



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Workshop III

Learning to lead – challenges to educational leaders

The role of school leaders has changed as rapid technological change, economic globalisation and increased migration and mobility challenged schools to become learning communities, to equip young people with knowledge, skills and attitudes and to involve wider communities in the governance of education and training.

The workshop will focus on the new role and approach for school leaders:

- to stimulate the participants to share their experience with other practitioners, experts and policy-makers;
- to raise awareness on the topic and strengthen mutual learning;
- to explore and discuss examples of good policies and practices identified during the study visits.

The outcomes of the seminar will provide a better understanding of the policy and practice in this area, will be included in a publication and used to prepare study visits in the future.

The discussion should be structured on the following key points:

1. What is a good school (education or training institution) nowadays?
2. Which new approaches in educational management have been observed in recent years in your countries? Which competences does a school leader need in today's education and training?
3. How should school leaders be trained to respond to the changing roles and today's challenges?
4. Based on the discussions and on your own experience, which competences should most leaders acquire in order for schools to equip students and teachers with key competences?

Summary of discussion

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1. The workshop engaged in an exercise to identify the characteristics of a good school.

The outcomes were grouped under the following descriptive headings:

- good physical conditions and learning resources;
 - model a learning community for all but focused on the needs of the students;
 - display care for all the individuals in the school;
 - operate with freedom and responsibility practiced by all members of the school community;
 - creativity evident in the school;
 - good leadership and good management at all levels in the school;
 - collaboration of all stakeholders which is energized by open communication.
2. The workshop participants shared **examples of new approaches** observed in educational management (for more detailed descriptions of the initiatives please see the [workshop booklet](#)):

Working and learning together

School clusters in Belgium where 24 autonomous schools worked together on policy development and areas of common interest.

School management initiative in Tromsø, Norway where schools work collaboratively to develop good practice and solve common problems

In the Netherlands school collaboration and research on means of building **quality in schools** is underway.

Creation of a positive atmosphere

A school in Sweden which had been failing badly in all areas of student learning had improved its learning outcomes significantly by **developing a respectful and collaborative ethos**. The professional leadership and example of management and staff had a profound and immediate effect on student outcomes.

Support of learning

The work of the FALSS, **Finland Association of Local Secondary Schools**, provides quality assurance training and support where 30% of members are small schools (≥ 120 students).

The benefits of education in a **small school environment** are being supported in Salzburg, Austria where planning and review systems are being developed to support change and flexibility.

Quality and accountability

Quality assurance and educational leadership initiatives in Malta using school development planning is reshaping the culture in schools developing openness and collaboration.

School self-evaluation is well developed in Finland over the past twenty years and there is no external inspection system.

Declaration of Human Rights in the Educational process was outlined as the basis education following a report from the UK where deficiencies were noted: teachers were not trusted as professionals and learning time was devoted to extensive testing procedures.

School Management: roles and responsibilities

A system of **e-school administration** in Turkey provided an efficient system using IT in school management is employed in Turkey to process data on the 40 million students in education.

In Spain a revision and development of the respective **roles of head teachers and inspectors** alongside a rigorous process in the appointment of head teachers has increasingly professionalized education.

3. Finally the workshop considered two new initiatives:

The **development of a training course for newly appointed heads of schools** which would provide a leadership skills training programmed focusing on the development of inter and intra personal skills of the participants. By assessing and reflecting on personal styles of relating/responding in communication, the development of listening skills and of techniques to improve effectiveness in leadership including positive thinking, personal training, role play, review of case studies. Team building through facing shared practical challenges, sharing of experiences and the development of a support network were included.

The role of inspection. Various practices were identified as being best practice in both inspection and self evaluation processes. These included:

- the collection of data on e.g. student progress, teacher performance;
- examining the pedagogical climate and parental satisfaction with the school;
- the development of an open system for feedback the use of SWOT and other analysis tools;
- transparency and a level of external feedback which relates to internal assessment which can enable an objective assessment of school effectiveness;
- self-evaluation was seen as a preferred and professional approach to quality assurance in education though countries varied greatly in their practices in this area.