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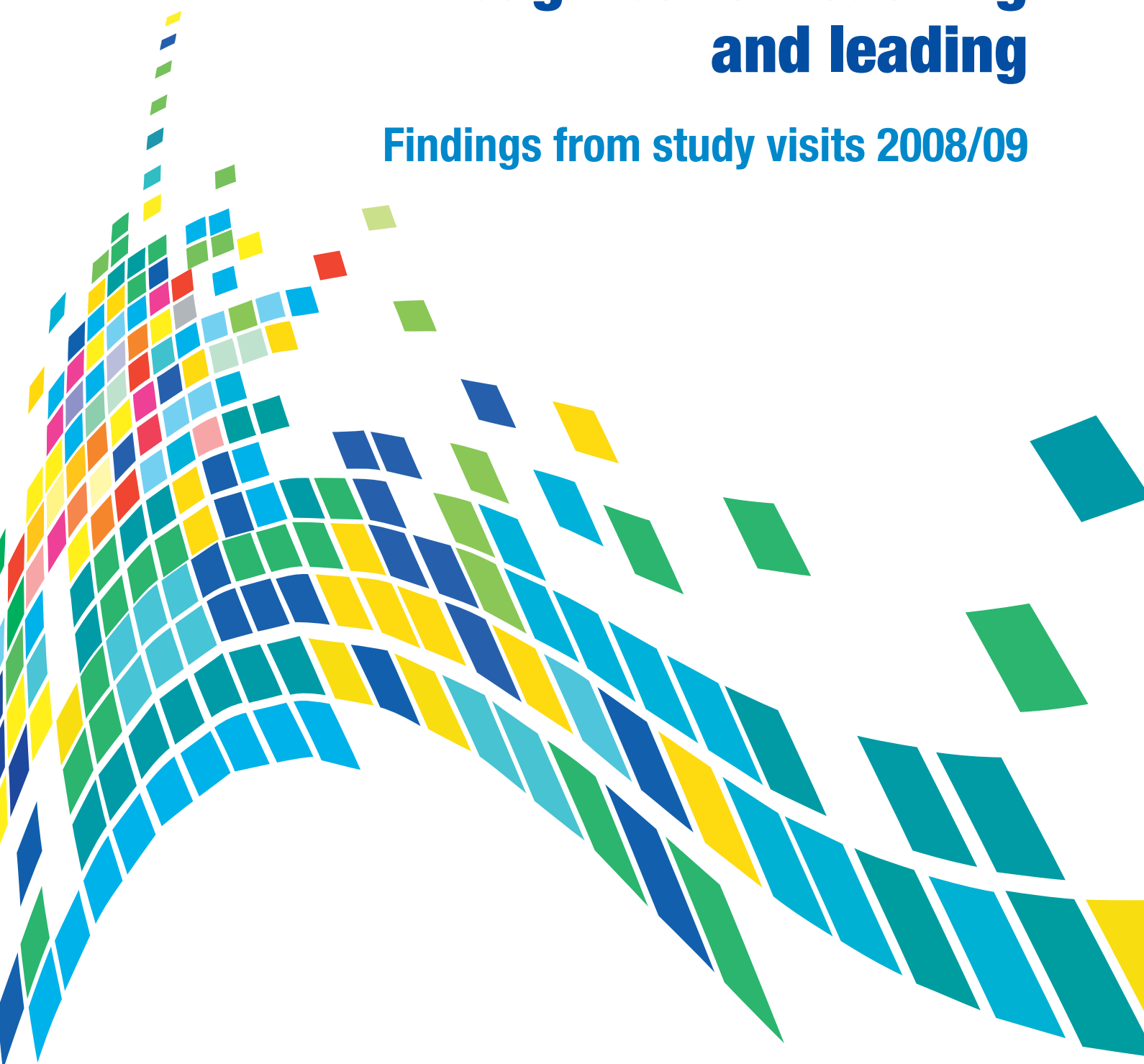
Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

EN

Better competences through better teaching and leading

Findings from study visits 2008/09





Better competences through better teaching and leading

Findings from study visits 2008/09



A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet.
It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu>).

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**The European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training (Cedefop)** is the European Union's
reference centre for vocational education and training.

We provide information on and analyses of vocational
education and training systems, policies, research and practice.

Cedefop was established in 1975
by Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75.

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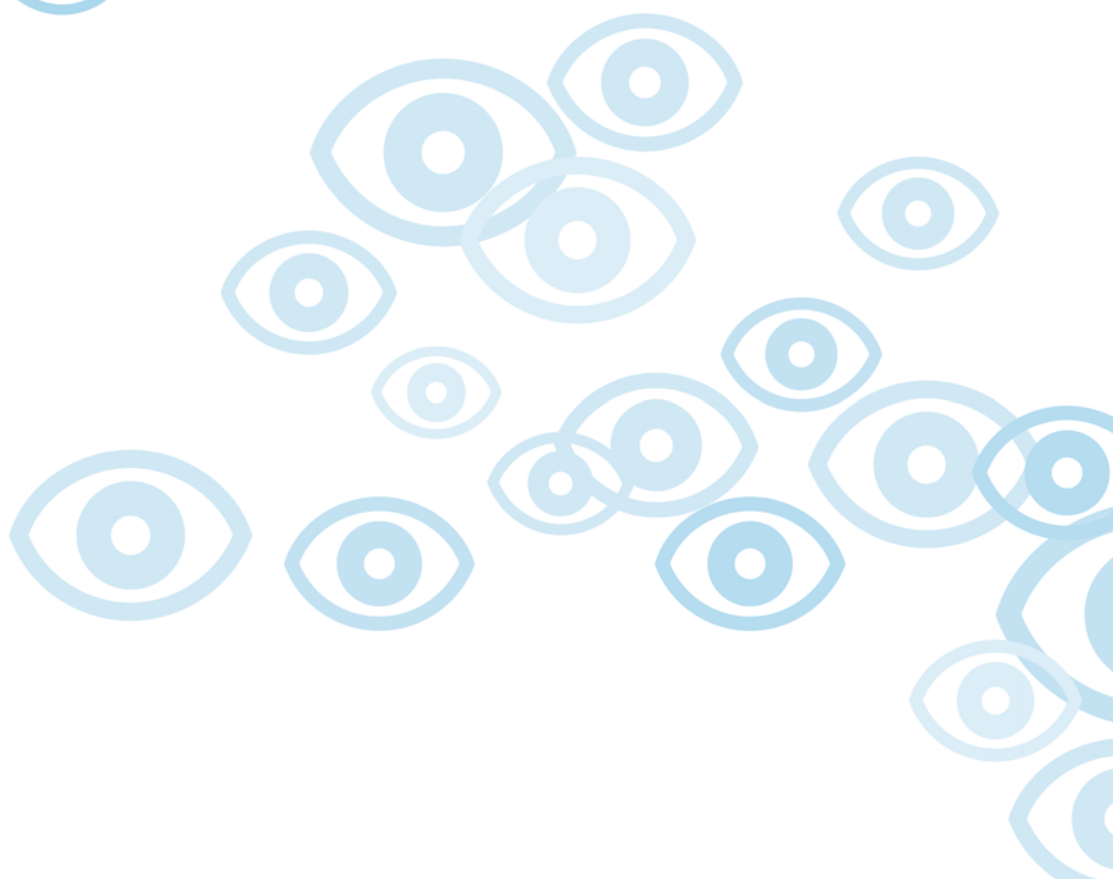
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Foreword

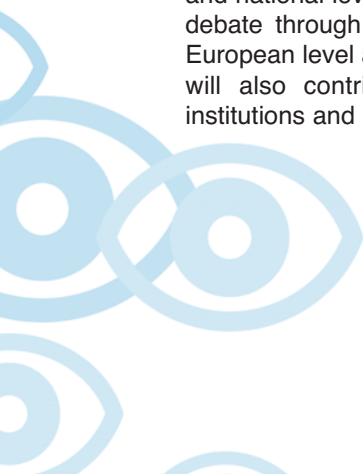
Since 2008, Cedefop has coordinated the study visits programme for education and vocational training specialists and decision-makers, one of the key actions of the European lifelong learning programme (2007-13). Cedefop's success in managing study visits for vocational education and training (VET) specialists for more than 20 years has been acknowledged and it is a stimulating challenge to embark on coordinating a transversal programme that includes all fields of education and training. It has worked out well and as we expected, brought new opportunities for developing the programme in bringing together VET, general, higher and adult education into a lifelong learning perspective.

The study visits programme is an effective platform for education and training policy development and cooperation in Europe. The programme provides excellent opportunities for discussion and knowledge-sharing, exchanging ideas and practices, networking and future cooperation for a wide spectrum of education and vocational training specialists and policy-makers, including social partners.

This publication presents findings of about 100 study visits 2008/09 related to improving quality and efficiency, which is one of the priorities of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020'), and more specifically, its three thematic components: acquisition of key competences, challenges for teachers and trainers and new approaches to leadership and management. Outcomes of exchanges that take place during study visits are recorded in group reports and bring a lot of interesting and relevant information to policy-makers and experts working in the field, especially practical examples of implementation of policies at national, regional and local levels.

Cedefop has set a priority to capture, assess and disseminate the outcomes of study visits to wider audiences. This publication shows that outcomes of study visits have strong potential for informing policy cooperation and development. In cooperation with key actors at European and national levels, Cedefop is committed to stimulate further reflection and debate through analysis of practices and common learning on issues at European level and to disseminate this knowledge. We hope this publication will also contribute to building bridges among educational and VET institutions and developing interesting cooperation projects.

Aviana Bulgarelli
Director of Cedefop



Acknowledgements

This publication is based on the contributions of many actors involved in preparing and carrying out study visits. Thanks are due to participants and, especially, to group reporters of study visits that took place in 2008/09 who brought to light the initiatives and projects presented here in their group reports; to organisers of study visits and representatives of hosting institutions who built the content of the visits; to national agencies who coordinate study visits at national level and who helped to get in touch with host institutions and collect information. Thanks are also due to those who enthusiastically presented examples of good practice during study visits and at a seminar organised by Cedefop on 1 and 2 February 2010 in Thessaloniki, and who provided the descriptions used in this publication. Thanks to all Cedefop colleagues who contributed to and participated in the seminar.

Cedefop would like to thank Irina Jemeljanova and Angela Musca of the study visits team who collected and analysed the outcomes of study visits, organised the synthesis seminar, drafted the text and prepared materials for this publication. Finally, thanks to Christine Nychas from Cedefop for her technical support in preparing this publication.

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Introduction

The study visits programme for education and vocational training specialists and decision-makers is part of the transversal programme of the lifelong learning programme (LLP). As such, it aims to support policy development and cooperation at European level in lifelong learning ⁽¹⁾. Cedefop, at the request of the European Commission, has coordinated the programme at European level since 2008. The programme has made significant progress towards becoming a genuinely transversal action with a lifelong learning perspective, bringing together all levels of education and training, in terms of both thematic coverage and participation.

A model of peer learning by nature, the programme reaches a wide spectrum of education and vocational training decision-makers and practitioners. It also gives an opportunity to those who do not participate in European-level working groups and clusters to learn from one another and explore new trends and developments in education and training and become involved in European cooperation on lifelong learning. In the academic year 2008/09, the **largest groups of participants** were head teachers and teacher trainers (25 %), directors of educational and training institutions, guidance and validation centres (15.6 %) and representatives of local, regional and national authorities (11.5 %) ⁽²⁾. Thus, study visits provide educational leaders and those responsible for educational and vocational training policies with a real **opportunity for exchange, mobility and networking**. This is quoted as one of the ways to improve teachers' and school leaders' professional development in the Council conclusions of 26 November 2009 ⁽³⁾. The programme brings educational leaders and decision-makers into contact and provides a platform for exchanging views with representatives from the world of work (the social partners make up 6.3 % of participants).

Study visits cover a **broad variety of themes** that are in line with the priorities of the European policy agenda in education and training. In 2008/09, about one third of visits were devoted to improving quality and efficiency of education and training. The Council of the European Union in its conclusions of 12 May 2009 maintains that one of the major challenges is to ensure everyone acquires key competences. To achieve this, it is necessary to ensure high quality teaching by providing teachers and trainers with adequate initial teacher education and continuous professional development, to improve leadership in

⁽¹⁾ European Parliament; Council of the European Union (2006). Decision 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning. *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 327, 24.11.2006, p. 45-68. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:327:0045:0068:en:PDF> [cited 16.4.2010].

⁽²⁾ Other target groups include the social partners, educational and vocational training inspectors, heads of departments, pedagogical or guidance advisers, representatives of education and training networks and associations, of educational services, labour offices or guidance centres, researchers (see also Figure 1).

⁽³⁾ Council of the European Union (2009). Council conclusions of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 302, 12.12.2009, p. 6-9. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:302:0006:0009:EN:PDF> [cited 16.4.2010].

education and training and develop effective quality assurance systems ⁽⁴⁾. The findings of study visits summarised in this publication are grouped under **three thematic headings**: learning to learn, learning to teach and learning to lead, which reflect the essential elements that contribute to improving quality and efficiency in education and training.

According to group reports, **participants are very satisfied** with the quality of discussions and networking opportunities that study visits provide. They value the opportunities to learn from colleagues from other countries that are provided through European education programmes for educational specialists and decision-makers. Such learning brings the European dimension into education and training. Cooperation is established between education and training institutions throughout Europe. For example, as a result of the study visit *'The professional development of teachers in Scotland'* (Group 290, February 2009), a close relationship was established between teacher education institutions and education partners in Germany and Scotland to help both future and current teachers/trainers rethink their mission with regard to current educational priorities.

Group reports prepared by participants during study visits were the main source of information for this publication. They are a rich source of information about practices in education and training in participating countries. Cedefop study visits team collected the information from study visits that took place in 2008/09. More than 100 policies, initiatives and projects were described by participants as examples of good practice on specific topics. This selection represents only a small sample of the initiatives identified and presented at the synthesis seminar that took place on 1 and 2 February 2010 in Thessaloniki, Greece. Many more can be found in the group reports available from the study visits website:

 <http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu>.

Initiatives presented in this publication are placed in specific national, regional and local contexts in order to understand why they were chosen and which issues they intended to address. This helps to reflect on their transferability to other contexts. Descriptions were contributed by those who presented them during study visits and during a Cedefop seminar (for more information see page 51) where these findings were discussed and validated. They also contain contact information of host institutions and details of a contact person should anyone wish to learn more or establish contact.

⁽⁴⁾ Council of the European Union (2009). Council conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET2020'). *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2-10. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:119:0002:0010:EN:PDF> [cited 16.4.2010].

Key data 2008/09

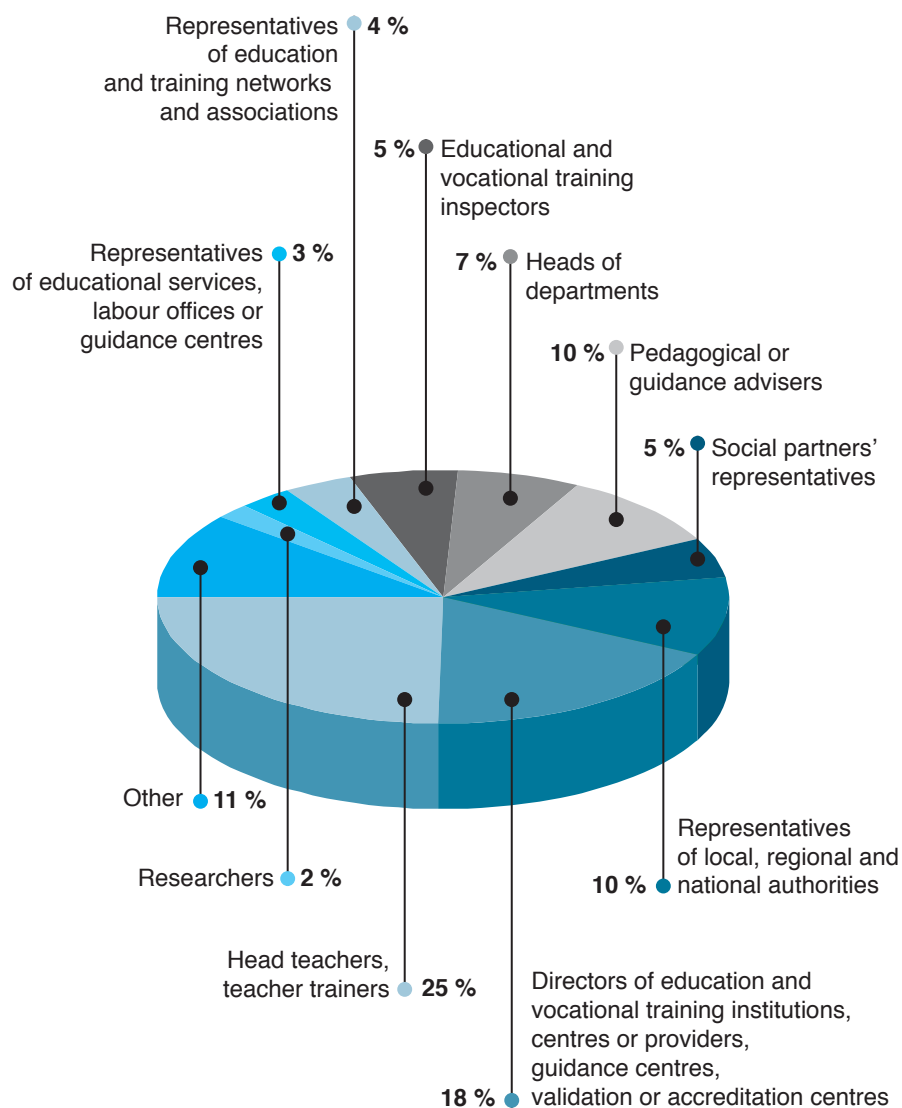
Table 1. **Study visits 2008/09 by type**

Study visits	Number of visits
on general education	128
on vocational education and training	41
with a lifelong learning approach	77
Total	246

Table 2. **Study visits 2008/09 on selected themes**

Theme	Number of visits
Early language learning	3
Language teaching and learning	7
Vocationally-oriented language learning	1
Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)	4
Equal opportunities for disadvantaged students in education and vocational training systems	13
2008 European year of intercultural dialogue	10
2009 European year of creativity and innovation	3
European dimension in education	11
Gender equity in education and training systems	3
Active citizenship through education and training	3
Developing entrepreneurship among young people and adults	9
Making science education more attractive	5
ICT in education and training	16
The teaching profession, challenges for teachers and trainers	13
New pedagogical methods to improve literacy skills	2
School management	13
Quality assurance in education and vocational training	10
Monitoring and evaluation of education and training	4
Measures to prevent school failure and early school leaving	8
The role of parents and their participation in school life	2
Presentation of national systems of education and vocational training	32

Figure 1. **Participants 2008/09 by category** (total number of participants: 2 532)



Learning to learn – Challenges for learners

(acquiring key competences, becoming open-minded and socially aware)

One study visit participant pointed out that schools of today need to prepare students for the ‘world that we do not know yet’. One of the first questions that educators seek to answer is what students should learn. What should they be able to do after school? Will school graduates be able to use what they learned at school easily when they enter world of work and life? Will they be ready and motivated to learn throughout their lives?

Recent research shows that there is a trend across the EU towards **competence-based teaching and learning and a learning outcomes** (what a learner knows, understands and is able to do) approach ⁽⁵⁾ that forms part of an innovative approach to teaching and learning ⁽⁶⁾. European countries have made good progress in developing school curricula with more emphasis on cross-curricular approaches and ‘real-life’ applications that support development of students’ key competences necessary for personal fulfilment, active citizenship and employability. Although improving literacy and basic skills still requires effort, the transversal competences (digital competence, social skills, cooperation skills and learning skills) are gaining more and more attention. There is also growing demand from employers for these competences ⁽⁷⁾.

The two competences examined in this publication, namely, communication in foreign languages and social and civic competences play an important role in widening individuals’ horizons, increasing awareness and understanding of diversity of cultures and perspectives and developing personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence, thus, allowing individuals to participate in social and working life.

During study visits, participants observed a wide variety of interesting and effective pedagogical approaches, methods and materials that prove to support better the development of communication in foreign languages and social and civic competences. **Early start brings advantages for acquiring competences**, both basic and transversal, through increased self-confidence and open-mindedness, improved communication skills, learning through play. In Poland, for example, the entire system of primary education was changed to ensure early language learning.

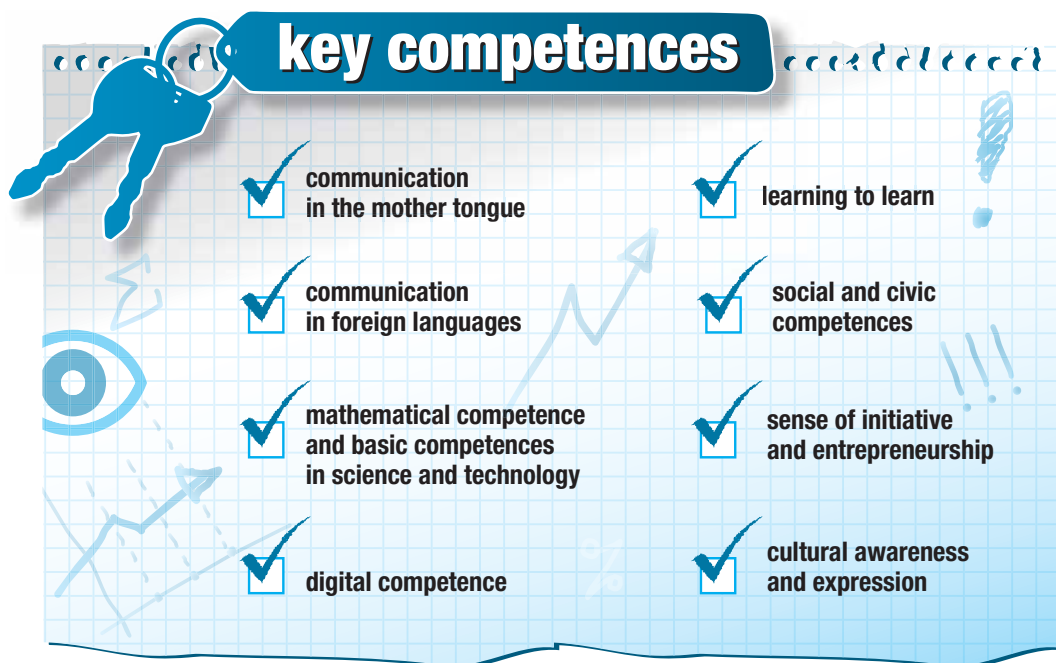
⁽⁵⁾ European Commission (2009). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Key competences for a changing world. Draft joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the ‘Education and training 2010 work programme’*. Brussels, 25.11.2009, COM(2009)640 final. Available from Internet: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/joint10/com640_en.pdf [cited 16.4.2010].

⁽⁶⁾ Cedefop (2009). *The shift to learning outcomes. Policies and practices in Europe*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3054_en.pdf [cited 20.4.2010].

⁽⁷⁾ Council of the European Union (2009). *Council conclusions on new skills for new jobs. Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs. In 2930th Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council meeting. 6479/09, Brussels, 9.3.2009*. Available from Internet: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/106549.pdf [cited 16.4.2010].

Cedefop (2010). *Skills supply and demand in Europe: medium-term forecast up to 2020*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3052_en.pdf [cited 20.4.2010].

Figure 2. Key competences for lifelong learning



Source: European Parliament; Council of the European Union, 2006 ⁽⁸⁾.

Equipping students with basic skills in active citizenship and intercultural education is a concern of most education and training systems in Europe. It is important to support and motivate, at school level, young people (including from early years) to become involved in democratic processes. Findings of study visits suggest that citizenship education mostly concerns students enrolled in secondary education.

Development of these competences is integrated into the curricula and/or takes place during extracurricular and out-of-class activities that are an integral part of schools' philosophy (work plans). **Applying acquired skills in 'real life' situations** is extremely important and effective for students' motivation and meaningful learning. Involving parents

⁽⁸⁾ European Parliament; Council of the European Union (2006). Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning. *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10-18. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0010:0018:en:PDF> [cited 16.4.2010].

in language, intercultural and social activities, in mediation and translation tasks is effective in valuing mother tongue, encouraging speaking and building learning-supportive communities.

In Turkey, a hotel and tourism school (page 20) provides students with the opportunity to apply their English language skills and vocational skills in reception, room service, sports centre and kitchen and feel the benefits of knowing a foreign language for employability. In Portugal, students improve and apply their social skills in a truly democratic assembly of a school environmental and civic council and contribute significantly to improving their school and community (page 21). In Spain, regional centres for innovation in education (CRIET) bring together students and teachers from schools in rural areas for valuable experiences of communication and social integration; intercultural mediators work with students and parents to help them understand the mission and values of the schools and solve the difficulties they face (page 14). In Romania, children from various cultural backgrounds meet in after-school activities to learn languages and Romanian culture (page 22). In Latvia, students develop their talents and key competences through hobby education which is a State-supported system (page 19).

Most effective approaches of language teaching are based on **communicative methodologies, cross-curricular learning and active learning**, such as the total physical response. Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) receives positive feedback from practitioners and has support from educational authorities and leaders. CLIL practices and options vary from country to country, depending on local language policies, number of hours allocated, content taught through CLIL, support to teachers, etc. CLIL curricula in mainstream schools and pilot projects in primary education target creative or play activities, while science and social sciences (geography, history) are the subjects most commonly covered by CLIL in general secondary education. English is the most common first foreign language taught. A project on use of CLIL for cultural, social and environmental awareness in European countries presented in Poland uses history, biology, sport and ICT to improve learning English (page 18).

Providing information about different cultures needs to be supported, whenever possible, by real communication, exchange and common activities. **Students' exchanges**, real and virtual, develop understanding of and respect for different cultures and lifestyles and contribute to students' development as responsible European citizens. EU programmes aimed at mobility and cooperation of education and training institutions help to make interesting ideas developed in study visits become a reality, for example, friendship and universal peace in Italy (page 13) or teaching science in English in Poland (page 17).

ICT is widely used for promoting learning languages, providing real life experience for students to use the languages they learn, sharing resources and virtual collaboration, for example, Internet-based platforms, blogs, and live journals. In Cyprus, language rooms in secondary schools allow teachers and students to carry out research, organise material and

make presentations on issues of common relevance to EU members such as environmental questions, immigration, unemployment and intercultural relations (page 16).

Participants of study visits observed that use of new approaches brings about **changes in teacher training and improved cooperation between teachers** of both the same subject and of different subjects, and teachers in the same countries and across borders. The **European framework of languages** ⁽⁹⁾ is considered a useful common reference tool by foreign language teachers who use it for setting clear target levels. In Poland, teacher training institutions provide a possibility to acquire dual qualification in language and subjects on a systematic basis (page 34). In Asturias, Spain, the Educational Authority supports CLIL teachers who work together to create and design new materials, share resources (online and published) and receive tailored training (page 36).

In its communication ‘Key competences for a changing world’ ⁽¹⁰⁾, the European Commission also pointed out that teachers’ competences should be further developed; assessment methods should be updated and aligned with curricula as well as be available for examining key competences at various levels of education and training. Cedefop’s comparative study on the relationship between learning outcomes and VET curricula and learning programmes ⁽¹¹⁾ shows that aligning teachers training and students’ assessment with competence-based curriculum development constitutes a major challenge in Member States.

Further, the European Commission (2009) suggests that stronger focus on key competences is needed in vocational training and adult learning, with adults having real opportunities to develop and update their competences throughout life (such as learn a foreign language or become familiar with new technologies).

Findings of study visits show that developing key competences of learners, an EU policy priority, has become the focus of educational systems in participating countries where schools and training institutions are looking for innovative and effective methods and approaches. The examples brought to light by study visits are not only relevant to the work of Cedefop and the European Commission on examining curricular and assessment reforms but also identify challenges. The findings also reveal a close link between changes in curricula and methodologies and a need for improving the quality of teaching. The latter will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁽⁹⁾ See: http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/CADRE_EN.asp [cited 15.4.2010].

⁽¹⁰⁾ European Commission (2009). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Key competences for a changing world. Draft joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the ‘Education and training 2010 work programme’*. Brussels, 25.11.2009, COM(2009)640 final. Available from Internet: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/joint10/com640_en.pdf [cited 16.4.2010].

⁽¹¹⁾ Cedefop (forthcoming). *Learning outcomes: approaches in VET curricula*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.

Figure 3. **Why does one need key competences?**



Source: Outcomes of a workshop at the synthesis seminar, 1-2 February 2010, Thessaloniki.

A Comenius project ‘Friendship and universal peace’ (2005-07), Italy



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The Liceo Classico Stabili Trebbiani has been involved for many years in promoting and disseminating European culture. A Comenius project ‘Friendship and universal peace’ ran between 2005 and 2007 and involved schools from Turkey, Belgium and Italy. The project promoted non-violent solutions to conflicts and respect to all cultures, languages and religions. A website (www.comeniusforpeace.eu) was created, a collection of poems published, and a study visit ‘*Les couleurs de la paix*’ organised in 2008. The website won the prestigious e-learning award by Schoolnet in 2007. The Liceo Stabili Trebbiani produced a large amount of teaching material that is also available on the website.

As a result of participating in the project, we observed a general improvement in students’ progress at school, especially in foreign languages and ICT use. They became profoundly aware of being European citizens and ambassadors of peace. Teachers, in turn, learned how to work in teams and how to use technology for communication and became more oriented to new teaching methods and techniques. They also benefited from mobility embedded in the project. Head teachers learned about other education systems and brought new ideas for school improvement and motivating teachers and students in their schools.

During the study visit, participants from Belgium, France, Norway, Romania, Spain, and Turkey agreed that it is necessary to integrate peace and human rights into the curriculum in all subjects and partners from Belgium and Germany developed another Comenius project for creating an international school of peace (*L’école de la paix*) where students will become aware of the European Union, of multilingualism and the advantages of learning foreign languages. As a result of the project, a cross-curricular teaching textbook in four languages (German, English, French and Italian) is planned summarising good practices and approaches.

Rural centres for innovation in education (CRIET) and the work of cultural mediators, Spain



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Three rural centres for innovation in education (CRIET) were created in 1983 to improve compulsory education by compensating for serious social and geographical disadvantages of schools in small and isolated villages in the rural areas of the province of Teruel. Students in these schools often lack social exchange with students of their own age, which hinders development of their social and civic competences. This happens not only because schools lack access to resources but rather because of their isolation.

These CRIETs are distributed strategically in depressed areas where pupils are rarely of the same age and consequently lack proper social exchange with peers. They offer pupils and teachers in several small schools the opportunity of sharing educational and life experiences at the centre during a week in each term (total of three weeks per year) through certain curricular activities (labs, drama, sports, trips, mass media, etc.). Same school-age students live together doing activities designed by mixed staff composed of CRIET and local school teachers. This coordinated work ensures that learning objectives of these weeks absolutely fit schools' curricula. CRIETs give students educational contexts to develop social and civic competences; support primary teachers in specialised subjects, promote innovative approaches.

Traditional timetables in these weeks are completely replaced with topic-based activities and learner-centred approaches. There is focus on cross-curricular issues as well as social learning contexts. There are specialised teachers and staff to support pupils and develop innovative programmes. They all have full accommodation at the centre. To make the process more effective, schools and CRIET have periodical evaluation meetings to ensure achievement of statutory curriculum expectations. At the end of the school year, all students who have shared the three-week stay have a great festival with their families and teachers.

The intercultural mediator service in education was created by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports of the government of Aragon. The main goal is to help the educational community receive and integrate immigrants into educational contexts.

There are 10 cultural mediators in the entire region coordinated by CAREI (*Centro Aragonés de Recursos para la Educación Intercultural* – Resource Centre for Intercultural Education in Aragon); they are part of a network of public support services for schools to strengthen intercultural, interpersonal and social competences. Mediators are from the main cultural areas where immigrants come from (South America, eastern European countries, Maghreb, China). They intercede in solving conflicts caused by cultural differences, support educational centres schooling immigrants and help improve relations between families and school, etc. This service is well perceived by the educational community and has increased from three part-time mediators to 10 during the past five years.

Early language teaching in Poland



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Since September 2008, children have started learning foreign languages at the age of six to seven (prior to this it was at age 10). In 2009, a new national core curriculum was introduced. To prepare for the new scheme, general teachers of early education and language teachers have gone through in-service training and received support.

During initial training at NKJO Zabrze, future teachers acquire a 30-hour module on teaching young learners and undertake 20 hours of teaching practice in early education classes.

Generalist teachers received language training with the aim of reaching B2 level of the common European framework of reference for languages and received an additional qualification in early language education for children aged six to nine through a 270-hour programme approved by the Ministry of Education. Teacher training colleges (such as NKJO Zabrze) offer part-time programmes in language teaching to general early years' teachers to enable them to continue working at school while studying.

Simultaneously, language teachers attend in-service courses, workshops and conference on early language education (such as using storytelling, drama activities, content and language integrated learning (CLIL)). Post-graduate programmes on

early language education are available both to generalist and language teachers.

A young learner project was cofunded by the National Centre for In-service Teacher Education in Warsaw, the British Council and the Goethe Institute in 1999-2002 to prepare cascade trainers for early language education of English and German and to produce support materials for teachers, including video lessons and accompanying training materials.

Foreign language learning at an early age is perceived as part of the holistic education of children that supports their intellectual, emotional, social, physical, aesthetic and ethical development. Through an early start and creation of a supportive and stimulating atmosphere, educators aim to create a positive attitude towards language learning and encourage children towards the next stages of learning. Without doubt, early language learning programmes should be adapted to each individual child's needs, stage and rate of development.

European dimension through teaching and learning English in Cyprus



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The Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus organised a study visit in 2009 to emphasise the importance of the European dimension in the educational system and, especially, in teaching languages, more specifically English. It is important to know not only our history and culture but also to get in touch with the history and culture of others. The study visit made everybody enthusiastic about the whole adventure, 'a journey to Ithaca'.

One innovation recognised by the group was language rooms established in 2000. A language room is a multifunctional classroom with equipment and resources that accommodate diverse students' needs, interests and learning styles. There are four corners in the language room: viewing, listening, multimedia and reading. Students are divided into groups of five to six and work on the same topic but through different activities. Students have time limits to finish their work; they choose spokespersons who present the final products to the rest of the class. The teacher, a facilitator of learning, gives instructions, sets tasks, helps students to form groups and monitors the students. Language rooms encourage autonomous learning, active participation, student initiative, negotiating ability, cooperation, creative and critical thinking.

Materials (presentations, lesson plans, etc.) prepared before and during the study visits were shared with language inspectors, educators, students and pupils through formal and informal meetings, seminars, workshops and lessons. Teachers seemed willing to implement the European dimension in their lessons. This effort was supported by the ministry and continues from pre-primary to university level.

Within the scope of my duties, I notice that schools collaborate and exchange materials produced by teachers based on course books and materials they find on the Internet, model lessons presented during the study visit. Teachers come to realise that inclusion of the European dimension in their teaching is not obligatory but a necessity for everybody.

Teaching science in English, Poland



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Inspired by experience and learning during a study visit in Mallorca in 2008, I started teaching science classes in English at my school from September 2009. This is still an experimental practice: students of 15 to 16 years of age voluntarily signed up for these classes. It is expected that students' achievements in English and in the subject will increase; they will see the benefit of foreign language competence for their studies and work; using technology for learning, including independent learning, will improve.

To organise this, I cooperate with science teachers, as often in Poland subject teachers are not fluent in foreign languages. First, we prepare the matter we want the students to learn; then I translate it into English and prepare my own materials for the students, such as Power Point presentations, handouts, crosswords, descriptions of experiments, etc. I created a web blog where students are also the authors and can upload the tasks, homework and experiments they perform: <http://www.spiekarczyk.blogspot.com/> [cited 16.3.2010].

So far, students eagerly take part in the classes and their semester grades in English were much better than in the previous year. Further, the headmaster of my school realised the importance of such classes and decided to include them in the school's curriculum for the next school year for two carefully selected classes. The teacher will be paid for this work, which is currently done voluntarily.

CLIL for cultural, social and environmental awareness, Poland



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A Comenius project 'CLIL for social, cultural and environmental awareness' was carried out by teachers of different subjects from the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Poland and Spain for almost two years (finished in 2010). Partners developed and shared materials for both students and teachers and visited countries to learn about the culture and habits of people around Europe.

Involving new teaching-learning practices (for example, conceptual maps), we aim at developing students' communication and self-learning skills and integrating students with social, cultural and linguistic problems. We use content to make students aware of environmental issues and/or social and cultural diversity.

In Gimnazjum in Radzionkow, students in the middle grades (aged between 13 and 16) participate in project activities with students from partner countries through multicultural dialogue using the information they learn at school. So far, students have developed the Moodle platform for international communication. Moreover, students have prepared an international historical guide on partner countries' towns and cities in their national languages and English, and with their teachers visited the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy and Poland and prepared concept maps describing their experience. Another interesting activity was an orientation trial during the visit to

Poland where students in international groups had to unravel mysteries encoded in different places with a map and hints left in the forest. Last but not least, students staged and recorded a school play in English and presented the results during the visit to the Czech Republic. The most precious outcome apart from language fluency was students' awareness of different interpretations of the play in partner countries.

All the results, materials and photographs are available on the project's website <http://www.comeniusclil.com/>.

Hobby education in Latvia



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Hobby education in Latvia is aimed at realising individual needs and desires, with respect to one's age and previous education (Law on Education, Art. 1).

Hobby education is coordinated by the State Education Content Centre (under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Science) and is funded both by the State and by municipalities. The centre also provides support and in-service training to hobby education teachers.

Hobby education contributes to inclusive education by involving particularly talented children, children from disadvantaged families and 'street' children, children from low income families and families with many children, children with special needs, children registered at the juvenile inspectorate and probation services or youths in juvenile custody, and children of ethnic minorities.

Various activities in music, arts, research, technical creativity are provided, such as competitions and concerts of school choirs, school brass bands and school theatres; folk song and dance festivals for children and youth; creative activities for children and youth with special needs; environmental games; a camp 'Alfa' for the winners of Olympiads in school subjects and laureates of pupils' research competitions; research conference of Latvian pupils; competitions in

auto/plane/ship modelling, photography; a summer camp for leaders of school self-governments 'academy of democracy'.

Most choirs, brass bands, folk and dance groups from hobby education take part in the Latvian school youth song and dance festival which takes place every five years in Riga since 1960. This tradition was proclaimed a masterpiece of oral and intangible heritage of humanity by Unesco in 2003 and belongs to the representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity since 2008.

Almost 80 % of pupils are involved in hobby education provided at general and vocational schools, institutions of hobby education (children and youth centres, centres for technical creative work, centres for environmental education), pre-school and professional institutions (music, arts and sport schools). Apart from making appropriate and thoughtful use of leisure time, students in hobby education develop their self-expression and talents, learn to socialise, build on their knowledge and skills acquired in formal education and prepare for future careers.

Language experience through out-of-class activities in Turkey



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Teachers observe that students are more motivated than before and that they learn the target language better outside the classroom. Teachers are also more inspired and willing to do their job.

The hotel and tourism school in Giresun is a vocational State school where students aged 14 to 18 are trained for the tourism industry. There are about 200 students. Every year 60 new students enter the school. The idea of providing students with real-life environment and experiences to make them more engaged and motivated with the subjects they learned was born about two years ago. However, we only started putting it into practice three months ago after moving to a new building. The new building has hotel rooms, a kitchen and a garden.

We agreed that 25 % of classes will take place outside the classroom. In the hotel and restaurant, students learn to present the hotel, welcome guests and respond to complaints. At the reception they practise check-in and check-out procedures, answer the phones both from the rooms and outside. In the sports centre, students learn about indoor and outdoor leisure activities, discuss the rules and equipment for various sports available at the centre. In the kitchen, they learn to use kitchenware and utensils, describe food and drinks, discuss responsibilities of the staff and, of course, learn cooking recipes. The new approach gives an opportunity to our students of using English in a job environment similar to where they will work and earn their living.

School environmental and civic council in Portugal



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The 'environmental and civic council' (*Conselho Cívico Ambiental*) is probably the oldest and most consistent project developed at Abrigada Schools Group. This initiative started in 2002 as an environmental council with its main objective to reduce the amount of garbage at school. In 2005, the new team in the school board decided to remodel the project and change the way students, teachers, employees and parents looked at their school.

The project involves 900 students from the age of six to 15 and even older students from vocational courses. During the first week of every month, a group of teachers on a rotation basis discuss with each class student leader (21 students in the school) good things, problems and opportunities at our school. Student leaders then go back to their classes and inform the other students about what the council proposed to the school head office to improve school quality. The office is composed of the headmaster, the deputy headmaster and two head assistants. The class discusses the proposals and prepares ideas for the next meeting. The headmaster and his team reply every month to students' feedback.

This practice developed a school culture based on self-responsibility and a sense of belonging to the school. Students organised 'green brigades' that supervise ecological behaviour of others during breaks; 'volunteer work bank' that brings parents to school to help restoring and improving working conditions; 'waste selective collection' that involves the community in bringing old paper, used oils, plastic to school and management sells it to recycling industries – helping the environment and creating wealth. Students take charge of the school; they decide what is best for the school; what is best for the students. Parents also appreciate this project because they participate and help school management to achieve goals and accomplish tasks.

In these past few years, the school area, building and materials have been completely restored and renewed with help from all members of the community. Some other projects arose from students' ideas and interests. For example, in an entrepreneurship project students decided to create local touristic products solving a regional problem. They found high-quality products (honey, wine, biological jellies, biological aromatic herbs, etc.), developed a 'brand' in a special subject at school and started selling them with the help of the local parents association. This project involved the town hall, parents associations, agricultural association, local producers, and students.

Multiculturalism in and through education in Romania



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Linguistic and cultural diversity is a feature of everyday life in the county of Sibiu that has at least four linguistic and national communities (Romanians, Roma, Hungarians, Germans) and at least seven Christian persuasions (Orthodox Church, Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Armenian Church, New-Protestants) and Jews.

The school inspectorate of the county of Sibiu organised a study visit in 2009 to show how schools manage to keep Romanian and minorities' traditions alive and how they work together to achieve this aim.

The constitutional right to education in the language of their community (or nationality) for children belonging to minorities is respected through various options: monolingual schools that accept pupils from all communities; multinational schools with Hungarian, Romanian and German sections; playgroup activities allowing for all languages to be present, etc. Although the number of students is sometimes very low, schools implement this right. For example, one school organises a minibus to collect Hungarian pupils from all around the town so that they can attend classes in Hungarian. School places are available for the Roma minority, whether they are taken up or not.

There are also other activities that the study visit group considered good practice, for example:

- afterschool activities that allow children from all backgrounds to participate in free cultural activities, including language learning and Romanian traditional culture;
- work with pre-school children from four communities and their parents;
- courses on interculturalism and human rights in English;
- competitions to improve self-esteem and European exchanges.

Study visit participants discovered that Romanian schools are engaged in many European projects as teachers are willing to collaborate with colleagues from other countries. As an outcome of the visit, a Comenius project was prepared by a school in January 2010.

Participants noted that 'in terms of dealing with multiculturalism, European countries could learn a lot from the Romanian example'.

Learning to teach – Challenges for teachers

Motivation, skills and competences of teachers and the quality of school leadership are key factors in achieving high quality learning outcomes ⁽¹²⁾. Ensuring a better quality of teaching and training requires that teacher and trainers embrace a broader range of duties and acquire more skills than in the past.

The perception of the role of the teacher (trainer) has changed in recent years with more expectation from teachers as well as from schools in general. Key players in supporting the learning experience of learners, teachers and trainers need to take greater responsibility for updating and developing their own knowledge and skills ⁽¹³⁾ and adapt their skills and working practices to a changing context. Teachers need to work with more heterogeneous groups of students and improve integration of disadvantaged students into mainstream education and training. Teachers and trainers need to master, develop and apply new teaching and training approaches and reflective thinking. This also implies more individualised approaches to teaching and learning, good communication skills, methods of teamwork, democratic schooling management and supportive mechanisms for pupil assessment and school evaluation. Teachers should be more involved and active in school improvement processes.

Well-trained teachers with up-to-date methodological approaches and tools play a key role in promoting learning and bringing good learning outcomes for students. To ensure this, all stages of teacher training from initial training through induction to continuous professional development should be interconnected to create a more coherent learning and development system for teachers ⁽¹⁴⁾. Teaching should be a well-qualified profession, with teachers and VET trainers being highly qualified in their professional areas with the necessary pedagogical competences. Some countries set higher qualification requirements for entering the profession. Some countries have already introduced a master's programme as part of initial teacher training (Bulgaria, Germany, Portugal, and Romania).

Findings of study visits indicate that there is **a need for teachers with integrated knowledge and competences** and for teachers with multiple qualifications. For example, in some countries, it is a challenge to hire teachers both with subject knowledge and language teaching capacity to provide CLIL-based learning. In Poland, dual qualifications in subject area and language are provided by initial teachers' training to enable students to teach their subjects in a foreign language (page 34). In Catalonia (Spain), CLIL training for

⁽¹²⁾ Swedish Presidency of the European Union (2009). Informal meeting for Ministers for Education. Presidency summary. 24.9.2009. Available from Internet: http://www.se2009.eu/polopoly_fs/1.16329!menu/standard/file/Conclusions%20med%20logg%20eng.pdf [cited 16.4.2010].

⁽¹³⁾ Council of the European Union (2009). Council conclusions of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 302, 12.12.2009, p. 6-9. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:302:0006:0009:EN:PDF> [cited 16.4.2010].

⁽¹⁴⁾ OECD (2005). *Teachers matter: attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers*. Paris, OECD.

primary and secondary school teachers offers foreign language training for subject teachers and an opportunity for schools to apply for a foreign language project (page 35).

Initial training should become more practice-oriented, shifting from content-centred to methodology-centred so that student-teachers get more practical tools for varied teaching and classroom management. Teacher trainers should demonstrate varied and up-to-date teaching methods to their students. In Norway, teacher education institutions work collaboratively with schools, build partnerships and develop bridges between theory and practice. Student-teachers run the entire school for a short period of time and can experience real situations of school life and acquire relevant working experience, while school teachers participate in service training (pages 27-28).

A good start in the teaching profession is seen as very important, especially induction and probation programmes that introduce new teachers to new working environments. For example, in Wales during the induction year newly-qualified teachers are involved in creating a personalised programme with their tutor (page 29), while in Scotland during induction a new teacher's working week is divided into class contact time (70 %) and curriculum reflection and pedagogical reflection and dialogue (30 %). It should be noted that currently the European Commission is working on a handbook for policy-makers on developing coherent induction programmes for new teachers.

To prepare students as self-directed learners and motivated to learn over a lifetime, **teachers and trainers should become role models of lifelong learners**. To achieve this, it is important that their learning is recognised and valued; in fact, it should be part of teachers' careers. The low status of teachers in many countries is a significant barrier to changes in educational and training systems. One interesting solution is combining teachers' professional development with career advancement that leads to more teachers' self-reflection, identification of their learning needs and increases their ownership of and responsibility for their lifelong learning. For example, the chartered teacher programme in Scotland (page 30) requires a contractual commitment for in-service training between individual teachers and a professional body, the General Teaching Council (GTC). GTC is an organisation where teachers, of their own will and at their own expense, actively celebrate their professional standing, set quality indicators for members, manage and maintain professional standards and govern the conduct of its members. Chartered teachers are expected to exemplify high quality teaching skills in schools.

Study visit reports indicate that **in-service teacher training** is provided for teachers in all countries through a range of methods to include short courses focusing on both policies and priorities, courses focusing on improving pedagogy and longer courses enabling teachers to improve their qualifications. Continuous professional development should be based on teachers' individual needs and consider initial training and the stage of a teaching career. Findings show that traditional in-service training methods are complemented by new forms, such as distance learning and peer learning.

In-service teacher training in the Basque country has been a showcase of study visits for more than 10 years (page 33). Pedagogic centres provide schools and teachers with a wide range of information, resource materials, training, courses, seminars, possibility of sharing experiences, fostering learning among peers, free-of-charge activities linked to daily classroom tasks supervised by advisers (former teachers).

Peer observation and peer learning are seen as exciting and motivating for maintaining high teaching quality. Team teaching in Norway (page 32) enables flexible approaches to the curriculum, pupil grouping and organisation of learning and teaching when teachers consult one another. Students have several adults to relate to in a safer learning environment. Teachers working together to produce teaching materials were regarded as a key ingredient to the success of educational programmes. Cooperation between subject and language teachers in providing CLIL has proved effective. In Spain, for example, such cooperation is supported with special provisions such as paid leave to teachers for developing teaching and learning materials (page 35). Sharing resources on the Internet is becoming a common practice. In Sweden, school management representatives, those responsible for teacher education at university and coordinators of students' practice reflect together to improve teaching teams (page 31).

Teachers and trainers should be encouraged to benefit from mobility experience in other European countries. Participants in study visits point to the need for teachers to learn foreign languages to participate in mobility and lifelong learning and in European and international cooperation. Creating opportunities for **teachers' mobility** to host countries of the languages taught constitutes an important concern in most countries. It is important that exchange programmes are incorporated into initial teacher training so student teachers can have part of their practice in another country, especially, in the country of the language which they are going to teach.

Findings from study visits help to understand better which policies and practices are effective for improving the quality of teaching and, consequently, learning in participating countries in light of competence-based curricula. The latter requires advanced high-quality initial teacher training and customised and up-to-date continuous professional development that also keeps teachers in the profession. Through learning and exchange of ideas during study visits, school heads and decision-makers can significantly contribute to improving teachers' education and training and aligning it to today's demand.

Figure 4. What makes a good teacher?



Source: Outcomes of a workshop at the synthesis seminar, 1-2 February 2010, Thessaloniki.

Student-run schools as part of teacher training in Norway



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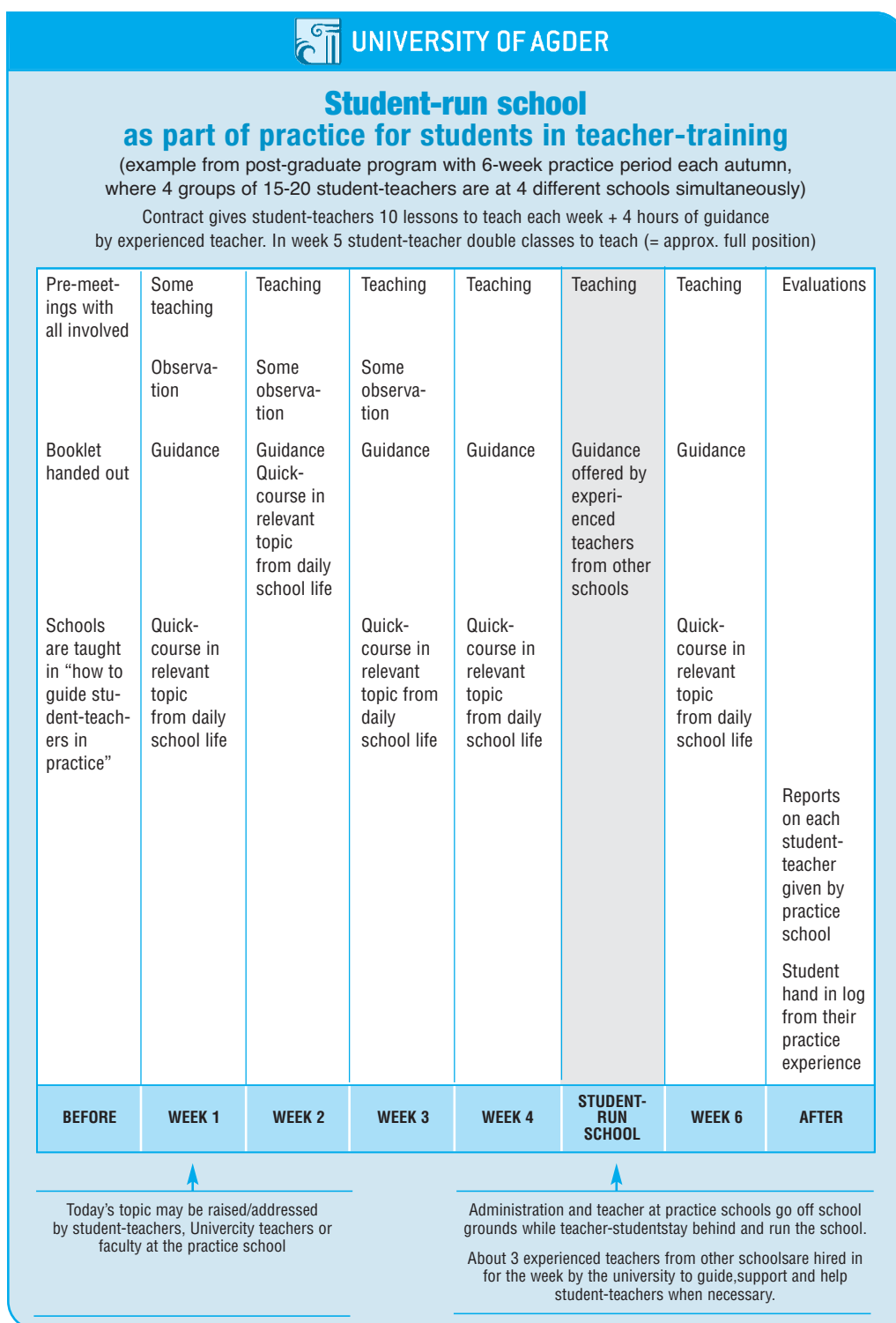
All students in post-graduate certificate teacher education (PGCE) at the University of Agder have six weeks practice when in their fifth week they run the school more or less by themselves. While experienced teachers leave the school grounds for conferences, in-service training and teambuilding, student-teachers acquire a much more realistic experience of being a full-time teacher. Moreover, university teachers move some of their lectures and seminars out to the school, thus, bridging theory and practice. The programme involves 70 PGCE student-teachers, faculty and administration of practice schools, university teachers and the teacher education unit.

In the weeks preceding running the school, student-teachers take part in all school activities: teaching (around 10 hours per week), faculty meetings, parent meetings, monitoring pupils' play areas, etc., and simultaneously, receiving guidance from mentor teachers. During the fifth week, student-teachers teach full time (around 20 hours) and learn to manage other aspects of school life.

To support student-teachers when necessary, three to four experienced teachers from other schools are brought in and one or two university teachers are present. When the regular teachers return, students share their experiences. Students are assessed pass or fail based on their report to their guidance teachers and the teachers' final assessment report in six predefined areas. In cases where the school is too big for student-teachers to run, it is possible to run a grade or even a subject (for example, English language classes).

To prepare students, student-teachers' meetings with administration and faculty at the practice school and university teachers in the teacher education programme take place to explain expectations and procedures. The teacher education unit is in charge of organising these meetings, distributing student-teachers to schools, offering schools a course in guidance of students in practice, and of making a 'student-run school' guidebook given to everybody involved.

As a result, student-teachers see a better link between practice and theory and gain a stronger feeling of responsibility. The interest of schools in this kind of practice has grown. University teachers get a chance to meet school teachers and share latest developments in education.

Figure 5. **Students-run school in Norway** (see page 27)

The induction year for newly-qualified teachers in Wales



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The induction year for newly-qualified teachers (NQTs), a statutory one-year programme, serves as a bridge from initial teacher training to effective professional practice. In the postgraduate certificate of education course (PGCE), trainee teachers are assessed on professional characteristics, knowledge and skills and at the end of the PGCE, they are awarded the qualified teacher status (QTS). In Wales, all NQTs who gained QTS after April 2003 are required to complete the period of induction and meet the end of induction standard in order to teach in government-funded schools.

At the start of the induction period, the newly-qualified teacher will be directed to the team of people involved in induction: head teacher, induction tutor, curriculum leaders and heads of year responsible for the pastoral needs of pupils. Members of the school team are carefully selected based on their ability and expertise to lead the training; they are highly motivated, well informed, usually senior staff, whose organisational and coordinating skills are paramount. Representatives from the Local Education Authority (LEA) and the General Teaching Council for Wales contribute to the induction process.

The NQT are actively involved in planning their induction programme. On entry to a school, the NQT will work closely with the induction tutor to create a personalised induction programme tailored to the individual strengths and needs of the NQT identified with college/university tutor at the conclusion of the initial teacher training course and presented in the career entry profile. With the Induction Tutor, the NQT will set short-, medium- and long-term objectives that emerge from individual, department and school priorities. Regular lesson observations, professional reviews and discussions, attendance at training courses, observation of experienced teaching staff and monitoring all work are undertaken in the highly-structured programme.

After induction, teachers can engage in early professional development (EPD) and in continuing professional development (CPD).

Entry into the teaching profession can be frightening and formidable. The induction programme serves to reduce fear, improve practice and ensure success, prior to proceeding to further professional development.

The chartered teacher programme in Scotland



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The chartered teacher was introduced in Scotland in 2003 as a result of a national agreement of the Scottish Government, unions and employers to reform the career structure, conditions of service and salaries of the teaching profession. The programme represents the commitment of Scotland to invest seriously in the quality of teachers' learning and development to ensure high quality learning experiences for learners.

As stated in the standard for chartered teacher ⁽¹⁵⁾, chartered teachers are accomplished, innovative and reflective practitioners, they actively promote equality and social justice in all areas of work. They systematically evaluate the impact for learners and learning and play 'a leading role in the professional development of colleagues' and make 'a recognised contribution to the educational effectiveness of the school and the wider professional community.' To date there are

979 chartered teachers in Scotland (the total teaching population in Scotland is 55 000).

Teachers who have reached the top of the main salary scale (typically after six years of practice) are eligible for chartered teacher status, an alternative career pathway for those who wish to remain in classroom with an improved pay structure of around GBP 7 000 annual increase. Since 2008, teachers can become a chartered teacher through a postgraduate master's level programme at one of the nine providers accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS).

Apart from the attractive salary raise, the motivation for teachers to participate in the programme is strong as the certification by a professional body, GTCS, provides an invaluable recognition and qualification. Teachers also get a stronger sense of professional autonomy and control over their learning development and career choices. Chartered teacher status encourages expert teachers to remain in the classroom as leaders of learning and pedagogy and be financially rewarded for this leadership and improved practice.

Teachers who achieve the status are very positive about their professional development and enthusiastic to take on new challenges and share their learning and practice with others. As one of the teachers put it, they 'have rediscovered the joy of teaching'.

⁽¹⁵⁾ The Scottish Government (2009). *Standard for chartered teacher*. Available from Internet: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/285174/0086635.pdf> [cited 15.4.2010].

Dialogue between university and municipality in Sweden



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With the introduction of new teacher education in 2001, dialogue meetings were introduced to improve contacts between teacher education at Dalarna University and municipalities in the county of Dalarna. Meetings take place at different levels: school management and the responsible for teacher education at the university; student placement coordinators in the municipalities and university staff responsible for teacher-students; practice teachers in the municipalities and university teachers of different subjects; teacher-students and coordinators and managers in the municipalities.

The basis for collecting information for dialogue meetings is self-evaluation. Self-evaluation questions prepared by a partner school developer and answered by management teams and practice teachers are then analysed and presented at the dialogue meeting between management and the university that takes place once a year. Analysis reveals strengths and weaknesses in the organisation and indicates where attention is needed, for example, better focus on examination papers or improved engagement of teaching teams in the municipality around the student.

This activity provides management with more knowledge about their organisations and reveals problems before they grow (examples of questions and outcomes are available at: <http://users.du.se/~jnr>). Principals, managers and coordinators also contribute to the agenda with questions of their own.

In the latest report of the national authority (*Högskoleverket*) that checks all university partnership models for student practice, Dalarna and Malmö universities are mentioned as examples of good practice.

Benefits of team teaching in Norway



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Opened in 2009, Moster school is a combined primary and lower secondary school with 330 pupils and a staff of 50 from two former schools and a reception centre for asylum-seekers.

Having been a headmistress for the past five years and taking up a new job, I focused on planning and building a school for the future. It was extremely interesting and motivating as my staff and I had influence in the planning process. Some of us travelled around Norway and visited other newly-built schools getting valuable ideas on form, architecture and pedagogy. We chose flexibility, areas with a lot of possibilities, enough space for pupils to learn, grow and develop. As a result, the school has an open layout with many break-out rooms that permit various forms of teaching. One of the reasons for this choice was our strong team teaching experience.

At lower secondary schools in Norway, teachers are mainly generalists. When you practise team teaching you can teach by talent and interest using one another's strengths. Teachers see the advantages of team teaching in complementarity, in having a discussion partner at all times, better exchange of experience on subjects, increased pedagogical reflection. They share planning, workload, responsibility for

pupils and can easily replace one another. Combined with the school layout, it increases possibilities to tailor teaching and learning to pupils' individual needs. Team teaching allows more flexible approaches to curriculum, pupils' grouping and organisation of teaching and learning.

Of course, there are challenges too. Large groups of pupils put greater demands on communication and cooperation techniques and require more time. It is necessary to inform parents of the benefits and practice of team teaching to get their support and goodwill.

All pupils are of equal worth, but none are alike. Moster school is an inclusive school: children with special needs are included in their respective grade, with education in classroom or various break-out rooms. We strive for the ideal of giving all our pupils adapted and differentiated education based on their own abilities and needs. Team teaching allows us to develop pupils' key competences to enable them to participate positively in our society.

In-service teacher training in the Basque country



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instruction, how to use ICT in the classroom, problems with coexistence or living together, intercultural dialogue. And at the same time they have learned that most are solved by inclusive approaches, adaptation of methodologies, cooperation of schools with community by involving teachers, students, parents and communities in school projects, competence-based teaching and learning and solid leadership at schools.

Ortuella Berritzegune has been hosting study visits on in-service training for teachers since 2001 after one of the organisers had taken part in an Arion study visit in 1998 and realised we could always learn from other educational systems and share our good practices with them.

Pedagogic centres (*Berritzegune*) are public institutions that provide schools and teachers with a wide range of free-of-charge information, resource materials, training, courses, seminars, and possibility of sharing experiences. They foster peer learning among teachers through activities linked to their daily tasks and supervised by advisers (former teachers) rather than by experts from universities. Teachers' evaluation and feedback is a keystone in those institutions.

While hosting study visits, we exchanged lots of materials, findings and resources between teacher trainers from different countries. As a result, many schools in our area take part in Comenius, eTwinning, study visits programme, etc. But above all, visitors and organisers learn that problems and solutions in education are very similar across Europe, for example, how to deal with special educational needs, how to implement second/third language

A dual qualification in subject and language in Poland



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The Foreign Language Teacher Training College in Toruń is a three-year school for adults who want to qualify as teachers of English, German or French and who have at least secondary education and a good command of a foreign language (B2 level for English, B1 level for French and German). The programme consists of 1 080 hours of practical language, 510 hours of literature/ linguistics/history classes, 480 hours of methodology and 150 hours of teaching practice. After writing a diploma project and taking final exams, students receive a diploma from the teacher training college that qualifies them to teach a language at primary and secondary schools.

Recently, we observed that more students choose combined subject studies at university with a language course at teacher training college. Thus, three years ago we decided to support such students by providing for individual organisation of studies, counselling and continuous support to students and Moodle-based courses (still in development). Another aim was to take advantage of students' subject knowledge combined with their language skills leading to interesting CLIL classes and/or possibility to teach subjects in foreign languages.

We introduced more CLIL into our courses. Our teacher trainers have modified their teaching techniques to provide a model for teacher trainees. We encourage students to teach elements of their subjects in a foreign language during their teaching practice and write their diploma projects on CLIL or on teaching subjects in foreign languages. We developed teaching and learning materials and use other projects, for example, students of history acting as guides during study visits in Toruń.

Each year about 90 % of students graduate with dual qualifications. Some students take a year off to write their master's thesis and then resume their language studies. It is easier for these students to find a job in schools. Obtaining dual qualifications does not mean, however, that these teachers are required to teach CLIL. There are still not too many schools in Poland that follow CLIL-based teaching. Nevertheless, our graduates try to introduce CLIL elements into general English classes, or prepare special CLIL projects at schools to promote the idea.

CLIL teachers training for schools with a special foreign language project in Spain



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Since 2006/07, the Ministry of Education of Catalonia has implemented a plan (until 2015) to improve the level of foreign languages competence (especially English) of pupils at primary and secondary schools. Hence, there is a huge offer of foreign language training for teachers. Schools can also apply for a three-year foreign language project. The number of participating schools has been growing as well as the number of teachers who improve their skills in foreign languages.

During the first year of the project, teachers follow a 30-hour training (including online) on theoretical foundations of CLIL and start developing materials, lesson plans and activities that they put into practice during the second and third years of the project. The first training was provided by experts from the University of Nottingham, but since 2008/09 by local teacher trainers who have gone through special training.

During the second and third years of the project, teachers are entitled to a paid study leave of 10 weeks to spend at Norwich Institute for Language Education (NILE), University of Nottingham or University of Aberdeen in the UK to learn about methodological principles of CLIL and their application in the classroom and to develop teaching and learning materials and lesson

plans that are then published online by the Ministry of Education. A bank of 'ready to use' CLIL materials is available at: <http://www.xtec.cat/cirel>.

Teachers who have not taken paid study leave participate in decentralised training courses in different regions of Catalonia to exchange experiences, evaluate their own and other teachers' CLIL experiences, develop new CLIL materials or adapt materials from other sources. Or they can pursue individual training in other programmes.

Teachers using the CLIL approach conclude that pupils enjoy learning a foreign language more as they find it more useful through learning to use the foreign language and use the foreign language to learn.

Support to CLIL and bilingual education in Asturias, Spain



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As a result of these efforts, pupils and teachers have improved their command and fluency of English and have developed their key competences to understand a 21st century world.

The teachers centre in Oviedo has organised six study visits since 2004 to share their experience and learn from other European colleagues.

Asturias has a long tradition of supporting learning of foreign languages. After a pilot project on early language learning in the 1990s, all pupils in our region start learning English before entering primary school. In secondary schools students learn languages in small groups of maximum 15 pupils.

We started bilingual and CLIL education in our region in 2004 in four pilot secondary schools. Today, more than half our primary and secondary schools are bilingual schools with English and seven secondary schools with French. Within the framework of the regional support programme for bilingual education, these schools have language assistants and all participating teachers have two free teaching periods to prepare lessons and one hour per week for meetings.

PALE (*Programa nacional de apoyo al aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras*) is a national support programme for primary and secondary CLIL teachers. It consists of a 200-hour course of three stages: a three-week training course in Asturias, a two-week course in England that includes studies of methodology and language and school visits and a 40-hour workshop to produce materials for each subject (available at: www.educastur.es).

Learning to lead – Challenges for education leaders

Economic globalisation, rapid technological change, demographic developments and increased migration and mobility as well the political pressure caused by international tests (for example, PISA ⁽¹⁶⁾) challenge schools and training institutions to equip learners with knowledge, skills and attitudes, to become learning communities and to create effective partnerships with stakeholders in their governance. New demands have made policy-makers and leaders of educational and training institutions look much more forward than before and changed the role of school leaders across Europe. School leaders nowadays are at the forefront and central actors of school improvement efforts. In this new context, school leaders are supposed to be able to cope with a wider range of competences and responsibilities than in the past. Heads of schools are now to become ‘head learners’, as a study visit’s participants put it, leading learners and learning leaders.

Participants of study visits observed that governance and management of schools varies extremely among European countries. One of the main factors that accounts for the variation is the distribution of power between national and local levels, from very centralised approaches (Romania, Turkey) to highly decentralised systems (Denmark, Finland). Greater decentralisation of school systems, more autonomy and demand for more equity, efficiency and quality of education and training have led to reconsidering traditional ways of organising and managing education and training and looking for new approaches and effective and dynamic leadership.

Managing change is not easy. There is **a need for effective leadership skills and competences** (including financial management, ICT skills, staff motivation, quality assurance, communication, etc.) that would embrace change and new roles. Most group reports highlight that professional school management demands special training and indicate that more countries are looking for ways to provide it through targeted induction and in-service training, through improved quality and more variety of training content and methods for school leaders. **Qualifications and specialised programmes for school leaders** are seen as valuable, for example, a fast track master’s programme for school leaders developed at the University of Malta (page 43) where participants are engaged in designing learning organisations.

Study visit reports indicate that there is **a need for competitive recruitment of school leaders**. The way of becoming a headmaster has a huge influence on the way leadership is realised. Headmasters are recruited differently in each country. In most countries a manager can spend his/her career at the same school, while in other countries there are limits on the number of terms for school heads, for example, four years in Sweden or two terms in Spain. This limit is seen as a useful tool to ensure motivation and quality in the

⁽¹⁶⁾ The programme for international student assessment (PISA) is an internationally standardised assessment that was jointly developed by participating economies and administered to 15 year-olds in schools: <http://www.pisa.oecd.org> [cited 29.3.2010].

leading position and as a way of making a decision to become a school leader more easy. In more countries aspiring schools leaders have to present a project for school development and improvement (Spain, Sweden).

Developing key competences and focus on learning outcomes is a very demanding task for school leaders: they have to make their teachers accept that task and come up with effective ways of teaching and they have to realise that sometimes students already are better prepared for the new world than teachers (this refers, for example, to ICT skills). Transition to a competence-based approach can be strengthened through improved partnerships between education and training institutions and the wider world, especially the world of work.

Moving from centralised systems of control towards more decentralised systems is a major challenge reported in all group reports. School autonomy has also coincided with greater pressures from the public and from national governments for schools to be accountable through **external and internal evaluation systems** (involving national standards, outcome-based curricula, pupil assessment and more interaction between all educational stakeholders). The main issue is to establish the right balance between State control and internal quality evaluation (self-evaluation).

Reflection and self-evaluation for continuous improvement are seen as integral part of leadership and of school functioning in many countries. In Finland, evaluation of school activities and school improvement efforts are based entirely on self-evaluation performed by school management and staff, including feedback from parents and pupils (page 48).

Schools are at the heart of their communities, particularly small schools which are by nature different and face specific needs and which often are significant for the overall welfare of the local population. For example, in Austria municipalities are prepared to invest in their schools over a long period of time and a campaign to raise awareness of policy-makers and public of the value of small schools is undertaken (page 47). In Finland, secondary schools are founded by local communities to meet their educational needs and most secondary schools are relatively small. The work of an association of small schools (pages 44-45) helps them to share experiences and solutions, learn from one another, optimise learning opportunities through distance courses, etc. **Tailoring school heads' competences** to the size of school and training institutions is crucial.

Opening schools to their communities and the wider world, involving all stakeholders in running a school makes leadership more distributed and based on cooperation and teamwork. Education and training institutions become learning organisations, learning communities. A characteristic of managing education and training nowadays is looking for solutions together, through cooperation with all involved: parents, industry, social partners, and local communities, and through international cooperation and exchange. Effective school leaders establish **a culture of trust and dialogue** between all

parties involved, not only between teachers and parents, but also between national level (such as ministry), local level (city council) and the individual school. Supporting establishment of management teams and shared leadership enables school heads to benefit from common learning. Increased involvement of parents in school life is challenging but it is nowadays part of the game, part of the quality assurance process.

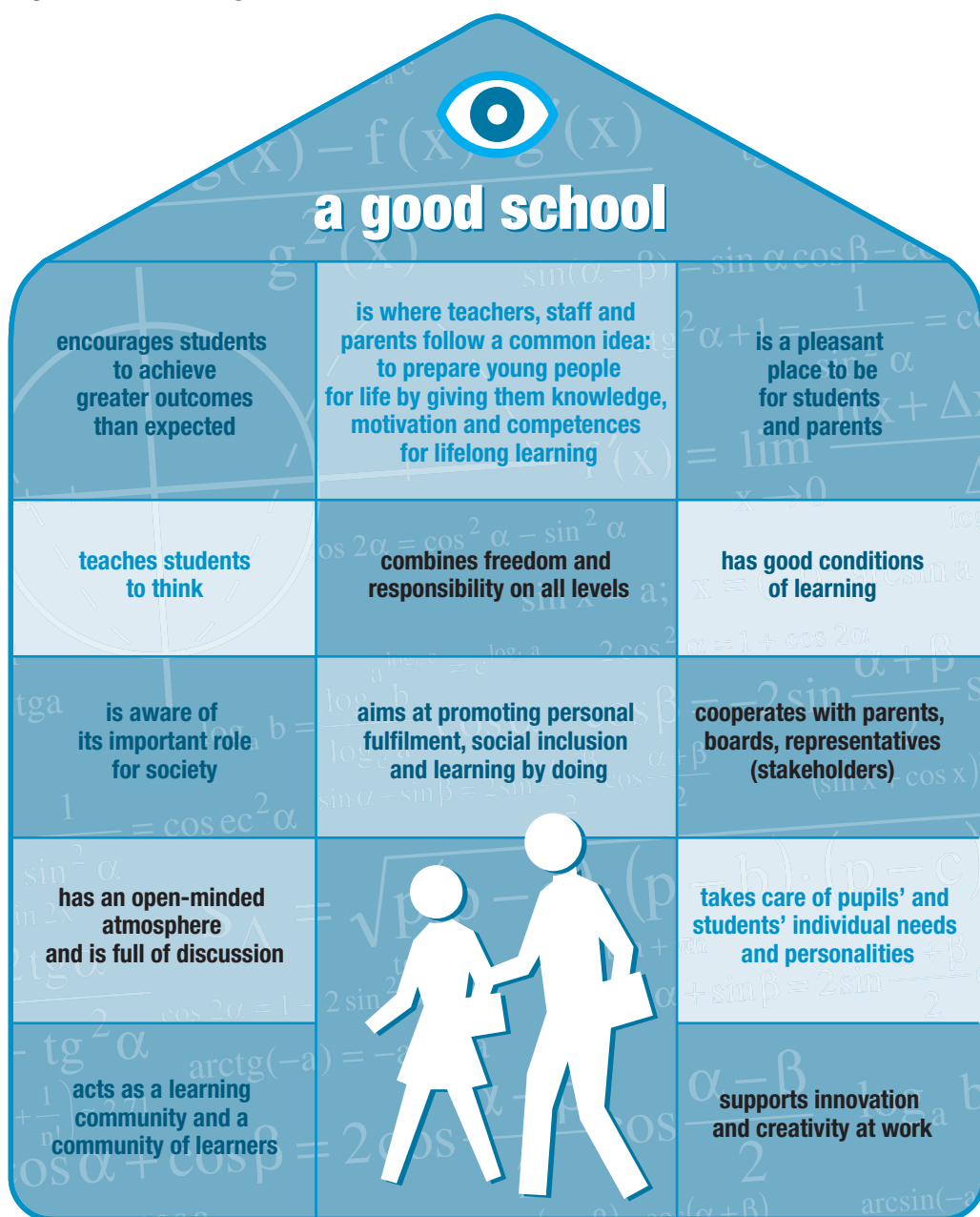
In Tromsø (Norway), heads of five schools put their experience together when building a new school and involved all teachers in managing change and creating a new leadership culture where all work together and learn from one another (page 41). Sometimes serious problems in the daily work of schools are a good stimulus to start school development and 'reload' school leadership. A young school head in Sweden used a participatory approach and involved students from disadvantaged backgrounds to start reshaping and improving a school in critical condition (page 49).

Teamwork proves effective not only within schools. Cooperation networks and clustering of schools is becoming a regular and valued practice. School clusters in the Flemish community of Belgium (page 46) constitute an interesting illustration of innovative arrangements involving teamwork of school leaders. Results show that such cooperation fosters solidarity and interaction between schools, increases the general level of knowledge and support for managers and tends to optimise school resources. In Järfälla commune in Sweden alongside in-service training (leadership academy, manager academy), school heads, head teachers and deputy heads meet once or twice a month to discuss common matters, offer common support aiming to establish a high quality school system (page 42).

Using technology to increase efficiency and accountability of education and training allows more time to be spent on quality assurance efforts. In Turkey, a comprehensive e-school administration system that contains records on all students, teachers and schools helped to diminish the administrative burden and focus efforts on education quality (page 50).

Findings of study visits make us believe that the concept of lifelong learning has become well-established; however, there is still a lot to be accomplished to make it a reality for all. During the informal meeting for Ministers for Education in Göteborg in September 2009, it was stressed that together with students and teachers, school leaders should benefit from 'opportunities to share good practice and professional development across national boundaries' ⁽¹⁷⁾. Study visits is the programme that, among others, addresses school heads and those responsible for education and training at local, regional and national levels and provides them with a forum for sharing examples of good practice and finding effective and innovative solutions to today's challenges.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Swedish Presidency of the European Union (2009). *Professional teachers - The key to successful schools: memorandum*. 27.8.2009. Available from Internet: www.se2009.eu/polopoly_fs/1.13697!menu/standard/file/Diskussionsunderlag.pdf [cited 16.4.2010].

Figure 6. **What is a good school?**

School management in Tromsø, Norway



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Five primary and secondary schools shared a project. The aim was to find out how leadership could improve students learning outcomes. Each school chose different approaches for implementation of change. Some started with a group of dedicated teachers, some with changes for one subject. We learned that leadership for change gives the best outcome where all teachers in a school are included.

We wanted to share the experiences we had in schools where we had special focus on leadership for change, developing culture for on-the-job training for teachers and for adjusted learning for students. The purpose was to build capacity and to raise teachers' awareness of their role in the classroom. A good school leader should have a moral purpose to improve student achievement. This means understanding change, being able to create relationships and inspire knowledge-sharing.

Our development project has lasted three years and is still going. The main outcome has been improved ways of making students aware of their learning goals. To do this, teachers have to make lesson plans and focus on goals for each lesson, we are looking at better ways to involve students in self-evaluation and we encourage teachers to plan together and participate in one another's classes and learn from one another.

Leadership strategies we have used can be summed up as:

- set a stage – leadership group pull together;
- decide what to do – create vision and strategy;
- make it happen – communicate, empower others, set short-term goals;
- make it stick – create a new culture.

As a result, our teachers have a sense of being part of a bigger professional group and principals get support from a leadership group and certainty of knowing what parents can expect from the school.

Manager development in Järfälla commune, Sweden



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The municipality provides training programmes for managers that include orientation programmes for managers; supervisor training programme; leadership academy and manager academy; a big management meeting at the end of the term; breakfast meetings; mentoring within and between municipalities and network/guide for leadership roles.

Järfälla Kommun lies about 25 km outside Stockholm and has about 65 000 inhabitants, the population being quite young. Schools range from pre-schools to adult education.

During the past two years all managers in education belong to the same unit. Managers are employed for a fixed period of four years and, if everything goes well, they may continue. The municipality's recruitment policy is to seek candidates both externally and internally and to hire the person most qualified for the job for a fixed term.

Heads have sometimes got a deputy head or a colleague in charge of development. A school has a management team with shared duties. Municipal managers face challenges associated with political influences, the public and complex operations.

Managers should be visible and consistent leaders capable of motivating and inspiring employees. Managers should apply situational leadership by choosing a strategy and approach based on individual employees' skills and experience in the current situation, as well as on a developmental level of the group.

Quality assurance and degree for educational leadership in Malta



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Quality control systems in Malta

The quality assurance department (QAD) is mainly responsible for implementing a number of particular functions of the Directorate for quality and standards in education as stipulated by the Education Act (2006). While respecting and seeing to implementation of functions particularly related to the Directorate, the QAD will provide: ‘... a professional service of support, guidance, monitoring, inspection, evaluation and reporting on the process of teaching in schools, on the application of the curriculum, syllabi, pedagogy, assessment and examinations, and on the administration and on the assurance and auditing of quality in colleges and schools’ ⁽¹⁸⁾.

A strategy has been developed to ensure QAD engages with colleges and schools differently with two main aims of providing support and evaluating practices to see that standards and quality education are provided. Support will be provided through continuous professional development/training sessions for school leaders in the State and non-State sectors; preparation of documents to support schools in school

development planning and school self-evaluation; and preparation of documents to help schools adequately prepare for external audits. While still in an initial stage, it is critical to the change process to focus on empowering staff at all levels, bestowing responsibility on all and creating different levels of accountability.

Master degree in educational leadership

The programme is currently being reviewed to be in line with developments of postgraduate courses offered by the University of Malta. The degree is targeted at educational leaders seeking to develop their organisations to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex and independent world. The course investigates leading-edge research and critical thinking about educational leadership and management, learning and creating effective learning environments needed to meet the demands of the information age. Participants will be engaged in the design, maintenance and development of learning organisations through a mixture of taught modules, open learning materials and reflective learning.

The course attracts candidates with at least five years teaching experience. Over the years we have made it a point to take on students with varied backgrounds, of different ages and respecting a gender balance. This has proved successful as one aim is to allow participants (no more than 20 candidates at a time) to learn from one another. This diversity encourages interesting dynamics and learning.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Education Act (2006), Part II, para. 18.1. Available from Internet: http://www.education.gov.mt/ministry/doc/pdf/acts/edu_laws/amendment_to_2003/Ac_XIIIE.pdf [cited 15.4.2010].

Work of an association of small schools in Finland



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Historically, most Finnish secondary schools were founded by private local associations, not by the State or municipalities. The size of Finnish upper secondary schools (students aged 16 to 18 in three grades) is generally small in international terms. Of almost 400 Finnish secondary schools more than 30 % are small, with less than 120 students.

The Finnish Association of Small Secondary Schools (FASSS) was founded in 2002. Currently, FASSS comprises 130 schools with a maximum of 120 students located in rural and scattered areas all around Finland. FASSS member schools are generally well equipped with modern IT learning facilities for video conferencing and distance education. English is the main language for foreign cooperation but a wide variety of other languages is also available. Member schools are outward oriented and have a lot of contacts with foreign schools.

The following are some examples of FASSS activities:

- **publishing the annual yellow pages of good practices** (see Figure 7).

Each member school presents their own good practices to share with other schools for benchmarking purposes and the practices they would like to learn about and adopt from other schools, such as pedagogy of distance education, school

networking, cooperation with vocational training, etc. In 2010, the 10th issue of this annual 60-page booklet will be published;

- **quality management chart (QMC).**

Originating from international excellence competitions, the QMC is aimed at providing schools with a 360 degrees evaluation tool to find out areas for improvement and set targets for improved work and performance. The chart suits equally all levels of general education. The chart is divided into eight sectors (leadership; strategic planning; student focus and marketing the school; information and analysis; staff empowerment; process management; results of activity; environmental impact) that further fan into examples of good practice on those topics. The QMC provides a basis for quality in-service training of teaching staff. As a result, a school identifies better practices and may adopt new approaches for its development. The QMC also spreads out into a self-evaluation questionnaire that allows direct comparison of different levels of schools (such as elementary and upper secondary) with one another;

- **distance learning among small schools.**

For small schools, it is often a problem when few students want to follow a course. In such a case, schools can cooperate with a school providing the teaching and students from other schools can attend lessons at a distance. FASSS schools have created about 100 distance education courses that are freely available among member schools. As distance is not a problem for IT, it is also possible to spread this know-how globally.

Figure 7. Yellow pages of good practice (Finland)

<p align="center">Ylitornio Senior High School, Principal Sari Lantto 016 - 3402 200 / 201 / 040 - 7259 285 lukio@ylitornio.fi www.ylitornio.fi/lukio</p>	
<p>Welcome to get acquainted with these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Special ICE HOCKEY TRAINING since 1995 - 12 courses, coach from St. Petersburg <input type="checkbox"/> TRANS-BORDER cooperation with the Swedish Övertorneå Gränsälvs senior high school <input type="checkbox"/> DISTANCE EDUCATION cooperation with eight other neighbouring schools and institutes <input type="checkbox"/> School building RENOVATION in 2005 	<p>These we would like to develop further:</p> <p>PEDAGOGY AND TECHNOLOGY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION</p> <p>How to SUPPORT THE YOUNG PEOPLE to meet the changing world</p>
<p align="center">Äetsä Sarkia Senior High School, Principal Seppo Holkeri 050 - 3540 212 seppo.holkeri@sastamala.fi www.peda.net/veraja/sastamala/aetsansarkialukio</p>	
<p>Welcome to get acquainted with these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Parallel SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL for ADULTS for already the 4th year, more than 30 students <input type="checkbox"/> GENUINE NETWORKING COOPERATION with 6 neighbouring schools <input type="checkbox"/> INNOVATIVE WORK SCHEDULE PRACTICE based on subject matter coupling in Maturity Examination <input type="checkbox"/> LISTENING TO THE STUDENTS in school leadership and management 	<p>These we would like to develop further:</p> <p>Sastamala NETWORK SENIOR HS (with 2 other SHS) since 2009</p> <p>Regional development of COOPERATION BETWEEN SHS AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION</p> <p>SPREADING OF THE VIRTUAL NETWORK to the other neighbouring senior high schools</p>

The work of school clusters in Belgium



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A schools cluster is a group of schools having a contract for cooperation for six years. Schools in the cluster are of the same level of education (nursery, primary and secondary) located in the same region and belonging to the same educational network throughout Flanders (for example, municipal schools, public schools, private catholic schools, etc.) though the schools may belong to the same or different governing bodies or school boards. School clusters were created by the government (in secondary education since 1999 and in primary schools – since 2003) to ensure a transparent landscape of study possibilities in the region for pupils and their parents with a view to have a better orientation of pupils and to use resources more efficiently.

School clusters must work together in several areas, such as, introducing new curricula; rational selection of courses; objective orientation of pupils; staff policies; synchronising administration; and implementing common activities, such as a day against senseless violence, a political debate, etc. School boards are able to work together on other aspects and provide a creative network for sharing expertise. Cooperation implies meetings with heads, staff members, parents, pupils, town hall

officials and other stakeholders to inform, advise, consult and decide.

In many countries, the government tends to decentralise management of schools. Local networks of schools help to improve the success of decentralisation. Participation in school clusters enables school leaders to address the following pitfalls and challenges:

- setting clear and explicit objectives for specific schools and the entire network;
- balancing individual and common interests;
- balancing all partners' expectations;
- maintaining specificity of schools;
- each member contributing to the effort;
- effectiveness of working together.

In a network, schools build capacity in collective learning. Compared to a traditional vertical hierarchy, in a cluster, collaboration, providing feedback and reflection are essential. Most school heads are very attached to their own schools. School boards are able to distance themselves more and have a broader view. In the network it is more necessary and difficult than in the school to separate policy-making from policy implementation.

A research project, ‘Is small beautiful’, in Austria



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Primary schools with one, two or three classes with students of mixed ages are called small in Austria. Due to decreasing numbers of population in Europe, the number of small schools is increasing raising issues of growing expenses, small number of pupils and, consequently, efficiency. Since OECD ⁽¹⁹⁾ published the ideal number of students to be taught in a school is 200, discussions on quality arise.

Small schools in Austria are very strong because of the commitment of local communities to have and maintain their schools. Schools are the centre of cultural and educational activities for adults as well as pupils. Schools are centres for music, ICT for adults and buildings are also used for public events. Through the activities they offer, they bring life to villages. There is a strong belief that when pupils are able to stay in a village for their education it is more likely they will remain in that village as adults.

The two-year research project on the role of small schools in their communities and the effect on their local environment was designed in collaboration with the University of Education in Graz and started in October 2009. The project was developed as a

result of six study visits in Salzburg focused on quality improvement of small schools in Europe. Results of the survey will inform on the advantages and problems of small schools.

Looking to answer the main research question, ‘how are schools able to generate social capital for a small society?’, researchers will survey teachers and head teachers from about 250 small schools in Salzburg and Styria and interview mayors of communities. The main themes of the questionnaire and interviews are the partnership between schools, parents and the wider community and the impact of schools on their communities. The study will reflect the quality of small schools and compare results between the federal counties of Salzburg and Styria.

During the study visit ‘Small primary schools in Europe, schools in geographically disadvantaged areas’ (Salzburg, March 2009), participants discussed challenges and problems small schools face. The findings were summarised in the group report as follows:

‘Austria has a broader understanding of quality – not just academic results. It regards quality of life, the relationships between children, relationship between school and communities as important and stresses collaboration rather than competition in the small schools. [...] in the group’s view, there is an opportunity for more research to be carried out to achieve this outcome.’

⁽¹⁹⁾ OECD (2009). *OECD economic surveys: Austria 2009*. Paris: OECD.

School self-evaluation system in Finland



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Before 1987, school inspectors in Finland through regular visits supervised the compliance of schools with laws and orders and the quality of their work. Since 1987, the government has passed laws on education in schools and has provided the core curricula that should be respected by all schools. Local school authorities have developed their own education strategies that specify the vision and objectives for education in communes while teachers have developed local and more accurate versions of the curricula based on the core curricula provided by the State. Evaluation of school activities is now based on self-evaluation.

At our school, the head teacher who is an operational leader of the school and the teaching staff are responsible for carrying out self-evaluation. The role of qualified and motivated teaching staff is crucial in carrying out the evaluation. In Finland, it has been important to invest in augmenting teachers' professional skills, and nowadays teachers of all levels have university degrees. A head teacher has a strong position in school with wide powers of action defined in the comprehensive school code.

The main task of school is teaching and learning and self-evaluation seeks to answer how well the school has succeeded.

The first step of self-evaluation is assessment of pupils' learning outcomes. School activities are evaluated regularly by the teaching and other staff in staff meetings which are the core of self-evaluation. Besides, schools regularly collect information about their activities, analyse it and provide it to school authorities. This information is collected with the help of the balanced score card that divides school activities into four fields: clients (pupils and parents or other guardians); processes (teaching, pupils' welfare and other aspects of activities inside the school); staff and leadership; and efficiency.

After analysis of the fields and the whole school, areas for improvement are identified and improvement activities can usually start immediately. The system might be seen as complicated at times, but it gives an opportunity to develop school activities, solve arising problems, and besides, it is equal to all acting in a school. Results of self-evaluation are reported to pupils' parents, though there is some need for improving the communication system. Results are not used for any ranking as the whole system is based on trust for validity of action and on high moral commitment of school leaders to do their jobs.

How to change a bad school into a good one – Story of a school principal in Sweden



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In autumn 2005, Fuxernaskolan in the municipality of Lilla Edet was mentioned as the worst school in Sweden by the media. There were serious problems with violence and vandalism, poorest study results with one quarter of students leaving for other schools. Annual costs of building repairs were more than EUR 100 000. The school changed eight school heads in three years.

In April 2006, the municipality asked me to take up the job of school head and I agreed, knowing the situation as I had been following the media for a few years. Although I had to start in September, there was a lot to be done in the summer. I stayed at school until late at night and at weekends, as I still worked in my old job. I noticed a group of teenagers who spent a lot of time in the school yard and soon made friends with them. They told me about their experiences at school and from their stories I got far more useful information than I had got from former school heads and teachers. I realised that although they fought against school authority, it was a better place for them to be than at home. They also recognised their own problems. They appreciated that I showed genuine interest in their lives. So I decided to involve them in my plans for the school's future.

The change strategy was aimed at changing the physical environment; rules and relations; investing in knowledge and building

up the 'trademark' of the school. First, we had to get rid of the graffiti and, knowing that my allies were mainly responsible for them, I invited them to clean the school and prepare for the school year with a little support from the responsible service. This was the start of great school development work.

When the school year started, we developed several international cooperation projects with EU countries, Turkey and even Tanzania. Students could now attend extracurricular activities, such as Turkish, modelling, drama, activities with local sport clubs. Four new study programmes were introduced (science, international, soccer and music and drama) which attracted new students in following years. We started to cooperate with local companies and students got support to create their own companies, some of which became really successful. Social workers replaced police in the school's corridors. We educated parents on how to support their children and improve their results. Many parents came to school to help other students with homework. A team of students took responsibility for the school environment.

We created new relations with media and began inviting them to cover our changes. In three years the school managed to appear in more than 150 positive media features.

One can say that the new attitude is a good result on its own, but for the past three years, not only the image but also results of students' learning have improved. The school receives many visitors from other schools, researchers, parliamentarians and even the general director has visited the school with his entire management group.

Of course, managing a school in an area of social problems is a challenge every day but we run after the problems and not the problem after us as before.

E-school administration in Turkey



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In 2008, the National Education Directorate of Sanliurfa organised a study visit, 'Let's reshape new schools for the future together', to discuss with colleagues from European countries how supervision activities can contribute to better education management and examples of good practice in school management. Participants noted the e-school administration system provided by the Ministry of National Education as an interesting practice.

The total number of students attending general education is more than 14 million. E-school, an electronic data bank, keeps records of all students in the school system. It helped to diminish administrative burdens on school managers and reduce bureaucracy, thus giving more time to spend on quality of education.

Data on students' personal information, their parents, health, enrolment and attendance and transfers from one school to another are available in the e-school system. It covers all students' progress from enrolment to graduation.

There are different levels of access rights: parents can only look up information about their own children; school managers have access to students' information in their schools; inspectors have access to

information about teachers and schools in the area for which they are responsible, while personnel at the Ministry of National Education can access any information about the entire school system.

The e-school system also monitors attendance, entering the weekly lesson schedule, subjects to be taught and the teachers assigned for each subject and class, determining exam dates and entering exam results and filling in school development reports.

In a similar system, information about inspectors, school managers and teachers is collected and stored.

Sharing knowledge, taking findings further: experience of the synthesis seminar

Study visit reports provide a lot of interesting and useful information about effective policies and practices in participating countries. As stated above, about one third of all visits 2008/09 were related to improving quality and efficiency of education and training and many interesting findings have been compiled. On 1 and 2 February 2010, Cedefop hosted a seminar to summarise and discuss the outcomes of these visits, focusing on development of key competences, namely, communication in foreign languages, social and civic competences; ensuring high quality of teaching and training; and strengthening educational leadership and management.

The seminar brought together 70 organisers and participants of study visits, representatives of initiatives identified as examples of good practice during visits and presented in the previous chapters, experts on the themes and representatives of national agencies.

During the seminar, participants discussed the importance of these issues for making lifelong learning a reality and their relevance to the European education and training agenda. Participants also worked together to develop a better understanding of and creative solutions for the challenges faced by learners in learning foreign languages and acquiring social and civic competence, for teachers and trainers in ensuring development of such competences and for school leaders in creating communities of learning.

Study visits' findings on quality and efficiency of education and training show that the study visits programme makes a substantial contribution to cooperation and common learning in education and training in Europe; there are also links from the outcomes of study visits to the EU strategy 2020 for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth that stresses the need to improve the quality and performance of education ⁽²⁰⁾. Discussions during the seminar resonated with the conclusions of the Education, Youth Affairs and Culture Council (November, 2009) ⁽²¹⁾ on the professional development of teachers and school leaders that recognised 'the motivation, skills and competences of teachers as well as the quality of school leadership' as key factors in achieving high quality learning outcomes. Teachers, trainers and school leaders and decision-makers should benefit more from the multiple opportunities for sharing good practice and cooperation that the lifelong learning programme ⁽²²⁾ presents.

During the seminar, participants had an opportunity to meet experts and school heads working on similar problems and they pointed out that further cooperation can develop. One of the spin-offs of the seminar was founding a joint international collaborative activity for small schools in the EU developed by Austrian and Finnish participants (page 52).

Materials of the seminar are available at the Cedefop study visits website at: <http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu> (look under Documentation).

⁽²⁰⁾ European Commission (2010). *Communication from the Commission. Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*. COM(2010) 2020 Brussels, 3.3.2010. Available from Internet: http://europa.eu/press_room/pdf/complet_en_barroso_007_-_europe_2020_-_en_version.pdf [cited 20.4.2010].

⁽²¹⁾ Council of the European Union (2009). Council conclusions of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 302, 12.12.2009, p. 6-9. Available from Internet: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:302:0006:0009:EN:PDF> [cited 16.4.2010].

⁽²²⁾ Lifelong learning programme (2007-13). See: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learningprogramme/doc78_en.htm [cited 14.4.2010].

SISSI – Strategic initiative for small schools international



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Strategic initiative for small schools international (SISSI) aims at empowering small schools, recognising their social and cultural impact on their local environments and solving common problems by offering an EU-wide umbrella.

Social, historical and geographic backgrounds and especially the current economic situation have caused both in Austria and Finland significant organised activity around the issue of small schools. One reason for current raised awareness is the economic situation. The rising level of expenses and diminishing number of pupils has in many cases led to schools either closing or being on the verge of closing.

The concept of a small school varies according to local conditions and regional or national definitions. In some countries (Austria, Greece, Norway) the extent of multigrade teaching (more than one grade taught simultaneously in a classroom) defines a small primary school. In Finland senior secondary schools with less than 120 students are considered small.

SISSI considers a school small if its existence or working conditions are more or less threatened because of size, which typically happens, if the school is located in a remote mountainous region, on an island, or far away in the rural countryside.

SISSI activities are based on experience

and good practices already attained by working with small schools to improve their overall quality, as well as school management and leadership skills by sharing information, experiences and collaboration.

The following activities are planned:

- Comenius – Grundtvig seminar
1 to 7 September 2010 in Salzburg, Austria;
- Comenius – Grundtvig seminar in autumn 2011 in Finland;
- future Comenius contact seminars: 'Small schools in Europe, schools in rural regions';
- helping small schools get in touch with one another for collaboration;
- joint SISSI web pages.

The project will target teachers and principals of small schools; regional authorities and decision-makers; scientists of educational and social studies.

The project will be coordinated by Mr Jukka O. Mattila, President of the Finnish Association of Small Secondary Schools (FASSS) (see also page 44) and Ms Marina Grogger, Professor, International Office, University of Education Salzburg, Austria (see also page 47).

Small schools and their local communities from EU countries are invited to participate in joint activities.

References – Further reading – Sources

Cedefop study visits website

A dedicated website of the study visits programme. Under documentation menu, one can find information about the themes covered by the programme, materials for further reading, links to overviews of educational and training systems. Group reports, publications and materials of seminars referred to in this publication are also available there. The website also serves as an interactive tool for participants, organisers of study visits and national agencies for managing and implementing the programme.

<http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu>

European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Official website of the European Commission covering policies, developments and programmes related to education and training, culture, youth, multilingualism, citizenship and sports.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.htm [cited 13.3.2010].

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

Cedefop is a European agency that helps promote and develop vocational education and training in the European Union. Cedefop's website provides up-to-date information on and analyses of vocational education and training systems in Europe, policies, research and practice in the field of lifelong learning.

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu> [cited 13.3.2010].

Eurydice

Eurydice is a European information network on education and training systems. Eurydice provides a vast source of information, including detailed descriptions of how European education systems are organised and how they function.

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/> [cited 13.3.2010].

Knowledge system on lifelong learning

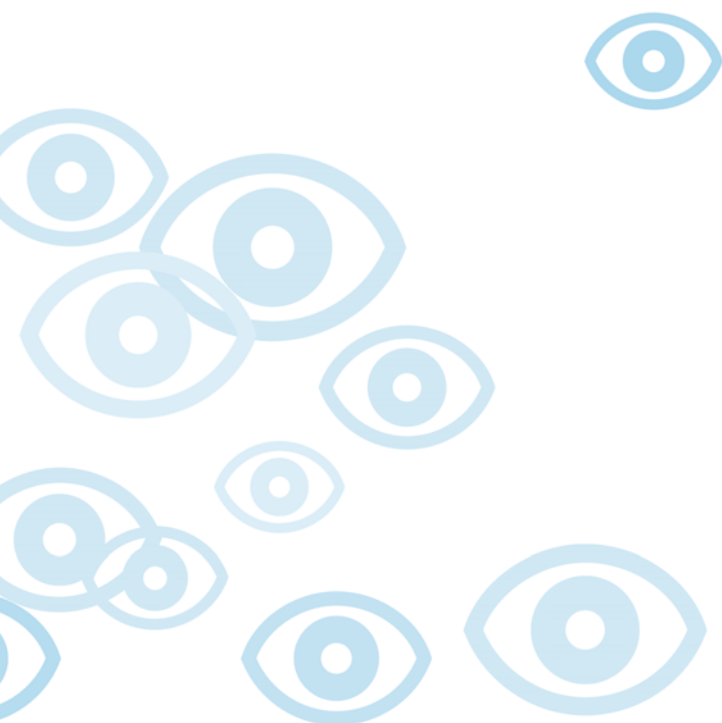
The knowledge system on lifelong learning (KSLLL) website offers up-to-date information on common learning activities in education and training for developing lifelong learning in Europe.

<http://www.kslll.net/> [cited 13.3.2010].

EVE – Electronic platform for dissemination and exploitation of results

EVE is a multilingual electronic platform containing results of projects financed through programmes and initiatives in education, training, culture, youth and citizenship. It is managed by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture in the framework of dissemination and exploitation of results of the lifelong learning programme.

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/eve/ [cited 13.3.2010].



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European Centre for the Development
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Better competences through better teaching and leading

Findings from study visits 2008/09

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The study visits programme for education and vocational training specialists, part of the lifelong learning programme (2007-13), is an initiative of the European Directorate-General for Education and Culture. Cedefop coordinates the programme at the European level, whereas the national agencies implement the programme in the Member States.

Better competences through better teaching and leading

Findings from study visits 2008/09

This publication presents findings from about 100 study visits in 2008/09 related to improving quality and efficiency, one of the strategic priorities of European cooperation in education and training, and specifically, its important components: acquisition of key competences, challenges to teachers and trainers and new approaches to leadership and management.

Group reports prepared by participants during study visits were the main source of information for this publication. They are a rich source of information about practices in education and training in participating countries. This selection represents only a small sample of initiatives identified and presented during visits and also at Cedefop's seminar on 1 and 2 February 2010 in Thessaloniki, Greece.

This publication is aimed at building bridges between educational and VET institutions and developing interesting cooperation projects.



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