event organized by a private foundation, starting this year). These measures would support the development of a professional ethos of teachers. As a side effect of personnel evaluation, the competition between teachers increased, in prejudice of cooperation. In the same respect, it is necessary to review the teachers' tasks at school level in order to relieve them of administrative obligations such as accountancy, communication, advertising, preparing irrelevant planning materials, etc. This is a difficult process because, in many cases, these activities – documents or planning materials – are more valued during an evaluation process than the concrete activity with pupils.

Another direction for improvement is related to **teachers' mobility**. The state and the local authorities should encourage the exchange of practices and provide opportunities for teachers to attend national or international conferences, develop partnerships in the country and abroad, attend study-visits or job-shadowing activities. The efforts for harmonisation of teacher training policies and structures in the EU member states should be continued in order to ensure the recognition of qualification and to support teachers' mobility.

Education policy makers have made efforts to support the quality of teacher training system, targeting – in the long term – at the quality of education system outcomes. This was not an easy task, because the teaching profession is very complex, involving not only the developed

competences, but also personal features – communication, empathy and many others. Teaching is more than an occupation; it is a mission.

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# TEACHER EDUCATION IN SLOVENIA

**Milena Valenčič Zuljan**

Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Mara Cotič**

Faculty of Education, University of Primorska, Slovenia

**Samo Fošnarič**

Faculty of Education, University of Maribor, Slovenia

**Cirila Peklaj**

Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Janez Vogrinc**

Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

## 1 Introduction

Teacher education always reflects professional as well as political, socio-economical and social circumstances of a country. Speaking of teacher education in Slovenia, we cannot overlook the political changes that had an important impact on the characteristics of the educational system as a whole. In the past (up to 1918), teacher education in Slovenia was developing within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, a part of which it was, later on within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (up to 1941) and between 1945 and 1991 within the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia. After the attainment of independence (in 1991), Slovenia started developing its own educational system. There are some important turning points in this period: in 1993, the Higher Education Act was approved to provide the legislative basis for modernising tertiary education; in 1995, a comprehensive White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia was published and based on it, in 1996, a package of legislation on pre-university education was passed (more on this in Zgaga 2006; Devjak & Polak 2007). In the area of tertiary education, the

most important changes began in 2003/2004. This school year marked the beginning of the so-called “Bologna process”. By 2009/10, all the faculties and higher education institutions had to enrol students to the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the reformed Bologna programmes.

The article shortly presents the Slovenian educational system and later on focuses on teacher education. It describes the characteristics of the undergraduate teacher education, induction period and the State Teacher Certification Examination, the options of postgraduate studies, in-service teacher training, the system of teacher promotion and teacher mobility. In the conclusion of the article we will briefly review the current circumstances in the area of education which we believe will have an important effect on future teacher education.

## **2 The National Educational system**

The Slovenian educational system starts with pre-school education, which is divided into two stages: ages 1 to 3 and 3 to 6. Pre-school education teachers graduate in a three-year higher-education programme. Pre-school education is not compulsory. Compulsory basic education lasts for nine years and is divided into three educational triads. Implementation of the 9-year primary school gradually began in the school year 1999/2000, but since 2003/2004 all schools have been running the 9-year programme (before that year compulsory basic education lasted for eight years). Children enter primary school at the age of 6. In the first educational triad pupils are taught by the class teacher. Class teachers graduate in a four-year teacher education university programme. In Year 1, pupils are taught by an additional teacher who is either a class teacher or a pre-school teacher. The second teacher i.e. the pre-school teacher teaches half the instruction lessons. From Year 4 to Year 6, the number of subject teachers gradually increases, so that pupils can get used to more teachers. Subject teachers teach exclusively in the third educational triad and in upper-secondary schools.

Upper-secondary education is organised in gymnasias (general and professional), which lasts for four years, in technical and professional



schools (all of them lasting 4 years), and in vocational schools (3 years, except shorter vocational education courses – they last for two years).

Shorter vocational education courses are intended for those, who have successfully completed compulsory education or at least Year 7 of primary school or those, who have successfully completed a special education programme, adapted to children with special needs.

Vocational schools are intended for those, who have successfully completed primary school. Coursework is organised as either a full-time course, which is provided entirely within schools, or in dual-mode (instruction is shared between the school and the workplace, provided by schools in combination with employers). Courses last approximately three years and end with a final exam in two subjects (final exams are prepared and assessed internally). General knowledge and technical skills in the relevant professional field allow students and apprentices to undertake independent work in occupations with broad profiles. Successful completion of the final exam allows candidates to continue their education in relevant technical-vocational courses. Graduates from vocational schools can continue their education also in a programme of additional 2 years (3 + 2) and can get a qualification equal to those of students who graduate from technical and professional schools.

The objectives of professional and technical education and training are to develop key competences, skills and vocational qualifications at an internationally comparable level and to provide knowledge and skills for employment, further education and lifelong learning. All courses include general education for continuous personal development, environmental studies and personal health care. Every professional or technical course must also contain subjects aimed at: the development of communication skills; the development of knowledge and awareness, learning about national integrity, national identity, one's own cultural tradition as well as other cultures and civilisations, the development of talents and training for artistic expression and perception of arts. Courses must be provided at an internationally comparable level and must enable participants' involvement in the European labour market. Technical and professional schools end with a Vocational Matura exam (exam in four subjects; the exams are prepared externally and assessed internally).

Gymnasia offer students four years of general education aimed at upgrading and extending the knowledge gained during compulsory

education. The primary missions of gymnasia are (General upper-secondary education in Slovenia 2010):

- to give students the knowledge and skills in accordance with international quality education standards that they need to continue their education at universities or other institutions of tertiary education;
- to develop critical judgement and responsibility;
- to foster responsibility towards themselves and towards other people and the environment;
- to develop general cultural and civilisation values;
- to prepare them for active citizenship;
- to encourage creativity and to develop the ability of artistic expression and the perception of artistic work; and
- to support decisions concerning further education and professional careers.

Gymnasium ends with a Matura exam (an externally prepared and assessed exam in 5 subjects, 3 of which are compulsory and 2 which are elective).

Tertiary education consists of post-secondary vocational education (vocationally-oriented study programmes last for 2 years) and higher education. All higher vocational studies are combined with practical training in the workplace in a relevant industry or public sector. Courses are organised for both full-time students and adults. The typical duration of study is 2 years. Study time is measured in credit points and the completion of a full-course corresponds to 120 ECTS. Programmes are offered in the areas of mechanics, electrical engineering, electronics, photography, geotechnology and mining, building and civil construction, informatics, wood, logistics, media, mechatronics, design, social work networking, telecommunication, dental hygiene, environment protection, economy, administration, food and diet, horticulture, management in rural environment, tourism and catering.

Undergraduate higher education programmes are provided at universities as well as at other higher education institutions and last for at least 3 (professionally-oriented programmes) or 4 years (university programmes) and lead to the awarding of a Diploma.

The 2003/2004 school year marked the beginning of the so-called “Bologna process”, which has in the year 2010 incorporated Slovenia into the unified European higher education system. The “Bologna” study programmes are divided into three cycles: the first cycle of 3 to 4 years, the second cycle of 1 to 2 years, the third cycle of 3 years. Each first-cycle study should lead to at least one second-cycle option and up to a doctoral level after that. Transitional provisions for those who have completed pre-reform programmes: first-degree professional graduates are equivalent to the Bologna first-cycle graduates and may normally continue to the second-cycle study. First-degree graduates of academically oriented studies are recognised to have a certain surplus of ECTS. In most cases, they would enter the second year of a Master study.

### **3 Teacher education**

The teaching profession in Slovenia is a regulated profession. After the reform of the previous higher education system to university education (1987–1988) or the reorganisation of the previous Academy of Education to the Faculty of Education (1990), all teachers are required to complete a four-year university study programme. Teachers must also pass the State Teacher Certification Examination. The State Teacher Certification Examination is taken before the National Examination Board for professional competency examinations in the field of education, which is appointed by the Minister of Education. The education of primary school teachers takes place in three faculties of education (in Ljubljana, Maribor and from 2003 in Koper), while education of subject teachers is also undertaken at other higher education institutions (such as the Faculty of Arts, the Biotechnical Faculty, etc). In school year 2009/10, all the education faculties enrolled students of the 1<sup>st</sup> year into new i.e. reformed Bologna study programmes, the reform of which began in 2003/04. The Common European Principles for teachers’ competences and qualifications (Zgaga 2006) provide a starting point for the modernisation of study programmes in the field of education on four principles and three sections of competences. These principles are: (1) teaching as a highly qualified profession (2) placed in the context of lifelong learning, (3) mobile and based on (4) partnership. The three

sections of competences are: (a) ability to work with others, (b) ability to work with knowledge, and (c) ability to work with and in society (ibid). Therefore, the modernisation of study programmes relies on a change in paradigm; it indicates a shift from “study programme design that is based on contents and objectives as determined by a teacher, to output study programme design that is performance and competence oriented” (Tancig & Devjak 2006, p. 9).

### **3.1 Admission requirement**

The general admission requirement is regulated by the Higher Education Act. Students must have completed general upper secondary school. Candidates are required the Matura examination certificates. The admission requirement for the Pre-school education is either the Matura exam or Professional Matura after completing a 4-year upper-secondary programme in pre-school education or health care. Students apply to courses through the joint national application system. The selection criteria in case of limited access are determined by the individual study programme. If the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of places available, a selection is made on the basis of upper-secondary school grades and the (Professional) Matura exam.

Full-time students in public and private state-subsidized higher education institutions do not pay fees. This benefit applies also to students from EU countries and foreign students from the countries with a mutual agreement with Slovenia. They are however charged a small registration fee of 30 € per year. Students can receive assistance for their cost of living in a form of scholarship, state subsidy for accommodation, food coupons and reduced costs of transport. The level of scholarship depends on their socio-economic status, the results of their previous study and the year of study.

### **3.2 Required Teacher Education**

The generations of students that will be enrolled into the “Bologna study programmes” will have to complete a second-cycle study programme and attain a Master degree (300 ECTS) to be able to enter the teaching profession. Pre-school teachers will have to complete the first cycle of higher professional studies programme (180 ECTS).

Further on, the currently required education for pre-school teachers, teachers and school counsellors will be presented. The regulations on teacher qualifications before the Bologna reform were as follows (more on this in Zgaga 2006):

- Pre-school teacher candidates may enter the profession provided they have completed an appropriate 3-year, professionally-oriented higher education study programme in pre-school teaching and obtained the professional title of a graduated pre-school educator. The regulations also set out the possibility of other first-degree higher education graduates entering the profession, provided qualifications in the appropriate discipline and consecutively supplementary training for the pre-school level teaching are acquired.
- Elementary school teacher candidates may enter the profession provided they have completed a 4-year university study programme and obtained the professional title of professor of class teaching or professor in one or two subjects. The weekly teaching load is up to 22 hours.
- Upper-secondary school teachers must complete either a 4-year university teacher training programme, thereby receiving the professional title Professor in one or two subjects or another higher education professionally-oriented or university study programme followed by a non-degree (credential) teacher training programme of 60 ECTS. The weekly teaching load for teachers of general-education subjects and theoretical professional subjects is up to 20 hours, for teachers of Slovene up to 19 hours and for teachers of practical instruction and skills up to 25 hours.
- School counsellors must complete a 4-year university programme in psychology, pedagogy, social pedagogy, special education or social work. School counsellors have a 40-hour weekly workload.

Initial teacher training can be obtained through:

- a) a higher education study programme in one or two subjects of teaching leading to the professional title of professor (first degree) of one or two subjects (concurrent or integrated model of teacher training); or
- b) a higher education study programme, which imparts the necessary knowledge about the subject of teaching or the field of education but does not provide the necessary professional contents for acquiring the

required teaching skills; a candidate must therefore complete a non-degree (credential) teacher training programme (consecutive model), amounting 60 ECTS.

The table below shows the syllabus of the teacher training programme of the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana<sup>1</sup>. This is the programme for future teachers that have not obtained their pedagogical-andragogical and special-didactics training.

The syllabus of the pedagogical-andragogical training

Subject	ECTS
Pedagogy	4
Pedagogical Methodology	3
Didactics	5
Developmental and Pedagogical Psychology	7
Andragogy	3
Sociology of Education	4
Selected Topics from Philosophy	4
Inclusive education	4
Professional Didactics with ICT and Practical Pedagogical Training	14
Teaching practice	4
Optional subject from the range of subjects offered by the University	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>

Teacher education study programmes contain the study of the subject discipline, education sciences (e.g. Pedagogy, Didactics, Pedagogical and Developmental Psychology, Andragogy, Pedagogical Methodology, Theory of Education, Selected Topics from Philosophy, Sociology of Education) and pedagogical training. In the 4-year teacher education study programmes of education sciences and pedagogical training lasted a minimum of one semester (375 to 450 contact hours) but have been extended under Bologna renewal of programmes to the equivalent of one year or 60 ECTS.

<sup>1</sup> The pedagogical-andragogical training is also carried out by two other Faculties of Education in Slovenia (Faculty of Education, University of Maribor and Faculty of Education Koper, University of Primorska) as well as the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana and Faculty of Arts (University of Maribor). The syllabi differ to some extent, but they all assure the basic pedagogical, andragogical and special-didactics education. They all amount to 60 ECTS.

### **3.3 Practical pedagogical teacher training**

Practical training of teachers was organized differently in different study programmes, better at faculties of education than at other faculties. Students of some programmes (e.g. programmes carried out by the Faculty of Arts, double-subject programmes at the faculties of education) only have 2 weeks of practical training during the study, while the students of Primary Teacher Education have practical training incorporated into all four years of study. Active participation of students in the pedagogical work and the amount of independent work are increased from year to year. In practical training, the largest part is taken by the serried teaching practice, which is described later on (Umek, Pečar & Skribe-Dimec 2007). In the period of four years, students of Primary Teacher Education have 10 weeks of teaching practice. In the 1<sup>st</sup> year, the teaching practice is organized in the aggregate of one week. It is individual and mainly based on observation. Each student is supposed to have an opportunity to prepare and carry out a “miniature lesson.” The content of teaching practice is connected to the subject-area of didactics. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, the student visits the selected primary school for at least ten Fridays, actively participates in instruction execution and cooperates and helps his / her mentor. The content is connected to the subject-area of the Pedagogical Psychology. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, the teaching practice lasts for three weeks in a row. Students do practice in groups of three. Each student teaches individually at least one lesson a day and altogether at least two lessons of each subject. They are accompanied at school by the organizer of practice; either a teacher or an assistant at the Faculty of Education. The organizer of the teaching practice follows the students’ work, observes students at teaching of at least one lesson and analyses the observed lessons together with the students and the mentor. In the 4<sup>th</sup> year, the student does an individual practice. He/she teaches autonomously under the supervision of the mentor for four weeks. Moreover, he/she participates in all the activities at the primary school for the duration of the teaching practice. The content is connected to all the subject-areas being taught at the Faculty of Education.

In the reformed Bologna study programmes, the teaching practice in schools is an obligatory part of pedagogical training and evaluated with at least 15 ECTS. It is organized and carried out according to the principle of reflective practice and must allow students to integrate the

subject-content and the pedagogical-professional knowledge by gradual introduction into teaching and the teaching profession.

### **3.4 The options of postgraduate degrees**

The graduates of teacher education programmes at different faculties that educate teachers have the option to enrol to Master and Doctor programmes in their subject field or in the subject didactics (teaching methods in geography, foreign language, etc).

When transitioning onto university education (in 1987), the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, started preparing postgraduate programmes that aimed not only at preparing pedagogical workers for narrow pedagogical work, but also for autonomous scientific research, developmental innovation and study of theoretical as well as practical, frequently also interdisciplinary professional dilemmas and problems that occur in education.

On the basis of these starting-points, the first admission to the post-graduate study was carried out in 1991/1992, namely to the Master programmes of Social Pedagogy and Defectology. In 1997/1998, the number of study programmes increased; the first admissions to the Master programme Art Pedagogy and the two specialisation programmes Art Therapy and Supervision were carried out. In 1999/2000, the first admission to the Master programme Primary Teacher Education was carried out. The study to obtain the Master degree lasted two years (four semesters). The first admission to the doctoral programme was carried out in 2002/2003. It lasted four years.

According to the Bologna reform of study programmes, it is necessary to obtain the Master degree (300 ECTS) to enter the teaching profession. At some faculties, the study lasts two years (120 ECTS), while on others it lasts one year (60 ECTS). Teachers also have the option of the doctoral study, which lasts three years (180 ECTS) and is carried out by institutions which educate teachers (Faculties of Education, Faculties of Art, etc).

### **3.5 Teacher educators**

Students, preparing to enter the teaching profession, are educated by higher education teachers and co-workers. A higher education co-worker i.e. a faculty assistant is a worker with a university degree of a



corresponding programme, has an average mark of exams above 8 and actively masters at least one foreign language. The assistant must enrol into a postgraduate programme and obtain his / her doctoral degree in 9 years. A person who obtains the doctoral degree and has an adequate number of national and international publications can become a higher education teacher. There are three professional titles of higher education: Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor. The titles Assistant Professor and Associate Professor need to be renewed every five years, while the title Professor is permanent. Promotion into professional titles depends on the number of scientific publications, the grading of pedagogical work (mentoring graduate students, Master degree candidates, doctoral candidates; textbooks and study materials, etc) and professional work. The criteria of promotion are defined by universities and are not unified for the whole country.

### **3.6 Induction period and State Teacher Certification Examination**

Professional staff members in public kindergartens and schools in Slovenia need to be adequately qualified. The acts and the corresponding regulations define that they must attain the appropriate education and pass the State Teacher Certification Examination. The regulated qualification is obtained through the combination of pre-service education, practical training for independent work and further education and training. Professional workers in kindergartens and schools in which education is carried out in the language of the national community or in bilingual kindergartens and schools, must also master Italian or Hungarian.

Pre-school teachers and primary school teachers obtain practical qualification for independent work after graduation during the induction period in kindergartens and schools. The State Teacher Certification Examination is a component of the induction period and is carried out during induction.

Since 1996, a specific form of induction, financially supported by the government, has taken place. Further, in 2007, voluntary induction was introduced. The Ministry of Education invites applicants to induction posts at least once a year. The call for applications is published in the

Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia and on the Ministry's webpage.

According to the regulations specifying employment, induction period is not obligatory. However, it is an ideal start of an individual's career, seen as the novice teacher's privilege, allowing him /her to gradually apply the knowledge obtained in undergraduate studies to concrete working environment. Applying to the call for applications for induction posts in kindergartens and schools is the best option of gaining initial experience in education, but still only one of them.

The induction period lasts:

- 8 months for workers with post-secondary vocational diploma.
- 10 months for workers with higher education diploma.

When the inductee performs exceptionally well during induction, the mentor may file a written proposal for the induction period to shorten for up to 1/4 of the induction time. A special committee, appointed by the principal decides on shortening the induction period. Members of the committee are the principal, the mentor and the member of the competent professional team of the kindergarten or school.

The aim of the induction period is to qualify the graduates of pedagogical study programmes entering the profession to perform independent work tasks. Thus, the inductee's tasks are also independent preparation and execution of at least 30 teaching demonstrations in the group or class of children, taught by the mentor. Also, the inductee should be directly involved in pedagogical work and carry out his / her work independently but with mentor's supervision. Moreover, the inductee independently prepares and carries out testing and evaluation of knowledge. The autonomous tasks comprise at least two hours a week but the total extent of these tasks should not exceed 50% of the induction period.

During the induction period, the novice teacher gets 70% of the basic wage and the corresponding supplements, the pension premium and other incomes, such as reimbursement for transport, food and leave of absence. For the inductee his/her employment period runs and his/her health insurance is arranged. The inductee is subject to the same regulations as the workers with a fixed-time contract when it comes to

the annual leave, the right to use the annual leave and the proportional share of the annual leave.

Induction can be carried out without the inductee and the kindergarten or school signing a contract, which is called voluntary induction. The rights and obligations of the inductee are stated in the contract on voluntary induction period. The volunteer has a status of an unemployed person, a postgraduate student, a person employed outside the field of education, etc, and gets corresponding health insurance.

The voluntary inductee is a professional worker. His / her direct workload is defined with the programme of induction. The workload of a voluntary inductee must not exceed the obligation he /she would have working on a regular induction post. Work is organized on the basis of the induction programme and voluntary inductees need to be introduced properly into pedagogical work. Especially when working with youth, the voluntary inductee must have a mentor and get personal support. The voluntary inductee must be ensured work security; the employer is obliged to provide insurance for the case of work accidents and professional diseases. There are no content-based differences between induction with a signed contract and voluntary induction.

### **3.6.1 The tasks of the mentor, principal, inductee**

During the induction period, every inductee has a mentor, assigned by the principal. The mentor is selected among the pedagogical workers employed at the institution. He/she works in the field for which the inductee is being prepared and has a pedagogical title of Consulter or Adviser or Mentor for at least three years.

The mentor prepares the induction programme, directs, supervises and evaluates the inductee's activities. Further, the mentor counsels and guides the inductee in the light of education and teaching the subject and writes a report on the process of the inductee's training and his / her qualification for autonomous work. Even though quality teaching is a necessary precondition for effective mentorship, it does not guarantee that a good teacher will also be a good mentor to the novice teacher. Training mentors for their role is of great importance, but there is no special mentor training required in Slovenia. Within the project Partnership of faculties and schools, that took place in the school years 2004/05 and 2006/07 and included different teacher education faculties,

there were various researches on mentorship, mentor's tasks and competencies carried out. Further on, numerous mentor training sessions were executed.

The principal directs, supervises and evaluates the activities of the inductee that are focused on the operation of the educational institution as a whole.

The inductee prepares and carries out at least thirty teaching demonstrations in the group or class that the mentor teaches. He/she is included in direct pedagogical work – independent work under mentor's supervision and writes an induction diary.

### **3.6.2 Induction programme**

The mentor prepares the induction programme based on the activities through which the inductee learns about planning, adjustment and execution of pedagogical work under the supervision of the mentor and the principal. Further on, the inductee gradually takes over certain independent tasks, gets involved in direct pedagogical work and participates in the planned projects. In the final phase, the inductee independently prepares methodical and didactical lesson plans for the teaching demonstrations, executes them, prepares, tests and evaluates at least three exams, executes oral testing and evaluation and carries out other pedagogical work, such as:

- cooperates with parents, teaching staff, school counsellors, library;
- prepares and organizes excursions, competitions, meetings, exhibitions, presentations;
- mentors pupils and learners when doing research and project assignments.

The teaching demonstration lasts one school period (45 minutes). The mentor is present during the lesson. Moreover, five teaching demonstrations are also observed by the principal of the kindergarten or school, which is necessary for the final three of them. No later than three days before the teaching demonstration, the mentor gives the inductee the subject topic. The teaching demonstrations are evaluated by the mentor and the principal with a common mark of "passed" or "failed." The inductee who has not successfully carried out the teaching demonstrations can carry them out again. The mentor writes a report on

the process of the inductee's training and his / her qualification for autonomous work.

### **3.6.3 State Teacher Certification Examination**

During the induction period, the inductee prepares for the State Teacher Certification Examination. The inductee with a post-secondary vocational diploma or higher education diploma is entitled to a 7-day leave to prepare for the State Teacher Certification Examination. This absence can only be used once. The State Teacher Certification Examination must be passed by all pedagogical staff, since it is a condition for carrying out pedagogical work defined by law. The State Teacher Certification Examination must also be passed by workers who are not subject to induction period according to the regulation specifying induction in the pedagogical field, but have worked at least six months in a kindergarten or school and fulfil the educational conditions determined by the law and other regulations.

The State Teacher Certification Examination is a national exam, taken before the National Examination Board for professional competency examinations in the field of education, which is appointed by the Minister of Education. Members of the board are the president of the board and a corresponding number of examiners.

The pedagogical worker can accede to the exam if he/she:

- is subject to induction in the pedagogical field or has been performing pedagogical work for at least six months,
- has a suitable level and programme of education for performing pedagogical work,
- has successfully done at least five teaching demonstrations.

The pedagogical workers who do not perform direct pedagogical work (e.g. counsellors, librarians, organizers of adult education) do not execute teaching demonstrations. They need to write an assignment (in the form of a seminary paper) with which their qualification for independent dealing with concrete professional problems in their field is tested. The professional staff in kindergartens and schools with Italian learning language and bilingual kindergartens and schools must state in their application whether they would like to take the State Teacher Certification Examination in Slovenian or in the language of their

national community. The pedagogical staff in bilingual kindergartens and schools also state in their application which language they will do on the basic and which one on the higher level of difficulty.

### **3.6.4 The content of the State Teacher Certification Examination**

The State Teacher Certification Examination consists of:

- a written assignment for school counsellors, librarians, organizers of adult education and other professional workers who do not execute direct educational work,
- oral examination for all professional workers that includes:
  - the constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, the constitution of the European Union and its legal system, and regulations specifying human and children’s rights and basic privileges,
  - legislation in the area of education,
  - Slovenian written language; for professional workers in kindergartens and schools with Italian learning language and bilingual kindergartens and schools – a part of the exam is according to the regulations specifying the special rights of Italian and Hungarian national communities in the area of education.

The written assignment tests the worker’s ability to independently solve concrete problems in the professional area for which he/she is being educated. The topic of the assignment is appointed by the examiner in the professional field. The worker writes an assignment in the form of a seminary paper after the obligatory consultation with the examiner in the professional field.

The board evaluates the professional worker’s success in respective parts of the oral examination. The evaluation of each particular part of the examination and of the State Teacher Certification Examination exam as a whole is: “passed” or “failed.” The professional worker passes the State Teacher Certification Examination if he/she passes all the parts of the oral examination.

## **4 In-service teacher training and promotion of teachers**

### **4.1 Options of further teacher training**

Quality education is one of the basic conditions that will enable individuals successful confrontation with the challenges of an evermore globalized society of knowledge, their active inclusion into the labour market and participation in all the forms of social life. The need for quality education and the awareness that it cannot be achieved without quality teachers is shown by different bodies on the level of European Union (Common European Principles for Teacher Competence and Qualifications 2005; Improving the Quality of Teacher Education 2007; Council's conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) 2009) having recently adopted several documents on teacher education. On the national level, this awareness is shown in different legislative and statutory acts adopted by respective countries and referring to teacher education (undergraduate, postgraduate, in-service teacher training). In these documents, the teaching profession is identified as a highly professional vocation that demands continuous, life-long supplementing and development of competencies.

In Slovenia, this awareness and the care for permanent professional development is built into the legislation, regulating the area of education, especially the Rules on In-service Training of Educational Professionals and their amendments (Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia, 64/04, 83/05, 27/07, 123/08, 42/09) and in Rules on the Title Promotion of the Employees in the Education and their amendments (Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia, 54/02, 123/08, 44/09, 16/09, 16/2010, 18/2010), defining the forms and ways of permanent professional education of teachers and other workers in education (from here on, the term teacher will be used) and assessment and ways of taking this training into consideration in the teachers' professional career. The collective agreement for the area of education in the Republic of Slovenia (Ur. list, 53/94) in paragraph 17, article 53 estimates that pedagogical staff with at least secondary level of education is enabled by their employer to participate in training at least 5 days a year or at least 15 days in three years.

In the Republic of Slovenia, teachers can participate in in-service training right after the gained undergraduate education in programmes of professional education that are published within the selection of programmes of further education and training. There are also other programmes for teachers that wish to gain new knowledge: thematic conferences, study groups, professional staff networks, programmes of IT literacy and other professional programmes. The programme council for further education and training of pedagogical staff at the Ministry of Education and Sport is responsible for designing developmental guidelines of in-service training and their content. The programmes of teacher education are carried out by different universities (faculties) that carry out teacher education for future teachers in their undergraduate programmes. Moreover, there are some other institutions: the National Education Institute, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training, the National Examinations Centre and other institutions which are entitled to participate in the call for applications of in-service training programmes on the basis of their references. The in-service programmes can relate to the development of specific knowledge (declarative and procedural) in individual subject-content areas or they can relate to broader cross-curricular and professional teacher competencies (e.g. class management, the use of ICT). The Ministry of Education and Sport can finance these programmes entirely or in a very large amount.

#### **4.2 Options of in-service training for teachers and teachers' workloads**

In the past years, there have been some studies trying to answer the questions to what extent teachers join different in-service training programmes, to what extent they are satisfied with them and what are their further wishes or needs in this area. Slovenia joined the international research TALIS (Teaching and Learning International Survey) which was held under the patronage of the international Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The research included teachers of higher grades of primary school. The Slovenian sample consisted of 200 primary schools (20 teachers from each primary school), teaching in the third triad. The results of the research show that the level of in-service training in Slovenia compared to other countries is suitable. According to the number of teachers,



participating in in-service training, our country is at the top. In the period of 18 months (the duration of the research), 96.9 % of questioned teachers participated in the training, which is the second highest place among all participating countries. In Slovenia, this training lasts on average 5.2 days, which places us at the very end of the list of the participating countries. The system solution in the collective agreement, enabling teachers to participate in training, affects the option of 5 days of training, which most of the teachers use. Majority of teachers (85.3 %) did not need to cover the expenses of training. The most frequent reason for not participating in teacher training to a larger extent is that training coincides with their work-schedule.

Nevertheless, the data about teachers' contentment with different forms of in-service training and to what extent (in their opinion) the effects of this training are reflected in their work is more important than the mere quantity of training. Teachers (78.5%) are convinced that training has an important impact on their work. The teachers evaluated that the methods with the greatest impact are individual or group researches, courses and workshops and educational programmes that guarantee a higher level of education. They attributed a bit lower, but still high rates to educational conferences and seminars, observations at other schools, mentorship and observation and coaching of colleagues. A negative deviation according to the impact on the teachers' work was attributed to participation in teachers' networks.

When authors compared indexes of existent needs in the area of in-service training, they found out that Slovenian teachers rank above average. The areas in which our teachers wish most additional education are teaching students with special needs, the field of discipline and behaviour problems, competences in ICT and class management. The results of the TALIS research showed that in Slovenia, compared to other countries, most teachers are systematically educated, they have the system support and they evaluate that their education has a great impact on their further work. The areas in which they would like to get more knowledge are the areas that also stood out in other researches: working with students with special needs, dealing with behaviour and behavioural problems in the class, working with difficult groups of students and further training in the use of ICT (Peklaj & Puklek Levpušček 2006; Valenčič Zuljan & Vogrinc 2007 a; Valenčič Zuljan & Vogrinc 2007 b; Valenčič Zuljan, Krištof & Vogrinc 2007; Devjak & Polak 2007).

Comparing the results of educational intentions of teachers to enrol into new study programmes to get additional education shows that they would most likely decide to study the third subject, if the faculties offered it. Most teachers do not intend to enrol into master and doctoral studies. To conclude, teachers would rather participate in the forms of study that enable them more opportunity and flexibility in the labour market.

When it comes to the needs for further training, in this research the teachers stated the same areas that already appear in other researches: knowledge in the field of behaviour problems, working with students with special needs, communication skills and rhetoric, psychology and the use of ICT. The least additional knowledge is desired in the areas of adult education and knowledge connected to social activity. Teachers evaluate that they successfully transfer the knowledge they get during professional education into their pedagogical practice. They also evaluate that among all the forms of education, reading professional literature, participating in in-service training seminars and cooperating in professional projects, has the greatest impact on their professional development. Meanwhile, they think that observations from the school leaders and participating in study groups have the smallest impact. The teachers find it important to pass the knowledge they get in the in-service training programmes onto their colleagues, while they assess their efficiency in that a bit lower. They perceive that their chances of professional development at the school are good.

Comparison of both studies shows that there are enough opportunities for in-service training of teachers in Slovenia. Moreover, the system solutions support in-service training, this kind of education is mostly free of charge for teachers and falls in the range of their workload. Nevertheless, there are many opportunities of improving in-service training, especially when it comes to offering quality programmes in the fields most frequently stated by teachers (discipline, students with special needs, use of ICT, class management, communication). The teachers also showed great willingness to enter programmes that would qualify them to teach the third subject, which should be an important note for the faculties to enable such programmes. Further possibilities for improvement are shown in the area of cooperative learning. Teachers do not evaluate these forms of work well. This is a clear message to the

school leaders and leaders of different study groups. They should seriously consider promoting the quality of such learning.

### **4.3 The system of promotion into professional titles for professional staff in the field of education**

School teachers, pre-school teachers as well as support professional staff (counsellors, librarians etc) can be promoted if certain requirements are fulfilled: a certain period of employment, teaching performance, additional qualifications acquired through in-service training programmes and various extra professional activities (e.g. being a mentor to students from the faculties of education in practical work at the school). With such a promotion, the candidate is awarded the title of Mentor, Adviser or Consulter (Rules on the Title Promotion of the Employees in the Education (Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia, 54/02).

Exact criteria for evaluating the teacher's work (the type and number of points he/she gets) are stated in regulations. E.g. an in-service training seminar that lasts 8–15 hours is rated with 0.5 points, a seminar that lasts 16–23 hours is rated with 1 point and a seminar that lasts more than 24 hours is rated with 1.5 points. When promotion into the title Mentor is concerned, the teacher needs to get at least 4 points in the area of in-service training and 3 points in the area of professional work (mentoring students, leading training for the teaching staff, organizing different activities for students, school, parents, doing research, writing textbooks, etc). The teacher can get the title Consulter after 13 years of pedagogical work. Once the teacher attains all the titles, he/she has no more options for being promoted into professional titles. However, he/she can be promoted into wage grades. The titles the teacher attains are permanent and do not have to be renewed.

The differences between individual titles are also evident from the different wages they get. The teachers in primary and secondary schools fall into the same wage grades. So, their wages do not differ. The data in the table below (Table 1) show average gross wages of teachers in Slovenia (in USD) compared to average wages in the countries of OECD and EU (OECD, Education at a Glance 2009). The difference in the wage of a teacher in Slovenia after 15 years of work, who got maximum promotion and the teacher who got minimum promotion, is 1.876 USD,

which is about 1.000 USD a year in net sums. On average, these differences are substantially bigger in the EU than in Slovenia (8.896 for the first cycle of primary school, 9.229 USD for the second cycle of primary school and 10.087 USD for secondary school).

One of the problems of the current system may be that teachers attain titles relatively soon and cannot be promoted later on. Moreover, there are small differences in the incomes of beginner teachers and the teachers with the highest title. The only way for teachers with the highest titles (Consulter) to be promoted is to change teaching for school leadership and become candidates for the leading posts (principal assistant or principal). Expert teachers should be enabled other chances of promotion within the pedagogical field, e.g. counsellor to his/her colleagues at school when they need teaching advice.

**Table 1.** Average minimum and maximum gross wages of teachers according to different education levels and years of experience (according to OECD 2009).

		OECD	EU	Slovenia
Primary school – (Primary school – first cycle)	Beginner teacher wage	28.667	29.518	27.190
	Minimum wage after 15 years of experience	39.007	39.610	31.754
	Maximum wage after 15 years of experience	47.747	48.506	33.630
Lower secondary school (Primary school – second cycle)	Beginner teacher wage	31.000	31.691	27.190
	Minimum wage after 15 years of experience	41.993	42.056	31.754
	Maximum wage after 15 years of experience	51.470	51.285	33.630
Upper secondary school (Secondary school)	Beginner teacher wage	32.183	32.946	27.190
	Minimum wage after 15 years of experience	44.782	45.513	31.754
	Maximum wage after 15 years of experience	54.440	55.600	33.630

## 5 Teacher mobility

According to the documents of the European Union, teacher mobility is one of the key factors of professional training and achieving higher standards of teaching (Study on Key Indicators on Social Inclusion and Efficiency, Mobility, Adult Skills and Active Citizenship, 2006). The main goal of mobility and project cooperation of EU member countries is the “increase of quality of education and training executors, encouragement and transfer of innovations, support of transparency of educational systems, strengthening of the European dimensions and acquiring knowledge and competence in other environments” (National Report of Slovenia on the Implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme, 2007).

Mobility of teachers can be discussed in connection to these dimensions: within a country, among countries, among different levels of schooling and according to the transition between teaching and other professions.

Concerning mobility of teachers, in 2005 (according to the Labour Force Study), there were only few of those teaching in particular EU member countries and not being citizens of those countries. In the Republic of Slovenia, the rate of teachers from EU member countries was 0%, the same goes for the rate of teachers from other countries. Therefore, the international mobility of teachers in the Republic of Slovenia is (was) at zero (Study on Key Indicators on Social Inclusion and Efficiency, Mobility, Adult Skills and Active Citizenship, 2006, p. 87).

The key factors affecting international teacher mobility are the working conditions and legislation referring to teaching, family and cultural circumstances, teacher demand and mobility schemes (ibid. p. 99).

Mobility schemes are an important factor of mobility encouragement. Two schemes emerge within the Socrates programme: Erasmus and Comenius (the latter is a short-term European mobility scheme) (ibid. p. 115).

In the Republic of Slovenia, the international teacher mobility has increased since 2000. From 2000 to 2003, there were 453 teachers included in Leonardo da Vinci programmes, while from 2004 to 2007, there were 1125 of them included. In this period, the international mobility in the field of adult education has also increased (National

Report of Slovenia on the Implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme, 2007, p. 25).

In the same period, mobility of higher education teachers has also increased: in the year 2003/04, 73 individuals went abroad, in 2004/05 139 of them and in 2005/06 141 higher education teachers went abroad (ibid. p.24).

We should also mention bilateral agreements between countries and the scheme of “guest teachers” (e.g. the agreement between Hungary and Slovenia).

Absence of schemes of (international) mobility definitely presents an obstacle for teacher mobility. However, the sole existence of schemes cannot remove all the obstacles in mobility, e.g. mastering the language, wage differences and differences in teacher education systems (Study on Key Indicators on Social Inclusion and Efficiency, Mobility, Adult Skills and Active Citizenship 2006, p. 120).

According to the results of the research Study on Key Indicators on Social Inclusion and Efficiency, Mobility, Adult Skills and Active Citizenship, there will be no excess or deficit of teacher in the Republic of Slovenia at least until 2015. This means that their national mobility will also be limited by their relative availability. There is nothing fundamentally wrong with availability of posts and employment security. Nevertheless, there is a question of whether this kind of security will block the processes of international and national teacher mobility and within that, the processes of transferring and enrichment of knowledge.

In a broader sense, the immobility of teachers in the Republic of Slovenia is a part of a national and cultural pattern of survival including the attachment to the place of living, land, house and the network of relatives. The Slovenian traditional survival pattern in its very heart resists mobility. Thus, it is easier to increase mobility on the above-national level than on the level of the country. From this point of view, the programmes of the European Union (Erasmus, Da Vinci and Comenius) seem absolutely reasonable, since they break the deep-rooted patterns of survival and spatial mobility.

## **6 Current issues in the area of teacher education**

In April 2009, the Minister of Education and Sport appointed the National expert group for the preparation of the White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia. This was the first step toward the professional work leading to a reflection upon the whole pre-university system of education. The main task of the National expert group is to form a proposal of conceptual and system solutions for formation and completion of the educational system in the Republic of Slovenia. There have been 12 field groups formed, each dealing with separate areas of the school system and with specific questions in pedagogical work: the group for kindergarten, primary school, secondary school, vocational education, adult education, language in education, students with special needs, finance and regionalisation, education of nationalities, principles of education, private education sector and a group for pedagogical workers' education and their professional development. The group for teacher education and professional development will:

- analyze the current state of teacher education in the Republic of Slovenia and do comparative studies on foreign systems;
- form proposals of conceptual and system solutions in the areas for which the prior analysis will show that there need to be changes and modernizations made;
- organize extensive professional discussions on proposed solutions.

The work should be done by March 2011. According to the work done up to now and with regard to the results of the previous researches dealing with teacher education and professional development (e.g. Peklaj, C. et al. 2008; Marentič Požarnik, B. et al. 2005; Valenčič Zuljan, M. et al. 2005; Valenčič Zuljan & Vogrinc 2007c), new solutions i.e. proposals of changes are expected in these content areas: practical training of future pedagogical workers, readiness of teachers to be educated to teach the 3rd subject, induction period and entering the teaching profession, the State Teacher Certification Examination, permanent professional training and promotion of pedagogical workers into titles.

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## BIOGRAPHIES

**Jacek Bogucki** was born in 1967 in Świdnik (Poland). In 1992 he graduated the Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, and obtained the master-degree in Education. After graduation he started work in the Pedagogy and Psychology Faculty, and in 2000 he obtained a PhD in Human Sciences – Pedagogy. He currently works in Pedeutology and Health Education Department. In the course of work he served as secretary of international scientific conferences, participated in the creation of new degree courses and training programs. In 2008 he received the Medal of the National Education Commission. He is the editor and co-editor of 5 books and author and co-author of 43 scientific articles. His research interests and research focuses on issues related to the social functioning of children and adolescents, sociometric techniques, problems of individuals with ADHD, health education and the issues of teacher education in Poland and European Union.

**Mara Cotič** is an Associate Professor in Didactics of Mathematics and Elementary School Mathematics at the Faculty of Education Koper, University of Primorska. She develops modern models of teaching elementary school mathematics, especially in the fields of geometry, data processing and problem solving. Cotič is author of the National Mathematics Curriculum for Elementary School, she has written a series of textbooks, exercise books and handbooks for elementary school, and published numerous scientific and academic articles.

**Vlatka Domović** received her PhD in Education in 2000 and is the associate professor at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb; vice – president of Croatian Academy of Educational Sciences; president of Scientific Committee of the Centre for Education Research and Development; member of the Executive committee of Comparative Educational Society in Europe. Her research interests include: teacher education and training, educational administration, comparative education, school effectiveness, and vocational education and training. She is currently the main researcher in a scientific project “Development of the National Standard for Professional Teacher Competences”.

**Eve Eisenschmidt** received her PhD in Educational Sciences in 2006 at Tallinn University, where she is currently the director of Haapsalu

College. She started her career as a class teacher in primary school. She led the expert group who prepared the implementation of the induction year for novice teachers in Estonia and her doctoral thesis was about implementation of the induction programme for novice teachers in Estonia. Her current research area is professional development of novice teachers during the first years of teaching. She has been involved in preparation teams of teacher education strategies and reform projects in Estonia. She also is a head of professional council of education in Estonia and member of European Network of Teacher Education Policy (ENTEP) and member of the Newly Qualified Teachers in Northern Europe- Research and Development Network (NQTNE).

**Samo Fošnarič** is a Full Professor and a Dean at the Faculty of Education on the University of Maribor, Slovenia. His research focuses on two fields. First is a Didactics of Science and Technology and second is Ergonomics of Children's Working Environment. Samo Fošnarič has very reach bibliography and today is a member of several bodies and boards in the educational and ergonomics scientific field. For example he is a member of a Technical Committee in the International Ergonomics Association (IEA) Ergonomics for Children in Educational Environments (ECEE); Professional Expert for the Education Field of Engineering and Technology at the at the Inspectorate of Education in Slovenia; Editor-in-Chief of "Journal of Elementary Education"; Member of Council of Slovenia for Education, Training and Youth Employment; Member of the research group "Kinesiology for the quality of life" and a president and member of many organizational and scientific committees at national and international professional and scientific conferences.

**Marie-Françoise Fave-Bonnet** is a professor in Education Sciences and the director of the research centre for education and training "CREF" at the university Paris Ouest Nanterre la Defence. She also teaches at the Master and Doctor programmes. Her research interests concern the field of higher education: evaluation, pedagogical practice, academic staff training and the Bologna process. She participated in EVALUE and TUNING international projects.

**Beata Głodzik** is a Teacher trainer, Academic Teacher in Health Education Department at the Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology, UMCS. MA and PhD in Elementary Education (2002), postgraduate studies in Montessori Education. Active member of Polish Montessori Association, propagator of Montessori method in Poland. Her research

interests concern on pupil self-esteem development; Expertise in small children education, especially dealing with mathematics education: development of maths' concepts in children, Montessori way of teaching mathematics, learning difficulties connected with dyslexia and dyscalculia, early diagnosis of sensory integration problems. Participated in several EU projects (Erasmus, EFFECT). Coordinator of several teacher trainings programmes (e.g. postgraduate studies for subject teachers – grant awarded by the Ministry of Polish Education 1999–2001).

**Olimpius Istrate** received his BA and his MEd from the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences. Presently, he is enrolled in a PhD programme – thesis on evaluating the E-learning Programmes. His research fields of interest are: e-learning, computer assisted instruction, pedagogy, education programmes evaluation, and teacher training. He is an associate researcher within the Institute for Education Sciences (Bucharest). He is also employed as an assistant professor within the Faculty of Education Sciences (University of Bucharest) – Computer-Assisted Instruction and Pedagogy courses – and, for short-terms, he undertakes consultancy tasks by various national and international institutions. Since 2006, he has coordinated the E-learning.Romania programme.

**Ritva Jakku-Sihvonen** is educationalist and research professor who is working as a Head of Unit for Evaluating Learning Outcomes at the Finnish National Board of Education. She has worked also as a director of the Department of Quality assurance and Monitoring at the Finnish National Board of Education and a Director for Continuing Education Center at the University of Helsinki. She was National Project Manager for National-Level Coordination of Degree Program Development in Teacher Training and the Sciences of Education (VOKKE) (Bologna Process in Finland) at the Faculty of Behavioral Sciences at the University of Helsinki in 2003–2006. She has written books and articles concerning Teacher Education and Evaluation.

**Anna Muraveva** is a Senior expert of the Centre for Vocational Education and Training Studies, Moscow Russia since 1998. deputy director of National Tempus Office in Russia since 2006. PhD in Philology.

Area of specialisation: Development of programme strategy and individual projects in the field of education, VET and labour market; social partnership and education management; competence-based

modular curricula design; development of occupational standards, development of social partnership mechanisms and regional strategies of social dialogue; design of adult education and training models for VET schools; trainer in: methodology of competence-based curricula; regional social partnership development, national qualifications framework.

Author and co-author of over 40 articles and publications in the field of VET and Labour market.

**Hannele Niemi**, Ph.D, is a Professor of Education (1998–) at the Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, University of Helsinki. She is Chair of the CICERO Learning Network ([www.helsinki.fi/cicero](http://www.helsinki.fi/cicero)) for multidisciplinary research on learning (2005–). She has been Vice Rector for academic affairs at the University of Helsinki (2003–2008, 2008–2009), Dean of the Faculty of Education (2001–2003), Head of the Department of Education and Vice-Dean at the University of Helsinki (1998–2000). She has been Professor of Education in Teacher Education Departments of Oulu, Turku and Tampere Universities (1987–1998) and Visiting Scholar at Michigan State University (6 months in 1989) and Stanford University (3 months in 2010). She has nominated as J.H. Koh Professor (Honorary) in Singapore, National Institute of Education in 2010 and Honorary Professor in University of Bucharest in 2010. Her main interest areas are quality in teaching and learning, teachers' professional development and technology- based learning environments.

**Laila Niklasson**, PhD, is a senior lecturer at Mälardalen University, Sweden. Her teaching assignment includes pre-service training and in-service training for professions; including a programme for headmasters. Mostly, she teaches about professions, leadership, development work, and evaluation. Together with municipality schools, she participates in a European project to develop learning material about European identity. Current evaluations concern a project for autonomous schools; a project for unemployed youth and an evaluation of the national revision of all course plans for subjects in compulsory school. One of the articles in progress (in cooperation with a colleague) presents results about how preschool children perceive outdoor environment, another whether a European project resulted in reflection among teachers (with European colleagues). A forthcoming conference paper is about how a national initiative offers 'drop out' teacher students to finish their studies; another is about a new model to support internal evaluation of projects (with several colleagues).

**Elisabeth Nilsen** has a position as Ass. Professor/Lecturer in Education at the School of professional studies at Bodø university college, Norway. She has a Cand. Paed. Degree (in education) from the University of Oslo. She has been a PhD-student at the Danish University of Education, Copenhagen. However, the doctoral degree is not fulfilled according to administrative duties. She has also been a Leader of the Institute for Teacher education, Dean at the Department for teacher education and Vice-chancellor (50%) at Bodø University College. She has experience in administration as a Consultant at the Directorate for education at the County-level.

With her broad interests and experience in education, she has been a member of several bodies and boards in the educational system and in research, both at the national and the regional level. In her research, her focus has been on teacher education: Organization and Management, curriculum, methods, and cooperation between university and practice schools.

**Irina Obukhova** works as a deputy head of the Department of the International relations at the Moscow State Pedagogical University. Before that she worked at The UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education. She mainly works as a project developer, staff trainer, organisator, coordinator. She graduated from Moscow State Lomonosov University and has a masters degree on CS, Faculty of Computer Science. As a co-author she published many articles in the proceedings at international conferences and other, last publications: Instrumental Web – model realization of ECTS process (manual for users); Analytical Survey: European Credit Transfer System Enabling Student Exchange Between Russian And (Western) European Universities, Teacher Education in the Russian Federation; The Sextant project- a modern educational navigation tool for students.

**Olga Oleynikova** is a Director of the Centre for Vocational Education and Training Studies, Moscow Russia. Director of National Tempus Office in Russia. Professor of Pedagogics. At the outset of her career she used to work for the Russian Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. In 1996 she was appointed by the European Training Foundation leader of the National Observatory for VET (Centre for VET Studies) in the Russian Federation. Apart from practical aspects of promoting international cooperation in education, Ms. Oleynikova is a researcher and author of a comprehensive manuscript on comparative education, dozens of publications and articles on European and international VET published in Russia and abroad.

**Cirila Peklaj** was born in year 1961 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. She graduated, obtained her masters and doctoral degree from Faculty of Arts, Department of Psychology. Her doctoral thesis was titled: Effects of cooperative learning on cognitive, socio-affective and motivational processes in students. In year 1987 she started to work at the Department of Psychology as teaching assistant and from 1998 on as university teacher. She works with future teachers at the Faculty of Arts (Educational psychology) and at other faculties at the University of Ljubljana and runs courses for psychology students (Interactive way of learning, Themes from educational psychology) on graduate and post-graduate level. She also works in in-service teacher training for teachers in primary, secondary and tertiary level. From year 2006 she is the Head of Centre for Educational Development at the Faculty of Arts. Occasionally she teaches abroad (Opicina: Istituto regionale di ricerca, sperimentazione e aggiornamento educativi, Italia, 1998; Hope University Liverpool, England, 2006; Oulu University of Applied Sciences, Finland, 2008).

Her main research interest is connected with learning and its effects: learning styles, self-regulated learning, learning motivation, co-operative learning and teachers' competencies. She participates in different international conferences, in different research projects and from year 2006 in an international Comenius program titled Identifying teacher quality (ITQ).

**Marina Sacilotto-Vasylenko** received her PhD in Education Sciences in 2007. She is a research fellow at the research centre for education and training "CREF" at the University Paris Ouest Nanterre la Defence. One of her research interests is the comparative analysis of policy and practice of teacher education and continuing professional development. She is currently carrying out a research on induction of beginning teachers into the profession in three countries: France, Canada and Ukraine.

**Marco Snoek** is a professor at the School of Education of the University of Applied Sciences Hogeschool van Amsterdam, The Netherlands. His research focuses on the professional quality and professional development of teachers in the context of school innovation. He has published articles on teacher education policies, in both the Dutch and the European context. Marco is a member of the boards of the Dutch Association for Teacher Educators (VELON) and the Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE). As a representative of the Dutch



government, he is a member of the European Commission's Thematic Working Group on the Professional Development of Teachers.

**Vladimíra Spilková**, CSc. works at the Faculty of Education of Charles University in Prague as a head of Department of Primary Education. The main focus of her interest is the theory and research of teaching profession, teacher education, education policy and primary education. She has taken an active role in the professional standard debate for the Ministry of Education in the Czech Republic and also on the European level. She has participated (2006 – 2009) as a national representative in the Erasmus – Comenius project „Identifying Teacher Quality – Toolbox for Teacher Reflection“. She has been a leader of the significant research project of the Ministry of Education – „Teaching profession in the environment of changing education requirements“ (2007–2013). She has published in international journals for example in the UK, France, Germany. Her work has been contained in book chapters in several countries, most notable are USA and Canada. Her most significant publications are: *Current Changes in Teacher Education in the Czech Republic* (2004); *Transformation of the Czech Primary Education after Velvet Revolution* (2005); *Teacher Quality and Professional Standard* (2010).

**Milena Valenčič – Zuljan** holds a Ph.D in pedagogy from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. She works as an associate professor of instructional sciences at the Faculty of Education University of Ljubljana. Her research interest are teachers' professional development, factors influencing teacher innovation, mentoring, student and teacher conceptions of instruction, learner activity in instruction, the cognitive-constructivist model of instruction and action research. She runs various in-service seminars for teachers and published numerous scientific and academic articles. She is also engaged in various projects (e.g. Social capital, cultural capital and school climate as predictors of school performance of the students, The analysis of the factors that influence on meaningful science and technology learning, Encouraging a culture of research and innovation in schools through a process of lifelong teacher learning, Teacher education for new competencies for the knowledge society and the role of these competencies at educational goal attainment at school).

**Jaroslava Vašutová**, Ph.D. works at the Institute for Research and Development of Education, Faculty of Education of Charles University in Prague. She devotes to theory and research of teaching profession,

teacher education, and teacher educators and publishes in this field. She has worked out the first proposal of professional standard of teachers for the Ministry of Education in CR (2001). In 1990 she was nominated the national coordinator ENSDHE CEPES. For many years, she has been interested in higher education pedagogy, academic staff development, and university teaching/learning improvement. At the Faculty of Education, she leads the course Higher Education Pedagogy for doctoral students and academic teachers-beginners. She is engaged in programmes of lifelong education for teachers. Her significant publications are: *Teaching Strategies in Higher Education* (2002), *Teaching Profession in the Czech Educational Context* (2004), *To Educate Future Teachers* (2008).

**Simona Velea** is an education researcher within the Institute for Education Sciences in Bucharest, Head of Theory of Education Department. She graduated at the Faculty of Education, University of Bucharest, and holds a Master Degree in Educational Evaluation. She also holds a Ph.D. in Education Sciences.

In 2005/2007, she was an associate professor at the Teacher Training Department, University "Politehnica" in Bucharest, teaching Pedagogy and Psychology of Education for future teachers.

Since 2008, she has been member of the UNESCO National Commission for Education. Her research studies focused on citizenship education, evaluation of social and educational programmes, teaching and learning practices and teacher training.

**Vlasta Vizek Vidovic** received her PhD in psychology in 1983. She has been a Professor of educational psychology at the University of Zagreb, Croatia for more than twenty years. Currently, she works as a senior researcher at the Centre for educational research and development of the Institute for social research in Zagreb. Her main research interests are in the field of motivation to learn/teach and teacher professional development. She has been involved in several EU projects regarding implementation of Bologna process into higher education and is presently a head of Croatian Accreditation Council for higher education. She is also engaged in various in-service teacher education programmes.

**Janez Vogrinc** works as an assistant professor for Statistics and Methodology at the Faculty of Education in Ljubljana, Slovenia. His main research area are criteria for evaluating the quality of the scientific findings, the professional development of education practitioners and teaching/learning practices, action research. He is involved in

international (“e.g. Enhancing Professional Development of Education Practitioners and Teaching/Learning practices in SEE countries, Teacher Education – Innovation of Studies in Mathematics and IT) and national projects (e.g. The analysis of the factors that influence on meaningful science and technology learning, Encouraging a culture of research and innovation in schools through a process of lifelong teacher learning).

**Dorota Zdybel** is an Academic Teacher in Department of Didactics; PhD in Elementary Education “Montessori school as a context of communicative competence development in 7–8 year old children” (1999). Participated in several international projects: Erasmus, MASHAV course- Bilingualism and multilingualism in early childhood education (2003). Expertise in child’s language development, developmental interconnections between language and cognition, children’s theories of mind development. Wide research experience, including: designing educational programs and standards for assessing the level of child’s language development, evaluating effectiveness of primary education; teaching methodology of educational research on graduate & postgraduate level. Author and co-author of over 30 scientific articles.



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