

SUPPORTING TEACHER CAREERS:

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER CAREERS

**ET2020 Working Group Schools
Peer Learning Activity**

Cyprus, October 2019



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About this report

Under its 2018-20 mandate, the Education and Training 2020 Working Group on Schools is exploring the governance of school education systems to support high quality inclusive education across a European Education Area. The work focuses on two interlinked topics: quality assurance and teacher and school leader careers.

A Peer Learning Activity took place over 4 days in October 2019 and brought together ministry representatives and school education stakeholders from 10 countries - Belgium (Flanders)*, Belgium (French Community), Cyprus*, Estonia, Greece, Ireland, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal*, and UK – Northern Ireland - plus representatives from the Association for Teacher Education in Europe, European Trade Union Committee for Education, and Eurydice. (**Representatives forming a steering group to guide activities*).

This report is aimed at policy makers but may also be useful to any school education stakeholder concerned with supporting teacher careers. It summarises discussions in response to key questions, as well as challenges, examples of policy action, and future possibilities in particular countries.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Peer Learning Activity was hosted by the Ministry of Education of Cyprus

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European Commission - October 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

THINKING DIFFERENTLY ABOUT TEACHER CAREERS

This Peer Learning Activity report widens previous ET2020 Working Group Schools discussions about teachers' careers to consider the relationship between the **systemic requirements** of school education for highly competent teachers; **school-level needs** for staff that can help develop and put into practice strategies for the benefit of its community of learners; and the **individual teachers' own motivations and sense of progression**.

None of these states of being (motivated, competent, seeing opportunities) can be assumed – they must be **continually supported and renewed** – which is a key challenge for policy makers in trying to maintain an attractive and sustainable teacher profession.

Many education systems have already adopted competence frameworks, using a variety of models, and which embody and emphasise the **professional expectations** that the school and the wider community have for all teachers and school leaders. However, the report deliberately shifts the focus to take greater account of the individual teacher's perspective.

This shift does not simply signal greater empathy with teachers in the **context of low morale and teacher shortages** which are concerns reported by a number of European countries. It is based on the understanding that acknowledging the **complex nature of teacher career progression**, and making systemic changes to the way **personal career choices** can be supported, should lead to a more confident, fulfilled work force that is responsive to the challenge of **improving the learning and welfare of students**.

A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER CAREERS

The report outlines an emerging proposal for education systems to develop a framework for teacher careers, which will complement competence frameworks (where these already exist). This complementarity centres on the notion of a "career competence" for teachers, which anticipates **proactive involvement by teachers in the management of their own careers**.

A framework for teacher careers is understood as a means for effectively **mapping and managing the varied structures available** to support teacher professional development and career progression. Crucially, such a framework for teacher careers breaks away from linear narratives to accept that teachers' career paths vary and may not follow the conventional hierarchies of school organisation.

GUIDANCE FOR POLICY MAKERS

The report explores the notion of a framework for teacher careers in further detail and the challenges and opportunities of developing policies in this area. It outlines different elements that such a framework may usefully include for **greater coherence**, and which may be mapped or signposted by or on behalf of stakeholders. In addition, such elements may also be subject to **steering, monitoring or regulation**, depending on the education system. This guidance is presented in a set of responses to key questions, along with a summary of **case study examples of policy development** from participating countries that illustrate how diverse support structures for teachers' careers are interlinked within individual systems.

WHY A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER CAREERS?

Why a framework for teacher careers?

TEACHER CAREERS

The Working Group understand the broad definition of a career as being an occupation – or series of occupations – “undertaken for a significant period of a person's life and with opportunities for progress.”¹ Therefore, we note that a teacher's career should include notions of, and support for, both competence development and career progression².

Teacher competence frameworks are common to school education systems and can help to define teacher education, criteria for teacher recruitment and selection, and teacher professional development needs³. However, whilst being a core reference point for the development of professional knowledge and skills, the question is whether such a framework alone can adequately encompass the diversity of opportunities and support to teachers along the entirety of their careers.

Despite a common understanding of the need for a continuum of professional development⁴, teacher careers are often seen as a flat or one-dimensional, with few or no opportunities for progression – to expand, grow or move on. This interpretation can have implications for individual teachers' long-term motivation and desire to develop as a professional. On a larger scale, it raises challenges both for schools, as places of work, and for education systems, which are intent on achieving not only a sustainable and competent teaching force, but a passionate and future-oriented one.

Previous Working Group discussions have stressed the importance of choice within the profession: that as far as possible, teachers should be leaders of their own career paths. By having choice, teachers may take responsibility for their own development, feel more motivated to explore new ground, and adapt to changing circumstances.

There can be considerable diversity in the career paths of teachers – both in perception and reality.

The **six circles** shown below (which have been developed as part of the Group's work) each represent a different teacher career path. In each case, new competences will be required of the individual following that path. Appropriate guidance and support according to each path is therefore paramount.

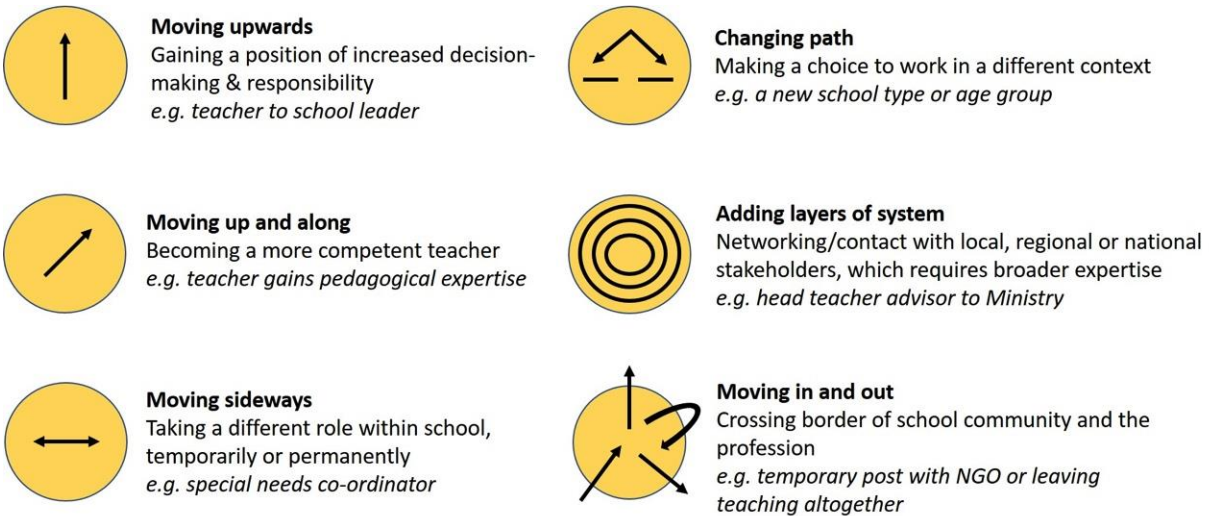
¹ Oxford English Dictionary definition: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/career>

² Progression through a) the various steps of a recognised career pathway, and b) experience gained by undertaking roles and responsibilities in addition to the teaching duties, e.g. mentoring, non-classroom pedagogical/methodological roles or management roles.

³ European Commission. (2013). Supporting teacher competence development for better learning outcomes. Brussels, Belgium: European Commission. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/experts-groups/2011-2013/teacher/teachercomp_en.pdf

⁴ Initial Teacher Education (pre-qualification), Induction (support during the first year(s) working in a school), Continued Professional Development (ongoing for the rest of one's time in the teacher profession). For more on this, see: European Commission (2015) *Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching: A guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, page 19. Available at <https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/files/Shaping%20career-long%20perspectives%20on%20teaching.pdf>

WHY A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER CAREERS?



NB these models are not exclusive and may be experienced at the same time by an individual teacher

Figure 1: Trajectories of teachers' career paths. Source: ET2020 Working Group on Schools.

In light of this complexity, attention also needs to be paid to 'teacher career competence', meaning the capacity to be able to navigate and make decisions about one's own career. Education systems differ on the extent to which teachers can take charge of, or have freedom of choice within, their careers. Therefore, the notion of career competence must always be considered in the context of a specific education system.

There is a potential tension or challenge between taking into account the motivations and needs of individual teachers personally, and considering and supporting all teachers within the profession as a whole. Equally, there may not be complete alignment between the needs of teachers and the localized objectives of each school, each school also navigating its role within a national system as a whole. This can create complex interrelationships, even when striving for high quality learning outcomes for all pupils is a universal goal.

Research on innovation in schools⁵ has shown how important school culture and leadership are to the innovative capacity of teachers. These motivated teachers will often create, lead, or volunteer for, projects and find themselves in roles sometimes not formally described or recognised. Effective approaches to career guidance and evaluation are therefore needed to also take this into account.

The objective of the Group was to explore how a framework can usefully acknowledge and signpost these different possible forms of career path (as in the circles above) along with the range of support mechanisms that make them realistic and rewarding opportunities for the individual, school and system. When referring to "improving the attractiveness and sustainability of the teacher profession", therefore, it is with this understanding of improving motivation and professional learning as a fundamental part of improving school education and the pupil learning experiences.

⁵ See European Commission (2017) Study on supporting school innovation across Europe, available at <https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/resources/innovation> . Also work by the ATEE R&D Community on the Professional Development of Teachers, <https://atee.education/rd-communities/professional-development-of-teachers/>

WHY A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER CAREERS?

A FRAMEWORK FOR BETTER SUPPORTING TEACHER CAREERS

A “framework” is a supportive structure made up of different elements that are linked together, such as the frame of a building. It can also be a set of values, which can act as a basis for making judgements. It can be constant by having a strong and fixed core, whilst also being flexible and adaptable through the additional elements mapped onto it.

A framework for teacher *careers* might therefore usefully link support structures within a system and guide decision-making within a broad context of the conditions defining teacher careers. It might also help to present a common vision and transparent set of values or standards with the goal of supporting teacher development, improvement and progression. In this respect it may incorporate – or link to – a *competence* framework.

At its core, a framework for teacher careers might refer to the regulations that define the broad parameters for teacher careers, including those setting out employment and contractual status, remuneration and promotion in formal (multi-level) career systems. In addition, it may take into account other relevant rules on qualification requirements, accreditation, placement and codes of professional conduct or ethics.

In order to be effective and useful, such a framework would need to be linked to each tangible supportive mechanism for career guidance and continued professional development opportunities that permit the teacher to “progress” within the perspective of that framework. These supportive mechanisms may take different forms, such as peer learning and exchange, mentoring, formal professional development provision (certified courses and qualifications, resources), or tracking (review procedures, inspection).

Support will not be offered solely from within the school. External support may include teacher unions, teaching councils, local or regional school authorities, researchers, teacher educators, education organisations, and providers of Continued Professional Development (CPD). Such stakeholders may provide individual teachers, school leaders or school leadership with time or tools for broader reflections, which the daily demands within school often prevent them from having. Better signposting this range of support may help make visible new opportunities, create empowering and outwardly powerful networks and communities, and help teachers and other actors search for solutions to problems, which may be barriers to progression.

Career progression may be initiated, guided and monitored at different levels of the school education system. For instance, a recognised qualification for senior teachers might operate at national level, whereas salary increase as recognition of competence specialisms (or years’ experience) might be managed by a municipality following evaluation at school level. A coherent framework will need to take these multiple levels into account.



Figure 2: The Working Group acknowledge the interplay of motivation, abilities (or competences) and opportunities in stimulating and supporting teacher career progression

WHY A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER CAREERS?

PROGRESSION OVER TIME AND SPACE

Regardless of the path chosen, or unfolding, teachers should be able – and encouraged - to enhance their competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) within a context of career-long professional learning that functions both for the individual and collective. Most, if not all, of their work will take place within a school, meaning there should be consideration of the teacher as a member of a school as an evolving learning community. The special nature of schools not just as institutions but unique communities with their own cultural ways of operating should be considered.

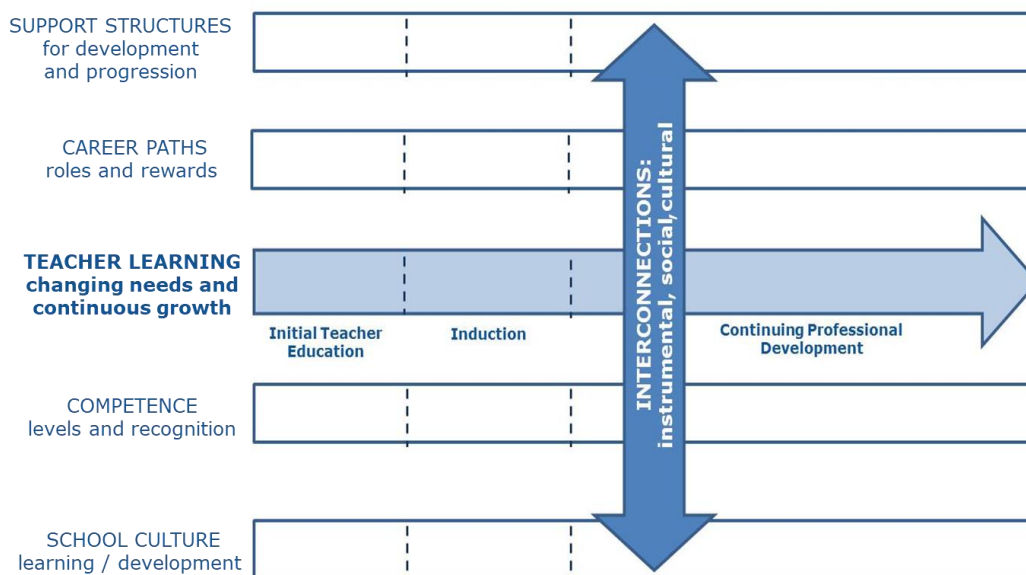


Figure 3: Different system perspectives on supporting teacher development, adapted from previous Working Group work on teacher education (see footnote 3)

There is an increased focus on importance of professional development but teachers often find it difficult to reconcile this with a charged work schedule. They may need both managerial encouragement and practical support to participate. Moreover, considering the shortages in teacher workforce faced by a number of countries, there is a challenge to secure high-quality pedagogical competence for beginning teachers entering from other sectors and potentially on a shorter period of initial teacher education.

Of course, teachers will not necessarily work within one school setting during their career. Mobility (local, regional, national, international) is an important consideration for professional development opportunities, both as a short-term experience (e.g. job shadowing, training course etc.) or a longer-term assignment (e.g. secondment). It can broaden the competences and perspectives of the individual, as well as bring new knowledge and practice into a school. However, there are potential obstacles to this particular offer, including language issues and qualification recognition. Mobility also requires the cooperation of the school head or authorities, as it can be difficult to replace the member of staff temporarily.

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It should also be considered when, which and how other roles and responsibilities become an option in a career. Does a formal structure of progression (e.g. several levels of teacher qualification) help in this respect? Recognition for the specialist competences required for such roles may be valid for a certain number of years and may (or not) be linked to salary benefits and further career opportunities, such as management and leadership.

There is a difference to be articulated – or balance needed – between an “official” recognition of achievement compared to an individual’s personal sense of progression, but both are valid. More individualized salary arrangements are now in place in many education systems. However, in some countries, and for varying reasons, efforts are being made to identify other motivational factors than financial rewards.

Responding to our key questions

The lead question for this Peer Learning Activity⁶ was:

How can a framework for teacher careers contribute to fostering an attractive and sustainable teaching profession?

A framework for teacher careers might usefully link support structures and policies within an education system and thereby help to guide decision-making and the individual choices a teacher might make. It may also help as a way of presenting a shared vision and language, as well as a transparent set of values or standards, with the goal of supporting teacher development, improvement and progression. Teachers need to remain passionate and motivated throughout their careers and this is at the heart of the “sustainability” of the profession if it is to remain a force for high quality learning experiences and better outcomes for pupils. In other words, a framework can help operationalise support to teachers, as well as present a conceptual understanding of teacher careers.

Such a framework may also usefully incorporate or link to guidelines for monitoring the impact of its combined support structures. Policy makers should consider the conditions around a framework (and its elements) that enable it to be used effectively.

To explore this overarching question, the key questions for the Peer Learning Activity were:

- 1. How can teachers, school leaders and other actors be usefully supported by a framework in the process of making decisions about career paths and opportunities?**
- 2. How can diverse roles, experiences and pathways be identified and then appropriately shaped and valued in the context of career progression?**
- 3. How can flexibility and individual choice be promoted and maintained whilst also supporting schools as learning communities?**

The following sections summarise the discussions of the participants, in response to the key questions.

The statements acknowledge that differences exist between and within national school education systems. It is understood that a necessary **flexibility** of frameworks enables them to be adapted to suit the different contexts, both within and across countries.

They are also closely linked to recent guidance for policy makers generated by the Working Group on “leadership support to teacher careers”, which focuses more on the elements themselves, such as developing a **supportive learning culture within schools** and developing a national or regional **Continued Professional Development infrastructure** to support the development of necessary competences.

⁶ These lead and key questions have been modified from the original version during, and after, the Peer Learning Activity to reflect the discussions and the new perspectives gained as a result.

RESPONDING TO OUR KEY QUESTIONS

SUPPORTING DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND INDIVIDUAL CHOICES

The Peer Learning Activity participants identified the need to improve decision-making with regard to teacher careers. Teachers in particular, as well as school leaders and other actors, need support in seeing and understanding possibilities. A challenge in creating a framework that can be effectively used at all system levels is to ensure that those designing it fully understand how the decision-making processes function and how dialogue may enhance or complement other formal processes.

- i. By centring a framework on teacher careers, **individual teachers' needs and desires** can be balanced with the **needs of schools and education systems**.
- ii. By mapping opportunities (for new roles, training, etc.), their **visibility** can be improved for all involved and choices and decisions can become better informed.
- iii. The **career competence** of teachers – their capacity to self-reflect and identify their own needs and opportunities – is important. Equally important is the competence of other actors, such as mentors and school heads, to effectively **guide** teachers.
- iv. By including a **set of competences** within a framework, a structured approach to appraisal or evaluation can **support self-reflection** as an individual and collaborative process. Competence descriptors will also make **expectations and responsibilities** more explicit.
- v. A framework can establish a **shared language** for **effective career-development dialogues** between teachers (individual or team) and other key actors in career progression (including mentors and school leaders) at all levels of the system.

DIVERSE ROLES FOR TEACHERS AND MULTIPLE CAREER PATHS

Participants identified the need to build capacity around choices and opportunities for teacher careers. Making these visible is of no use if the opportunities are not able to be taken up or valued. Negative attitudes towards some roles and pathways may need to be counteracted.

- vi. By coherently including **diverse roles and paths** within a framework, these opportunities are potentially more able to be **respected and acknowledged**. This does not mean automatically formalising all roles, but may include some degree of recognition for **informal** roles or experiences.
- vii. By including diverse forms of **recognition and reward**, a framework can reinforce the positive **complexity** of career progression as being more than merely increasing years and salary.
- viii. A framework can expand and diversify the understanding of what is expected of, and available to, teachers at **different stages of their careers**. As well as beginning teachers, more experienced teachers may gain an increased sense of motivation for the latter stages of their careers.
- ix. Mapping within a framework can help to identify the **use of resources and a supportive infrastructure** across a system. For example, a well-formulated appraisal process may be effectively linked with recognition and incentives - such as greater responsibility, time or salary - and future support - such as networks and training providers.
- x. Mapping can also help to identify **overlaps or gaps** in supportive elements across a system.

RESPONDING TO OUR KEY QUESTIONS

MEETING INDIVIDUAL AND SCHOOL NEEDS

Participants identified a tension between meeting the needs of individual teachers and the needs of the schools in which teachers do most of their work. A challenging area is the placement or movement of teachers in and between schools. Another challenge concerns appropriately supporting and recognising innovation at school level undertaken by teachers who may be creating their own new roles and opportunities. All of these are factors to consider in order to help maintain the motivation of all teachers to develop.

- xi.** A framework may include acknowledgement of the **various roles** that may be undertaken – **temporarily or permanently** - in schools. This can help teachers to build their own **professional identity**, with a sense of **ownership**, and seek out new opportunities.
- xii.** Linking **teacher development to school development** can help teachers to build careers appropriate to the context in which they work, individually and within teams. Equally, school development plans will help to identify needs for staff with particular expertise, feeding into recruitment and placement processes, as well as the creation of new roles and responsibilities for in-school initiatives.
- xiii.** **Leadership** is important in supporting teacher career progression. Guidance and training for school heads and other school leaders should feature within a framework for teacher careers, in order that these leaders can identify and create the necessary opportunities for individuals and teams of teachers to develop, whilst also benefiting the school as a whole.

Guidance for policy makers

CURRENT POLICY REFORM – CAREER PATHS AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES

Countries participating in the Peer Learning Activity were invited to share one aspect of their own system approach. Although none explicitly labelled what they had as a “framework for teacher careers”, each described how their diverse support structures were interlinked, typically centred around a set of competences and some form of provision for professional development. Nevertheless, the links between the elements of support are made in a variety of ways and to differing degrees of separation.

These examples of policy reform from the participating countries reveal the key challenges and priorities for policy makers:

1. Having some form of framework that can guide professional development;
2. Establishing and supporting clear yet diverse and flexible career paths;
3. Linking teachers and schools with a range of support structures.

Portugal already has an established legal framework for Continued Professional Development (CPD), linked to a school teacher general profile, a teaching career statute and a teacher evaluation model. Likewise, the Competence Framework in **Estonia** includes qualification requirements, the requirements of teacher education and evaluation. There is a sense of the individual’s career path, which includes the variety in roles and responsibilities, and self-assessment. There have been changes to introduce more flexibility into the qualification system and to remuneration principles, which offer the opportunity to deal with other tasks and take other roles.

Also paying attention to a sense of stages within a career path, the new reform in **Cyprus** will include the creation of a formally-recognised Senior Teacher, who is expected to move to a new school to spread their expertise. **Belgium – French Community** have introduced changes as part of the broad Pact for Excellence (“Pacte pour un enseignement d’excellence”) to improve the professionalism of teachers. They are developing a framework explicitly to support the introduction of distributed leadership.

Recognising the complexity of teachers’ career development, recent policy developments in **The Netherlands** include a focus on in-service master qualifications for teachers during their careers through funding of Masters programmes and initiatives by national boards for schools and regional structures to generate improved support based on a more diverse view of opportunities within the teacher profession. Similarly paying attention to the career progression of teachers within the school community, the Department of Education of **UK-Northern Ireland** requires schools to have a three-year development plan, which must include the needs of both school and staff. The education authority supports the work, scrutinising and helping to implement the plan. Professional learning clusters of schools (area learning communities) provide additional support and make decisions for development whilst the Framework for Professional Learning explicitly links expectations for teachers with their entitlement and personal responsibility.

GUIDANCE FOR POLICY MAKERS

As a national offer, **Belgium – Flemish Community** supports umbrella organisations who play an important role in providing teacher Continued Professional Development (CPD) and pedagogical counselling. They are currently introducing a new policy for beginning teachers as well as teacher welfare policies and implementing adaptations of employment conditions as identified areas of need. **Greece** has also introduced a new legal framework which is expected to assist capacity building within school units and create an interactive and dynamic relationship between primary and secondary schools and support structures.

Countries are contemplating how to manage the diverse sources of teacher career support. In **Ireland**, there are many different actors involved in different aspects of the continuum of teacher education, Initial Teacher Education, Droichead ('Bridge', the induction), and Cosán ('Pathway', the framework for teachers' learning throughout their career). These actors include: the inspectorate; a new centre for school leadership; a national induction scheme for teachers; Teacher Education institutions; teacher unions and associations; and a range of support services and Education Centres which provide CPD for teachers.

Poland have an established 4-tier career model and a range of support structures, however recognize the need to make links with professional development. New standards for teacher education have been coupled with the reworking of teacher education programmes and the introduction of training centres for established teachers to explore innovative pedagogical approaches. There is also a new provision of special funds to employ high performing teachers as counsellors.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A FRAMEWORK TO MEET SYSTEM NEEDS

There are a number of considerations for policy makers when developing a framework for teacher careers.

The first consideration is to understand the different elements that may be included or referred to. Whereas some may be included in order to map or signpost opportunities, other elements, such as rules and regulations governing formal aspects of teacher careers may be purposefully included in order to steer or monitor aspects of teacher careers.

The other consideration is the use of the framework to both identify and respond to the needs of the teacher, the school and the system.

For the **teacher**, professional development generally takes place across three distinct, but ideally continuous, phases of Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Induction (IND), and Continued Professional Development (CPD). However, across all phases there should also be an ongoing concern for teacher "motivation" (such as through ownership or recognition), developing "abilities" or "competences" (coupled with clear expectations), and available "opportunities" for progression. Combatting traditional singular perspectives on teacher careers as being either flat or merely hierarchical, a range of career paths should be clearly identified and visible. Professional development may take different forms, such as courses outside of school hours and buildings or new experiences and peer learning within school.

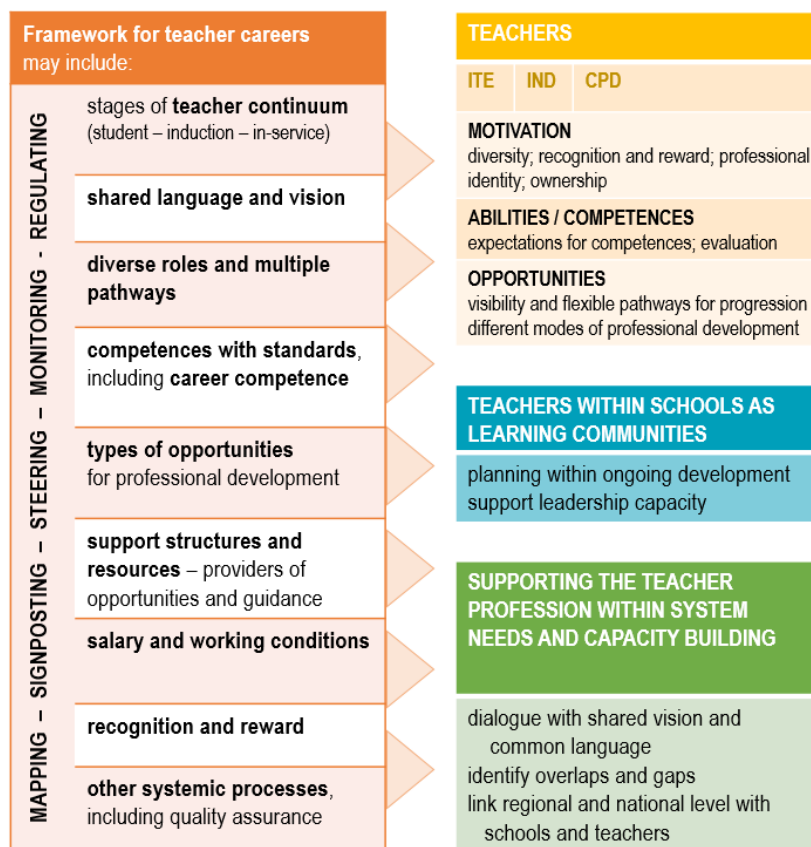
Supporting **schools** as learning organisations, or "communities", continues to be a key concern for policy makers in order to ensure that all schools continue to develop with a culture of quality. The effectiveness of this approach does depend in part on the clarity of vision of the school and their capacity to make change happen and monitor the impact on learning outcomes. Effectively supporting the motivation and innovative capacity of teachers and their own careers requires an approach that aligns teacher development coherently with school development. For example, it is important to have a transparent and objective set of criteria for

GUIDANCE FOR POLICY MAKERS

career opportunities and well-defined responsibilities connected to the different possible teacher roles within a school. Whilst a framework for careers can help define these across schools within a system, an open dialogue on these criteria specific to each school context (i.e. a flexible framework) may encourage more teachers to strive for different roles and responsibilities at school level for the benefit of both the school and individual teacher. A framework for careers may also support the capacity of the leadership to guide such development and decision-making, as well as foster a collaborative – rather than purely competitive or isolated – community of professionals.

Whilst much of the focus of this work has been on teacher and school needs, the needs and capacity of the **system**, in particular at **regional and national authority level**, should also be considered. Elements of a framework and the way they are utilised will make an important contribution to effective dialogue between these levels and other stakeholders across the system, based on a shared vision and language. Mapping and monitoring via a framework can also help to identify overlaps and gaps in support structures. Another important function is to link or align the elements to other regulations on the teaching profession, which may or may not be able to be changed.

These considerations are summarised below⁷:



⁷ The inter-relationships of different levels of school education systems have been explored previously by the ET2020 Working Group Schools and are outlined in the report “European ideas for better learning: the governance of school education systems”, available at <https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/resources/governance-of-school-edu.htm>.

Country perspectives

HOST COUNTRY: CYPRUS

Recent development

There have been considerable changes recently in the context of reform across the country's educational system. A series of policies to tackle the issues related to educators in Cyprus are currently under reform and implementation. The aim is to recruit the best teachers and offer them the motivation and the resources so that they can continue developing throughout their service. The Ministry recognises that it may take time and further adjustments for the innovations to have the desired impact.



New teacher appointment system: Schools in Cyprus do not choose their own staff; they are appointed. Until very recently all teachers were appointed centrally by an independent body, based on the date of application. A new recent legislation gives the opportunity for people to be appointed via certain criteria: examinations (teaching approach of the specific subject, pedagogy and language); additional academic qualifications; teaching experience; grade of Bachelor's Degree; and year of application. The new system of appointment is gradually replacing the old system.

Professional development of educators: Teachers in Cyprus have opportunities for professional learning through mandatory and optional seminars and workshops offered by the Ministry (Departments of Education or/and Cyprus Pedagogical Institute), as well as stakeholder organisations and universities. These courses are on priority topics or targeted at specific groups of teachers.

Since 2015, a unified policy was introduced by the Ministry of Education concerning the professional learning of teachers, which designated Cyprus Pedagogical Institute as the Official Body for Professional Learning of in-service teachers. Opportunities are provided for systematic training, which includes needs assessment, planning, acting, reflecting on and evaluating matters which are relevant to the needs of the specific school. Throughout this procedure, the school prepares its professional learning action plan which is a part of a broader development action plan.

Teacher Evaluation System: A new evaluation system for educators and educational practice is now in its final stages of development. In the proposal, formative assessment from the outset is being put in place for teachers, with varying input designed for different stages of a teacher's career.

A new promotion position of Senior Teacher is proposed which will enable teachers to stay in the classroom but with less teaching time, to enable the person in that role to support others. The role of the school head in the assessment process becomes more significant. Inspectors who have the dual role of assessing and counselling teachers will have to undertake one of those roles for a maximum of four years. The effectiveness of the assessors and the whole system will be evaluated by a post-evaluation process.

However, it is also still the case that all teachers are placed in new schools after 8 years (typically to locations closer to their place of residence each time) or when educational needs change. There is a sensitivity to the fact that newly-promoted teachers may find it difficult to assert themselves among former colleagues and may therefore benefit from joining a new school community.

COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

Future Challenges & Opportunities

In order to achieve the aim for high quality education, a series of new policies have been formed and many already implemented. The success of initiatives is dependent on educators and all stakeholders accepting change. Although all actors who share the same vision, their interest in maintaining the status quo will take precedence over the ambitious call for change especially concerning the evaluation/appraisal system because of the lack of trust and fear of the unknown. A big challenge is to find all underlying systemic issues that could be the real heart of the problem to win the support of teachers.

Concerning the teachers' professional development, it is understood that teachers are not permanently fixed in characteristics or competence and so they should be able to take steps to shape themselves, based on their personal objectives. Teachers may take more responsibility for their careers, through self-assessment and the creation of identity.

Whilst establishing and recognising formal paths of a teacher's career, the effect of school culture and attitudes of teachers and school leaders is also appreciated. Whereas expectations of applying for promotion may be based on years served, this may lead to decisions based on inappropriate criteria. Certainly, a challenge associated with the new teacher evaluation and appraisal system is to ensure that it is agreed and accepted by all. There is also a will to develop the teacher placement system so that it serves the best interest of the students.

The idea of a career path is not yet fully-established but there is an opportunity for it to be developed by linking to the Professional Learning Programme and through refining the arrangements for teacher appraisal.

POSITION	SUPPORT / PREPARATION / DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
TEACHERS BEFORE PERMANENT CONTRACT	New Entrance Teachers Program
TEACHERS AFTER RECEIVING PERMANENT POST AND BEFORE A PROMOTION	Continuous Professional Development/ Learning Program
NOMINATIVE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	Executive Training Program - Optional
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	
PRINCIPAL	Program for Assistant Principals and Principals
INSPECTOR	Specialised Training Programs for Executives (Inspectors/Assessors)
SENIOR OFFICER	Specialised Program

With regard to school culture, the professionalism of teachers – their motivation for their own development and towards the school they work in - requires trust in the processes. School action plans are an important element in supporting innovation that leads to better learning outcomes of the pupils. The challenge is to align career opportunities with this same purpose and establish professional relationships that foster staff collaboration.

The high frequency of movement of staff between schools can demand repeated training for newcomers, potentially putting pressure on time and the sense of engagement with school priorities. However, there is also an opportunity to better link teacher evaluation with the staff placement process with the rationale of enhancing quality and sharing expertise according to the needs of schools, their staff, and their pupils.

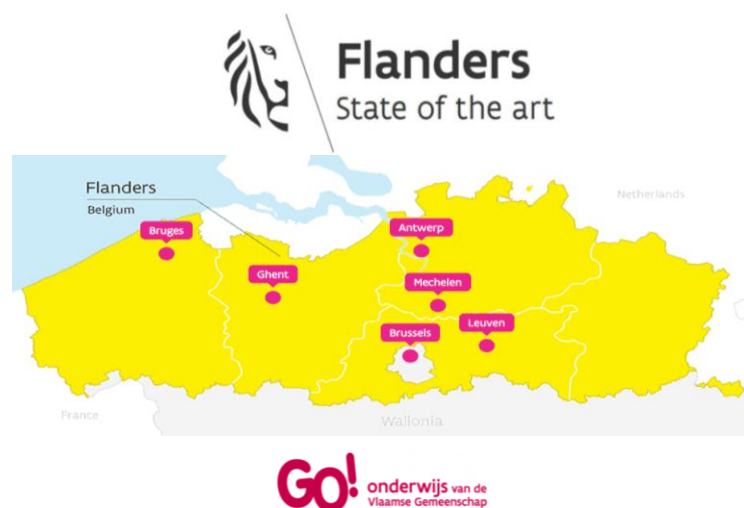
COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

BELGIUM – FLANDERS

Recent development

Among other initiatives, the Ministry is already funding research, implementing adaptations of employment conditions and introducing welfare policies including a new initiative for beginning teachers.

The Ministry supports umbrella bodies, such as the pedagogical counselling offered by GO! This organisation is involved in pedagogical projects and Continued Professional Development. The pedagogical counselling service of GO! Has chosen to pay specific attention to teachers at the beginning of their careers and also to leadership training and coaching in a professional continuum.



Future Challenges & Opportunities

Belgium-Flanders is one of a number of European systems wanting to address teacher shortages. This challenge involves not only replacing those teachers who are retiring but also encouraging early career teachers to remain in the profession. The causes are typical: teachers may feel under pressure, especially where inexperienced teachers are in more challenging schools, or may regard their careers as flat, without attractive options. Teachers do have opportunities, however, including secondments.

The Ministry recognises that the solution found must not compromise quality. There is particular interest in gaining staff through side and late entrants. Policy makers understand that translating formal national frameworks into support for individual teaching careers may help motivate teachers and support innovation; for example by reducing practice shock for new teachers, and putting in place the preconditions for using CPD as a successful instrument in career advancement.

There is perceived to be a good relationship between schools and the ministry, which offers high levels of school autonomy and trust. The school head is a key person in guiding teachers on CPD and there is an opportunity to support this in the future as “structured dialogue” between leader and teacher. The placements undertaken at the beginning of a teacher’s career could be considered as a way of creating varied opportunities. Consideration could also be given to making the support to teachers more visible - especially for those teachers early on in their careers.

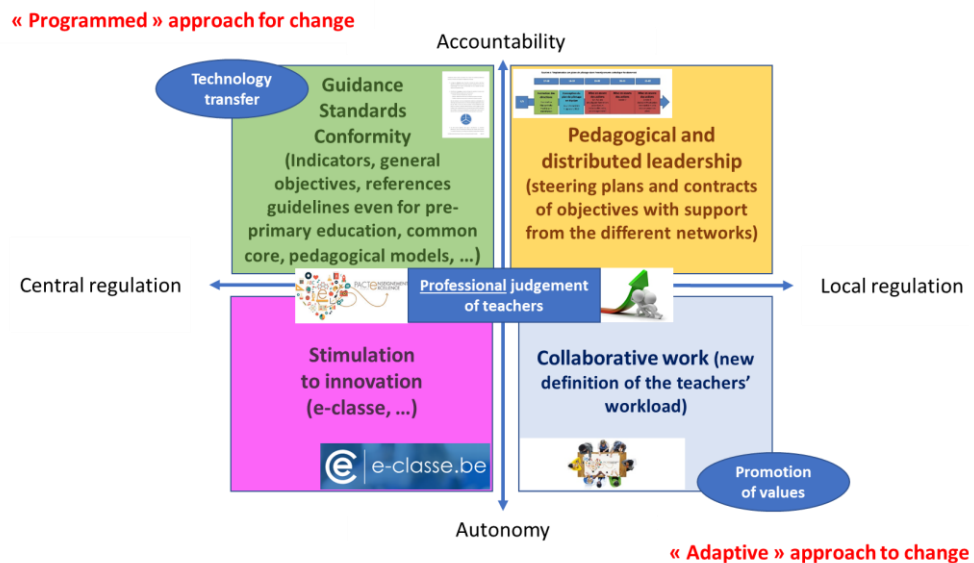
COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

BELGIUM – FRENCH COMMUNITY

Recent development

Current changes are part of the *Pact for excellence* (*“Pacte pour un enseignement d’excellence”*) in teaching reform. Among the objectives of this part of the wider school reform, two main ones are to improve the professionalism of teachers and to make teaching an attractive career option where teachers feel recognised and appreciated. An important principle underpinning the reform is to rely on teachers’ professional judgement to implement change at classroom level in order to achieve overall improvement in the system. The aim is to ensure that teachers see themselves first and foremost as pedagogues rather than as specialists in teaching a subject.

Distributed leadership is being introduced. It is hoped that staff engagement will increase by requiring a school steering plan - with joint objectives - to be created collaboratively by staff.



D'après C. Letor 2018 et inspiré de Berman, 1980 et Rowan et Miller, 2007

Future Challenges & Opportunities

The Ministry recognise the challenge of addressing teacher shortages in primary and pre-primary, and some in secondary schools. Teacher salaries are considered good, compared with other European systems, but not compared to those of similarly educated professionals within the country. Salary increases are based entirely on years of service, with no added incentives.

It is not uncommon for teachers to change school during their careers, even if few of them do so and usually remain teachers all their working life. The challenge is then to provide alternatives to a seemingly ‘flat’ career structure.

The reinforcement of Continued Professional Development on school leadership is an opportunity to target teachers with specific aspirations in their career and address the development of collaboration within schools. The new steering plans for schools may also be an opportunity to better address individual teachers’ CPD needs within school, supported by school leaders.

COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

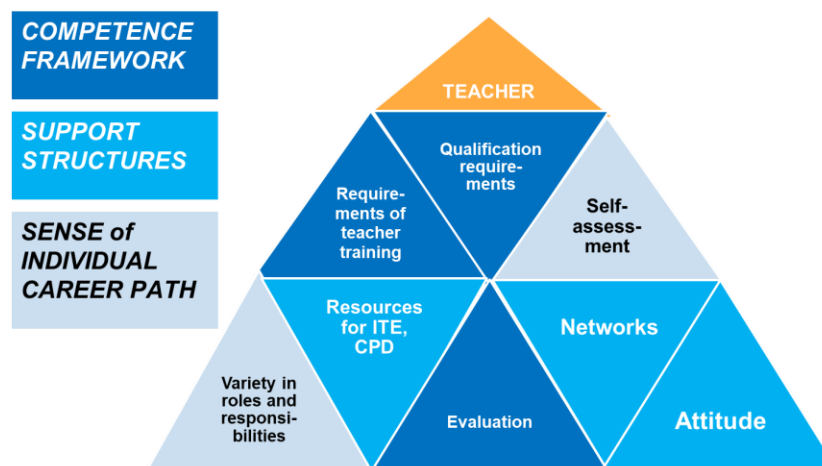
ESTONIA

Recent development

The Competence Framework in Estonia includes qualification requirements, the requirements of teacher education and evaluation. There is a sense of the individual's career path, which includes the variety in roles and responsibilities, and self-assessment. This is considered important coupled with a general positive attitude of society towards teachers as having a high status.

There have been recent changes to process of teacher qualification. More flexibility has been introduced to enable (re)entering the profession, moving up and along, and changing paths. However, the number of qualified teachers has decreased due to retirement, but also because there are not sufficient teachers meeting the current requirements for full teacher status.

There have also been recent changes to remuneration principles, which offer the opportunity to deal with other tasks and take on other roles. However, the chance for differentiation of teachers' tasks, responsibilities and remunerations has been used less than expected.



Future Challenges & Opportunities

Education is decentralised, and support structures include resources for ITE, CPD and networks. They operate at both regional and national levels. It is understood that school owners (mostly municipalities) and school leaders are critical to supporting a flexible, motivating and working teacher career model. There is also an inclusive understanding that any future development needs to work for everyone, not just those who are intrinsically motivated.

Continued Professional Development is provided free of charge, but a challenge is how the system can make the best use of the existing data about teachers and their CPD needs. If teachers are to be encouraged to value professional development in a supportive environment, it is understood that they also need to be able to allocate time towards it.

Self-perceptions, especially for those part-time within the school community, are significant motivational factors, and how far these needs are aligned to the system is a consideration. Self-assessment is already recognised as valuable and may prove to be a useful tool on which progress is built. Work in this area of evaluation may also include consideration of how aware teachers and potential teachers are of support available.

COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

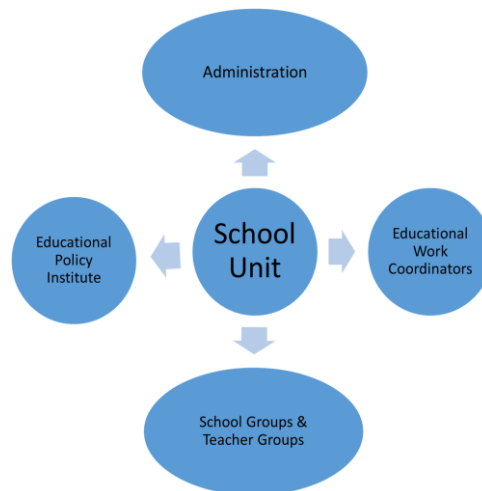
GREECE

Recent development

A new legal framework ([Law 4547/2018](#)) has introduced strategic support structures for primary and secondary education. The reform expects to assist capacity building within school units and create an interactive and dynamic relationship between the school and support structures. However, this goal also depends on certain changes in school cultures and a sustained effort on the part of the education staff involved in these new structures.

Existing support structures around a school include the Educational Policy Institute, Educational Work Coordinators, and School Groups and Teacher Groups, as well as Regional and Central education administration.

A significant number of new teacher appointments are planned for within the next three years. The Ministry needs to take into consideration the significance of making teachers' careers more attractive and sustainable, given that the majority of substitute teachers that are expected to be appointed have previously experienced professional insecurity.



Future Challenges & Opportunities

Like other countries, Greece recognises that a “flat” career structure, with limited career pathways, is not always regarded as attractive. In consequence, consideration is being given to the sort of structures or frameworks that will ensure teachers' professional development responds to their personal interests and at the same time builds on their professionalism. One example is the combination of teacher support with the evaluation and assessment of their school-based work.

Another opportunity may be the identification of formal roles at school level (or at school groups' level) that will ensure teachers have options for their career paths while continuing classroom teaching.

The establishment of a culture of collaboration – via school groups and teacher groups – is seen as a challenge, but also an opportunity to encourage teachers to be inspired by each other and more motivated.

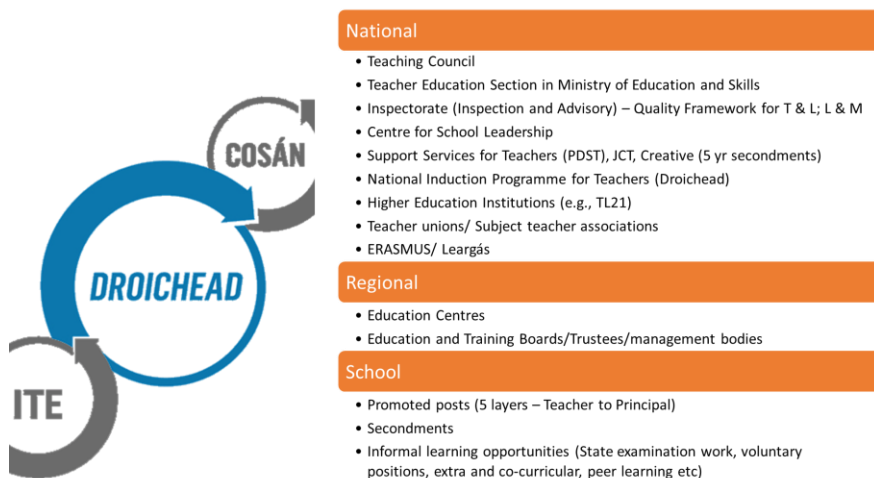
COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

IRELAND

Recent development

There are a number of relatively new institutions at national and regional level, including many agencies under the auspices of the Ministry, most notably the Teaching Council. These actors are involved in different aspects of the continuum of teacher education including Initial Teacher Education, Droichead (Bridge - induction), and Cosán ('Pathway' - the framework for teachers' learning throughout their career).

Support structures are offered by a range of institutions and are perceived to include: a number of support services that provide continuing professional development for teachers; the inspectorate; a new centre for school leadership, which supports newly appointed school leaders; a national induction programme for teachers; Teacher Education institutions, which engage in partnerships and close links with schools; Teacher unions and teacher associations; management bodies, which provide training and support for teachers; and a range of support services and Education Centres which also offer teachers in-service training.



Future Challenges & Opportunities

Traditionally, the Ministry has a strong steering role in the school education system but at the same time there is a high degree of school autonomy. The importance of establishing Continued Professional Development as a career-long journey is recognised, and there are many external agencies offering input. However, ensuring the engagement of all teachers – especially in CPD based on their individual needs – is recognised as an ongoing challenge.

Another challenge is how to further clarify and signpost, for teachers, where and how they can work on their professional development. Opportunities for improving support to teacher careers lie not only within Ireland's existing new framework for teachers' learning, and the career paths it entails, but also within the various roles that individuals can potentially take within their institutions.

At school level there are five steps for teachers on a promotion pathway of increased responsibility, with school head as the highest level (but not all steps need to be taken to reach that level). Within schools there are also informal learning opportunities and coordinating roles, for which there is no additional payment. Outside school there are additional opportunities for secondment, which are highly popular.

Planning for professional development at school level is not yet fully in place, but changes that have been implemented are relatively new, and still emerging.

COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

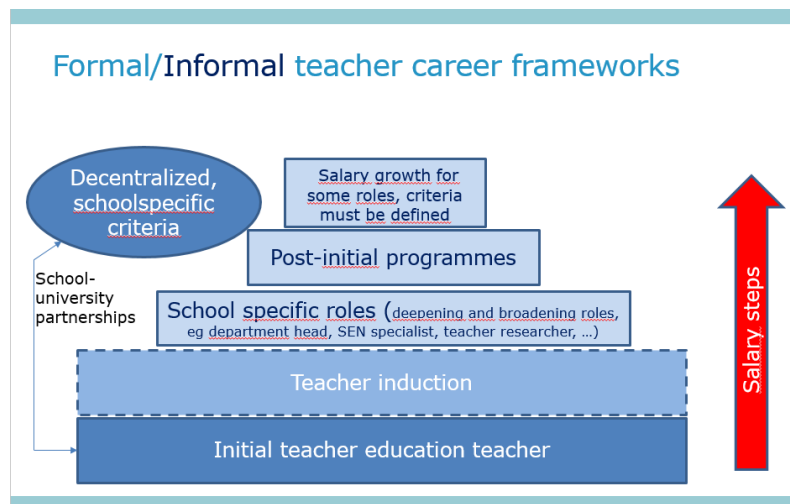
THE NETHERLANDS

Recent development

The education system in Netherlands is complex, with many different actors, and a strong focus on the autonomy of school organisations. This autonomy, vested in school leaders and boards allows for local variation and strong school-based management policy. One of the current main focal points in policy making is strategic human resources management (including career paths, continuous professional development of teachers, and ways of creating an attractive image of the profession).

Recent policy developments have included a focus on in-service Masters qualifications for teachers during their careers and funding of these programmes. This is seen as part of an important drive towards teacher quality, self-confidence and work satisfaction.

There have also been decentralised initiatives by Boards, creating a more varied view on the teacher profession. Among these innovations have been tools for career dialogues between school heads and teachers and the provision of a starting point to develop regional support structures.



Future Challenges & Opportunities

The Netherlands is addressing teacher shortages through strategies such as job differentiation and attractive career paths. There is a perceived need to create more flexibility in careers, for example, through adding subject qualifications, changing from primary to secondary. However, even though formal qualifications may guarantee teacher quality, they may also create some inflexibility when it comes to meeting the needs of schools.

The coherence and connection between career paths (progression), competence frameworks and support structures within the Dutch decentralised education system are a positive consideration. However, strengthening these links may make additional demands from school structures and school cultures where time and money present challenging obstacles. Decentralised initiatives may need some central co-ordination, while the different career tracks may require development in the national competence frameworks.

There are opportunities for enhanced support structures for teachers, including the development of post-ITE teacher competence frameworks and a CPD infrastructure, through which schools leaders may have improved capacity to direct teacher professional development and offer career guidance.

COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

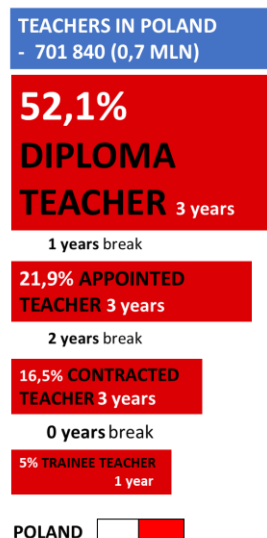
POLAND

Recent development

Policy developments in 2019 have included salary increases and the appointment of a working group by Ministry of Education to investigate the status of the teaching profession. New standards for teacher education have resulted in higher education institutions reworking their teacher education programmes.

There has been provision of special funds to provide methodological counselling, entailing additional part-time employment in training centres for the best teachers and a regional network, which is the responsibility of the inspectorate. The introduction of training schools for teachers and students has resulted in reformed teacher training programmes, which now use advanced and innovative teaching methods in a real working environment. The initiative involves cooperation with universities and new materials and tools for teachers.

STEPS OF TEACHER' CAREERS



Future Challenges & Opportunities

There is a desire to change the existing administrative model of teacher' careers towards a more universal, flexible and individual framework, and there is a willingness to build a supportive culture of teaching within schools. The current stages of a teacher's career form a strict upwards pathway that leads, in ten years, to the status of Diploma Teacher, which is held by over 50% of the nation's 700,000 teachers. Three National Training Centres and 96 Regional Training Centres lead support for the profession, with further contributions from universities, NGO teachers, unions and others. This vast and complex support, whilst diverse, also presents resource challenges for the system.

A key challenge is to envisage what kind of model of teachers' careers would be appropriate and the most universal in the different contexts of teachers' work, given that it is believed that Continued Professional Development should be bespoke to the individual and the school, not just to ensure promotion. Whilst teachers currently draw up personal development plans for approval by the head teacher, there may be an opportunity to develop a teacher competence framework with levels of proficiency, which could then be linked to career development and CPD (including school-based CPD).

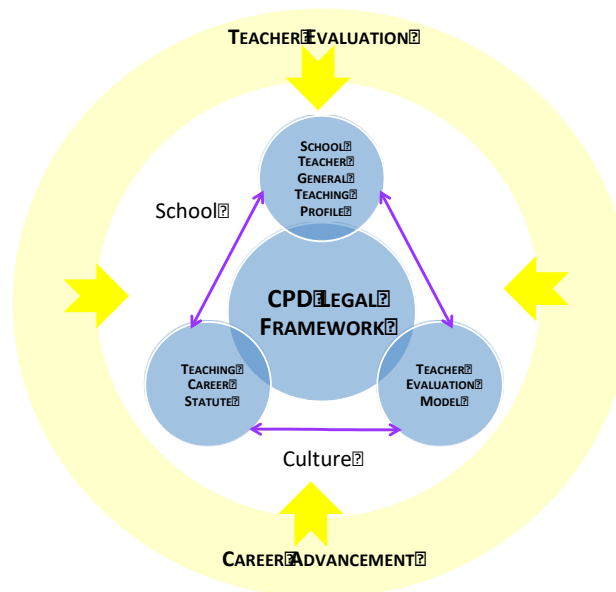
COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

PORTUGAL

Recent development

There is already a Continued Professional Development legal framework, together with support structures, in place in the school education system of Portugal.

However, recent trends have been discouraging: teachers' careers have been "frozen" for almost ten years; teachers have applied for early retirement; and there have been fewer candidates for the Masters qualification in teaching. A previous surplus of teachers is believed to be in danger of becoming a shortage of teachers in the immediate future.



Future Challenges & Opportunities

Frameworks are believed to have the capacity to offer support for teachers staying the profession long-term, and increase the teachers' social prestige. They are recognised in being able to offer protection of what makes teachers feel positive about their work, and encourage better collaboration among inspectors, head teachers and the teachers themselves.

Whilst there is pride in the current Continued Professional Development framework, the challenge with such a tool is to avoid it becoming too closely linked to pure career advancement and losing some of the original purpose to enable teachers to learn and develop. Part of overcoming this challenge is about creating a different mind-set so that CPD is seen as helpful professionally, and not just about points and promotion.

Improving the quality of teacher practice across the system can be tangled up with notions of career progression and individual professional growth. A challenge is to distinguish and ensure the transfer of practice gained in Higher Education institutions whilst also recognising and activating school-based CPD. The latter is often dependent on collaboration and the proactivity of school leadership, which may provide positive opportunities for improvement.

Above all, there is a desire to empower those in the system and to protect and enhance what motivates teachers.

COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

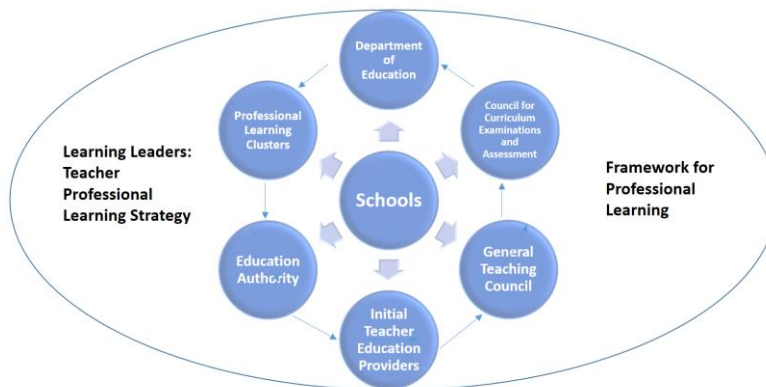
UNITED KINGDOM – NORTHERN IRELAND

Recent development

The Department of Education has established a ten-year strategy, Learning Leaders (2016), aimed at building coherence and consistency in to the careers of teachers. The strategy underpins the school improvement policy, Every School A Good School (ESaGS). There is a statutory requirement for all school to have a three year School Development Plan a key feature of which is the identification of all associated professional learning needs of staff and individual and whole school level in order to realise the plan to its optimum. The Education Authority supports the work, scrutinising and helping to implement the school plans and designs its annual programme of professional support based on identified need across all of the schools in Northern Ireland. Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is provided by four organisations in Northern Ireland and entry is very competitive, with young people also having additional opportunities across the United Kingdom. On completion, every teacher must be a member of the General Teaching Council (GTC).

The belief is that the system is co-designing a coherent model, which focuses on career-long professional learning (as opposed to only the beginning phases), taking into account individual school and teacher learning needs within communities of practice. This aims at building capacity in the system to empower teachers and schools to be confident in making informed and relevant choices in relation to both career development and school improvement more generally.

Teacher Careers: Support Structures in Northern Ireland



Future Challenges & Opportunities

There are significant current challenges, including political uncertainty, financial constraints and an extensive period of industrial action by teachers. Policy makers sense that there is still opportunity for positive influence but in a low-key manner. Having a substantially long timescale (their 10-year strategy) is perceived to be important, not least because of the obstacles faced currently. The vision of “ESaGS” is to build effective, self-sustaining professional learning communities. The Learning Leaders Strategy complements that shared vision and includes explicit links to the identified expectations of teachers with their entitlement and personal responsibility. An opportunity to complement this is envisioned in the aim to establish of effective partnerships across all support structures and organisations.

A further opportunity to build coherence in the system may be by optimising the use of time for professional development. Reviewing the current provision for whole school improvement (a fixed number of days per year), including open dialogue with stakeholders, may help to balance the needs of the individual, the school and the system.

ANNEX – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Annex – list of participants

Belgium (French Community)	Bernadette SCHREUER	Direction des Relations internationales, Ministère de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles
	Luc SCHOLLEN	SeGEC: Conseiller auprès du Service des Pouvoirs organisateurs
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	Andries VALKE	Senior advisor/ member of staf/ pedagogische begeleidingsdienst GO!
Cyprus	Chrystalla KOUKOUMA*	School Inspector, Department of Secondary Education, Ministry of Education and Culture
	Elena HAJKAKOU*	Chief Education Officer - Cyprus Pedagogical Institute
Estonia	Aivi JÜRGENSON	Chief Expert in General Education Department, Ministry of Education and Research
	Margit TIMAKOV	President, Estonian Association of Teachers
Greece	Evangelia PANTA	Policy officer (Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs)
Ireland	Mary GILBRIDE	Assistant Chief Inspector, Department of Education and Skills
	Thomas WALSH	Deputy Head of the Department of Education, Maynooth University, Ireland
The Netherlands	Marco SNOEK	Professor, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences
	Sharon OLSTHOORN	Policy advisor for secondary education, Ministry of Education
Poland	Elzbieta LESZCZYNSKA	Chief of School Inspectors
	Mateusz LESZKOWICZ	Assistant Professor - Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Faculty of Educational
Portugal	Lilia VICENTE	Team Coordinator for Interdisciplinary and Training Projects, Directorate-General Education Administration
	Estela COSTA	Professor, Institute of Education, Lisbon
UK (Northern Ireland)	Faustina GRAHAM	Director for Curriculum, Qualifications and Standards Department of Education
	Carol MCCANN	Headteacher - St Dominic's School (secondary), Belfast
Association of Teacher Education in Europe	Kay LIVINGSTON*	Research and Development; also Professor of Educational Research, University of Glasgow
European Trade Union Committee for Education	Hans LAUGESEN*	Senior Education Policy Officer in GL, Denmark. Representing ETUCE
Eurydice	Peter BIRCH	Coordinator for education policy and systems analysis
European Commission	Hannah GRAINGER CLEMSON*	Policy Officer / Working Group Schools Co-ordinator
	Thomas PRITZKOW*	Policy Officer
	Jonathan ALLEN*	Consultant

**Indicates member of the steering group for the event*

