Policy Review on Teacher Education for Inclusion

International documents, reports and projects

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European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education

CONTENTS

PREAMBLE

This document presents an initial review of literature relating to teacher education. The aim for this review is to present summary information on key international resources considering teacher education issues. The information in this document is purely descriptive and no attempt has been made to analyse this information.

Information presented in this review includes the details on the resource (title, author, producer, date, etc.) as well as a summary of the focus. Where relevant, specific extracts presenting key statements relating to teacher training for inclusion and special needs education relating are also given.

This document presents information on documents, reports and project write-ups from key international organisations: mainly the European Council, Parliament and Commission, UNESCO, OECD and the Council of Europe.

INTRODUCTION

The methodology used in this literature review involved searching various sources and databases on the Internet. This review contains summaries and extracts from the work of European institutions, descriptions of the activity of major international organisations and links and information on various other organisations, groups and initiatives relevant to the subject of teacher education for inclusion.

The keywords searched included the words 'teacher', 'education', 'training', '(for) inclusion', 'inclusive', 'special education', 'special (educational) needs', 'disability', etc.

As education and training is one of the subjects of co-operation among EU member states, there is a special section dedicated to education and training within the European Commission, the Council and the Parliament. The focus for all searching within the European institutions was the portal of the European Union http://europa.eu/ which gives a comprehensive overview of texts and documents dealing with co-operation. It gives access not only to the Commission communications that are not published in the Official Journal, but also references to other texts published in the Official Journal which can be found on: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/. A second source explored was the website of European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture, which gives access to studies and reports produced by the Commission or on behalf of the Commission. In the case of the Parliament and the Council, searching was conducted in their electronic archives. For the Parliament the focus was mainly on the Committee of Culture and Education and the reports its members have produced.

The selection of documents was limited to the second half of 1990 to date. The documents included in this review mention measures and recommendations for teacher training in the context of special needs education (SNE) or in the context of education for all (inclusion).

The Council of Europe publishes documents on its website and they can be found in two databases: one dedicated to the Council of Ministers and the other to the Parliamentary Assembly. The search was focused on all the recommendations, resolutions or any other kind of document issued by the Council of Europe with regards to the teacher education. As more recent developments were of interest in this review, the research was restricted to the period from 2000 to the present. Two groups of keywords were searched: 'teacher training' and 'disability'. As the Council of Europe interprets this subject of teacher training in a very broad manner, this review also includes a selection of documents that do not explicitly mention special needs or disability but speak about 'intercultural diversity' or 'socio-cultural diversity'.

2008

Education and Training 2010 programme, Cluster 'Teachers and Trainers', Cluster 'Key Competences – Curriculum Development' Joint seminar Report

Date: 3–4/04/2008
Link: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/teacherreport_en.pdf

Summary: In the frame of the 'Education and Training 2010' Programme, the Commission organised a joint seminar between two thematic clusters: 'teacher's education' and 'key competences' with the involvement three external experts (including a representative from the Agency). The experts reviewed their thematic conclusions and reached a common statement. They mainly stated that the two aspects are complementary.

Key statements:

p. 5 '*Conclusions*' (paragraph 38): The school curriculum / key competences and teacher education are not isolated subjects; rather they are key aspects of school policy that influence each other [...] the need for schools to cope with a wide variety of differences between students (linked to migration, disadvantage, special needs ...) requires innovative ways of teaching *and* new approaches to the curriculum.

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Improving competences for the 21st Century: An Agenda for European Cooperation on Schools

Date: 03/07/2008
Link: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0425:FIN:EN:PDF

Summary: In 2008, the European Commission made a series of proposals to modernise school systems in its 'Improving Competences for the 21st Century: An Agenda for European Cooperation on Schools' Communication.

The Commission identified three main areas for action:

- First, to increase the focus on ensuring all pupils gain the competences they need in the rapidly changing knowledge society. This includes: increasing levels of literacy and numeracy; reinforcing learning-to-learn skills; and modernising curricula, learning materials, teacher training and assessment.

- Secondly, to increase the commitment to provide high-quality learning for every student. This involves making pre-school education more widely available; improving equity in school systems; reducing early school leaving; and improving support within mainstream schooling for students with special needs.

- Thirdly, to improve the quality of teachers and school staff, with more and better-quality teacher education; more effective teacher recruitment; and help for school leaders to focus on improving learning.

The Communication was part of the EU Commission's Renewed Social Agenda, to reinforce access, opportunities and solidarity among all EU citizens.

Key statements:

p. 11. (4) *Teacher Competences and Qualifications*: 4.1 Teacher quality is the most important within-school factor affecting student performance. As such, it is vital to the achievement of Lisbon goals. The profession has a high percentage of older workers; some 30% of teachers are over 50, and around two million will need to be replaced in the next 15 years to maintain the size of the teaching workforce. Staff need the skills to give every pupil adequate opportunities to acquire necessary competences in a safe and attractive school environment based on mutual respect and cooperation, which promotes social, physical and mental well-being and where bullying and violence have no place. Yet most countries report shortfalls in teaching skills. Despite this, incentives for, and investment in, continuous training and development are weak. Generally, time spent on in-service training is minimal and many Member States offer no systematic support for new teachers.

4.2 Ministers agreed in 2007 to make the teaching profession a more attractive career choice, and to improve the quality of teacher education and to provide initial education, early career support (induction) and further professional development that is coordinated, coherent, adequately resourced and quality assured. Teachers should have sufficient incentives throughout their careers to review their learning needs and to acquire new knowledge, skills and competence, including in languages.

4.3 The school consultation responses highlight the need to improve the balance between theory and practice in initial teacher education, and to present teaching as a problem-solving or research-in-action activity linked more to children's learning and progress. Staff should have time for training and professional development and this should be accredited. In some countries, teachers' working conditions, including remuneration, were cited as key issues.

4.4 Recent research shows that the best-performing education systems attract the most able people into the teaching profession; use effective processes to select the right applicants to become teachers and to tackle poor performance; adopt a career-long and practical approach to teacher education; and create school environments in which teachers learn from each other.

Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Improving the Quality of Teacher Education

Date: 3/08/2007
Reference: COM(2007) 392 final
Link: http://ec.europa.eu/education/com392_en.pdf

Summary: In this communication the Commission presents the current state of affairs of the teaching profession namely in the field of in-service training provision, gender and age profile. It insists on the fact that quality teaching is the core element of pupils' success and school attendance. Therefore the Commission calls for different policy measures on the level of member States in order to adapt the profession to meet the new challenges of the knowledge-based economy. Above all this communication details the common principles on which the profession should be based in terms of training, career developments, mobility, etc.

Key statements:

p. 4 *'Context: 1.3 Changing demands'*: 'Changes in education and in society place new demands on the teaching profession. [...] classrooms now contain a more heterogeneous mix of young people from different backgrounds and with different levels of ability and disability. [...] These changes require teachers not only to acquire new knowledge and skills but also to develop them continuously. To equip the teaching body with skills and competences for its new roles, it is necessary to have both high-quality initial teacher education and a coherent process of continuous professional development keeping teachers up to date with the skills required in the knowledge based society.'

p. 13 *'A framework for action: 2.3.2. Necessary skills'*: 'identify the specific needs of each individual learner, and respond to them by deploying a wide range of teaching strategies'.

p. 15 *'A framework for action: 2.3.6. Teaching in society'*: 'Teachers act as role models. It is important for pupil attainment that the profession fully reflects the diversity of the society in which it operates (in terms, for example of culture, mother tongue, and (dis)ability). Member States could take measures to ensure that the composition of the teaching workforce fully reflects the diversity of society...'

'Teachers and Trainers' Peer Learning Cluster

Link: http://www.kslll.net/PeerLearningClusters/clusterDetails.cfm?id=14

In the Conclusions of the European Council of 15 November 2007 on improving the quality of teacher education, Ministers responsible for Education agreed as follows:

- to provide initial education, early career support (induction) and further professional development that is coordinated, coherent, adequately resourced and quality assured;
- to improve the quality of teacher education;
- to make the teaching profession a more attractive career choice.

Amongst other things, it was agreed that teachers should:

- possess pedagogical skills as well as specialist knowledge of their subjects;
- have access to effective early career support programmes at the start of their career;

- have sufficient incentives throughout their careers to review their learning needs and to acquire new knowledge, skills and competence;
- be able to teach key competences and to teach effectively in heterogeneous classes;
- engage in reflective practice and research;
- be autonomous learners in their own career-long professional development.

Outputs of the 'Teachers and Trainers' Peer Learning Cluster:

The Cluster adopts a peer learning approach to policy cooperation.

Its PLAs have so far produced policy conclusions on these themes:

- Teachers' continuous professional development;
- Schools as communities in which teachers as well as pupils are learning;
- Preparing teachers to teach in culturally diverse classroom settings;
- Effective relationships between schools and teacher education institutions;
- The induction of beginning teachers.

Background

Teacher quality is the most important within-school factor affecting student performance. As such, it is vital to the achievement of Lisbon goals.

The key role played by teachers and trainers in creating quality education and training systems was recognised from the very beginning of the **Open Method of Coordination in Education and Training.**

Early work led to the drafting and validation by representatives of all Member States and stakeholders of a key document: **'Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications'**.
Link: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles_en.pdf

The ideas in this text formed the basis of the early work of the Peer Learning Cluster 'Teachers and Trainers' Cluster.

More recently, the agenda for the Peer Learning Cluster has been set by the **Conclusions of the European Council of 15 November 2007 on improving the quality of teacher education.**

Education and Training 2010 programme – Cluster 'Teachers and Trainers' Report of the Peer Learning Activity, Oslo, May 2007. 'How can Teacher Education and Training policies prepare teachers to teach effectively in culturally diverse settings?'

Summary: This note summarises the main policy conclusions of a Peer Learning Activity, in which experts from several European countries exchange ideas on policy and practice on a key topic in Teacher Education. The Norwegian Ministry of Education hosted the PLA in Oslo from 20 to 24 May 2007. The particular focus of discussion was on training for multi-cultural diversity.

Key statements:

p. 1 *Background, 3*: 'Secondly, in some Member States, teachers have not been, or feel that they have not been, adequately trained to teach groups of pupil from a diversity of cultures. For example, in the UK (En), an annual survey of newly qualified teachers shows

that many of them felt that their initial training had not properly prepared them for teaching in a diverse classroom.'

p. 3 *Policy conclusions – a diversity of contexts – 19*: 'Overall, participants concluded that policies to equip teachers to deal with the challenges and opportunities posed by culturally diverse classrooms need to be seen in the context of wider policies at the level of society, of the education system as a whole, and of each school. The teacher is not the only actor involved. Similarly, the effectiveness of the school in this area will depend on the wider society's attitudes towards multiculturalism; all citizens now require the skills and awareness necessary to live in a multicultural society'.

p. 4 *Policy conclusions – system issues – 23*: 'Several participants noted that the current teaching workforce in their country does not adequately reflect the cultural diversity of society. They identified a need for policies to encourage the recruitment and retention of larger numbers of teachers and other school staff - as well as school leaders and teacher educators - from other cultural backgrounds.'

p. 5 *Policy conclusions – teacher education policy:* 26. 'A key question posed was whether Teacher Education policy should seek to prepare all teachers to deal with diversity, or to focus training on a small number of specialists. Some teachers hold the view that pupils from minority backgrounds are the responsibility only of those teachers who teach the language of instruction as a second language.'

27. 'Appropriate training should be a part of both initial and in-service teacher education (CPD), both theory and practice, for all subjects. Participants noted that in several countries this would require changes to existing Teacher Education curricula and supply or courses.'

p. 5 – 6 Policy conclusions – teacher education curricula 36: ' It was not the purpose of the PLA to draw up a comprehensive syllabus for the Education of teachers to work in culturally diverse settings; however, participants concluded that several basic teaching skills are particularly important in this context:

• classroom research skills and the ability to engage with academic research;
• monitoring the effectiveness of their classroom interventions;
• reflecting critically on their own practice;
• working collaboratively.
In addition, initial Teacher Education should also equip teachers with the skills to:
• examine and reassess their attitudes towards other cultures;
• develop empathy;
• treat all students as individuals;
• promote the success of all students;
and the strategies to:
• deal appropriately with prejudice at school;
• teach children who lack a strong command of the language of instruction;
• make good use of the resources that minority children bring to the classroom; and
• communicate effectively and with cultural sensitivity with parents.'

Study on Key Education Indicators on Social Inclusion and Efficiency, Mobility, Adult Skills and Active Citizenship

Author/Editor: GHK
Date: December 2006
Reference: 2005-4682/001-001 EDU ETU
Link: http://ec.europa.eu/education/pdf/doc258_en.pdf

Summary: The study was commissioned by the Commission in order to obtain statistical support for the policy proposals in the framework of the 'Education and Training 2010 Work Programme'. It focuses on the situation of teachers and trainers in terms of training, shortage, mobility or adaptability to new educational challenges.

Concerning special educational needs it presents a portrait based on experience from different European countries pointing out the need for special training for in-service teachers to provide quality education to all categories of pupils especially in the context of inclusive education and mixed classes. It also lists incentives from countries in order to attract new teachers in this field and stresses also the positive impact on teacher's mobility on their competences, thanks to the experience sharing.

Key statements:

p. 7 '*Variations in the demand for and supply of teachers: Qualitative factors'*: 'There are a range of factors that influence demand, these include: policy preference [..] the design of national curricula [..] and special needs linked to migration, culture, languages or disabilities. These factors might create the need for existing teachers to follow further training and/or create the need for new teachers. There is concern that adequate support needs to be provided to teachers through, for example, teaching assistants so as to avoid workloads which might lead to 'burn-out' and the loss of teachers.'

p. 54 *'Changing role of teachers'*: 'The demand on and for teachers are being affected by: New subjects in the school curricula, Changing and increasing work loads, Increasingly diverse pupil population as a consequence of immigration, Requirements to teach and integrate pupils with special needs.'

p. 60/62 '*Special needs education*': 'In Austria, since the 1996 provisions on the integration of pupils with special educational needs at lower secondary schools, schools became obliged to integrate pupils with special needs into mainstream classes. Since then, the number of children with special needs attending lower secondary schools instead of Sonderschulen (special schools) has increased constantly. However, the development of adequate teacher training has not matched the real situation in schools over the last decade. At university, special needs education is not part of the initial teacher training programme. At teacher training colleges, curricula for both the theoretical and practical branch of special needs education had to be developed or revised.'

'Overall, most of the countries included in the study are experiencing a trend towards 'integration'. It can be expected that the number of special needs schools will decrease in the future (and will only be attended by severely disabled pupils). But special needs teaching will be strengthened in mainstream teacher education in many countries. This trend might lead to higher demands on existing teachers if they are to educate the special needs children in mainstream education and/or to more teachers with a specific qualification required. Higher demands on existing teachers may also lead to more stress

and burn-out among teachers which may lead to a higher turnover among teachers. On the other hand, higher demands on existing teachers may also lead a higher degree of professional recognition and higher status if teachers are supported in managing the higher demands.'

p. 64 table: 'To what extent are the study countries increasing or decreasing the number of special needs schools and how will this impact the demand for teachers with qualifications to teach special needs children? In many countries there is a trend towards the integration of special needs children into mainstream education, rather than increasing the number of specialist schools. This tends to reduce the need for teachers in specialist schools, but it might increase the training needs of teachers in regular schools, and the demands placed on them if the necessary support is not provided.'

p. 142 'Measures to tackle subject related shortages'

'*Financial incentives*': 'In Estonia, teachers who are not fully qualified are offered the opportunity to obtain teaching qualifications in specific subjects for which there is a high demand (for example, Estonian as a second language, English, and special needs education)'

'*Flexible entry requirements'*: 'In Finland, the Ministry of Education initiated a three-year expansion programme for teacher education and training at ten universities, with the aid of separate funding. Increases in educational provision have specifically targeted class teacher education, special needs teacher education and the training of teachers of languages, mathematics and natural sciences'

p. 174 *'International mobility and the demand and supply of teachers and trainers in Europe':* '[…] the typical European classroom is becoming more diverse in terms of the backgrounds, languages, abilities, and special needs of pupils, the competences required for teaching successfully are increasing, and education systems and curricula are continually evolving. Teachers face considerable challenges and have to adapt to changing conditions.

There is a strong case to suggest, and no contrary evidence has been revealed in this report, that increased international mobility within Europe for teachers and trainers would help them to address these challenges, enrich and increase the effectiveness of their teaching and improve the pedagogic and administrative aspects of the national education and training schemes.'

Communication from the Commission to the Council and to the European Parliament: Efficiency and equity in European education and training systems

Date: 08/09/2006

Reference: COM(2006) 481 final

Link:
http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/general_framework/c11095_en.htm

Summary: The 2006 Spring European Council outlined the twin challenges which Europe's education and training systems face when it concluded that they are critical factors to develop the EU's long-term potential for competitiveness as well as for social cohesion. It stated that reforms must be stepped up to ensure high quality education and training systems that are both efficient and equitable. These issues are central to the

fulfilment of the EU's objectives in the Lisbon Partnership for Growth and Jobs and the Open Method of Coordination for Social Inclusion and Social Protection. This communication does not specifically address issues related to teacher training, but the necessity for highly qualified and motivate teachers is implicit throughout.

Key statements:

p. 6 3.2 Primary and secondary education: Improving the quality of basic education for all. 'The most important factors for efficiency and equity are the quality, experience and motivation of teachers and the types of pedagogy they use. Working in collaboration with parents and pupil welfare services, teachers can play a key role in securing participation of the most disadvantaged.'

p. 7 'Efficiency and equity can both be improved by focussing on improving teacher quality and recruitment procedures in disadvantaged areas, and designing autonomy and accountability systems which avoid inequity.'

Report from the Commission: The Concrete Future Objectives of Education Systems

Date: 31.01.2001
Reference: COM(2001) 59 final
Link:http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2001:0059:FIN:EN:PDF

Summary: Following the Lisbon strategy, the EC and the Council recognise that efforts should be made namely in the field of education and training in order to achieve the objective of the 'World most competitive economy in 2010'. In this report the Commission identifies five main objectives to be achieved in the particular field of education: concerning the quality, the skills pupils should acquire, etc.

Concerning the theme of teachers training, recommendations put forward by the Commission do not concentrate particularly on teachers training for SEN. It mentions however that training of teachers should continue when they are in-service in order to adapt to new challenging reality of their classes (i.e. inclusive education), new technologies (ICT) and new approaches (personal not only technical development of pupils). The report underlines also the learning and training advantages of teacher's mobility.

Key statements:

p. 6 *'Improving Training for Teachers and Trainers'*: 'Upgrading the initial and in-service training of teachers and trainers so that their skills respond both to the changes in society and expectations, and to the varied groups involved (all ages of young people in initial education and training, and a wide spectrum of ages of adults; people with specific learning difficulties, and with personal or societal difficulties; etc.)

p. 11-12 *'Increasing mobility and exchanges'*: 'Over the last 10 years or so,[..], many schools have opened up to mobility and exchanges. [..] They also provide [..] the possibility for teachers to share good practice with their foreign colleagues, and to learn from each other in that context. [..] It is now necessary to widen the range of schools and training institutions which take part in such activities, since institutions with less-advantaged learners tend to be under-represented.

Education and Training 2010 programme, Cluster 'Teachers and Trainers': Main policy conclusions 2005–2007

Date: 2005–2007

Link: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/reportpeer5_en.pdf

Summary: In the framework of the 'Education and Training 2010' Programme, the Commission organised a series of peer learning activities around the four main challenges concerning teacher education and training identified by the Programme. The document lists the main conclusions that experts agreed on during their meetings.

Key statements:

p. 6 (36): As every classroom is a place of diversity (we need only think of the diversity of age and gender; the diversity of learning styles and intelligences; the diversity of socio-economic groups; the ranges of ability/disability; the diversity of mother tongues …), there was great consensus that all teachers have to be prepared already in their initial phase of education.

2008

European Parliament resolution on improving the quality of teacher education

Date: 23/09/2008
Reference: INI/2008/2068

Link: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2008-0422+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

Summary: In its resolution the European Parliament highlights the core role of teachers training and education for the subsequent good results of pupils. The Parliament calls for more financing for teachers (i.e. for life long learning, salaries, new qualifications), it stresses the need to keep the best elements in the system and prevent the 'brain drain' towards the private sector and insists on new competences for teachers who should have a good knowledge of ICT, medias, languages, civic education and the EU functioning and institutions in order to offer to their pupils the most accurate education possible.

Key statements:

Whereas E) 'whereas the challenges faced by the teaching profession are increasing as educational environments become more complex and heterogeneous; [...] and the increasingly diverse mix of students in many schools [...] and the need to pay more attention to the learning needs of individual pupils,'

Whereas Q) 'whereas the objective of equal opportunities for all is enshrined in the EC Treaty, particularly in Article 13 of the Treaty, which provides a legal basis for combating discrimination on grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation'.

2001

European Parliament resolution: Towards a barrier-free Europe for people with disabilities

Reference: A5-0084/2001
Link: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P5-TA-2001-0188+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

Summary: This resolution reacts to the communication of the Commission. It calls for equal treatment for people with disabilities so they can have the same opportunities as every other person. The resolution covers the fields of education, employment, freedom of movement, support to families, etc. The Parliament calls for better and more action from the Commission and the Member States in order to guarantee a real quality and equality of life for people with disabilities.

Key statements:

p. 29: 'Calls on the Member States to implement the Charter of Luxembourg on a 'school for all' which gives children with disabilities [...] teachers specialising in continuous training, appropriate teaching methods and materials...'

2010

Council conclusions on the social dimension of education and training 3013th Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting

Date: 11/05/2010

Link:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/114374.pdf

Key statements:

p. 8 The Council invites Member States to: (4) Strengthen guidance and counselling activities and relevant teacher training, in order to support students' career choices and transitions within education or from education to employment. This is particularly important for successful integration into the labour market and for the inclusion of students with special needs.

2009

Council conclusions of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders

Date: 26/11/2009
Reference: (2009/C 302/04)
Link: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:302:0006:0009:EN:PDF

Key statements:

p. 2. (4.) (...) Demands on the teaching profession are evolving rapidly, imposing the need for new approaches. To be fully effective in teaching, and capable of adjusting to the evolving needs of learners in a world of rapid social, cultural, economic and technological change, teachers themselves need to reflect on their own learning requirements in the context of their particular school environment, and to take greater responsibility for their own lifelong learning as a means of updating and developing their own knowledge and skills. (...)

p. 3 (4.) In a rapidly changing world, and in keeping with the concept of lifelong learning, the education and development of teachers should be a coherent continuum spanning initial teacher education (with a strong practical component), induction and continuing professional development. In particular, efforts should be made to ensure that:
(a) all newly qualified teachers receive sufficient and effective support and guidance during the first few years of their careers;
(b) a reflective approach is promoted, whereby both newly qualified and more experienced teachers are encouraged continuously to review their work individually and collectively;
(c) all teachers receive regular feedback on their performance, together with help in identifying their professional development needs and establishing a plan to meet these;

(d) in the light of such feedback, sufficient opportunities are made available for practising teachers to update, develop and extend their competences throughout their careers, and that they are encouraged and enabled to do so;

(e) professional development programmes for teachers are relevant, tailored to needs, firmly rooted in practice and quality assured;

(f) teachers and school leaders are encouraged and enabled to take advantage of the opportunities offered by exchange and mobility schemes, and networks, at both national and international level;

(g) teachers and school leaders are encouraged and enabled to participate in advanced professional training and development, to engage in pedagogical research and to take advantage of opportunities to develop their knowledge of other professional sectors.

2008

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on preparing young people for the 21st century: an agenda for European cooperation on schools

Date: 13/12/2008
Reference: 2008/C 319/08

Link: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:319:0020:0022:

EN:PDF

Summary: The resolution is a response to the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament of 3 July 2008 entitled *Improving competences for the 21st Century: An Agenda for European Cooperation on Schools*, which proposes an agenda for cooperation between Member States aimed at stepping up and strengthening the development of school systems.

Key statements:

p. 1 *Whereas* (7) '… the need to ensure that provision for teachers' initial training, early career support and further professional development is coordinated, coherent, adequately resourced and quality assured … '

(**2**) to enhance the essential role which schools play in promoting inclusive societies and strengthening social cohesion, by ensuring high-quality education for all pupils in accordance with the principle of equity;

(**3..**) to promote teaching as a profession and to improve initial and in-service training for teaching staff and school leaders.

p. 6 *Emphasise that* (7) *'…* Member States were invited to ensure a high standard of initial teacher education, to provide early career support and continuing professional development that is coordinated, coherent, adequately resourced and quality assured, to attract into the teaching profession — and endeavour to retain — the most able people, to tackle instances of poor performance, to support all pupils in making full use of their potential and to create school environments in which teachers learn from one another and which focus on improving student learning.'

p. 9 *Invite Member States with the support of the Commission to'* (4) '… when following up the Council conclusions on improving the quality of teacher education, to focus cooperation on:

- enhancing the attractiveness of teaching as a profession,

- enabling all beginning teachers to benefit from structured early career support programmes,

- improving the supply, quality and take-up of teachers' continuous professional development programmes,

- reviewing teacher recruitment, placement, retention and mobility policies, in order to maximise their impact on the quality of school education,

- expanding opportunities for teachers to spend a period of time in another Member State, so that they can further their own education and training, acquire additional work experience and develop their foreign language skills,

- improving the recruitment and training of school leaders, in order to enhance their management and teaching skills.

2007

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 15 November 2007, on improving the quality of teacher education

Date: 17/11/2007
Reference: 2007/C 300/07
Link: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:300:0006:0009:EN:PDF

Summary: The conclusions deal with challenges in the field of teacher education and recruitment in order to attract and keep competent and well motivated teachers in the frame of the Lisbon strategy and 'Education & Training 2010' work programme. The document also lists the skills and competences that teachers should possess and focuson in the new changing educational environment. It especially insists on the fact that the increasing heterogeneity of classes which include more and more children with SEN (and different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds) must be reflected in the initial as well as in-service training of teachers.

Key statements:

1. Endeavour to ensure that teachers:

- hold a qualification from a higher education institution which strikes a suitable balance between research-based studies and teaching practice,
- possess specialist knowledge of their subjects, as well as the pedagogical skills required,
- have access to effective early career support programmes at the start of their career,
- have access to adequate mentoring support throughout their careers,
- are encouraged and supported throughout their careers to review their learning needs and to acquire new knowledge, skills and competence through formal, informal and non-formal learning, including exchanges and placements abroad.

7. Provide appropriate support for teacher education institutions and teacher educators, so as to enable these to develop innovative responses to the new demands on teacher education.

6. Promote during initial teacher education, early career support and through continuous professional development the acquisition of competences which will enable teachers to:

- teach transversal competences such as those outlined in the Recommendation on key competences,
- create a safe and attractive school environment which is based on mutual respect and cooperation,
- teach effectively in heterogeneous classes of pupils from diverse social and cultural backgrounds and with a wide range of abilities and needs, including special education needs,
- work in close collaboration with colleagues, parents and the wider community,
- participate in the development of the school or training centre in which they are employed,
- develop new knowledge and be innovative through engagement in reflective practice and research,
- make use of ICT in their various tasks, as well as in their own continuing professional development,
- become autonomous learners in their own career-long professional development.

2003

Council resolution on equal opportunities for pupils and students with disabilities in education and training

Date: 5/5/2003
Reference: 2003/C 134/04
Link:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2003:134:0006:0007:EN:PDF

Summary: This resolution points out the difficulties people with disabilities are facing in the field of education. It presents actions that should be taken and recommends policy steps in order to guarantee an equal and quality education and life long learning opportunities to people with disabilities.

Key statements:

p. 2 'Invites the Member States and the Commission to' vi): continue and, if necessary, increase the efforts aiming at the initial and in-service training of teachers in the area of special needs, with a view, in particular, to the provision of appropriate pedagogical techniques and materials.

2006/2007

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Link: http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=13&pid=150

Summary: The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and was opened for signature on 30 March 2007. There were 82 signatories to the Convention, 44 signatories to the Optional Protocol, and 1 ratification of the Convention. This is the highest number of signatories in history to a UN Convention on its opening day. It is the first comprehensive human rights treaty of the 21st century and is the first human rights convention to be open for signature by regional integration organizations. The Convention entered into force on 3May 2008.

The Convention marks a 'paradigm shift' in attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. It takes to a new height the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as 'objects' of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as 'subjects' with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.

The Convention is intended as a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. It adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced.

Article 24 (http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=284) is specifically on the right to education.

Key statements:

Article 24 – Education: (4) In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATION SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANISATION (UNESCO)

http://www.unesco.org/en/inclusive-education

2009

Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education

Link: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001778/177849e.pdf

2008

Status of Teacher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region

Link: http://www.unescobkk.org/education/apeid/programme-areas/teacher-education-and-training/status-of-teacher-education-in-the-asia-pacific-region/

This multinational study, prepared by the International Reading Association (IRA), was undertaken to provide information regarding the current status of the structures, policies, procedures, and practices of teacher education in the Asia-Pacific region. The data presented in this report offers an insight into national issues, traditions, and visions for the future. It should be of use to researchers and programme developers looking for a sense of the national context and the nature of the infrastructures empowered to address these issues.

2006–2015

The Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa

Link: http://www.unesco.org/en/ttissa

The Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA) is a ten-year initiative aiming to increase the quantity and improve the quality of the teaching force in Sub-Saharan Africa. It advocates a holistic approach through the improvement of teacher status and working conditions, teacher management and administration structures, the development of appropriate teacher policies and enhancement of the quality and coherence of teacher professional development.

Strategy

The TTISSA strategy is built around four main areas of support:

- Improvement of the status and working conditions for teachers

- Improvement of teacher management and administration structures

- Development of appropriate teacher policies

- Enhancement of the quality and coherence of teacher professional development

To know more: http://www.unesco.org/en/ttissa/coordination/

Teacher Education: Capacity development through teacher education in the Asia-Pacific region

UNESCO Bangkok

Link: http://www.unescobkk.org/education/apeid/programme-areas/teacher-education-and-training/esd-net-and-teacher-education/

http://www.unescobkk.org/education/apeid/

For the 8th Programme Cycle, the Teacher Education programme aims to improve the quality of education by enhancing the competencies of teachers and the capacity of teacher education institutions. The main objective is to encourage TEIs to incorporate UNESCO's initiatives in the areas of rights-based education, ESD and values education, ICT in education and skills development into their training programmes. The focus will be to reform the teacher education systems by introducing innovative approaches to teacher education in terms of teacher training policies, curricula, methodologies and resources. The targets will be ministries of education, TEIs, teacher educators and regional network master teachers.

Under this programme, training and curricular materials on ESD, ICT in teacher training and TVET will be developed and disseminated. Regional guidelines, toolkits and manuals will be produced and adapted for local use. Training workshops will be held at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. In addition, monitoring and evaluation of the status and working condition of teachers in line with the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendations Concerning the Status of Teachers will be a key activity for the 8th Programme Cycle.

Teacher Education and Teacher Training
UNESCO Chair for Teacher Education

The UNESCO Chair for Teacher Education is an addition to the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme that is already well established in the region. The Chair has been established in East China Normal University, Shanghai, PR China.

The purpose of the Chair is to promote an integrated system of research, training, information and documentation in the field of teacher education and training, and educational research. It will serve as a means of facilitating collaboration between high-level, internationally recognized researchers and teaching staff of the East China University and other institutions in China, and South East Asia region.

2005–

Teacher Education and Teacher Training
Use of ICTs in Improving Teaching and Learning (starting in 2005)

Link: http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/ict-in-education-projects/training-of-teachers/next-generation-of-teachers-project/

This project aims at:

- improving the capabilities of teachers/facilitators, through both pre-service education and in-service training, to integrate/infuse ICTs as pedagogies tools and educational resources and to facilitate interactive learning;

- identifying, creating and disseminating country/locally-specific ICT pedagogies and models of ICT use in different learning environments and teacher-developed e-lesson plans and educational software;

- developing and putting into operation a regional online teacher resource base and offline network of teacher-training institutions to share teacher-developed education courseware and innovative practices.

Case studies on pre-service teacher training in the Asia-Pacific region (2005)

As part of the UNESCO Next Generation of Teachers (through ICT) project, a survey was conducted to examine the present level (2005) of provision of ICT training for teachers, specifically in pre-service teacher education, in six countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

Development of Guidelines on Policy and Curricular Issues in Teacher Education

Link: http://www.unescobkk.org/education/apeid/programme-areas/teacher-education-and-training/development-of-policy-guidelines/

Summary: There are two main international legal instruments specific to teachers. These are:

i) the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, 1966, and

ii) the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel, 1997.

The Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (CEART) is composed of 12 independent experts – six appointed by the ILO and six appointed by UNESCO – and it meets every three years to study the application of these two standards. It then makes recommendations to the Governing Body of the ILO and to the Executive Board of UNESCO, and through them to governments, employers' and workers' organisations of their Member States, on how to improve the condition of the teaching profession within their respective mandates.

UNESCO-INTERNATIONAL BUREAU FOR EDUCATION

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/inclusive-education.html

2008

The 48th session of the International Conference on Education: Inclusive Education: The way of the Future (Geneva, 25-28 November 2008)

Link: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/ice/48th-ice-2008.html

Summary: Inclusive quality education is fundamental to achieving human, social and economic development, affirmed Ministers of Education and heads of delegation from 153 UNESCO Member States that met in Geneva at the 48th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE, November 2008).

They also agreed that governments as well as all the other social actors have an important role in providing a quality education for all and, in doing so, should recognize the importance of a broadened concept of inclusive education that addresses the diverse needs of all learners and that is relevant, equitable and effective.

The Conference called upon Member States to adopt an inclusive education approach in the design, implementation, monitoring and assessment of educational policies as a way to further accelerate the attainment of Education for All (EFA) goals as well as to contribute to building more inclusive societies.

To this end, a broadened concept of inclusive education can be viewed as a general guiding principle to strengthen education for sustainable development, lifelong learning for all and equal access of all levels of society to learning opportunities so as to implement the principles of inclusive education.

Conclusions and recommendations

Link: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/ice/48th-session-2008/conclusions-and-recommendations.html

Final report

Link: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/ice/48th-session-2008/final-report.html

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List of inclusive education guidelines

Link: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/inclusive-education/guidelines.html?0=

A range of useful resources that can support policy makers, education administrators, teachers and community leaders in their efforts to address inequalities in education and create more inclusive learning environments.

2010

Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) – Educating Teachers for Diversity: Meeting the Challenge

Link: http://www.oecd.org/document/38/0,3343,en_2649_35845581_44572006_1_1_1_1,00.html

Educating Teachers for Diversity: Meeting the Challenge explores the concepts underlying diversity in various contexts and the challenges involved in creating an evidence base to guide policy makers. It looks at the need to better articulate the links between initial and in-service teacher education and the necessity of addressing current gaps in our knowledge. Such gaps include how to attract and retain more diverse student teachers and how best to educate the teacher educators themselves. It also examines classroom practices and principles in a number of country contexts. Throughout the volume, issues raised by student teachers, teachers, and teacher educators who participated in an online consultation are used to highlight emerging themes and key challenges in the field.

The issue of educating teachers for diverse classrooms must be addressed urgently. That diversity is an asset for educators and societies in general and that efforts should be made to make the most of this rich resource is an important theme underlying all contributions to this publication. This approach contrasts with the view that diversity is a problem that needs to be avoided, or, if this is not possible, 'solved'.

Summary:

Increasingly multicultural societies have an impact on education and student achievement. Educational challenges posed by family background, socioeconomic context and migration status are not only strongly linked to student performance, they determine student performance over and above the school's influence. Schools and education systems must therefore seek to overcome such inequalities and at the same time harness the benefits that students and teachers from diverse backgrounds bring to classrooms. A successful school system treats diversity as a source of potential growth rather than an inherent hindrance to student performance. It uses the strength and flexibility of its teachers to draw out this potential, and provides them with the appropriate support and guidance to accomplish this task.

2009

Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments: First Results from Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)

Type of document: publication
Link: http://www.oecd.org/document/54/0,3343,en_2649_39263231_42980662_1_1_1_1,00.html

Summary: OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) provides the first internationally comparative perspective on the conditions of teaching and learning, based on data from over 70,000 teachers and school principals who represent lower secondary

teachers in the 23 participating countries. TALIS examines important aspects of professional development; teacher beliefs, attitudes and practices; teacher appraisal and feedback; and school leadership. TALIS looks at these factors through the eyes of teachers and school principals. This innovative approach was chosen in order to examine how the intended school and teacher policies of education systems are actually perceived and implemented in schools and classrooms, recognising that the best intentions will only yield results if effectively and consistently implemented in the frontline.

The study, Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments: First Results from TALIS, representing over 2 million teachers, focuses on teachers appraisal and feedback, their professional development, the teaching practices and beliefs and school leadership. The objective aim is to identify barriers to effective instruction. The report presents quantitative information for policymakers. Countries participating: Australia, Austria, Belgium (Flemish Community), Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey.

Findings:

- Teachers are actively embracing many of the challenges highlighted in this report. In most countries, the large majority of teachers are satisfied with their jobs and consider that they make a significant educational difference for their students. Teachers are also investing in their professional development, both in terms of their time and often also in terms of money, an investment which goes hand in hand with a wider repertoire of pedagogic strategies used in the classroom. It is worrying that, on average across countries, three-quarters of teachers report that they would receive no recognition for increasing the quality of their work or for being more innovative in their teaching. In fact, three-quarters of teachers say that, in their school, the most effective teachers do not receive the most recognition and that their school principal does not take steps to alter the monetary rewards of a persistently underperforming teacher.

- Better support for effective teaching is needed through teacher appraisal and feedback. The generally positive reception by teachers of the appraisal and feedback which they receive on their work indicates a willingness in the profession to move forward. And it's not just a bureaucratic exercise, but teachers generally report that appraisal and feedback make a difference in their work.

- TALIS highlights better and more targeted professional development as an important lever towards improvement. But TALIS also shows that we need to do better in matching the costs and benefit as well as supply and demand for professional development. Relatively few teachers participate in the kinds of professional development which they find has the largest impact on their work, namely qualification programmes and individual and collaborative research.

- The hardest issues to grapple with relate to actually improving teaching practice. Teachers in most countries report using traditional practices aimed at transmitting knowledge in structured settings much more often than they use student-oriented practices, such as adapting teaching to individual needs. And even less so do they use enhanced learning activities that require a deeper cognitive activation of students.

- TALIS suggests that effective school leadership plays a vital role in teachers' working lives and that it can make an important contribution to shaping the development of teachers. In schools where strong instructional leadership is

present, TALIS shows that school principals are more likely to use further professional development to address teachers' weaknesses identified in appraisals. Often, there are also better student-teacher relations, greater recognition given to teachers for innovative teaching practices and more emphasis on developmental outcomes of teacher appraisals and more collaboration between teachers.

- The close associations that TALIS shows between factors such as a positive school climate, teaching beliefs, cooperation between teachers, teacher job satisfaction, professional development, and the adoption of a range of teaching techniques provide indications that public policy can actively shape the conditions for effective learning. At the same time, the fact that much of the variation in these relationships lies in differences among individual teachers rather than among schools or countries underlines the need for individualised and targeted programmes for teachers rather than just whole-school or system-wide interventions that have traditionally dominated education policy.

2005

Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers

Type of document: publication
Published by: OECD Publishing
Link: http://www.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/display.asp?K=5LGTVPVRN5TD&LANG=EN

Summary: *Teachers Matter* provides a comprehensive, international analysis of trends and developments in the teacher workforce in 25 countries around the world; research on attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers; innovative and successful policies and practices that countries have implemented; and teacher policy options for countries to consider.

While documenting many areas of concern about teachers and teaching, the report also provides positive examples of where policies are making a difference. It spotlights countries where teachers' social standing is high, and where there are more qualified applicants than vacant posts. Even in countries where shortages have been a concern, there are recent signs of increased interest in teaching, and policy initiatives appear to be taking effect.

At a time when many countries are facing an ageing teaching workforce and having trouble attracting new recruits, this book provides insights into how governments can successfully deal with these issues.

2010

Education for Sustainable Democratic Societies: the Role of Teachers, Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education, 23rd session

Date: 4–5/06/2010

Link: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/standingconf/default_EN.asp

Summary: At their meeting in Ljubljana in Slovenia on 4 and 5 June 2010, the Ministers of Education of the 50 states parties to the European Cultural Convention were able to draw on the discussions to devise strategies for education and teacher training policies and thereby give direction to future Council of Europe action.

At the end of their deliberations, the participants adopted the following texts:

- Declaration on the Conference Theme: 'Education for Sustainable Democratic Societies: the Role of Teachers'

- Resolution on the Council of Europe's Education Programme in the context of the current institutional reform

- Resolution on the enhancement of teachers' professional development through the Pestalozzi Programme.

2010–2014

Steering Committee for Education (CDED) and Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR), Draft education programme 2010–2014

Link:
https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=CM(2009)62&Ver=add2&Language=lanEnglish&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383

Summary: The programme covers all levels of education, from pre-school to higher education, with targeted activities focused in three areas: education for democratic citizenship and human rights, the teaching and learning of history and language teaching. Its overall aim is to develop a coherent vision of the role of education, with particular emphasis on preserving and promoting human rights, democracy and rule of law and the ability of our societies to engage in intercultural dialogue.

Key statements:

'Education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic culture'

'The Council of Europe education programme will aim to develop a Council of Europe perspective on the right to quality education for every human being, as an enabling right making education of a certain level of quality a precondition for fully enjoying other human rights. (*Projects 1 – A: Protecting and promoting the right to quality education in European education systems, 2 – A: Learning democracy and human rights in school and out-of-school throughout life*).'

Objective 3. 'Recognising, protecting and promoting diversity through the exercise of the right to quality education'

'With regard to teacher education:'

3.2 'develop strategies and tools for the implementation of the Common reference framework for young teachers' competences on socio-cultural diversity at the level of teachers' education institutions and at the level of the school;'

3.3 'enhance capacity-building and encourage exchange of information among all stakeholders in relation to the implementation of the Common reference framework for young teachers' competences on socio-cultural diversity.'

'Expected results'

'Objective 3. Recognising, protecting and promoting diversity through the exercise of the right to quality education'

'With regard to teacher education:'

a. 'a set of policy guidelines for the drafting of framework programmes for teacher education in socio-cultural diversity, citizenship and human rights in the members states is prepared;'

b. 'a compilation of methodologies to be adapted to learning programmes for teachers in order to prepare them to work on the basis of socio-cultural diversity, citizenship and human rights;'

c. 'discussions are organised in member states to validate the guidelines and the methodologies, and support systems for the implementation of teacher education programmes in socio-cultural diversity are developed within member states.'

2009

Policies and practices for teaching sociocultural diversity – Concepts, principles and challenges in teacher education

Authors: Anne-Lise Arnesen, Pavlina Hadzhitheodoulou-Loizidou, Cézar Bîrzéa, Miquel Angel Essomba, Julie Allan
Link: http://book.coe.int/EN/ficheouvrage.php?PAGEID=36&lang=EN&produit_aliasid= 2424

Summary: The project 'Policies and practices for teaching sociocultural diversity' was launched by the Steering Committee for Education (CDED) of the Council of Europe in 2006, with the primary aim of promoting the recognition of diversity in pre-service teacher training and the management of diversity at school.

This publication is aimed at all staff in teacher education institutions. It intends to raise discussion about how teacher education, particularly in-service training, can prepare student teachers to become reflective professionals responsive to diversity in schools and classrooms. It addresses the urgent need to develop courses and practical training which stimulate the competence and reflection necessary to enhance inclusive environments where children and young people can learn to live together respecting differences. This work offers an outline of the main principles underpinning work in the diversity area. It also introduces some key concepts related to sociocultural diversity in education while analysing some challenges in teacher education and development. It identifies policy measures and guidelines for teachers' pre-service training institutions.

Policies and practices for teaching sociocultural diversity – A survey report

Author(s): Anne-Lise Arnesen, Cézar Bîrzéa, Bernard Dumont, Miguel Angel Essomba, Elisabeth Furch, Angelos Vallianatos, Ferran Ferrer
Link: http://book.coe.int/EN/ficheouvrage.php?PAGEID=36&produit_aliasid=2354lang=EN

Summary: This report underlines that teacher education institutions play an important role, in collaboration with policy makers, in drafting study programmes, but also in defining national policies concerning teacher education. Such is not always the case for the relevant qualification requirements for teachers, the evaluation of associated skills or the recognition of experience gained in the field of sociocultural diversity.

This report is the result of a survey on the initial training of teachers in sociocultural diversity in Europe, carried out in 16 countries within the framework of the project 'Policies and practices for teaching sociocultural diversity launched by the Steering Committee for Education of the Council of Europe in 2006. An analysis of replies from practitioners completes the results of the survey. The recommendations contained in this report will serve as a basis for carrying out the second phase of the project on the definition of a framework of teachers competences relating to the enhanced value of diversity.

For the promotion of a culture of democracy and human rights through teacher education

Author/Editor: Committee on Culture, Science and Education
Reference: Doc. 11624
Link: http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc08/EDOC11624.htm

Summary: The Parliamentary Assembly stresses the transversal competencies that all teachers should acquire in initial training and develop constantly during their lives, mainly education for democracy and citizenship. The report also lists key competences that teachers should posses in order to offer quality education to all pupils.

Key statements:

'B. Explanatory memorandum by M. Glăvan, rapporteur'

'I. Teacher education in the Council of Europe context'

6. '[...] it has been underlined that democracy learning needs a permanent up-dating of teachers' competences, so that the programmes of teacher education (both pre-service and in-service) take into account citizenship needs and human rights education as well as diversity education requirements.'

'III. Key competences for teacher education'

9. 'The teachers are the key factor in the educational processes: they must transform objectives into effective teaching practices and these practices should be materialised in appropriate learning outcomes. In other words, the teachers must have the necessary competences to carry out this set of educational and managerial transformations.'

11. 'As for teachers' professional competences, they are in fact a set of specific competences enabling them to carry out certain educational activities in the field of citizenship, human rights and diversity education. '

'They comprise:

- respect for the rights of learners and sensitivity to their needs and interests; [...]
- ability to adjust teaching styles to a variety of learners [...]
- ability to encourage exchanges, openness and interaction.'

2006–2015

Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states: Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006–2015

Author/Editor: Committee of Ministers
Reference: Recommendation Rec(2006)5
Link: http://www.coe.int/t/e/social_cohesion/soc-sp/integration/02_council_of_europe_disability_action_plan/Council_of_Europe_Disability_Action_Plan.asp

Summary: Taking into account that major changes have occurred in the society since the Recommendation No. R(92)6 on a 'Coherent policy for people with disabilities' was adopted, the Committee of ministers agreed on the need for a new policy and action framework in the domain of disability. The first step was taken in 2003 in Malaga, where ministers in charge of disability issues adopted the 'Malaga Ministerial Declaration'.

The main principle of the Disability Action Plan 2006–2015 (DAP 2006–2015) is to promote equality for people with disabilities in all aspects of life. The DAP was conceived as a flexible and adaptable framework to promote policy strategies and measures that will lead to full participation of persons with disabilities in the society and mainstream the disability issue. Recommendations for specific actions are proposed in several areas such as participation in political and public life, employment, education, social and legal protection, awareness raising, etc. It concentrates also on cross-cutting aspects concerning less advantaged groups amongst people with disabilities such as women, ethnic minorities, etc.

Furthermore, the DAP 2006–2015 is based on the idea that people with disabilities should be consulted and included as stakeholders in every decision or process they are concerned by.

Key statements:

p. 16 '3.4. Action line No 4: Education, 3.4.3. Specific actions by member states': 'vi. To encourage the development of initial and training for all professionals and staff working across all phases of education to incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate educational techniques and materials to support disabled pupils and students where appropriate.'

2003

Intercultural education in the 21st century: learning to live together

Type of document: Standing conference of European ministers of education, 21st session (report)
Author/Editor: Pieter Batelaan
Link: http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/education/intercultural_ education/EMED21_5.pdf

Summary: In this report, the author analyses different policy requirements and requirements in terms of school provision and teacher training in order to achieve a democratic, participative and equal society. The term 'intercultural' is understood in a broad way including all differences, not only cultural or linguistic background. An intercultural education should offer chances to all pupils irrespective of their abilities.

Key statements:

p. 2 'The term 'intercultural education' covers two characteristics of education that is appropriate in democratic multicultural societies: (1) 'inclusion and participation' [...] (2) 'learning to live together'.

p. 2 '1. Inclusion and participation: Within a democratic framework there are repercussions for both policy makers (governments) and professionals in schools and classrooms. [...] The challenge for the professionals (teachers, school leaders) is to ensure that each individual gets the opportunity to learn what she/he has to and wants to learn in order to be able to participate in the economic, cultural, social and political realms of the society.'

p. 3 'Dealing with diversity is not confined to different cultural backgrounds, but also to all aspects of an individual: including gender, talents, interests, skills and knowledge, etc. It would be an artificial exercise to separate cultural differences from other differences (social, intellectual, gender, etc.) in teaching respect.

p. 3 '*Table 1 Areas of intercultural education*': Inclusion/participation: equal access, special care for groups/individuals at risk

p. 4 '*Table 2: Diversity – Interaction:* **1.2.2**. The teacher provides opportunities to use the knowledge and skills of each individual student, [...]'

p. 4 '*Table 2: Equity – Interaction*: **2.2.1**. The teacher makes sure that all students have equal access to the interaction and to the materials, **2.2.2**. The teacher validates different skills and knowledge equally.'

p. 4 'A new role of the teacher as facilitator, observer, manager, and evaluator of learning processes (instead of provider of information) is nowadays promoted by educational authorities, researchers, teacher educators, and school managers'

p. 5 'The new role of the teacher has consequences for teacher education and further professional development. [...] Implementing new educational strategies to achieve the goals of 'learning to live together' implies that teachers should have the professional competency to: organize co-operative learning in classrooms in such a way that all students participate and can be held accountable for their contributions; identify and validate the various skills and knowledge that students bring into the classroom; [...] discuss controversial issues on respect for diversity within the framework of human rights principles'.

p. 12 '3. Teacher education and training, 3.1. Dealing with diversity: Encourage the development and organisation of in-service teacher training programmes, in particular to develop: conceptual knowledge pertaining to equity and equal opportunities to participate in classroom activities; strategies to organise co-operative learning processes which ensure the participation of all children, particularly children who are otherwise marginalized; [...]'

p. 13 '3. Teacher education and training, 3.3. Quality: [...] make sure that teachers are prepared for new professional commitments such as those of observers, evaluators, mediators, counsellors, managers, team members, etc.'.

Protection of sign languages in the member states of the Council of Europe

Type of document: Recommendation
Author/Editor: Parliamentary Assembly
Reference: Recommendation 1598 (2003)
Link: http://assembly.coe.int/main.asp?Link=/documents/adoptedtext/ta03/erec1598.htm

Summary: By this recommendation the Parliamentary Assembly aims to protect the sign languages as minority languages and thus offer them the same status as any other oral minority language. In order to offer deaf and hearing-impaired people equal education and full inclusion into society, sign languages should be equally taught in schools and they should have the choice of their schooling.

Key statements:

10 'The Assembly also recommends that the Committee of Ministers encourage member states': **iv)** 'to train teachers, in preparation for working with deaf and hearing-impaired children, in sign languages'.

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