



European
Commission



Supporting teacher and school leader careers: A Policy Guide

Education and
Training

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Executive Summary

KNOWING THE CHALLENGES: RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND REGENERATION

An innovative and inclusive European Education Area can only be achieved with passionate and highly competent teachers. However, with just a few exceptions, education systems around the world are struggling to overcome teacher shortages as part of a number of challenges of establishing and maintaining a highly competent, enthusiastic and committed workforce. The ET2020 Working Group Schools spent 18 months (2018-2020) focusing on teacher and school leader careers, discussing and sharing ways to address these challenges.

Some systems are struggling with the recruitment of new candidates because a career in school education is deemed unattractive. Alternative occupations may have working conditions and career opportunities that are more appealing. Public and media perceptions of teaching and schools may also be negative and therefore a deterrent. While status may not be a prime motivator, it is not an easy choice to work in a profession that is not valued by society.

If the hurdle of recruitment is overcome, retention of employees may also be difficult. A significant number of European countries are concerned about the drift away from teaching witnessed in the first few years after qualification. This trend may be coupled with early retirement in a workforce that is already skewed by an ageing teaching population.

There are, of course, many who happily join and happily stay. However, policy action to support regeneration should not be neglected. This is the notion that teachers and school leaders continue to develop themselves, for the good of themselves and their pupils, and nurture their peers as a professional community. It requires a conducive school climate as well as system-wide support

THINKING DIFFERENTLY ABOUT TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER CAREERS

Policy makers already give considerable attention to recruitment and retention (some examples are given in this Guide). Actions may address a specific problem, for example offering incentives to teachers where there is a subject shortage. It may also be possible to address negative perceptions and promote a sense of value with a media campaign or salary increase. These measures may have positive results, particularly for initial recruitment, but there is a tendency for such actions to be based on only what the system regards as desirable, statistical outcomes, rather than on the needs and desires of the individual professionals within it. They also do not necessarily address a fundamental problem: that careers in school education are often perceived as “flat” or one-dimensional (typically hierarchical), with no or few opportunities for progression.

In considering how to better support teacher and school leader careers, the ET2020 Working Group on Schools has redressed the balance by understanding better the lived experience of individual teachers and school leaders. The starting point was to focus on what teachers may want from their careers as they enter the school education profession, and how these ambitions may change as their career is sustained.

Importantly for policy makers, the Group has considered how support mechanisms can benefit these individuals and, at the same time, benefit schools and the wider system in a coherent manner.

HOW CAN POLICY MAKERS HELP?

It is hoped that education systems, by virtue of their policy makers, can engage and support stakeholders to take a new approach to teacher and school leader careers: one that genuinely nurtures individual **motivation** and **abilities** (competence), whilst providing a range of **opportunities** in which all teachers and school leaders can grow and progress.

There are two core ideas explored in this Guide: the need to **recognise and support diverse career paths**; and the need to take a **coherent approach to that support**.

The first idea recognises that the careers of teachers and school leaders are built on the choices they make, every bit as much as on the priorities of the system. This principle leads logically to policies that increase and diversify opportunities, and ensure that they are visible and accessible. The idea of **choice** also leads inevitably to acceptance that the career path of a teacher is not inevitably a hierarchical progression through to school leadership, but can take many twists and turns.

The numerous examples of recent policy action across Europe is evidence of the possibilities to be explored in better supporting teachers and school leaders as individuals and across the system. One particular group of professionals that has received less attention – but is central – is **school heads**, who require specific preparation and ongoing support for the role. Acknowledging this, the Guide identifies action that can be taken to help existing school heads and teachers who do wish to take leadership roles. One key strategy is the encouragement of the “middle ground”: those stakeholders, usually local, who act to support school leadership and form links with other parts of the school education system.

The second idea concerns the deployment of **frameworks**. Competence frameworks are established in many education systems, but not always constructively, and may be viewed with suspicion and anxiety. This problem may stem from a lack of clarity about purpose: whether it is to assess an individual's performance, or to support the individual's future development. The argument made in the Guide is to carefully consider evaluation and feedback processes,

and for teachers to build on their own talents as well as to meet the competence expectations of all teachers; both needing to be coherent with the school development plan. The two ideas come together with the suggestion for a “career competence”: the capacity of teachers and school leaders to adopt an imaginative approach to their career, taking themselves in bold and interesting directions that will still benefit the school.

Competences are not the only dimension of professional development and policy makers may consider the creation of a framework for teacher and school leader careers. The Guide outlines a template, demonstrating how different elements of support to careers can be successfully linked and made more visible. By creating a comprehensive framework for careers, it may also be easier to steer and monitor such mechanisms, ensuring that actions targeted towards supporting teachers and school leaders are both efficient and effective.

Any framework is ultimately a tool for setting out requirements and expectations, but the Guide emphasises that a framework is only effective when a shared vision and language is established among

stakeholders and fruitful dialogue can take place in an atmosphere of trust. Effective dialogue at school level is also highlighted as important in helping individuals to reach their full potential.

As a final consideration for coherence, policy makers may consider how to positively influence the management of support structures. The Guide reflects on three areas: linking Continued Professional Development (CPD) to career progression; connecting and networking with stakeholders; and approaches to management and quality assurance. All three are important, but the management of CPD may be most critical in the context of teacher and school leader careers, not least because of the time and money it consumes. Teachers and school leaders should be assured that the CPD they undertake contributes both to the improvement of their schools and to their own career progression. This aim needs to be equally valued by the schools and the wider system in order that sustained motivation and ongoing competence development is matched and fostered by genuinely accessible and beneficial opportunities.



Understanding teacher motivation

Introduction

“The centrality of teachers and school leaders to the learning process in schools is self-evident. However schools are organised, and whatever pedagogies may have been introduced, pupils are ultimately dependent for their academic and social progress on the expertise, energy, inspiration and imagination of the adults to whom they are entrusted.”¹

An innovative and inclusive European Education Area can only be achieved with passionate and highly competent teachers. This Guide addresses a number of concerns and challenges facing school education systems in their capacity to best support and nurture their teachers and school leaders. It is aimed mainly towards policy makers, offering new understandings and approaches to careers in school education, together with numerous recent examples from countries across Europe.

TOWARDS A EUROPEAN EDUCATION AREA

It is the ambition of the European Education Area to support outward-looking schools and teachers across Europe, giving all pupils an opportunity to have meaningful learning experiences derived from diverse cultures and experiences, and to support innovative and inclusive education and training systems based on the principle of lifelong learning. Having enough passionate – positive, engaged, ambitious – and highly competent teachers and school leaders inspiring all learners to reach their full potential is therefore crucial.

A broad aim for school education systems is to foster a culture of quality enhancement. This places an emphasis on continuous improvement, with the overall objective of improving all children’s and young people’s learning and wellbeing. It is a collaborative culture based on trust and a sense of ownership, with all relevant stakeholders engaged.

A culture of quality enhancement operates at all levels of the school education system. It highlights the importance of appropriate transparency while avoiding the counter-

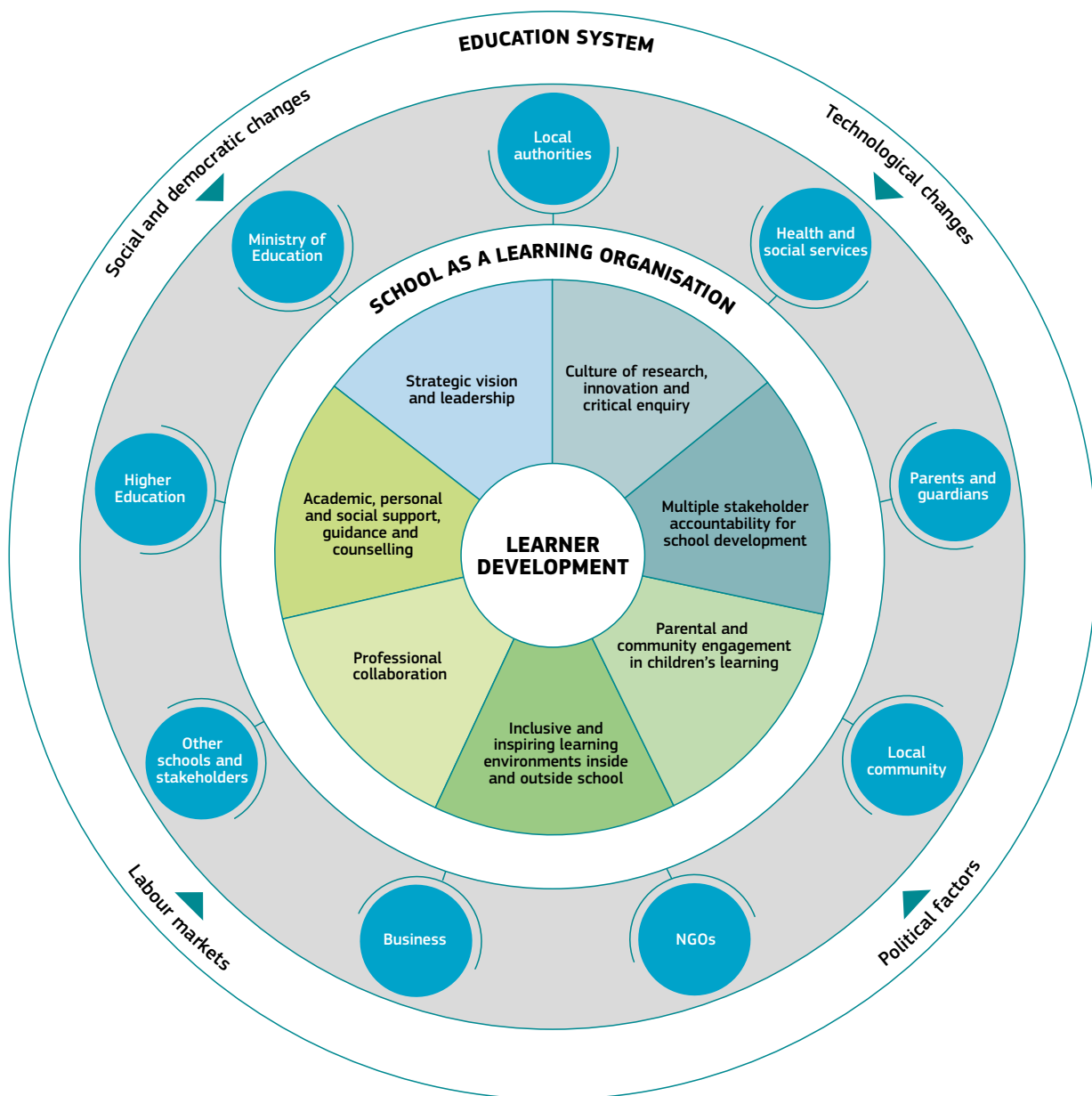
productive pressures of high-stakes accountability approaches. There is openness to new ideas, including from outside the school education system. In a culture of quality enhancement, all stakeholders have a responsibility to contribute to achieving a shared vision and the objectives for young people’s learning and wellbeing.

Fundamental to continuous development in European education is to understand and support schools as learning organisations. These encourage and enable teachers and school leaders to improve both their pedagogical and their organisational practices concurrently through local collaborative research, networking and continued professional development. Developing the capacity and role of teachers and school leaders is essential for schools to provide a clear strategic vision and leadership that guides and fully supports teaching and learning, and which enables effective communication with other practitioners and stakeholders.²

1 European Commission (2017) Teachers and school leaders in schools as learning organisations – Guiding Principles for policy development in school education. Report by the ET2020 Working Group on Schools (2016/18). Available from: https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/Governance/2018-wgs4-learning-organisations_en.pdf

2 European Commission (2018) ‘European ideas for better learning: the governance of school education systems’ <https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/resources/governance-of-school-edu.htm>

Figure 1: Schools as learning organisations: recognising the diverse roles and action that exist in and around schools to support learner development



School education cannot exist without its teachers and school leaders. They are the professionals responsible for learner development on a daily basis and it is the learners who are their primary concern. Any change in school education is unlikely to take place – or even be conceived – without their engagement and capacity to act. Not only do European school education systems need to continually recruit enough suitable teachers and school leaders, they also need to keep and nurture them for as long as best suits those individuals and systems.

However, serious teacher shortages are being reported and school education careers across Europe are still often seen as flat or one-dimensional, with few or no opportunities for progression – to expand, grow or move around. This raises a serious challenge both for schools and for education systems, which need not only a sustainable and competent teaching force, but a passionate and future-oriented one. Hence a crucial and immediate concern for the European Education Area is to focus on better supporting teachers and school leaders in their careers.

ET2020 WORKING GROUP SCHOOLS: POLICY SUPPORT TO TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

The ET2020 Working Group on Schools is made up of representatives from European education ministries and stakeholder organisations. The Working Groups are set up as part of the EU's policy cooperation process in education and training supporting common policy objectives. The groups support policymaking at the EU and national levels, and offer a forum for the exchange of experiences and best practices on ways to address the key challenges facing education and training systems.³

The mandate of the Working Group on Schools is to reflect critically on the governance of school education and how systems can address the serious challenges of

quality and equity in order to strive for better learning outcomes for all young people. Each two-year cycle of work, through meetings, thematic seminars and in-depth 'Peer Learning Activities', culminates in major outputs for policy makers and other stakeholders.

This Guide reflects not only recent work but also a legacy of ten years of European collaboration to improve the support to teachers and school leaders within school education systems.

Table 1 – European cooperation on the topic of teachers and school leaders: topics and policy guides

2010-2013	(Thematic Working Group) Teacher Professional Development	<u>Supporting teacher educators for better learning outcomes</u> (European Commission 2013) <u>Supporting teacher competence development for better learning outcomes</u> (European Commission 2013)
2014-2015	Improving Teacher Education	<u>Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching</u> (European Commission 2015)
2016-2018	The Governance of School Education Systems	<u>'European ideas for better learning: the governance of school education systems'</u> including the report, <u>Teachers and school leaders in schools as learning organisations</u> (European Commission 2017).
2018-2020	Teacher and school leader careers	Supporting teacher and school leader careers

³ https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/european-policy-cooperation/et2020-working-groups_en

ABOUT THIS GUIDE:

This Guide is aimed primarily at policy makers but may also be useful to any stakeholder concerned with supporting the careers of teachers and school leaders in school education.

PART ONE

“New Understandings and New Approaches” – offers a multi-dimensional understanding of teacher and school leader development and progression. Current challenges and new concepts are introduced in short thematic sections, and these are based on recent research, examples from European countries and on discussions between the Working Group members and other school education experts. Part One is essential reading for any stakeholder in school education seeking to understand better the current challenges in Europe and to take a new approach to the development of its professionals.

KEY TERMS

Teachers and school leaders

In this Guide we refer to both teachers and school leaders. First, we assume a broad understanding of the role of the teacher as extending beyond the pedagogical practice of the classroom. Whilst teachers may take on minor or temporary leadership roles – as project managers, or pedagogical specialists – we also use the term ‘school leader’ to refer to those who hold a formal position of responsibility for the management of the school. However, school leaders are also teachers, as they are also still involved in learner development, both in and out of the classroom. We use the term “teachers and school leaders” in this Guide, particularly in the context of career progression, to acknowledge the difference for the individual within the school context, but also to acknowledge that there needs to be certain career support to reach a leadership role.

School heads

Whilst this Guide mostly refers to teachers and school leaders, the particular role of school head is also separately discussed. The term “school head” refers to the most senior school leadership position – the person with overall responsibility for the pedagogical and administrative management of the school or cluster of schools. This role might also be referred to as head teacher, school principal or school director. They can also be included in the broad definition of ‘school leader’.

The school education profession

A profession means a paid role for which there is typically a period of training and a specific qualification; and this definition applies to the role of teacher. Teaching has been variously referred to as a “science”, an “art”, and a “craft”. It has also been referred to as a “vocation” and

PART TWO

“Supporting Progression” – is divided into five chapters. Each chapter takes the challenges and concepts explored in Part One and offers practical ideas and possible solutions. These are discussed in further detail – with references to the discussion in Part One and key messages for policy makers highlighted in each chapter. The ideas are inspired and accompanied by many more recent examples of action taken in European countries, and described by the participants of the ET2020 Working Group Schools (representatives of European ministries and stakeholder organisations).

We also offer guidance for further reading, as well as ideas for sharing the content of the Guide with colleagues in different areas of school education.

Accompanying this Guide are a short Summary and single page Information Sheets on some of the key ideas.

even a “calling”. In many countries it will be known as the teaching profession. We acknowledge this term but do not use it in this Guide to avoid the misinterpretation of referring only to teachers.

In the Guide we discuss the diversity of careers within school education and so, where referring to the “attractiveness” or other notion of “the profession”, we are referring to the various roles available within school education. The majority of employees will take on roles as teachers and school leaders.

Career paths in school education

We 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. Therefore, a career in school education should include notions of, and support for, both

competence development and career progression. As the focus of the Guide is on teachers and school leaders (including school heads), and as the majority of their work takes place in school, the context for career progression is predominantly in and around the school.

We describe the various directions that teachers' and school leaders' careers can take as “career paths”. We use the word “path” as it implies a consciously chosen direction by a person who is undertaking a journey toward various goals.



Supporting motivated and highly competent teachers

PART ONE: NEW UNDERSTANDINGS AND NEW APPROACHES

In Part One we explore:

- Current challenges in supporting careers in school education
- New perspectives on “career progression”: the importance of diverse paths that can stimulate and nurture motivation, competence and further opportunities.
- How a framework for teacher and school leader careers can support individual teachers, schools and the wider system

1. CURRENT CHALLENGES

AN ATTRACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE PROFESSION

Successful, high quality teachers and school leaders are key to the future lives of children and young adults, to the social fabric of society and to the stability and growth of economies. Teachers are central to pupils' learning, helping them develop knowledge and skills, and providing motivation and inspiration. They act as role models in the way they teach and the way they act and sustain their own learning.

School leaders have a key role in schools by setting directions, by creating inspirational learning environments both for pupils and teachers, by supporting teachers in their development, by accounting for the impact of the school on learners and by creating favourable conditions for learning cultures for all and schools as learning organisations.

It is of utmost importance to motivate teachers and school leaders and support their professional development, autonomy and growth. The impact of local school culture on teaching professionals, embedded in networks of learning communities, is critical to their successful career progress.⁴

Given the diverse challenges regarding the quality and quantity of the teacher and school leader workforce, a key question for policymakers is how to create a profession that is attractive and fulfilling for new and existing teachers and school leaders. It is often a topic of political interest and, in some countries, policymakers are held responsible for teacher shortage but struggle to make sufficient changes to an evidently complex problem.

Being a teacher or school leader is a role that extends through a number of years; therefore the question is not only how to attract dedicated and passionate teachers to the profession, but also – and maybe even more importantly – how to ensure they stay dedicated and passionate over time. For this, growth, development,

variation and recognition are essential. Teachers must have the opportunity to grow and develop, not only to support the needs of their pupils in a better way, but so that they stay motivated and committed to pupils' learning. Opportunities arise not only in the classroom, but might include roles such as involvement in curriculum development or in mentoring less experienced colleagues.

Since 2018 the Working Group has continued to take a systemic view, considering factors influencing teacher development from the perspective of perceived school needs and the expectations of the education system and wider community. A constant end goal is the better education and well-being of pupils. Beneath this wide umbrella – and in a context of continuing, sometimes worsening, teacher shortage – discussions have paid increased attention to the agency of teachers as individuals in determining their own career pathways.

There is a distinction to be made between 'professional development' and 'career development'. Generally, professional development involves enhancing teachers' capacity to meet changing job requirements as subject content develops or curricula changes are introduced. Professional development opportunities may take various forms, but are generally targeted at improving skills, knowledge and expertise.⁵ It is likely that effective professional development will benefit a school education career, as the experience should respond to developmental needs and enable the teacher or school leader to become a better practitioner. Professional development may also promote feelings of job satisfaction. However, it is firstly a mechanism for school improvement, and tends to fit a plan established by the school and the wider education system. A teacher's career, on the other hand, is individual and unique. It may even include periods away from teaching and the education system altogether. It will be determined in part by personal ambition and realisable goals, but may also be constrained by factors such as family commitments, and the professional opportunities and support that are available.

4 See footnote 1

5 (OECD 2009, p49) OECD (2009) Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments: First Results from TALIS. Available from: <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/43023606.pdf>

TEACHER SHORTAGES

The Eurydice report, [Teaching Careers in Europe: Access, Progression and Support](#),⁶ explores the difficulties faced by many countries across the continent in ensuring recruitment and retention of teachers. The main challenges are identified as:

- Shortage in some subjects
- Shortage in some geographical areas
- Ageing teacher population
- Oversupply
- Shortage of students enrolling in ITE
- High drop-out rates from the profession
- High drop-out rates from ITE

The significance of each of these challenges varies from country to country, but with the exception of oversupply these factors influencing recruitment and retention all ultimately derive from a lack of attraction to teaching among existing or potential teachers.

The Eurydice report suggests a number of policy areas that could be influential in improving the situation. There is emphasis on the importance of forward-planning processes to regulate supply and demand, and on the value of data in these processes. Data may relate to factors such as how many teachers are expected to retire imminently; demographics (e.g. ethnicity and disability status); the numbers of teachers teaching specific subjects; the number of teachers leaving the profession for reasons other than for retirement; and entrants to the profession. (For more on supply and demand, see Chapter 1 of the Eurydice report).

The challenges faced in transition from initial teacher education to taking on professional responsibilities are also discussed, with observations about the way teachers move between schools. The conclusion (and also noting the goals of Council of the European Union, 2018),⁷ is that, “As teacher mobility is generally driven by the teachers themselves and motivated by personal and/or professional reasons, it seems that education authorities and schools rarely intervene through incentives to encourage mobility” (Eurydice Report p50).

RECRUITMENT

Despite the research that has been undertaken to understand better the aspiration and motivation of teachers in Europe, teacher shortages through an ageing teacher workforce, under-recruitment, and then high drop-out rates remain a stubborn problem for those responsible for teacher supply.⁸ Key causes of recruitment shortfalls resonate across countries. In some countries, a high level of competition in the wider labour market, and lower salaries - compared to employees with similar academic qualifications - may be seen as a major obstacle. Teachers may additionally feel pressured by society and the negative criticism found in media, including the public perception of “long holidays” that teachers enjoy. There may also be tensions in public discourse between expert and political opinions that impede efforts to raise the attractiveness of the profession.

Even if it is convenient from a systemic viewpoint, the perception of a long-term career solely in the core role of teaching – i.e. year on year in the same or similar school setting - may not be attractive to young graduates. The opportunities for choice in career direction and the freedom to explore new roles and develop new skills may have significant impact on potential candidates to the profession, thereby affecting national and local teacher supply and demand, and, in due course, retention.

6 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2018). *Teaching Careers in Europe: Access, Progression and Support*. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available from: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/teaching-careers-europe-access-progression-and-support_en (See Report pp9-10; Summary p2)

7 Council of the EU (2018) Council conclusions on moving towards a vision of a European Education Area (2018/C 195/04) in Notices of the Official Journal of the European Union, 7th June 2018. Available from: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018XG0607\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018XG0607(01)&from=EN)

8 During the course of the 2018-2020 mandate a number of participants in the Working Group cited teacher shortages as a major challenge. For example, in Belgium (Flemish Community) it is anticipated that a projected annual extra demand of 5000-7000 teachers each year will persist through to 2028. Primary schools in The Netherlands are also struggling with a severe teacher shortage. The estimated shortfall in 2022 will be 4,100 and this number is expected to grow to 11,000 in 2027. The teacher shortage is especially prominent in the big cities, where housing is more expensive than in other parts of the country.

Recruitment action

In **Iceland**, the current Government Coalition Agreement states the importance of ensuring proper recognition of the work carried out by teachers, to strengthen their professional autonomy, and to prioritise school development planning at all levels of the education system. The agreement furthermore states that solutions to teacher shortages must be sought in cooperation between the government, local authorities and the teachers' union.

Since 2008, enrolment in teacher education has fallen by 40% and currently the number of newly qualified teachers does not meet recruitment needs. A new action (2019) to increase the number of teacher education students and decrease dropout from the teaching profession comprised a paid internship for students during the final year and a scholarship combined with the final thesis. Study grants were also offered to qualified teachers to specialize in mentoring teacher trainees and newly qualified teachers during their first years in the profession.

A new Act on teacher education and the professional certificate of teachers came into force in January 2020. The Act applies to the education, competency and recruitment of teachers and administrators of preschools, compulsory schools and upper secondary schools, and the legal protection of their professional qualifications and titles.

RETENTION

Once recruitment – at whatever level – has been achieved, there remains the challenge of retention.

Belgium (Flemish Community), for example, is determined to address its attrition, with over 12% of young teachers leaving during their first years in schools, and absences among a significant number of staff reportedly arising from psychological causes. The most difficult schools in the system tend to have inexperienced teachers, who often do not stay long. The result is instability among staff in those schools already most vulnerable and disadvantaged. As well as measures to stimulate part-time teachers to work full-time, housing grants for primary school teachers, and campaigns to stimulate people in other professions to consider a career change towards teaching, primary schools in Amsterdam, **The Netherlands**, have had to look for unorthodox solutions to avoid extensive pressure on teachers who continue to work in schools, for example by suggesting a reduction of the school week to four days instead of five.

It is unlikely that there will be a simple explanation of teacher shortages in any education system. A number of factors will be relevant, and they will affect each other. For instance, difficulties in recruitment may tempt a lowering of entry standards and qualification criteria. This strategy may result in higher numbers entering the profession, but would risk the acceptance of less suitable candidates, and then risk these newly qualified teachers struggling to cope and consequently leaving.

MOTIVATION, IDENTITY, AND PROFESSIONAL STATUS

The challenge of motivation

Motivation is critical to how a teacher or school leader may seek to guide his or her career. It may arise from:

- Altruism: a sense of contributing to society and community, and more specifically a desire to be involved actively in school development; the possibility of making things happen and the realisation of a dream;
- Need for change or positive challenge, perhaps resulting from weariness of classroom practice or the realisation that working in school offers more than teaching;
- Ambition: personal desire for progression;
- Status: recognition by colleagues and the wider community that career progression has been achieved;
- Monetary reward;
- Circumstances: which might include family demands or commitments outside of school, as well as the climate within the school.

Motivation prompted by the first three stimuli above tends to be intrinsic, determined by that individual's predisposition and inclination, while status, money and circumstances might be regarded more as extrinsic or external factors. Nevertheless, the individual response to this latter group will still be linked to individual predilection. Given the complexity of factors, and that they are so specific to the individual, it is not easy to determine systemic strategies that will helpfully guide candidates in their career choices.

The careers of school heads are considered in detail in Chapter 8 of this report, but at this point it is worth emphasising that, just as for teachers, different forms of motivation for taking a senior position in a school can be significant. Factors such as altruism, professional challenge and salary may all have a part to play. And just as for teachers and other school leaders, motivation for school heads must be continuous.



The challenge of nurturing individual talent and the competence development of all teachers and school leaders

A teacher or school leader's perspective should not be incompatible with that of the school or the wider education system. However, it is important to create an appropriate balance between developing competences, which define what is required of an employee according to the needs of an organisation, and nurturing talents, which recognise the individual attributes and potential of the teacher. The combination can be expressed using the metaphor of 3D glasses, with a blue spectacle lens representing the competences needed, and a red lens expressing the individual's talents, these colours combine to create an interpretation of the world.⁹ The view through the "competence" lens is characterised by a standard expectation of knowledge and skills, while there are no formal requirements to be seen through the "talent" lens. Rather than creating tension, the lenses work constructively and harmoniously together.

The talents should be the starting point of the review process for the employee – the teacher or school leader – but both viewpoints should work in dialogue, optimising individual strengths and neutralising weaknesses. Acknowledging both talents and competences requires that jobs are no longer narrow and rigid, nor are organisations – the schools – static. The review process depends on dialogue and agreement between teacher and reviewer (or reviewers). It has implications for selection procedures, and it should ideally lead to better retention and less administration.

Through this dialogic approach, evaluation becomes a means of supporting professional development and so enhances the attractiveness of careers. (See Chapter 6 'supporting the individual teacher and school leader' and Chapter 7 'Supporting teachers and school leaders across the system'). Regeneration - the notion that teachers and school leaders continue to develop themselves, for the good of themselves and their pupils, and nurture their peers as a professional community – is important.

⁹ This helpful illustration of the benefits in reconciling the needs of the system with those of the individual teacher was provided by a school in Antwerp, Belgium, which was using 'Purple Management', a commercial tool that can be applied in a variety of workplaces. Purple Management has been developed by Quintessence, Founder Director: Lou Van Beirendonck. www.quintessence.be

The challenge of diversifying career paths

A career as a teacher may generally be characterised as flat (single-level) or hierarchical (multi-level). The distinction is important: the former implies continuing the same role for the duration of the career, whereas the latter structure infers the opportunity for promotion to a higher career level, possibly with an associated higher salary.

One connotation of “career” is the link to growth in salary, particularly within flat structures, where the main career offer is simply a predictable salary increment gained through years of “experience”. This salary increment can be regarded as recognition of growth of “expertise” that is indeed built over the years and might contribute to motivation and a feeling of recognition. However, the risk of such a career system is that it loses the motivational factor once teachers have reached the final salary level of a scale.

Teaching is not necessarily associated with the idea of ‘having a varied career’. Often the dominant image of the education profession is the caricature of the teacher teaching the same material year after year just with a different group of pupils. This representation is clearly unattractive. To motivate potential teachers to join the profession and to motivate present teachers to stay, it is necessary to create and stimulate a different and more dynamic image of the school education profession and of career opportunities within that profession¹⁰.

From the teacher’s viewpoint, career paths that incorporate other roles within education (or even outside education altogether) must be taken into account. For the individual, opportunities such as promotion to a leadership post or other role in management and administration, or moves or secondment to the inspectorate, or to teacher education and research, could provide attractive next career steps. By contrast, a flat career structure is likely to appear to teachers as a constraint on personal growth and progress. In a recent study commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Education, about half of the young students in secondary and vocational education in **The Netherlands** indicated that one of the reasons not to choose teacher education and becoming a teacher was the lack of career options.

The challenge of professional identity

Professional identity – the perception of one’s self as a professional actor based on an individual life journey – is important. Not least, self-perception determines how a teacher sees his or her own professional expertise and consequently what requires development.

Research and policy action in education sometimes assume that situations are simple and controllable rather than recognising a reality that is chaotic and uncertain. Such conditions affect teachers’ and school leaders’ professional identities, expertise and agency, which in turn will affect how they view their careers. Education systems should take into account and carefully consider what kind of professional identity is being constructed and by whom – by the system (central authorities and/or other institutions), by the teachers as a collective, or by individuals for themselves. This complexity suggests that there is no universal description that holds for all teachers or school leaders.

Finland provides an interesting example of an education system responding to the complexity – and influence – of professional identity in determining career choices. Famously, the education system in Finland is built on trust, which has enabled an emphasis to be placed on the welfare of teachers. The starting point is that teachers are good and capable. This positive ethos is set against the background of an operational environment in flux where schools and professionals have the autonomy to develop in many different ways. It potentially becomes challenging to seek uniformity. However, as described in Figure 2 (below) collaboration and proactivity become two necessary and positive characteristics of such cultures.

¹⁰ Bahlmann, M., Eustatia, B., & Pillen-Warmerdam, D. (2018). Optimale inrichting van lerarenopleidingen. Leiden: Qompas. Zie [https://corporate.qompas.nl/media/38169/Optimale%20inrichting%20van%20lerarenopleidingen%20-%20Qompas%20\(2018\).pdf](https://corporate.qompas.nl/media/38169/Optimale%20inrichting%20van%20lerarenopleidingen%20-%20Qompas%20(2018).pdf) (in Dutch)

Figure 2 – The differences between simple and complex work and system cultures ¹¹

SIMPLE LAW- ABIDING CONTROLLABLE	COMPLEX CHAOTIC UNCERTAIN
CERTAINTY PREDICTABILITY HIERARCHY ATOMISM TOP DOWN PASSIVE WORKERS ONE BEST METHOD COMPETITION UNYELDING BUREAUCRACY EFFECTIVITY REACTIVITY	UNCERTAINTY INPREDICTABILITY NO HIERARCHY, NETWORKS HOLISM SEVERAL POWER CENTRES PARTNERS MANY BEST METHODS COLLABORATION FLEXIBLE TRUST APPROPRIATENESS PROACTIVITY

The agency of the teacher in career development has been acknowledged in **Cyprus**, where it has been accepted that teachers are not permanently locked into characteristics or competences and so 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. How a teacher conceives her or his identity determines how the teacher assesses their professional expertise, and so where to develop

knowledge, skills, judgement and capacity. The teaching profession remains attractive and has started to become more competitive. However, teacher evaluation is currently towards informing promotion and the link with professional development is weak. A new proposal for evaluation is under discussion, with the aim of increasing teachers' and school leaders' motivation, professional development and encouraging teacher to adopt expanded roles and responsibilities.



Developing specialist roles according to talent

Image: © Cedefop, 2019/Eetu Laine

¹¹ Professor M. Risku, Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä in a presentation to the ET2020 Working Group Schools Thematic Seminar on the Evaluation of teachers and school leaders. December. 2018. The notion of paradigm shift is attributed to D. Zohar (1997), *Rewiring the Corporate Brain: Using the New Science to Rethink how We Structure and Lead Organizations*, San-Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.



Distributed leadership offers career opportunities and support
Image: flickr – Scottish Government, 2015

2. NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE CAREERS OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

The development of teachers and their career progression involves a dynamic interplay between **motivation**, **ability**, and **opportunity**. These three elements are themselves multi-faceted but they are also linked.

Knowing there are opportunities to develop and advance is an important factor in helping some teachers remain motivated throughout their career. This motivation includes a feeling of empowerment: avoiding a feeling of being isolated or locked into one position, and able to recognise one's own strengths. In this sense, the motivation can be both intrinsic and extrinsic.

Career advancement is also a matter of stimulating professional competence development (abilities) and afterwards providing individuals with the opportunities to put these newly developed abilities into good use. Vice versa, those who have received new opportunities (for example, new roles or responsibilities) may need quickly to develop new abilities and competences to enable them to fulfil the tasks of that new role.

In developing new abilities or competences, the motivation to use them in the daily practice of schools and the opportunity to apply them both in the classroom and beyond the classroom are interrelated^{12,13}.

12 Snook, M. (2013). Developing teacher leadership and its impact in schools. Amsterdam: HvA, and Snook, M., Knezic, D., van den Berg, E., Emmelot, Y., Heyma, A., & Sligte, H. (2018). Impact of in-service Master of Education programmes on teachers and their working environment. *European journal of teacher education*, 41(5), 620-637.

13 See <https://www.dus-inl/subsidies/teambeurs-primair-ondervijs> (in Dutch)

Figure 3 - the concept of combining motivation, ability and opportunity stems from Human Resources studies¹⁴



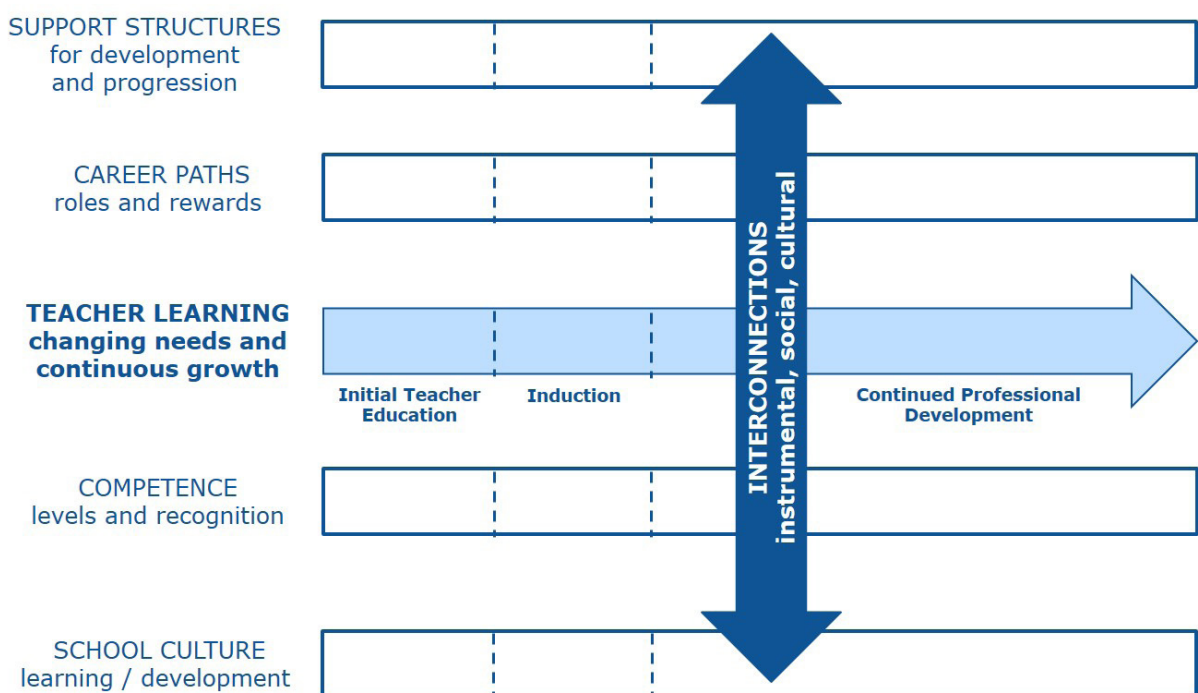
The combination of motivation, ability and opportunity informs the understanding of the teacher’s working life as a ‘career’: a path over a significant period of a person’s life with different opportunities for progress within or across a profession or job¹⁵. From this perspective, a teacher’s career – especially one that is attractive and sustainable – should include notions of, and support for, both development and progression.

RE-SHAPING CAREERS WITHIN SCHOOL EDUCATION

Under its 2014-15 mandate the ET2020 Working Group on Schools addressed the question of establishing and maintaining quality in the teacher profession through a schema of five interrelated policy perspectives: those of teachers’ learning needs (a continuum of teacher education and other professional development); instrumental support structures; career; professional competence levels; and the cultural perspective of a

school.¹⁶ The importance of creating new opportunities during a teacher’s working life was already expressed in its report, *Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching*, which recognised the importance of a “continuum” of teacher education beyond ITE into phases of induction and continuing professional development, where teachers could grow during their careers in terms of roles, opportunities and responsibilities (see figure 4 below).

Figure 4 - Five policy perspectives on the continuum of the teaching profession



¹⁴ Appelbaum, E., Bailey, T., Berg, P., & Kalleberg, A.L. (2000). *Manufacturing Advantage: Why High Performance Work Systems Pay Off*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University.

¹⁵ Adapted from Oxford English Dictionary definition: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/career>

¹⁶ European Commission (2015) *Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching. A guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education*. Report by the ET2020 Working Group on Schools (2014/15) Available from: <https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/files/Shaping%20career-long%20perspectives%20on%20teaching.pdf>

As a direct response to concerns that the school education profession is often seen as a flat, with no or few career opportunities¹⁷, we understand that there are, in fact, different ways of describing teacher and school leader career paths – based on examples that are already established in countries throughout Europe:

1. A career in school education may involve combining (or leaving) the in-classroom role with responsibility for school management

In many national systems, the career opportunities that exist mostly relate to a move from teacher to (deputy) school leader (sometimes with intermediate steps). Teachers may combine (or leave) their classroom role with managerial leadership roles, moves which may be connected to an increase in salaries and status.

2. A career may involve recognition as an expert in a specific aspect of teaching

Several countries make a distinction between different levels of teacher expertise, based on local or central assessment procedures. In many cases, this recognition may again be connected to an increase in salaries and status. This type of progression in career path might be attractive to teachers who derive energy from the interaction with the pupils; at the same time, they feel recognised in the way they have developed their knowledge and skills.

3. A career may involve combining teaching with specific roles alongside teaching

This path might relate to becoming a mentor to teacher students or novice teachers, or as a digital technology co-ordinator, for example. These career opportunities are connected to specific recognised roles in schools that are open to a few teachers. Sometimes these roles are only available when teachers who hold these places retire or move to other schools. If the school conditions allow, teachers may also suggest new roles for themselves, for example as short-term project leaders.

4. A career may involve changing contexts

Teachers and school leaders have the opportunity to change contexts, e.g. by moving from one school to

another school, by broadening expertise through gaining qualifications for other subjects, by switching between primary, secondary or vocational education, or by moving into teacher education. These changes between contexts create variation in work and new challenges.

5. A career may involve working at different levels – or layers - of the system

Teachers and school leaders do not only have roles within the school, but they can also act at a multi-school level by participating in quality improvement projects, at a local level contributing to city-wide education initiatives, at national level by participating in national curriculum projects or within teacher unions or teacher councils or even at international level through participation in projects, peer exchange, or network representation roles.¹⁸

6. A career may begin, involve, or end with working outside of schools

Many teachers and school leaders working in schools have little to no work experience outside schools and the education sector. However, some combine their work with another job (e.g. a music teacher who is also a professional musician in an orchestra, or an experienced and entrepreneurial teacher who has started her own consultancy practice supporting schools with innovation projects). A career might also begin after working elsewhere in school education, or the career as a teacher or school leader might end with a move to, for example, education research, curriculum development or policymaking, or outside of education altogether.

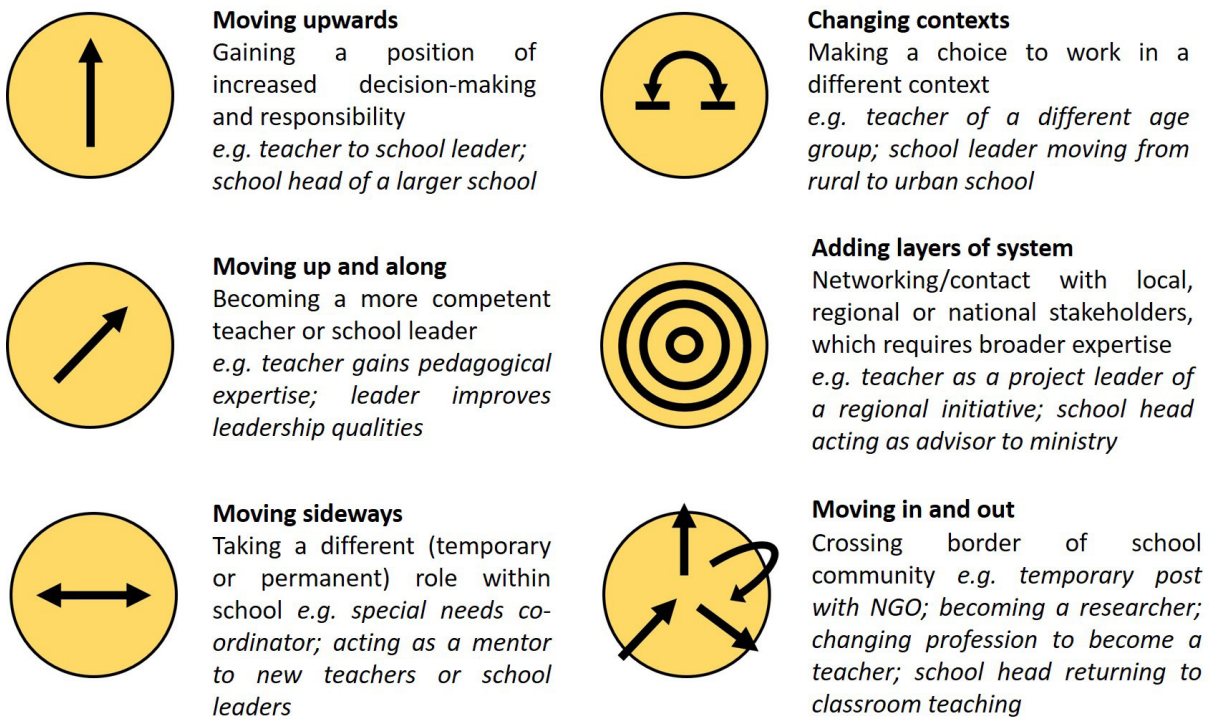
Even if not all paths are supported by formal policy measures, many of the potentially inspiring opportunities described above might still be possible for a teacher to experience during their own career. Having a range of paths available can create an attractive suite of career opportunities for teachers and contributes to a richer education system, benefiting from the external influences that teachers encounter and experience.

Although all of these paths imply a change in role, remaining solely as a classroom teacher should be valued as a career-long choice.

¹⁷ See Eurydice (2018), footnote 6

¹⁸ For example, [eTwinning](#), the [Erasmus+](#) programme, and European network organisations in education.

Figure 5 - Six types of teacher and school leader career path. Note that these paths are not exclusive and may be experienced at the same time, or one after the other, by an individual



Even if only one or two career options are supported or promoted within a country, there will be opportunities, positive challenges and inspiration for some teachers and school leaders, but these opportunities will not be available to all or necessarily recognised as opportunities by everyone. Accepting the variation amongst preferences and ambitions and creating opportunities for each of these career preferences will contribute to understanding the individual needs of all teachers, and lead to a more attractive profession and to an increase in the quality and quantity of teachers.

The six possible career paths illustrated in Figure 5 are not independent from each other. A teacher can combine different steps, e.g. by becoming an expert in an area of practice (Moving up and along) and at the same time taking on new roles e.g. as a mentor (Moving sideways), or by taking on new roles (Moving sideways) while at the same time acting within the school and at a regional or national level (Adding layers of system). Also the paths may vary over time, e.g. when a teacher focuses on becoming better in teaching history in the first years of teaching (Moving up and along), then after a few years adds new roles to working within the classroom as a subject coordinator in the

school and as a mentor to novice history teachers (Moving sideways) and then after another couple of years brings his experience and expertise to a national taskforce on revising the history curriculum for secondary schools (Adding layers of system).

Acknowledging this variety also implies the recognition that not all teachers and school leaders have the same profile. The variation of roles and expertise within a school can contribute to a stronger community of professionals that, in cooperation, is able to solve the variety of challenges that a school encounters. School leaders and teachers themselves should be aware of this potential strength, and there should be support available to them as they take on new roles. This provision becomes especially important where teachers are responsible for the content or the coordination of teamwork without having personnel responsibilities, which may still rest with school leadership. Open dialogue is important to break down any resistance or critical attitudes to those colleagues who are willing to take up the new opportunities (see Part Two for more about the importance of dialogue). Once there is a culture of mutual support it is likely that more teachers will aspire to explore opportunities and apply for new roles.

CAREERS AND CAREER PROGRESSION OF SCHOOL LEADERS AND SCHOOL HEADS

The ideas that have so far been described with regard to teachers also apply to those already in school leadership roles. (See also the Introduction for a definition of these key terms).

The attractiveness of the role of a school leader – in the broadest sense as being part of the management team of a school – is not only defined by salaries, responsibilities and status, but also by the opportunities to grow and develop, to vary one's work, and by the recognition one gets. In other words, when we understand a career as a path over a significant period of a person's life with opportunities for progress within or across a profession or job, becoming a school leader can on the one hand be seen as a career step, while on the other hand that career does not stop once someone achieves the position of school leader.

The most senior school leadership position is that of school head (of one or a number of schools) and, again, career progression should not cease when this particular role is undertaken. If school development is crucial to a system-wide aspiration for high quality of education, then school heads play a critical role: inspiring, leading, and developing their entire community and acting as a crucial link between that community and the rest of the system and its stakeholders. Just as countries are concerned about the recruitment, retention and development of teachers, so too are they concerned about how best to attract and support school heads who will be a positive force for change. The possible career path steps towards and whilst being a school head may be identified using the same ideas. Nevertheless, special approaches and support structures still need to be considered – alongside those for teachers and other school leaders – in order that school heads in particular can also be motivated and operate to the best of their ability. This imperative is discussed further in Part Two.

There are some specific concerns relating to the careers of school leaders and school heads:

- How can teachers (or other professionals) take the career steps towards and through different types of school leadership: what qualities are needed, what support is available, what conditions are necessary?
- What career opportunities do school heads have once they are in this most senior role in a school?

To attract at least a sufficient quality and quantity of school leaders, it is essential that policy makers find answers to these questions. Here, the insights regarding teacher careers might be helpful to also guide policies on school leaders and, in particular, school heads.

Just as it is for teachers, the development of school leaders during their working life involves a dynamic interplay between motivation, abilities, and opportunities. To stay motivated as a school leader, they need to feel confident in terms of their abilities to meet the expectations and responsibilities of their role and to develop these and remain motivated to put these into practice. At the same time, they need to have the opportunity to take on new responsibilities and challenges as their qualities and abilities develop over time. Although the contexts and conditions for school leaders in different European countries can vary considerably, the types of career path that have been identified for teachers might also be an inspiration when thinking about career opportunities for school leaders.

To strengthen the attractiveness of school leadership, it is important to acknowledge that school leaders might vary in their ambitions and in the way these opportunities appeal to them and to create support structures and conditions that facilitate school leaders in developing their career. Having opportunities for growth, development, variation in work and recognition of their abilities and roles (see the six types of career path in Figure 5, above), is an important condition to stay passionate as a school leader and to be able to inspire teachers in their school to give the best they have for their pupils.

3. A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER CAREERS

THE NEED FOR CAREER FRAMEWORKS

To broaden the understanding of careers in school education and to support the career development of teachers, it is essential that a shared language regarding the teacher profession, and regarding career opportunities within this profession, is developed. This shared language will help coordinate action for different stakeholders whose aim is to strengthen the attractiveness and sustainability of the profession, including ministries, education employers, local authorities, school leaders, teachers, teacher unions and teacher councils, and teacher education institutes.

A framework for teacher careers can support the development of such a shared language, create coherence within national teacher policies, and guide actions to improve career opportunities for teachers and school leaders. Such a framework can start with defining the teacher profession as a profession whose core consists of teaching pupils and students, but which also involves roles in developing, defining and safeguarding the quality of teaching and learning. School education is not a static profession; teachers develop over time¹⁹.

Next, the framework can identify possible areas of progression, where teachers can develop their abilities and roles. These roles may be specific. By mapping these roles and functions, the visibility of these career opportunities can be improved for all involved and career choices and decisions can become better informed.

Some of these career opportunities can be elaborated in terms of competences and criteria that can be used to identify and select teachers for such roles or functions (e.g. with respect to competences that are needed for a certain role or function). This approach can clarify expectations and responsibilities and thus support processes of self-reflection, appraisal, evaluation and career-development dialogues.

The framework can also include how teachers in specific roles or expertise levels are recognised, e.g. through salaries and remuneration or in other ways. It can indicate what contractual status is connected to a career step and whether it is a temporary or permanent position.

To support career progression, the framework might include how further steps can be taken (e.g. through individual initiatives of teachers, open vacancies, selection, etc.) and to what extent there is room for diversity and local variation and autonomy for schools.

Finally, the framework can include or give guidance to support what is already available for teachers and school leaders to help them to pursue career opportunities. This support can include career guidance offered by local regional or national experts (e.g. from teacher education institutes, teacher unions, national or regional CPD providers), or CPD opportunities, including forms such as peer learning and exchange, job shadowing, mentoring, formal professional development provision (certified courses and qualifications, resources), or tracking (review procedures, inspection).

19 Snook, M.; Dengerink, J.; & De Wit, B., 2019). Reframing the Teacher profession as a dynamic and multifaceted profession: A wider perspective on teacher quality and teacher competence frameworks. *European Journal of Education*, 54, 413–425

A career framework as a map and shared language

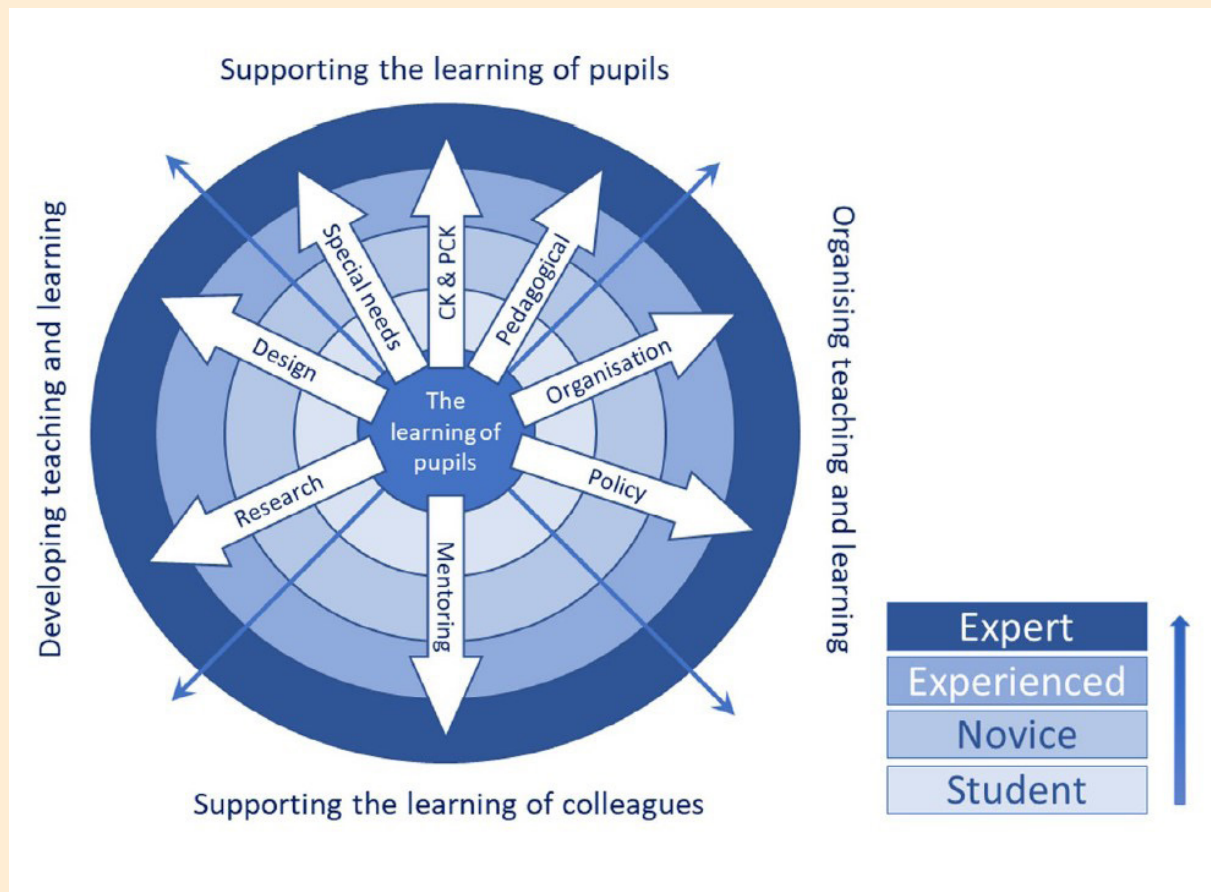
To support career development of teachers and thus contribute to the attractiveness of the profession, the board for secondary schools and teacher education institutes in **The Netherlands** have developed a framework that combines several of the career paths outlined earlier. This framework emphasises both Moving up and along (by becoming an expert teacher), Moving sideways (by adding new roles to the role of classroom teacher) and Adding layers of system (by taking roles at team, school, regional or national level).

The framework does not identify separate career paths, but can be considered as a map that teachers can use to navigate their career and that school leaders can use to support career development and to identify career possibilities within their school. Teacher education institutes can use the framework to develop support programmes for certain roles

The framework has no formal status and does not formalise what schools can or cannot do with regard to career policy and support, but it offers a shared language regarding teacher careers in The Netherlands. The framework invites school leaders, teachers and teacher education institutes to identify how the framework relates to or requires adaptation for the local context. It offers both tools to identify opportunities for teacher careers, to develop career policies within schools and to support career steps.

See www.beroepsbeeldvandeleraar.nl (in Dutch)

Figure 6 – career framework developed in The Netherlands



CREATING A “FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER CAREERS”

In many countries, competence frameworks are already established as a pivotal element of school management, used to review and assess teachers’ performance against a set of competences and then monitor subsequent progress from this evaluation point. The competences are central to the framework. They should make clear what is expected of the teacher’s role and enable the identification of reasonable and attainable expectations for the future. Gaps in the competences, as well as school development plan priorities, may themselves lead to targets for an individual teacher’s professional development.

The advantage of a competence framework in schools is that it communicates an understanding, generally agreed and ideally shared by the teachers, of what is required by the school and the wider education system. The framework may be complex, and identify different measures or levels according to teachers’ experience and responsibility.

Initial Teacher Education typically sets some minimum standards which, when met, allow entry to the profession. A competence framework applicable to senior, experienced (and presumably higher paid) teachers would be based on raised expectations for their performance.

However, a competence framework sets an organisational agenda. The school circumscribes the role of the teacher and the required competences are a reflection of perceived needs of the school and the system. Of course, these needs cannot be ignored, but against the background of teacher shortages that exists, it makes sense to have a “framework for teacher and school leader careers” – either linked or integrating the competence framework – that addresses a broader notion of teacher and school leader progression and provides consideration and a response to their aims, motivation and ambitions.

Practical steps in creating a framework

Figure 7.1 – the inclusion of different elements



Figure 7.2 – the function of different elements

MAPPING - SIGNPOSTING - STEERING - MONITORING - REGULATING

The first consideration in creating a framework for teacher careers is to understand the different elements of careers that may be included or referred to – as introduced above.

It is also important to be fully transparent about the purpose or function of these different elements.

A framework may map or signpost opportunities, such as defining diverse roles in and outside of school setting. Other elements, such as criteria for promotion or quality standards for teacher career guidance, may be purposefully included in order to steer, monitor or regulate aspects of support to teacher and school leader career progression.

This process will involve important dialogue and negotiation in order to engage different stakeholders, ensuring a sense of ownership and understanding of responsibility at different levels of the system.

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

Figure 7.3 – supporting the individual

Teachers and school leaders as individuals		
ITE	INDUCTION	CPD
<p>MOTIVATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing professional identity • Ownership and responsibility for progression • Sense of recognition and reward 		
<p>ABILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent and competence • Evaluation and feedback processes 		
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible, accessible and flexible paths • Different modes of professional development 		

In order to support the individual **teacher and school leader**, a framework should take into account the following:

- Professional development generally takes place across three distinct, but ideally continuous, phases of Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Induction (IND), and Continued Professional Development (CPD).
- 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. There should be occasions to apply newly developed competences in authentic situations; there is no point in a teacher developing competences if these cannot be utilised.
- Combatting traditional singular perspectives on teacher careers as being either flat or simply hierarchical, a range of career paths that recognise and support individual differences between teachers should be clearly identified and visible.
- Encouraging a sense of ownership and responsibility for one’s own career – part of “career competence”
- Professional development may take different forms, such as courses outside of school hours and buildings or new experiences and peer learning within school.

Figure 7.4 – supporting schools

Teachers and school leaders within schools as learning organisations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal planning alongside school development • Leadership capacity to support staff

Supporting schools as learning organisations, or “communities”, emphasises the focus on learning and development of all actors within schools, including teachers and school heads. The focus on development of all contributes to a culture of quality. Such an 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. A framework should be designed with an understanding that:

- 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 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 development of local human resource strategies in schools, including supporting the capacity of the leadership to guide such development and decision-making with effective dialogue, as well as foster a collaborative – rather than purely competitive or isolated – community of professionals.

Figure 7.5 – support aligned with system needs

Support to the school education profession aligned with **system** needs

- Dialogue with shared vision and language
- Identify overlaps and gaps
- Link regional and national level stakeholders with school professionals

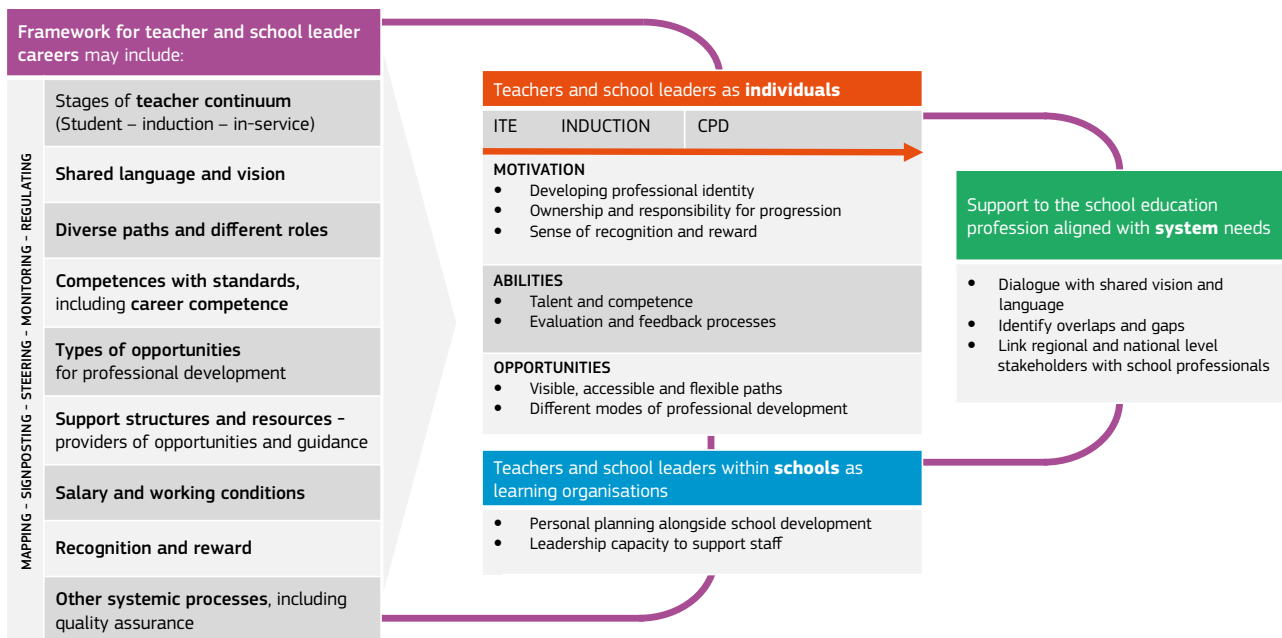
Whilst much of the focus of this work has been on teacher and school needs, the needs and capacity of the system, in particular at regional and national authority levels, should also be considered:

It is important to take into account the inter-relationships of the different levels of school education systems. Their complexity has been explored previously by the ET2020 Working Group Schools²⁰.

- 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 shared language that supports that dialogue.
- Mapping and monitoring using a framework can also help identify overlaps and gaps in support structures.
- Another significant function is to link or align the elements to other regulations on the teaching profession, which it may or may not be possible to change.

Figure 7.6 below combines the factors described here to summarise what a Framework for teacher and school leader careers may include and what its benefits are to individual teachers, schools and the system as a whole:

Figure 7.6 – a template for a framework with its potential use and positive impact across the system



20 This is outlined in the report "European ideas for better learning: the governance of school education systems". See footnote 2.

4. HOW CAN SCHOOL EDUCATION SYSTEMS BETTER SUPPORT TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER CAREERS?

Creating and supporting new policy initiatives on teacher and school leader careers requires action on several levels:

DIVERSE CAREER PATHS	Broaden the understanding of teacher and school leader careers to include different types of career path. This approach requires a shared appreciation of careers in the school education profession, e.g. in terms of a framework that can contribute to a shared language and to signposts for teacher and school leaders, thus creating coherence between the way in which different stakeholders understand teacher career opportunities.
VARIETY OF CAREER OPPORTUNITIES	Consider at a national, local or a school level what variety of career opportunities can be created for teachers and school leaders to work and develop as professionals. Some of these possibilities are based on local decisions or system-wide opportunities. Some of these functions can be appointed on a temporary basis, while others can be more permanent advancements.
SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT	Create a support system for continuous professional development in order to support career steps , with a balanced focus on pedagogy to become an expert in teaching, but also to qualify for fulfilling new job-functions. Personal development plans for teachers and school leaders should be effectively linked to training opportunities.
EFFECTIVE DIALOGUE	Support effective dialogue between teachers and school leaders. Through the mutual recognition of school needs and individual ambitions, new roles and responsibilities for the teacher, their colleagues and school leaders are made more explicit and possible. Through this dialogue, personal planning can be complementary to school strategic development.
RECOGNITION AND REWARD	Identify ways to recognise and reward the development and career progression of teachers and school leaders in each of the different types of role and career path (either through salaries or other non-financial forms of recognition, such as time compensation).
SCHOOL HEADS AND THEIR LOCAL SUPPORT	Pay particular attention to the recruitment, support and nurturing of school heads , as well as improving the capacity of those local stakeholders that work most closely with school heads to give effective support.

These ideas are further discussed in Part Two, along with practical policy examples from European countries.

A high-angle photograph of a person climbing a large, multi-colored rock climbing wall. The climber is positioned in the upper left quadrant, facing away from the camera. The wall is covered in numerous colorful climbing holds in shades of red, yellow, green, and blue. The climber is wearing a dark harness and a backpack. The background shows the continuation of the wall and the surrounding environment, which appears to be an outdoor climbing area.

PART TWO: SUPPORTING CAREER PROGRESSION

Part One establishes that, whether in a centralised or decentralised system, creating and supporting new policy initiatives on teacher careers, requires action on several levels:

- Broadening the understanding of teacher and school leader careers
- Considering at a national, local or a school level what variety of career opportunities can be created
- Creating a support system for continuous professional development in order to support career steps
- Supporting effective dialogue between teachers and school leaders
- Identifying ways to best recognise and reward the development and career progression
- Paying particular attention to the recruitment, support and nurturing of school heads

As a way of inspiring policy development based on these ideas, in **Part Two** we explore ways to take action with practical examples from European countries:

- Establishing diverse choice and opportunities
- Supporting the individual teacher and school leader
- Supporting teachers and school leaders across the system
- Supporting the careers of school heads
- Managing support structures

5. DIVERSE CHOICE AND OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers and school leaders are, ultimately, the leaders of their own career path – they have the right to accept or reject opportunities but they should also not be blocked from accessing them (through lack of training or support). To ignore a teacher or school leader who is struggling in or outside of the classroom is a matter of neglect in the system with an impact on the passion, inspiration and dedication of all professionals in a school, thereby putting at risk the learning processes and outcomes of pupils. But it is equally a matter of neglect to ignore the development needs of highly talented and motivated teachers and

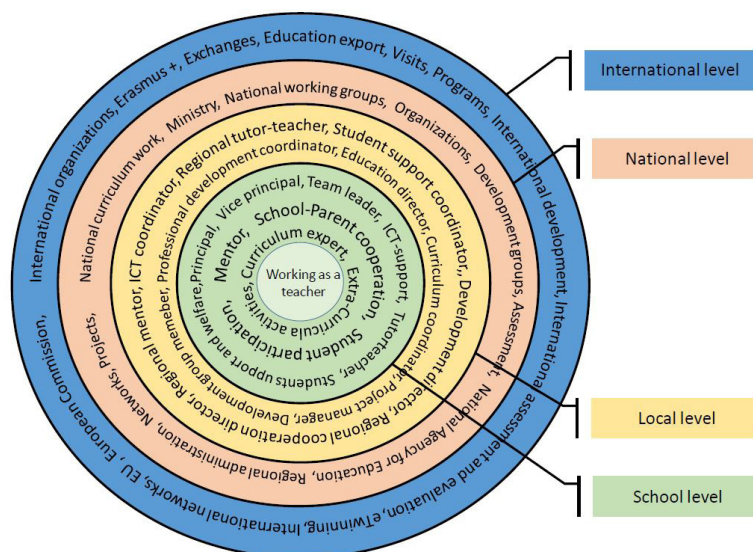
school leaders, which poses similar risks. Contemporary research highlights the benefits of offering a wider range of opportunities for progression as part of a school education career²¹.

HAVING CHOICE

To expand and improve the opportunities available to teachers and school leaders, it is first necessary to examine the extent of that choice. An initial step is to identify what is, could or should be available.

Mapping the full range of professional opportunities within school education as a starting point for reflecting on career support

In **Finland**, working as a teacher in the classroom forms the core of teacher's work, but it is recognised that an individual should have opportunities to work simultaneously on different levels, move across levels, have a chance to use their knowledge and skills widely and return to classroom teaching in due course if wanted. Figure 8 (below) was developed by policy makers to express the variation in professional opportunities, as a starting point to reflect on how choices within career paths might be made and better supported.



21 For example, Harris, A. & Muijs, D. (2002) in *Teacher Leadership: A review of the research* found that 1) Teachers who are leaders, lead within and beyond the classroom, not only in organisational aspects, but also in encouraging colleagues to move forward in their professional practice; 2) Student outcomes are more likely to improve where leadership sources are distributed throughout the school community and where teachers are empowered in areas of importance to them.

Choice and progression are not isolated notions. Policy work may be prompted by another school education initiative, such as curricular reform. Given that teachers and school leaders are at the forefront of such policy

implementation, their own professional opportunities and development are naturally entwined with the aims and processes of the new initiative.

Recognising the importance of teacher career development and opportunities within other school education policy action

In **Croatia**, the implementation of the new curricular reform started with a pilot project (Experimental Program School for Life) in 2018. Lessons learned from this initiative highlighted that not only teaching methods and CPD, but also recognition and career advancement are all relevant for a successful implementation of the Reform in the school year 2019/2020. In consequence, teachers' motivation and confidence, their development as "innovators", and their capacity to act as peer mentors are all receiving attention.

RECENT POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

School for Life
Comprehensive Curricular Reform

Recognising and
Rewarding Excellence

Teacher Advancement
Regulations

Teacher Beliefs

Teacher Motivation
and Confidence

Teachers as
Innovators

Teachers as
Mentors

In **Sweden**, the government initiated an inquiry into how to raise the quality of school education with a focus on making the teacher professions more attractive. Its report proposed a National Professional Programme for Teachers and School Leaders with the aim of enhancing the attractiveness of the profession, as well as boosting professional development.

The proposed programme contains three building blocks:

1. A structure for capacity building focused on skills development.
2. Qualification levels that clearly and transparently define progression based on descriptions of what teachers should know and do.
3. Support for what tasks teachers with different qualification levels are apt to perform and thus support for, for example, the recruitment process.

INCREASING AND DIVERSIFYING OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers and school leaders may benefit from diversifying their daily tasks to complement their fundamental role in the classroom. Based on contemporary research, where teachers and school leaders are genuinely at the forefront of educational reform and change, the net result can be both positive and empowering.²²

Empowerment should be tangible within different leadership roles, and can contribute to an individual's own sense of career progression as well as help to have

a direct positive impact on their learners as they are able to take direct action depending on their own personal experience of the school community. Nevertheless, such accomplishment depends upon an attitude – within the school and the system – of “respect for the dignity, quality and sophistication of teachers’ practical knowledge and judgement”.²³

Teachers as well as pupils will benefit if special talents are deployed carefully within teaching teams. For example, an enthusiast in using digital tools may share that expertise by assisting with other classes than his or her own.

The importance of opportunities in Master programmes

Since 2008 the government in **The Netherlands** has stimulated teachers to increase their qualification level by engaging in in-service masters’ programmes. Supported by a grant system covering study costs and study leave, more than 38,000 teachers have enrolled in Masters’ programmes. Many of those Master teachers reported that they have developed their knowledge and skills regarding teaching and learning, a more critical inquiring attitude, a wider understanding of the dynamics of school organisations and expertise with regard to innovation of teaching and learning. However, a considerable number of those teachers complained that they lacked the opportunity to put these new capabilities into practice. They felt that they could contribute more strongly to issues in the school, but felt locked within their role of classroom teacher. This constraint impacted on their motivation and strengthened in some the intention to leave their school and look for places where their new expertise was valued more explicitly and opportunities for new roles were given.

Based on this experience the Dutch government launched a small-scale funding scheme where the grant programme was adapted to include a stronger incentive for school leaders to consider how to use the newly developed abilities of Master teachers in their school. Funding was provided to enable Master teachers to take on new roles for one day per week (over the course of one year) in stimulating innovation or supporting colleagues in the school.

For more information see footnote²⁴

It should be considered when, which and how other roles and responsibilities become an option in a career. Roles for classroom teachers within schools may vary: being a curriculum expert or leader; extra-curricular provision;

mentoring of beginning teachers; or senior management roles. These roles may be taken on for a short period of time alongside classroom teaching, or may be a more long-term addition of a position of responsibility.

22 Harris, A. & Jones, M. (2019) Teacher leadership and educational change, *School Leadership & Management*, 39:2, 123-126 and Donaldson, G. (2015) *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

23 Hargreaves, A. and Dawe, R. (1990) Paths of Professional Development: Contrived Collegiality, Collaborative Culture and the Case of Peer Coaching, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 4, (2); cited in Woods, P., Jeffrey, B., Troman, G., Boyle, M. (1997). *Restructuring Schools, Reconstructing Teachers*. London: Routledge

24 Snoek, M. (2013). Developing teacher leadership and its impact in schools. Amsterdam: HvA. Also Snoek, M., Knezic, D., van den Berg, E., Emmelot, Y., Heyma, A., & Sligte, H. (2018). Impact of in-service Master of Education programmes on teachers and their working environment. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(5), 620-637. Also see <https://www.dus-i.nl/subsidies/teambeurs-primair-onderwijs> (in Dutch)

It is worth determining whether a formal structure of progression (e.g. several levels of teacher qualification) would help in this respect. For example, in **Slovakia**, teachers who have completed their Initial Teacher Education can add to their qualification by completing in-service training to qualify to teach other subjects or other specialisation, such as working with pupils with special educational needs.

Recognition for the specialist competences required for such roles may be valid for a certain number of years (rather than permanently) and may (or may not) be linked to salary benefits and further career opportunities, such as management and leadership. In **Bulgaria**, it is possible to become a “senior teacher” after 10 years of experience and a required amount of professional development, or sooner if certain qualifications are obtained.

In 2019, in **Croatia**, a new policy defined three stages in career progression, which are not just connected with years of experience but also with achievements in their work. The three stages are: ‘teacher mentor’ after 5 years spent working as a teacher or school head; ‘teacher advisor’ after 5 years being mentor; ‘excellent teacher advisor’ after 5 years being advisor. In addition, this final stage requires a certain number of points defined by the policy in the same areas as for awarding of teachers, a certain number of hours spent in continuous professional development, and the achievement of learning outcomes defined by the ‘Framework on the qualification standard of teachers in primary and secondary education’.

Formal defined levels of progression

The teacher competence framework in **Estonia** includes qualification requirements, the requirements of teacher education and evaluation. Embedded is a sense of the individual’s career path, which includes the variety in roles and responsibilities, and self-assessment. There have been recent changes to the process of teacher qualification. More flexibility has been introduced to enable (re)entering the profession, moving up and along, and changing paths. There have also been recent changes to remuneration principles, which offer the opportunity to deal with other tasks and take on other roles.

In **Spain**, there are two clearly differentiated levels: teacher and senior teacher (“catedrático”). The latter level, which involves not only salary compensations but also better opportunities to choose vacancies at schools and priority for the choice of subjects within the department, is accessed through a procedure that varies from one Autonomous Community to another, but always takes into account former experience and previous training.

Within each department there is a Head of Department who has certain organisational responsibilities, in return for which there is a reduction in hours and a slightly higher salary than other colleagues. If there is a senior teacher within the department, he or she usually assumes this position. If there is not, the School Head appoints him or her after hearing the advice of other members of the department.

In **Malta**, teachers have opportunities for career progression with clearly defined expectations for previous experience:

- Head of Department – not less than ten scholastic years teaching experience, four years of which have been served teaching the subject/area/level;

- Head of Department - College Prefect of Discipline – seven years teaching experience;
- Assistant Head of School – not less than ten scholastic years teaching experience;
- Learning Support Centre Co-ordinator – MQF level 7 or and MQF level 6 in Education together with two years relevant work experience;
- Head of School – not less than ten scholastic years teaching experience together with a full qualification at MQF level 7 in Educational Leadership and Management or a comparable qualification;
- Education Officer – these are Assistant Heads of School and Heads of Department with not less than ten scholastic years teaching experience, together with at least four years teaching experience in the particular subject group or area.

Vacancies are posted online with job descriptions that are created in accordance with the specific needs of that context: <https://education.gov.mt/en/vacancies/Pages/Vacancies.aspx>

These diverse career path opportunities may lie within the same school, across schools, or extend to other organisations and institutions.

Policy action in conjunction with other sectors may support teachers to work with (or even specialise as) other experts; for example, speech therapists, educational psychologists, teaching assistants, researchers and regional or national advisers. As an example, in **Italy** (Emilia Romagna region) the teacher professional development team for digital education has a member

who works both as a teacher in a school and for the regional authority office.

Increasing the choice for teachers, and both aspiring and existing school leaders, means ensuring that the school – in terms of both climate and organisation - supports and offers such opportunities. This does not simply mean the ability to take on new roles, but also refers to, for example, having a positive attitude towards collaboration between teachers, and linking staff development plans to the whole development plan.

Opportunities to prepare for new roles

In **Ireland**, the senior and middle management structure in schools has recently been reviewed to align with the 'Looking at Our School' Quality Framework in order to underline the range of responsibilities for various leadership roles and provide opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership capacity. Middle leaders are afforded opportunities to engage in short focused continuing professional development on topics such as the curriculum, pastoral leadership and programme coordination. The [Centre for School Leadership](#) provides support and professional development for school leaders from pre-appointment training and induction to continuing professional development throughout careers.

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 and specific competences that teachers are perceived to need development in.

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 that 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.

Policy development should acknowledge and confirm the close relationship between school head and teacher in the context of career advancement. This may affect the particular roles and responsibilities given to schools as well as resources directed to improve the capacities of school leadership (school heads and management teams).

Supporting effective career development dialogue, especially regarding the role undertaken by school leaders, is discussed in the next section on ‘Supporting the individual teacher’. It may also be useful to consider where school heads have a particular responsibility or position of power in terms of impacting on a teacher’s career progression. This is the case, for example, in Poland where school heads are able to approve a teacher’s promotion to ‘Contract Teacher’. In **Latvia** and **Serbia**, both the school head and local authorities approve promotion at lower levels, whilst the higher authorities approve higher level promotions.²⁶

It is important to increase the possibilities for teacher and school leader mobility to observe,

experience and learn from different contexts and approaches, both inside and outside of their national context, as well as to stimulate evidence-informed development in schools.

Teachers and school leaders will not necessarily work within just 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 or a training course) or a longer-term assignment (e.g. secondment). Mobility 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 opportunity, 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. In **Croatia**, teachers who participate in collaboration and peer learning, including European mobility initiatives and cross-border projects, can gain points towards their application for the new Teachers’ Award (introduced in 2019).

Specialist opportunities through higher degree studies

In **Latvia**, a new reform of teacher education is being implemented to provide synergy with ongoing reform of general education. Alongside new tracks for obtaining the teacher qualification (with a one-year option), a Masters level study program will develop teachers as “change agents” for education institutions. The programme will provide opportunities to focus their further studies in fields such as educational technologies, didactics, and school leadership and management. A doctoral study programme will also be established to develop the knowledge basis in the field of education and pedagogy.

26 Further data on promotional structures and decision-makers is available in European Commission (2018) [Teaching Careers in Europe](#), pp.73-75.

IMPROVING THE VISIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF OPPORTUNITIES

Improving the visibility of opportunities – to take on new roles and responsibilities, or simply to undertake professional development courses – is an important next step. Professional bodies supported by ministries could play a role in this strategy.

The role of education authorities and organisations in making opportunities visible and accessible

In **Belgium (Flemish Community)** the Ministry of Education 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.

In **Northern Ireland** (UK), 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](#) – a body responsible for delivering education services – 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.

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.

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 effective partnerships across all support structures and organisations.

Often heard from teachers and school leaders is the difficulty in accessing opportunities, even when they have been publicised. Such are the demands on teachers in terms of their core duties of classroom teaching and the holistic care of – and reporting on – pupil development that they have little time for taking on additional roles, participating in projects or attending courses.²⁷ Even if time is found within official working hours (often such things must be done in the evenings, weekends or vacations), finding staff to cover absent teachers and school leaders is an added task for school heads and senior management teams.

Appreciating and balancing the needs of teacher career development within school development is further explored in Chapter 7 ‘Supporting teachers and school leaders across the system’.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

Flexible working arrangements may be attractive for a teacher at various stages of their career. They can offer a gradual re-entry into teaching after a career break; or enable a teacher to take on other work outside of school related to other skills and expertise they may want to explore; or provide an accommodation of commitments in their home life.

In **England**, where nearly one in four teachers now work part-time, the Department for Education is currently promoting the creation of part-time posts and job-sharing. This move may partly be seen as a policy initiative taken to address teacher shortages that exist in many regions of the country. However, there are also significant advantages to part-time arrangements appreciated by some teachers. These are not only benefits to the teachers themselves, but may help the school as a whole to retain colleagues who remain keen and enthusiastic.²⁸

There are, of course, challenges involved in organising part-time staff such as time and financial cost. There may also be managerial considerations regarding the expectations of part-time staff’s involvement in wider school responsibilities, which should not simply be re-allocated to full-time colleagues. If teachers’ posts are perceived as becoming increasingly short term, temporary and for restricted hours, this may also cause concern that a career in school education is not a stable option for employment. Nevertheless, if part-time posts result in teachers feeling the benefits of flexible working patterns, including suffering less stress and diversifying their interests, the option may be worth exploring.

FUTURE STEPS IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ Having choice is fundamental. Identifying and communicating what career opportunities are currently available to teachers and school leaders is a first step and may be achieved by simple mapping. The next step is to consider how this offer might be enhanced to increase choice, for instance by linking to certain elements of new initiatives or reform.
- ▶ Schools and the wider system should offer ways to diversify opportunities beyond the core role of the teacher in the classroom. These include leadership, specialist roles, and mobility opportunities to learn from peers working in other contexts. Defined levels of progression, including qualifications, may help to formalise career paths, although informal and temporary roles should also be recognised.
- ▶ The visibility of career opportunities for teachers and school leaders can be improved by involving professional development organisations. Equally important is improving access to such opportunities, lifting time and other resource pressures on teachers and schools. Flexible working patterns may be considered.

²⁷ The TALIS study finds that across all the participating countries and economies, teachers most often cite conflicts with their work schedule (51% of teachers); lack of incentives (48%), lack of support from employers; and on average, 44% of teachers consider professional development activities to be too expensive (OECD, 2014). Cited in European Commission (2019) [Innovating Professional Development in Compulsory Education](#), Luxembourg: European Union, p.16

²⁸ A video interviews two school staff members at a primary school in England explain the advantages of sharing the role of school head and emphasise how the arrangement has enabled them each to bring their complementary strengths to the role. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery&v=Wb2RZiqn2z8

6. SUPPORTING THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER

Changes to the way teachers support learners and learning means that teachers need to be supported in learning to ‘teach’ in different ways. It is not only what is expected of teachers that is changing continuously but also the particular contexts in which they work.

Teachers and school leaders have different characteristics, abilities and personal experiences and neither can be considered as a homogenous group. The challenge for those supporting professional development and career progression is to understand them as individuals³⁰.

There is, therefore, a need to acknowledge the complexity of school education career paths and give greater attention to how individual teachers and school leaders are supported in their personal career choices.

To add to the complexity in identifying ways to support teacher progression, what it means to be a teacher is also changing: “Teaching now is more dynamic, challenging and demanding than ever before. Teachers

and school leaders are expected to continuously innovate, adapt, and develop their teaching practices to equip all students with the skills and knowledge they will need to succeed in life and work.”³¹

In Part One we explain how careers opportunities need not only refer to ‘teaching’ in classrooms and schools. Potential roles during a school education career could be diverse and dependent on an individual’s choices and the support they are given to access career opportunities. It is recognised that policies designed to support the development of highly competent teachers need to take account of the relationship between an individual’s own motivations and sense of career progression and the system requirements of education and school level needs in relation to the community of learners.

This chapter focuses **on supporting the learning and development of individual teachers and school leaders** while taking account of the context for their career progression. Emphasis is placed on the importance of understanding them as individuals with different professional learning needs and different career intentions and aspirations.



Effective career support requires structured dialogue

29 Livingston, K. (2012) ‘Quality in teachers’ professional career-long professional development’, in J. Hartford, B. Hudson, and H. Niemi (eds.), *Quality Assurance and Teacher Education*, Oxford: Peter Lang, pp. 35 – 51.

30 Livingston, K. (2016). ‘Pedagogy and Curriculum – Teachers as Learners’. in D. Wyse, L. Hayward and J. Pandya (eds.), *Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment* (pp. 325 – 340). Sage: London

31 OECD, 2018, *Teaching for the Future: Effective Classroom Practices to Transform Education*. Available at https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/1d0bc92a-en/1/2/3/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/1d0bc92a-en&mimeType=text/html&csp_1418ec5a16ddb9919c5bc207486a271c&itemGO=oeed&itemContentType=book

DEVELOPING TALENT AND COMPETENCE ALONG A CAREER PATH

The concepts of ‘talent’ and ‘competence’ (knowledge, skills and attitudes required for a professional role) were discussed in Part One of this guide (see Chapter 2) as well as making a distinction between them. However, it is important to recognise that teachers and school leaders also need ‘career competence’ (capacity to be able to navigate and make decisions about their own career) and that this competence will itself need support and guidance throughout a career.

Recognising each member of school staff as an individual also means acknowledging their individual characteristics (distinguishing features of a person), their talents (natural aptitudes or inner qualities) and the competences and capabilities they have in learning and teaching. The richness and diversity of a teacher or school leaders’ individual talents, competences and experiences offer potential benefits to meet system needs and the individual needs of their school context and its learners. A support structure that aims to stimulate and support progression needs a more nuanced understanding of individuals’ strengths and challenges for development in relation to their individual motivations, competences, experiences and opportunities. This complexity requires different and more flexible support strategies for teachers and school leaders.

An individual’s talents should be the starting point of a review process, but should be considered in dialogue alongside teacher and school leader competences, optimising individual strengths and identifying challenges. Review processes also need to recognise that talents and competences are will change over time. Also, teachers’ jobs are no longer narrow and rigid, nor are organisations static. For example, a school in **Antwerp, Belgium** pays attention both to developing teachers’ competences, which define what is required of a teacher according to the needs of the school, and to nurturing their talent, which recognise the individual attributes and potential of the teacher (see footnote 9 in Chapter 2). An effective use of this approach as a model for reflection depends on dialogue and agreement between the teacher and the

colleague or external adviser undertaking the reflection with them. The importance of dialogue will be discussed in further detail below.

It is useful to recognise that alongside the extensive list of competences expected of teachers and school leaders, their “**career competence**” also needs to be nurtured. If teachers are to be encouraged to take their own professional career in new and exciting directions, they need the knowledge, skills and attitude (competence) to do so. However, having career competence does not mean that the teacher is left to navigate their own course, with its inevitable challenges, but he or she knows where to seek support and engages with others – these “others” also need to be skilled and supported

If the teacher or school leader does not know where to seek the support they should nevertheless remain proactive in finding out where the information or guidance they need can be found or developed. For example, [Ireland’s Teaching Council](#) takes a clear position on the teacher’s management of their own development. Cosán, the Teaching Council’s new national framework for teachers’ learning, which is currently going through a development process, provides a clear and accessible framework for teachers’ ongoing professional learning to be recognised, in the context of teachers’ status as registered professionals. The Teacher Council states that “The Cosán framework does not mandate CPD hours or credit requirements for teachers. Cosán recognises teachers as autonomous and responsible professionals and as such states that teachers themselves should identify and prioritise the learning which they feel benefits them and their pupils and that teachers would also determine the impact of this learning on their practice and on the learning of their students.”

Regardless of the autonomy of teachers and school leaders in managing their development, it is essential to facilitate **effective reflection and dialogue** about career progression, as well as understanding that **different approaches may be taken at different times** in an individual’s career. This is discussed further in the sections below.

Career guidance – models that exist for school education students could be considered for Initial Teacher Education student teachers

Euroguidance is a European network of national resource and information centres for guidance in mobility and careers (www.euroguidance.eu). One of the topics that the network covers is career guidance, that is provided to young people during secondary and vocational education. Career guidance should focus on supporting the development of career competences, which include 5 qualities³²:

- (1) reflection on capacities: What is my strength?
- (2) reflection on motives: What drives me?
- (3) work exploration: What and where are opportunities and possibilities?
- (4) career directedness: What steps can I take?
- (5) networking: Who can help me?

These five qualities do not only apply to young people in schools, but also to teachers. However, in most countries these qualities do not get much attention during initial teacher education. Support systems and frameworks that aim to strengthen career possibilities of teachers need to support the development of these qualities.

Teachers themselves should also be able to propose potential roles for consideration that had not been previously recognised. For example, teachers may wish to create their own new roles and opportunities. Finding ways to support teachers' own ideas is challenging but may be better enabled by the following:

- A "framework for teacher and school leader careers" 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.
- 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.

- **Leadership** is important in supporting career progression. Guidance and training for school heads and other school leaders should feature within a framework for teacher and school leader careers, in order that those in a management position can identify and create the necessary opportunities for individuals and teams of teachers to develop, whilst also benefiting the school as a whole.

An **Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE)** research project (see box below) looking at the conditions for teacher innovation found that the role of the school leader was recognized as essential for teachers' professional development. The importance of whole school commitment to innovation was identified to enable teachers to develop trusting relationships, take risks and try new and different ways to develop learning and teaching for all learners in school.

³² Kuijpers, M.A.C.T., Schyns, B., & Scheerens, J. (2006). Career competencies for the modern career. *Journal of Career Development*, 32 (4), pp.303-319. Available at: https://ris.utwente.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/6842893/kuijpers_schyns_scherens-2006.pdf

Conditions to support innovative teaching - a research project by members of the Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE)

Members of ATEE's Research and Development Centre (RDC) on the Professional Development of Teachers undertook a research project, which aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the characteristics of innovative teachers and how they can best be supported in developing innovation. The results of the research found that the innovative teachers displayed active agency in what they did. They also pursued ways to develop their own learning and development. Teachers, school leaders and teacher educators identified the following conditions to support and develop innovative teachers and teaching:

- Professional autonomy to innovate
- Trusting and cooperative environment for teachers to work in (involving, school leaders, students, and parents)
- Strong and inspiring leadership
- Creation of time to innovate
- Opportunities for professional development
- Collaboration and teamwork amongst colleagues in teachers' own school and networking with others beyond own school
- Effective mentoring
- Appreciation and rewarding of innovation and new ideas
- Support in terms of resources: money, time and materials
- Reduction in number of students in groups
- Access to IT facilities

See <https://atee.education/>

USING FRAMEWORKS IN REFLECTIONS ON CAREER PROGRESSION

There is a potential tension or challenge between taking into account the motivations and needs of individual teachers and school leaders and considering and supporting all professionals within the system as a whole.

It is acknowledged that education systems differ in the extent to which teachers and school leaders can make decisions about their career pathways. Teacher and school leader competence and career competence must therefore be considered within the context of specific education systems and school contexts. A framework for teacher and school leader careers (which may incorporate

or be linked to a “competence” framework) can offer a way to assist in linking and making visible support structures and guiding decision-making within a broad context of conditions. These conditions include identifying opportunities and signposting different potential career pathways for teachers. The role of the system and school leaders is important in creating the enabling conditions. Teachers should also recognise their role and capacity to develop schools as learning organisations.

A framework should have a clear and developmental purpose. It should be elegant and simple, and adaptable to different parts of the system. It should provide a basis for reflection and dialogue, and help find a common vision.

The frameworks developed in **The Netherlands** (Chapter 3, figure 6) and in **Finland** (Chapter 5, figure 8) illustrate different potential roles or career moves a teacher could make at team, school, regional, national or international level. When made transparent these frameworks can also assist in providing coherence in planning at policy or school level for the different opportunities to be realised

in order to meet individual needs and career progression aspirations. By setting out possible career moves in a framework they are visible for all – teachers, school leaders and relevant regional and national stakeholders. This arrangement can contribute to joint planning to make teachers' individual choices possible.

Defining professional competences and standards

In 2017 the Ministry of Education in **Slovakia** issued professional standards that define the necessary professional competences for the standard performance of the profession. The standards provide a framework for undergraduate training, further training and career development in the education system. They allow for purposeful and systematic professionalisation and comparison with other professions. At the same time, they enable training providers to prepare training programmes and compare the quality of programmes and their outcomes.

The professional standard defines qualification prerequisites, career level, career position, competence profile and competence level indicators. Following the adoption of the new law in 2019, there will be a revision of the professional standards.

Career positions for the performance of specialised activities (e.g. class teacher, educational counsellor, mentoring professional and others) or management activities (e.g. director, deputy director and others) are recognised as professional development. Specialised activities as well as management activities are explicitly defined in the Act.

At least once a year, an evaluation is carried out, focusing on the results, difficulty and quality of work performance, and the acquisition and use of professional competencies. Acquisition and use of professional competences shall be assessed in accordance with the professional standard and the needs of the school. The evaluation may be the basis for the development of a career development plan, an annual training plan and for remuneration.

<https://www.minedu.sk-a-subcategories-pedagogical-workers-and-professional-staff-schools-a-School-devices/>

Professional standards should not be seen as prescriptive or static. They should be seen as opportunities for dialogue and frameworks to support and stimulate discussion between teachers; between school leaders; and among teachers, school leaders and policy makers. In this way they can contribute to the development of a shared language and to shared understanding of what is expected and what is possible in terms of professional development of teacher competences and career competences.

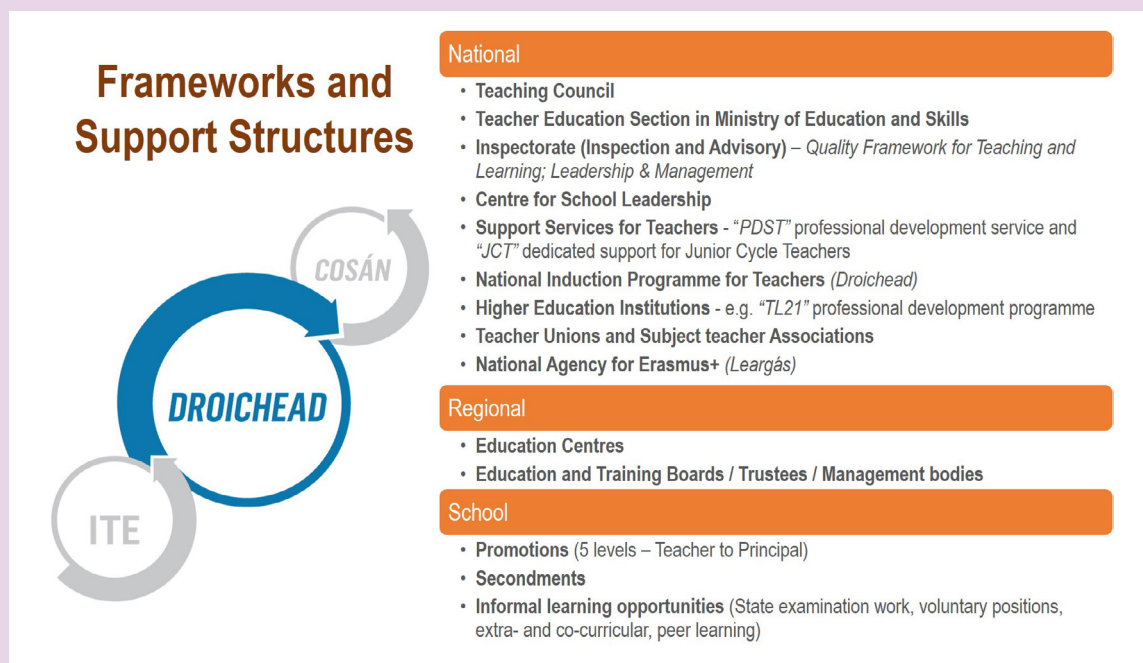
Whilst considering teachers as individuals, it is necessary to recognise that not all teachers are confident or proactive in taking responsibility for their own learning or exploring different possibilities for their career progression. To support and nurture talent and understand more about teachers' individual strengths and challenges, as well as their aspirations and career intentions, teachers themselves need to be encouraged to take responsibility for their own

learning and developing their career competence. Career frameworks can be used to support teachers' reflection and self-evaluation on different possibilities for career progression and assist in identifying flexible support strategies to meet the individual needs of the teachers' thinking about, developing towards or following different career paths.

In this way a Framework for teacher and school leader careers can be linked to tangible support mechanisms for career guidance and continued professional development opportunities. The frameworks can enable reflection and dialogue about the opportunities but they can also assist in thinking about how to overcome any challenges that arise in the selection of career moves.

Support to teacher and school leader development at different levels of the system

Ireland has an established framework which recognises teachers as autonomous and responsible professionals and as such states that teachers themselves should identify and prioritise the learning which they feel benefits them and their pupils. Nevertheless, the support is wide-ranging and offered at school, regional and national level.



There is a need to raise teachers' and school leaders' awareness about alternative opportunities and routes that they can take in their career. The greater the variation in career possibilities for teachers to meet their individual needs and aspirations, the greater the requirement for different types of support and supporters. These circumstances mean it is necessary to widen the range of possible stakeholders who can act as supporters

or teacher educators for teachers at different times of their career according to their different needs (be they professional development of competences or career guidance). Some of these supporters may not recognise themselves as teacher educators³⁴ or be traditionally recognised as a teacher educator which highlights the need to identify, map and name a wider pool of supporters available to teachers, particularly when they

seek advice about alternative career paths or roles. In addition, these ‘new’ teacher educators may need professional development to feel confident and capable of taking up this role.

Frameworks can identify and include links to the various support structures available. They also offer a helpful starting point as they provide a common language for teachers when identifying possibilities, decision-making and navigating a stimulating career path in discussions with a range of stakeholders. (See Chapter 9, ‘Managing support structures’)

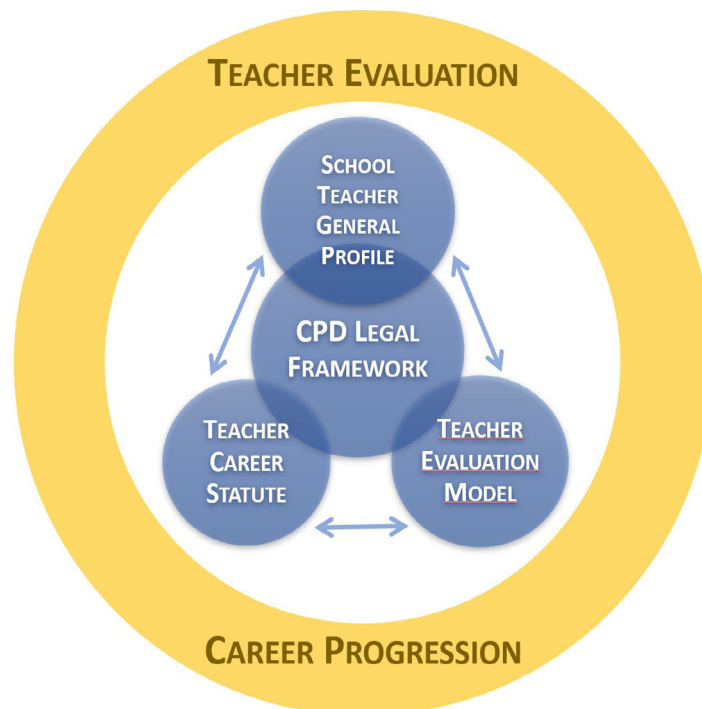
However, while frameworks can assist in opening discussions about what the different requirements are at system, school, and a personal level and what is

possible in terms of different career options, the different stakeholders must first work together to develop the shared language. Engagement and dialogue between multiple stakeholders, including teachers, is required during the creation of any new framework in order to enable **coherence** across the system and stages of teacher education about what is possible on the one hand and **flexibility** in supporting and meeting teachers’ individual needs on the other in the application of the framework in practice.

Portugal provides an example of a framework that identifies support mechanisms at macro, meso and micro levels and has the teacher at the centre.

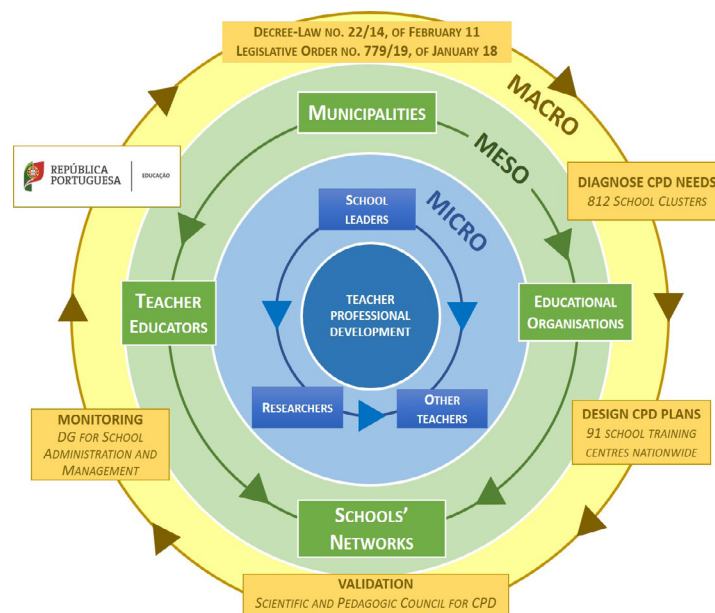
Establishing coherence between evaluation, professional development, and career progression

Portugal is undergoing a process of implementation of new educational policies (i.e. Autonomy and Curriculum Flexibility), all actors involved in the education system are facing new challenges, such as implementing a framework for teacher evaluation that has real positive impact on their professional development.



Although there has been a recent multi-level and holistic approach to teachers' professional development, some concerns on how to establish a culture of accountability and a strategic vision concerning the nature of teachers' CPD remain. CPD is closely linked to career progression, since it is mandatory for a teacher to have attended at least 50 hours of CPD activities in each one of the career steps (except for step 5), where only 25 hours are mandatory).

The link between CPD and career progression has the potential to be strengthened, as well as the articulation among the different levels involved in teacher professional development. There is an opportunity to find ways of giving teachers the necessary tools to direct their talents and competences towards their schools' needs. Specific training for school leaders may have a positive impact in this respect. There is also an opportunity to enhance collaboration through the school clusters and to make school self- and external evaluation more effective.



SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE

The use of both competence frameworks and a Framework for teacher and school leader careers can provide a shared language to guide dialogue between individuals and those who support them in their professional learning and career progression. However, developing a shared language is only the first step.

The **conditions that nurture and enable dialogue** between teachers and for example, their peers,

mentors, lead teachers, school leaders and other relevant stakeholders must be identified and put in place. Sharing strengths and challenges and making career decisions requires open and honest dialogue and everyone involved needs to be supported in gaining the knowledge, skills and dispositions to engage in dialogue that is recognised as worthwhile. The conditions needed include understanding how to develop and build trusting relationships for dialogue to take place.

Meaningful dialogue, with for example school leaders, can assist teachers in identification of realistic and

rewarding opportunities for their career progression. Dialogue with others can also help in the identification of appropriate forms of support to meet the individual objectives of a teacher (such as peer-learning, secondment, job shadowing, engagement in networks, conferences, courses and formal qualifications).

However, dialogue between teachers and members of the school leadership team about professional development and career progression can be experienced by teachers as judgemental of their ability and performance. Such conversations can be viewed as summative, about 'official' recognition of achievement, and only take place at certain times of the year.

A shift is required so that ongoing dialogue that is formative, developmental and supports and nurtures teachers in becoming active agents in their own learning and career progression is valued by school leaders and by teachers themselves. The purpose of the dialogue needs to be clear and time needs to be identified for these discussions.

Despite an increasing body of research concerning support for teachers' professional learning through collaboration and dialogue, with school leaders and

peers in mentoring conversations, lesson study discussions, peer learning communities and networks, there remain gaps in knowledge and understanding about how to develop teachers' and school leaders' capacities to engage in collaborative conversations about learning and teaching and their career progression. There may in fact be a CPD requirement in conducting effective dialogue between teachers or with school leaders and other stakeholders to ensure that the CPD will both support and challenge their learning or career development in a trusting, non-judgemental environment.

To be effective, teachers' dialogue with others needs to be appreciated as an opportunity for professional learning and career guidance. In **Belgium (Flemish Community)** there is recognition that a school leader is a key person in guiding teachers in CPD. The opportunity to support teachers' development in future through 'structured dialogue' has been recognised. Training and ongoing support strategies should be established for all involved to develop their capability to engage in productive dialogue with one another.

Support to mentoring and structured dialogue in school

In **Scotland**, the importance of training for mentors has been recognised, as has the key role of school leaders in supporting teacher development. While mentoring is important for early career teachers it is also acknowledged as beneficial for the development of all teachers throughout their careers. Consequently, the need for training for all teachers to engage in mentoring is also recognised.

Following a review of teacher education in Scotland a report (Teaching Scotland's Future, 2011³⁵) made a number of recommendations, including some specifically relating to mentoring and to mentor training:

- Mentors should be selected carefully and undertake training based on a recognition of the skills and capacities required for this role (Recommendation 28).
- Early career teachers should continue to benefit from mentoring beyond induction. Additional support should be provided by senior managers within schools and local authorities to ensure appropriate progression as part of the CPD and PDR process. (Recommendation 31).
- All teachers should see themselves as teacher educators and be trained in mentoring. (Recommendation 39).

Experience suggests that “it is not just engaging in dialogue that matters, although the opportunities to do so are an essential prerequisite to assessment for learning. In addition, the quality of the learning conversations that characterize teachers’ professional practice is crucial to the development of their own and their pupils’ learning.”³⁶ Some schools and Local Councils/Education Authorities have worked in partnership with universities to develop mentoring training with a specific focus on the knowledge and skills of mentors to engage with their peers in structured dialogue. The training has included development of the ‘language of mentoring’ and strategies to facilitate teacher reflection and professional development.

DIFFERENTIATING AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF CAREERS

Professional learning needs, motivation and career intentions differ at different stages of a career. At different times in their career teachers and school leaders will require different types of professional development. They may also engage in the same professional development activities at different times of their career for different purposes with different outcomes. This complexity underlines the importance of support mechanisms that assist teachers to reflect continually on their professional learning needs and provide continuing career guidance. Teachers and school leaders need to remain motivated throughout their careers and this is at the heart of the ‘sustainability’ of the profession.

In Part One of this Guide, the importance of understanding an individuals’ motivations, professional learning needs and career aspirations was emphasised.

Teachers’ and school leaders’ motivations, professional learning needs and career aspirations are not static. They are likely to change throughout a teacher’s career with different influences to different extents at different stages. An individual teacher’s capacity to navigate and make decisions and to see and understand possibilities means there is a continuous need for differentiation and a range of support mechanisms.

A framework can expand and diversify the understanding of what is expected of, and available to, teachers and school leaders 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.

By including diverse forms of recognition and reward, a framework can reinforce the positive perception of career progression as being more than merely increasing years and salary.



36 Livingston, K. and Hutchinson, C. (2017) Developing teachers’ capacities in assessment through career-long professional learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice*, 24(2), pp. 290-307.

Dedicated support to early career teachers

'Alustavat õpetajat toetav kool (School for New Teachers)' is an NGO dedicated to the growth of a strong new generation of teachers in **Estonia**.

Concerned about the rapidly aging teacher force (~50% of teachers in Estonia are above 50), the fact that just about half of the newcomers are qualified teachers, and the reality that one in every four new teachers leaves the profession before the second year, the organisation aims to prototype solutions that involve various players in the ecosystem.

The team began by synthesising data that illustrates the situation of new teachers, including hundreds of interviews with stakeholders - teachers in various stages of their career, school leaders, students and parents. Based on this, it launched various initiatives, experiments and services:

- 10 baseline principles for schools when hiring new teachers;
- biannual recognition of schools based on new teacher feedback;
- hosting a network of school leaders who aim to improve their organisation and strategy for recruiting and supporting the growth of new teachers;
- professional 1-1 instruction for new teachers;
- regular regional peer meetings for new teachers through their first year of school led by a professional group coach with a teacher trainer in attendance;
- creating the tradition of celebrating the first 100 days of teaching;
- offering coaching programs for school leaders for school improvement.

Experience suggests that "it is not just engaging in dialogue that matters, although the opportunities to do so are an essential prerequisite to assessment for learning. In addition, the quality of the learning conversations that characterize teachers' professional practice is crucial to the development of their own and their pupils' learning." Some schools and Local Councils/Education Authorities have worked in partnership with universities to develop mentoring training with a specific focus on the knowledge and skills of mentors to engage with their peers in structured dialogue. The training has included development of the 'language of mentoring' and strategies to facilitate teacher reflection and professional development.

<http://www.alustavatopetajattoetavkool.ee/>

The early phase of working as a newly qualified kindergarten or school teacher has been identified in **Norway** as important to subsequent professional practice and development. The government, in cooperation with the stakeholders, have in 2019 completed a national framework for an induction programme for newly qualified teachers which ensures that they receive mentoring, while allowing for local variations.

Initial teacher education programmes alone cannot prepare the candidates for every aspect of the teaching profession, and newly qualified teachers should be able to rely on their employers to have a system in place to support them in the transition between education and practice and to include them in the professional learning community. This understanding is made explicit in the 2014 Quality Agreement between the Ministry of Education and Research and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities.

Evaluations of the induction programmes for newly qualified teachers suggest that they help ensure a better transition between education and professional practice in that the teachers gain more confidence and awareness of their own competence and become more comfortable in the teaching role. The evaluations also show that newly qualified teachers who receive guidance are satisfied, although there are significant variations in terms of the scope, content and quality of the support being offered. Responsibility for looking after newly qualified teachers, including mentoring and competency development, rests with the local employer.

<https://www.udir.no/kvalitet-og-kompetanse/veiledning-av-nyutdannede/hvordan-kan-det-gjennomfores/> (in Norwegian)

Not every teacher will be motivated by traditional incentives such as gaining salary increases or promotion to leadership roles in school. Some may be motivated by alternative roles and career pathways that offer new opportunities. To realise the aims of differentiation there is a need to make different roles and pathways visible for teachers and build capacity around choices and opportunities for teacher and school leaders careers.

Conditions need to be in place to support individuals in making career decisions.

Again, the school head and the leadership team have a key role to play in developing a supportive learning culture within school and in assisting teachers to connect to regional and national support mechanisms. This infrastructure of support should enable individual teacher learning differences, preferences and career intentions.

(This is discussed further in Chapter 7 'Supporting teachers and school leaders across the system' and Chapter 9 'Managing support structures'.)

FUTURE STEPS IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ The notion of “career competence” needs to be established for teachers and school leaders, enabling them to make informed decisions about their professional development and career path. A fundamental step in policy action is for it to become accepted system-wide as part of staff evaluation and feedback, and of routine professional practice. Where competence frameworks already exist, career competence can be built into the formal expectations for every teacher and school leader.
- ▶ A framework for careers in school education needs to formally recognise and make visible the diverse paths and forms of support that are possible, as well as the full continuum of professional development, for individual teachers. Personal development plans should be linked to school development plans.
- ▶ Action that enables structured dialogue and reflection is crucial, including specific training for these conversations, in order to maintain a sense of personal development and progress as key objectives. This responsibility might be the responsibility of a school leadership team, or delegated to supportive stakeholders working at local level, such as the inspectorate or municipality.
- ▶ Policy makers should check that the evaluation and feedback that takes place allows for different expectations and measures to be in place, according to a teacher’s context, own talents and competences. Professional standards that reflect the different stages of a school education career can be built into guidelines or frameworks.

7. SUPPORTING TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS ACROSS THE SYSTEM

This chapter considers how the dialogue and interaction that takes place at local level is situated in the wider system, and consider broad strategies that help reinforce efforts to enable teacher and school leader career development to take place.



Image: Mgr. Szilárd Fecsó, Methodology and Pedagogy Centre in the Slovak Republic

EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

Evaluation and feedback play a crucial role in career progression. Regular and structured dialogue can provide formative feedback on one's strengths and further development needs - reflection on one's own capability being an important part of "career competence" - and can support decisions to be made by the teacher, or about them, for example, in the selection of candidates for a new role.

Evaluation also underpins how schools are valued and regarded within an education system. Used well, it should include positive feedback and improve, through encouragement and practical support, the performance of teachers and school leaders whose

responsibility it is to enable schools to serve their pupils more effectively.

Unfortunately, the evaluation process can appear at times to be threatening or burdensome. It is the responsibility of policy makers to ensure that the requirements of evaluation are proportionate, and that the process is considered by those evaluated to be constructive.

The purpose of evaluation and feedback

Evaluation might be undertaken for any or all of the following reasons, including:

- As continuous self-reflection
- As a feedback mechanism on a specific teaching or leadership practice;
- As an element of school/system evaluation;
- As (summative) assessment of performance;
- As (formative) support for professional development.

The purpose will determine aspects of the evaluation process, and lead to different emphases in the way that the evaluation is designed. An illustration of this point is the distinction between a summative approach, characterised by formal appraisal and a focus on past performance, and formative approach, which tends instead to look ahead to professional growth and development. There are potential tensions between the accountability and individual development. Accordingly, the purpose and the process of the evaluation should always be absolutely clear to the colleague being evaluated as well as to the evaluator, and the criteria used should be transparent, objective and evidence-based.

However, the extent to which evaluation can be standardised is questionable; contextual differences should be recognised and the process should allow for diverse school circumstances. The frame of reference used in evaluation may be considered to contain three different elements:

- **a generic element**, based on the general and overall requirements of the role;
- **a context-specific element**, reflecting the local situation and also factors relating to the individual teacher, such as specific responsibilities and level of experience
- **a personal element**, based on the individual's own priorities, in line with their personal vision and ambition in shaping the role in question.

Different purposes for evaluation may require different tools and approaches, but fragmentation of the overall evaluation process will inevitably lead to additional overall expense. It may be pragmatic, and even beneficial, to link summative evaluation sensitively with the future development of the individual, so providing part of the rationale for next steps by, and for, the teacher.

The process of evaluation and feedback

It is likely that evaluation involves a variety of internal sources, for example: a combination of feedback from school board, school leader, colleagues via classroom observations, student and parent surveys; also student performance test scores as well as self-reflection. External perspectives, such as the inspectorate, may also contribute to the evaluation process. This approach, using '360°' viewpoints, provides triangulation and will underpin objectivity.

Guidelines for evaluation

ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education) guidelines for evaluation recommend:

- Respect for the professional autonomy of teachers
- Give the teacher a role in quality assurance
- Move away from the checklist approach
- Use independent and transparent instruments
- Combine self-evaluation and dialogue
- Understanding that evaluation is not a punitive process
- Respect for social dialogue in all aspects of education

There are examples³⁷ from different countries of student feedback contributing to staff and school evaluation:

In **Iceland**, students are sent a survey. One student is nominated as representative and offers feedback in the evaluation process.

In **The Netherlands** the student union has a survey, reporting on the system. This process can have an effect on funding, at school level, although it was noted that results at individual level are not published.

In **Austria** students receive a teacher evaluation form asking for an assessment on the relationship between teachers and pupils, taught content, atmosphere, methods, diversity and sensibility.

Self-evaluations may be particularly helpful. They can have added value when³⁸:

- the information is understood and seen as useful
- there is agreement on the way of reaching conclusions
- the knowledge to use the information is available
- there is a non-threatening atmosphere (trust)
- self-evaluation is suitable for quality improvement

In **Belgium (Flemish Community)** a strong relationship exists between schools and the ministry, which enables high levels of school autonomy and trust to exist. The school head is a key person in guiding teachers on CPD and there is an opportunity to support this as “structured dialogue” between leader and teacher.

In **Ireland**, a number of relatively new institutions, at national and regional level, have been created, including a number of agencies under the auspices of the Ministry (see Figure 11) and these organisations are involved in different aspects of the continuum of teacher education. The inspectorate has a key role to play in recognising that continuing professional development is a career-long journey, and that there are several sources offering input to this process. It is not seen simply as an external arbiter on school or

individual teacher performance but brings this expert knowledge to its work alongside other providers of support, including teacher education institutions, teacher unions and a new centre for school leadership.

BALANCING NEEDS

If it is accepted that teacher and school leader evaluation and any appraisal system should allow for a “personal element” to form part of the discussion, it follows that the education system must recognise and accommodate some degree of personal development as well as cater for the developmental goals of the school.

While schools are working spaces with certain rules and expectations, they are also places where professionals build a common understanding of the principles that should guide their education work. Having a shared vision and understanding, with an emphasis of collaboration rather than competition, is a fundamental basis of schools as learning organisations and, rather than being a starting point, “vision is the outcome of a process involving all staff”.

Such inclusivity suggests that there should arise, naturally, a high degree of alignment between the interests and priorities of the school, as an organic whole, and the motivation of individual teachers and school leaders. If the vision for the school is genuinely a consensus to which individual teachers subscribe, then it should give rise to plenty of projects, developmental for both the school and themselves, in which teachers can engage enthusiastically and wholeheartedly.

The harmony of ambitions envisaged here will in practice still require negotiation and careful handling to ensure a fair balance of interests is struck between school developmental goals and the professional interests of the staff, but this process will be much easier if the priorities of school and staff are largely complementary.

³⁷ Shared by a representative of the Organising Bureau of European Student Unions (OBESSU) at an ET2020 Working Group Schools Thematic Seminar.

³⁸ Contributed by a representative of the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) at an ET2020 Working Group Schools Thematic Seminar in Brussels.

³⁹ European Commission (2018) Teachers and school leaders in schools as learning organisations - Guiding Principles for policy development in school education. Report by the ET2020 Working Group on Schools (2016/18). Available from: https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/Governance/2018-wgs4-learning-organisations_en.pdf

⁴⁰ (OECD/UNICEF (2016) p1-2) OECD/UNICEF (2016) What makes a school a learning organisation? A guide for policy makers, school leaders and teachers. Available from: <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/school-learning-organisation.pdf>

Making the link between personal and school development plans

In **Italy**, schools may include in their development plans different opportunities offered by:

- the organisation of professional development activities by the school itself, also through self-training and structured research;
- the coordinated organisation with other schools of network professional development initiatives;
- participation in national initiatives promoted centrally, through lead schools;
- the initiative of the individual teachers, through the use of their annual personal teacher card.

The different training initiatives respond to different purposes, but should be consistent with the overall training needs of the school, identified during the self-evaluation process, and scheduled in the improvement plans. The initiatives should also relate to the priorities outlined in the National Training Plan. Professional development initiatives, whose priorities are established at national level, are coordinated by the Regional Education Offices through the involvement of lead schools and may be addressed to small groups of teachers who will act as facilitators within schools.

There is already progress happening to shift from a functional, static view of teachers' careers towards more flexible, responsive processes. In **Poland**, for example, a teacher historically treads a strictly hierarchical, upwards pathway that leads to recognition as a Diploma Teacher, a status held by over half of the nation's teachers. The system now seeks to define a model of teachers' careers that would respond appropriately to the different contexts of teachers' work, given that there is already a belief that professional development should be bespoke to the individual and the school, and not just to ensure promotion.

Similarly, **Estonia** is working to use continuing professional development in ways that are more targeted. It is believed that self-perceptions are

significant motivational factors. Consequently, self-assessment is already regarded as valuable and may prove to be a useful tool on which progress is built. As we have seen, in Ireland, too, there is a move to personalisation of CPD based in individual needs.

A "flat" career structure, with limited career paths, is rarely regarded as attractive. In **Greece**, in consequence, consideration is currently 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 possibility is the combination of teacher support with the evaluation and assessment of their school-based work.

Introducing change that reflects both individual and school needs

In **Belgium (French Community)** current changes are being introduced as part of the Pact for excellence in teaching ("Pacte pour un enseignement d'excellence") reform. 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.

New features have been introduced since 1 September 2019:

- A new stage has been added to a teacher's career: teachers with 15 years' seniority and no unfavourable reports are "experienced teachers" to whom specific missions in the service of the school and pupils may be entrusted (pedagogical coordination, relations with parents, referent for beginning teachers). These roles may be accompanied by a slight reduction of classroom hours.
- The conditions of access to selection and promotion functions have been broadened. Recruitment is now possible at all levels and networks, which offers new career prospects for serving staff members.
- The initial training for school heads has been revised, in particular by increasing the number of hours of initial training from 120 to 180 hours.
- A mechanism to increase the involvement of school leadership in the strategic development of their institution's human resources and, in particular, to highlight the knowledge of their team and the needs of their institution in order to build teaching teams into the recruitment process.

REWARD AND RECOGNITION

To make a significant long-term contribution, teachers' motivation and interest must be sustained and having opportunities within different types of career path can be a way to achieve this goal. However, teachers are also likely to seek and expect validation through reward and recognition for the hard work that they are doing and the complexity of their role.

As also discussed in Part One (Chapter 1, Current Challenges), **monetary reward** is potentially only one aspect of teaching that might appeal to a teacher. However, particularly if other motivation – notably status – is in short supply, then salary will assume greater significance. It is hard for anyone to do a job successfully if it does not appear to be valued particularly by peers but also by the wider community. Those considering a career in school education will make a judgement on entering the profession based on comparison with other opportunities available, and salaries will form part of that judgement. Other motivations will have to be strong if they are to compensate for having insufficient income to live a reasonably comfortable existence. However, for teachers, time – away from other tasks – can be just as important as money as an incentive. This is particularly valuable when a new role demands more hours in itself.

Some form of **time** allowance is provided in many systems to enable experienced teachers to take on roles

beyond classroom teaching. The time is necessary to fulfil the role, but it also indicates, at least within the school, a status attached to the work undertaken. For example, in **Cyprus** a new promoted position of Senior Teacher is proposed that will enable teachers to stay in the classroom but with the agreement that their workload includes less teaching time. It is envisaged that these posts will enable the person in that role to support others. Similarly, in **Estonia** it is understood that if teachers are to be encouraged to value professional development in a supportive environment, they also need to be able to allocate time towards it.

Some systems include recognition of **previous experience** in other careers, during a career break, or after temporary leadership roles. By contrast, other countries are not in a position to link salary steps with a career framework. Progression may or may not be salary-linked but a framework should make clear how a teacher's work is formally recognised.

Financial incentives for career progression

In 2013, **Sweden** introduced Teacher Career Steps through a grant for school providers that implemented such steps. Today there are about 15 000 Lead Teachers/First Teachers (Förstelärare) and around 160 Senior Subject Teachers (Lektor). A Lead Teacher is given about 500 euros a month in extra salary and a Senior Subject Teacher about 1000 euros. Recently the Government passed a resolution targeting schools with extra difficulties due to the students' socio-economic background, giving such schools a higher rate of Lead Teacher positions and also an even higher salary. The aim is to recruit more experienced teachers to schools with highest needs.

In order to further enhance the attractiveness of the teacher profession, in 2016 the government introduced a "Boost for Teacher Salary Programme" giving about 60 000 teachers a salary increase of around 250 euros a month.

FUTURE STEPS IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ A key step in policy action is making sure that evaluation processes are viewed positively. Effective and balanced processes involve in-school evaluation (including self-evaluation) complemented by a form of evaluation that adds objectivity and a comparative viewpoint, in a number of systems this being from outside of the school. Templates and model processes will help schools achieve these goals.
- ▶ Schools should achieve a balance between the individual development and ambitions of their teachers and the aims of the school. This can benefit from external support, and occasionally mediation, which should be provided system-wide. At the same time, a framework for careers should support aligned school development plans and help to realise the priorities of the wider education system.
- ▶ Policy makers should consider different forms of reward by which to motivate teachers and school leaders, and to recognise their contribution to school education. There are many options at national or local level - including labels or certificates, public awards, and monetary payments - but it is likely that the most valued will be reasonable time allowances for staff to undertake the responsibilities that they have accepted. Discussions with unions may lead to agreement of what is acceptable compensation for work done beyond usual classroom responsibilities.

8. SUPPORTING THE CAREERS OF SCHOOL HEADS

If schools as learning organisations are crucial to a system-wide drive for the ongoing development and high quality of education, then school heads play a critical role: inspiring, leading, and developing their entire community and acting as a crucial link between that community and the rest of the system and its stakeholders. However, just as countries are concerned about the recruitment, retention and development of teachers, so too are they concerned about how best to attract and support school heads who will be a positive force for change.

It is relatively easy to agree on the qualities of a good leader and guidance can be found in a range of literature. Rather like an orchestra conductor leading various groups

of instrumentalists, they are dynamic team players with a clear vision and can communicate well whilst inspiring and empowering those around them. However, it can be “lonely at the top” for a solo “superhero” who is accountable to the education system (meaning everyone in and around the school as well as the authorities), and the danger is that it can be an unattractive role.

The possible career steps towards and whilst being a school head may be more easily identified using the idea of different types of path (as discussed in Part One). However, special approaches and support structures need to be considered – alongside those for teachers and other school leaders - in order that school heads can be motivated and operate to the best of their ability.

School leaders and school leadership are broad terms used differently in European Member States. In general, a school leader might be any person who as a member of school staff leads other staff and has some responsibility for a team or another aspect of school life. In different education systems multiple roles fit this definition.

For clarity the focus in this chapter is on the school head, meaning, conventionally, the person with overall responsibility for the pedagogical and administrative management of the school or a cluster of schools. This role might also be referred to as head teacher, school principal or school director.



School heads require specific career guidance and opportunities for development
Image: Marius Fiskum, Norway – UTDANNING.NO

WHO WANTS TO BE A SCHOOL HEAD?

Challenges

Many of the factors that are proving obstacles for teacher recruitment may apply also to securing high calibre candidates for headships. Considerations of status and remuneration, and unreasonable societal expectations may all act as deterrents. There are additional challenges, too:

- Loneliness may be particularly difficult for a new school head. Teamwork is important. Networks and structures for sharing may help (see below).
- Autonomy and accountability are also a concern, and must be clarified to potential applicants. Autonomy is important for a head teacher, avoiding rigid frameworks and providing more time for consideration of pedagogy and strategy.
- The school governing body has an important role to play in recruitment and retention in some systems. Its role and degree of influence, which varies in different countries, must be made clear.
- There should be appreciation of school heads, demonstrating trust and also a sense of shared responsibility.
- The lack of diversity among school heads requires proactive strategies to remedy (gender, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), Gen X/Y) in many systems.

A national response to school head recruitment challenges

In **England** most schools have faced increased recruitment challenges for headship posts, with some parts of the system (e.g. faith schools, small rural schools) encountering more acute pressures. There was a demographic challenge as reflected in the statistics that in 1997, 40% of heads were 50 years or older and 13% were 55 or over, but by 2010 three-fifths of heads were 50 years or older, and three in 10 were 55 or over. Forecasts in 2010 indicated that around one-third of all heads would retire by 2015. There were also concerns about workload and accountability, with responsibility for budgets devolved onto schools.

The government's response was channelled through the National College for School Leadership. The College addressed the challenge in 2006 and continued its work until around 2014. It had funding of ca £10m per annum. The College aimed to bring through more high-quality people more quickly to senior leadership/headship whilst retaining the best existing heads as system leaders. Efforts were made to reassure potential candidates that leadership roles were manageable. A local solutions approach was developed for succession planning under a national framework, but with emphasis on bringing local schools and partners together to address challenges. Marketing campaigns and programmes were introduced. Evaluation evidence subsequently showed these initiatives had positive impact, and reduced temporary filled posts.⁴¹

Motivation and pathways

In Part One we identified a range of factors that individually or in combination may motivate teachers in the development of their careers. These included: altruism; the desire for new challenges; ambition; status and recognition; financial reward; and personal circumstances. These

considerations equally apply to school heads, who could be prompted by any or all of them to work towards school leadership positions and ultimately headships. In particular, potential leaders will see in themselves a desire to change and improve, but will also see other leaders (both good and bad, and in school or elsewhere) whose practice they may wish to emulate.

41 Professor Toby Greany, University of Nottingham, in a presentation to the ET2020 Working Group Schools Thematic Seminar on school leaders' competences and careers, September 2019.

As defined in the different career paths (see Part One) the route to headship is likely to be characterised by movement up a hierarchy, for example gaining experience as a department head or deputy head as steps along the way to school headship. However, this ladder does not preclude gaining valuable experience by making lateral or other divergent moves that also enable the development of relevant transversal skills

and creative ideas.⁴² For example, an aspiring school head may take time away from schools to be involved in teacher education and career development at university. It may even be conceivable that someone without a pedagogical background in schools takes on a post at senior level because of their exceptional managerial and administrative capability, although there are relatively few known cases in European countries.

School heads without a pedagogical background or role

Exceptionally, in just four public schools in **Portugal**, the Executive Director (the head of the school) holds budgetary and managerial responsibilities, but is not a teacher by background. Pedagogical and didactical responsibilities are the domain of the Pedagogical Director, who is a teacher. An Assistant Director has operational responsibilities, and oversees the school budget, field trips, partnerships, time schedules and school staff. Again, this colleague is not a teacher.

One such school head personally reported to the ET2020 Working Group Schools that to be a leader in a school, but not a teacher, enabled him to break the status quo more easily, establish new partnerships for the school, and manage differently (“as a team, and not for the team”). However, he acknowledged that some aspects of the work did prove challenging, including relations between leader and other actors and the decision-making processes.

In smaller schools – typically primary schools – the low number of staff dictates that the scope for a career progression within the school is reduced, with fewer opportunities for distributed leadership and substantive middle leader positions. This observation suggests that additional consideration should be given to ensuring that primary school teachers have gained sufficient management experience before they move into senior leadership roles.

TRAINING, RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Formal pre-appointment training opportunities

In view of the typical desire for school heads to have a pedagogical background, it is important to note that, conversely, teacher education does not always provide input on the knowledge and skills necessary for headship. Education systems should determine when best to introduce teachers to the career opportunities offered by school leadership. Consideration of these options tends to happen after teachers have gained experience through several years in post, but some systems provide earlier exposure. Several education systems already have in place formal programmes, or even institutes, to address the development needs of leadership. These tend to focus on skills enhancement

for leaders already in post but, in some countries, potential leaders also attend pre-appointment courses.

The provision of appropriate professional development opportunities for school heads is important (see below), especially when it is considered that, conventionally, leadership rarely features in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) or early career programmes. In some countries, though, there is now in ITE an emphasis on notions of distributed leadership and teachers as leaders of learning across schools, and greater emphasis on ensuring preparation and support of visionary, inspirational school leaders.

42 See David Epstein (2019) *Range: How Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World*, UK:Macmillan

A new centre for school leadership

In **Albania**, the Center for School Leadership aims to support the professional development of in-service and aspiring school heads and deputy school heads, by providing the compulsory training, certification process and provide on-the-job continuous professional development training.

The Compulsory Preparatory Training Programme for Principals of Pre-university Education Institutions (launched 2019) aims to equip current and aspiring principals with the Certificate of Leadership that enables them to continue by following a course specifically designed for principals of lower-secondary education institutions and upper-secondary education institutions. The training programme lasts nine months divided between lectures and professional practice (internship).

It includes modules such as: Vision, Strategy and the Management of Change, Effective leadership in curriculum development, Effective management of staff and resources, and Establishing cooperation with parents and the community. Upon successful completion of the training programme, candidates will undertake the testing process for the Certificate of Management and Administration of the Pre-University Education Institution.

If it is accepted that school heads are usually drawn from the pool of existing teachers, a central consideration for selection is the extent to which a teaching background adequately prepares a candidate for a leadership role. It is unlikely that a candidate for a senior position arrives with all of the necessary leadership skills for that position of responsibility within school. Deficits in background and experience can be overcome, but first have to be identified and acknowledged. Competence frameworks can serve as a reference point in this process. We acknowledge that:

- The provision of a dedicated qualification should be considered;
- It is important to expose teachers to leadership as part of their training for these roles;
- Competences should match the context and there are certain expectations of school heads that are different to teachers (see next section below);
- A framework should have a clear purpose and be developmental. A framework in which assessment of school heads is open and there is some freedom can avoid a normative, narrow, tick box approach. A framework provides a basis for reflection and dialogue, and helps to establish a common vision.

Defining the expectations of school heads

Competences expected of a school head may overlap with those of a teacher or a school leader, but there are other dimensions, just as there are other responsibilities in the role.

There are commonly held to be three main competence domains for school heads: **pedagogical, managerial and leadership**. The competences of school heads will always reflect on their teachers and school leaders, as a school head has to underpin and endorse their pedagogical work. Personnel management skills should be understood, developed and supported, given the role school heads play in the careers of their staff. Indeed, a crucial task for existing school heads is to recognise and identify future leaders and school heads, so that they can be nurtured and mentored.

Leadership is complex, as it can depend on working conditions and the capacity to act. It varies across many definitions but can include personal attributes such as: maintaining mutual respect and the attitude of being a team player; being able to look into the future; being open to new models, the capacity to innovate, and change-management skills; and appreciating the value of life-long learning.

Under the previous mandate, the Working Group explored the implications for teachers of the 'school as learning organisation', and endorsed this conceptualisation. One of seven dimensions proposed is 'strategic vision and leadership'.⁴³ Underlying this dimension is an understanding that assuming leadership is not a singular event. Leadership competences can be steadily increased through 'distributed leadership': participation in decision-making, collaboration, team-work, and participation in professional learning communities and networks, not least within the idea of the school as a 'learning organisation'.

The **judicial domain** is also recognised as important in some countries, which means it is expected that school heads are knowledgeable in the legal matters that affect school policy and processes.

The expectations of school heads will naturally be influenced by the education culture - the conditions, wishes and beliefs - of a school, region or country.

An established education programme and framework for school leadership

Since 2009 **Norway** has had a national school leadership education to support school heads and other school leaders in developing their competence and skills in leadership. Requirements and expectations associated with the principal role is are defined in the objectives of the National Leadership Education for School Principals, and can be divided into five main areas:

1. Pupils' learning processes
2. Leadership and administration
3. Co-operation and organisation development
4. Development and change
5. The leadership role

It is believed that leadership training should assume a practical approach. The key is to relate the learning that takes place on leadership programmes to leadership in practice. Leadership is primarily learnt in the workplace, where it is developed by a range of experiences and challenges. Development programmes can help school leaders find meaning in their experiences by reflecting on them both individually and with colleagues. Bringing the learning outcomes back to the organisation must be part of the process to develop the organisation. Management development should therefore also extend to organisational development.

In an extensive evaluation since 2009 the vast majority of the participants have stated that they are confident that they will apply their new-gained knowledge in the future. The participants consider the leadership education to have given them greater confidence in their exercise of leadership. The participants also report that new knowledge contributes to changing their leadership practices. Overall the findings show a high degree of goal achievement, but areas of further development for the National school leadership education are also pointed to.

Norway has a 'Framework for school leadership' as incorporated into the National Leadership Education for School Principals

Further information is available at:

<https://www.udir.no/kvalitet-og-kompetanse/etter-og-videreutdanning/rektor/>

Identifying and selecting future school heads

Becoming a school head is a possible step in a teacher's career path. Yet there is seldom a mechanism in place to identify future school heads from the population of teachers. 'Talent spotters', such as inspectors and advisors, within the education system could facilitate the transition from being a teacher to preparing to be a school head, and so become significant in sourcing high quality leadership. School heads may also identify future candidates from amongst their own staff.

A risk, however, is that school heads or local authorities may tend to select successors who mirror their own characteristics and this may not be in the best interests of the school. Recognition of different motivations and the diversity brought by leaders from different backgrounds should be important considerations when selecting any new school head. The lack of diversity among school heads requires proactive strategies as remedy. Having that diversity in the selection board is a part of the solution and will avoid issues such as only selecting from a known or favoured group of individuals.

Defining school head competences

The Long-term Plan for Education and Development of the Education System of the **Czech Republic** 2019 to 2023 defines the School Director's Competence Model based on the evaluation criteria of the Czech School Inspectorate. It will be implemented for the selection of directors (school heads), their education and evaluation.

The School Director's Competence Model defines the school head's complex prerequisites for good school management. In addition, it provides a clear structure of the necessary knowledge, activities performed and personality requirements that the director should possess for a successful career. The Competence model also takes into account the basic prerequisites for the performance of a beginning school head or a potential candidate for the school head's position (entry prerequisites).

The finalised School Director's Competence Model will influence the creation of the system of support for professional management of schools as one of the key activities of the SYPO project and will influence the form of standardised (accredited) studies for school heads.

It is important to be clear about the sort of school for which a head is sought. This consideration could form an opening statement, and should take into account whether the description may deter candidates from a sufficiently broad pool. If restrictions on gender or background appear to limit the scope of recruitment, it may still be possible to change the expectations of the post to attract a wider pool of applicants. For example, it may be desirable to also attract highly competent female candidates to apply to lead a boys' school, or a successful rural school head to lead an urban school.

Identifying potential school leaders and heads can be a challenge because of the personal and social skills that form a significant part of leadership and management competence. How these skills can be identified and

evaluated should be carefully and creatively considered. As in most selection procedures the role and composition of the selection panel is critical.

SUPPORT AND CAREER PROGRESSION

The expectations for school leadership are changing, and in recent years debate has focused on professionalising school management through effective school leadership as a determining factor in improving service to the community. Inside and outside of school the leader has to be an excellent articulator, promoting the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation. Skills such as empathy, creativity, and initiative,

will be needed more than ever in the future, especially by leaders.⁴⁴

Formal and informal support

Through shared vision and goals there should be close alignment of the needs of the person, the school and the system. CPD is likely to play an important part in crystallising this synergy. Some education systems, such as France, have already developed sophisticated training provision for school heads.

A blended learning approach to management education

The initial and lifelong training offered by the [Institute of Advanced Studies of Education and Training](#) (IH2EF) in **France** is organised across 16 regional centres throughout the country. It is for all kinds of public sector managers, but is linked to professional backgrounds, so there is an expectation that all, including school leaders, will implement what they learn in their work places.

Every year, the Institute publishes a training offer catalogue to communicate the strategy behind the training. In this way, the Institute not only responds to a demand but also offers the opportunity for participants to design training, associated with their calendar and budget, in order to assure quality and efficiency. Lifelong training continues through the career of the school head. The initial training is composed of five weeks at the IH2EF and three weeks in local territories, spread over two years. In addition to face-to-face training, some distance training and networking are organised during the whole period of the programme. The trainee also receives advice from two tutors, one in his own school and another from another school. Concurrently, the trainee assumes complete and effective responsibilities in school, as a school head assistant. The principles on which training is based are:

- Training is related to professional background and professional issues.
- Training is competence based and takes into account the skill basis required for each particular profession.
- There is exchange and experience sharing, training by peers and mutual enrichment.
- The trainees are involved in the design of their own training, according to their special needs and their initial competences.
- Information and communication technologies assure continuity between face- to-face training and distance training.

The programme is structured into six topics, which are developed together throughout the two years. Most of these topics are referred back to the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) of the Master degrees of partner universities in France.

Denmark is another country in which formal qualifications are offered to school heads as part of their CPD. The Halsnæs Municipality has developed professionalisation through a Bachelor degree in Leadership, adopted in 2007. Some school heads go on to gain a Masters. Mentoring is regarded as important, as is shared leadership and co-creation through action-based learning. Change leadership requires staff, students' and parents' involvement. Experimentation and innovation are considered favourably.

Support, either formally as described in the examples above, or informally, will not simply maintain the interest and motivation of school heads. It should contribute directly to the expertise they bring to their roles, especially given that at the time of their initial appointment they will be relatively inexperienced practitioners of the role. Local support can help school heads go further in their careers by being specific to the local context. Although this may mean a school wishes to hold on to one school head, there should be a sense of pride in developing school leaders, who can go on to lead in other schools.

A sense of career progression may simply be achieved by accepting a leadership role in schools that provide a greater challenge, for examples if the new school is larger, or serving disadvantaged catchments, or at an earlier stage in its development. There may also be specific experience gained in one school that is transferrable to new situations, such as a new head introducing a new form of leadership team. In some countries school heads can go on to be executive heads of a group of schools, as is the model for multi-academy trusts in **England** and for school clusters in **Portugal**.

Distributed leadership introduced in **England's** schools led over time to the development of a "lattice of leadership" in which a vertical qualification framework was coupled with lateral, network-based delivery by groups of schools.⁴⁵ The qualification framework included the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and equivalents for middle and senior leaders. Licensees around country provided this national framework, and were chosen by schools or individuals (or both) who contributed to the costs. The lateral element

of this lattice was made up of schools working together in local areas, clusters, dioceses, alliances and chains to spot and develop talent.

Support from the 'middle ground'

School heads can be seen as links between a school, local communities, parents, stakeholders and national policy makers. They are expected to manage the needs of individual pupils and teachers, the needs of the school as a whole, and balance those with the needs of the wider society. The support for school heads is often not very well developed. Consequently, as we have seen, the school head can appear as a lonely figure with many responsibilities. Activating the 'middle ground' might provide some solutions.

We identify the 'middle ground' as a group of (local) stakeholders (e.g. head of administration of a municipality, local school advisor), who could act to support school heads and link them with central authorities. In this role they can manage school heads' expectations, and also the expectations on school heads made by others, particularly within the education system, but perhaps also in the media and local community too. They can assist by organising training, but also by the sharing of experiences, evaluation, peer learning and inspection. The 'middle ground' should be recognised, respected, involved and sufficiently knowledgeable to take on this role.

⁴⁵ Supovitz, J. (2014). Building a Lattice for School Leadership: The Top to Bottom Rethinking of Leadership Development in England. Research Report (#RR-83). Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania. Available at: https://www.cpre.org/sites/default/files/researchreport/2027_leadershipengland.pdf

Supporting newly-appointed school heads

In **Italy**, in order to support the newly-appointed school heads in the performance of their duties during their probation period, the local education offices plan and offer specific accompanying support, including tutoring and professional consultancy through the collaboration of tenured school heads who take on these roles, as well as through the organisation of training activities.

The tutor listens, gives advice and offers collaboration to improve the quality and effectiveness of management actions. Tutoring includes mutual observation and support to the main tasks related to the function for a total of 25 hours, mainly related to the more significant aspects and deadlines of school life and make up an ideal time schedule for sharing ideas and experiences with the tutor and developing a new insight.

The training activities are normally arranged for groups of 25 school heads mainly in the workshop modality with the adoption of the case study methodology, the exchange of good practices, and problem-solving activities. The training activities have a duration of at least 50 hours in total and are linked with the profile of the school head and are related to their main areas of interest, for example the development and review of new strategies (school development plan, staff training plan, the development of learning environments).

Besides the examples of formal programmes for school heads, there is an important element of informal support to mention; namely that policy makers and other stakeholder should consider how to break any tension or sense of distance around the school head. As stated earlier in this chapter, the head is often a very lonely figure at the school. By establishing effective school leadership teams, and establishing networks between school heads, it is possible to break the isolation and improve key decision-making. This

increased professionalism can have a significant impact on the career progression of those individuals, as well as the overall respect given to school heads as public figures. It also sends an important message to the whole school: that working together as a team is desirable and expected also from teachers.

Capacity building around the school head is an important way to make a positive difference and is discussed further with regards to networks in Chapter 9.

Capacity building and collaboration between stakeholders in the 'middle ground', including those supporting school heads

In **Norway**, ABSOLUTT is the development programme for municipalities

ABSOLUTT is designed to help the elected representatives, the administration and various actors in the local community jointly develop knowledge about the room for action, roles and responsibilities for children and young people's education and upbringing. This is targeted, therefore, at those actors who potentially support the school heads, as well as the school heads themselves.

The programme was developed as a collaboration between KS (Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities) and the Ministry of Education and Research and will give participants knowledge about the room for manoeuvre, roles and responsibilities. The participating municipalities and counties will identify areas for improvement, look at contexts and find local solutions to a number of issues including "How to develop good quality kindergartens and schools?"

The meetings are based on research-based and experience-based knowledge. Good interaction and common understanding about the needs of children and young people is important to ensure seamless transitions between different parts of the educational course, and to ensure interaction between the educational course and other services for children and young people. This approach applies internally within the municipality, between municipalities and county municipalities and across sectors.

<https://www.ks.no/fagomrader/barn-og-unge/absolutt> (In Norwegian)

FUTURE STEPS IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ Heavy workload and responsibility, and the perception of isolation, are well-known deterrents to potential school heads. Radical solutions may be difficult to envisage; however, there may be opportunities to encourage and support distributed leadership or other organisational arrangements in and around schools to alleviate this pressure.
- ▶ Recruitment of new inspiring and motivational school heads requires clear criteria for demonstrating the qualities sought. However, if a teacher becomes a school head there are likely to be gaps in the managerial and possibly leadership competence domains, which should be acknowledged as normal and predictable. Policy action can ensure that tailor-made support is readily available, such as formal training for headships, at national or local level, as well as mentoring arrangements.
- ▶ School heads work at the critical boundary – geographically and professionally – between the school and the wider system. The ‘middle ground’ of local stakeholders, such as advisors and the municipality, can have a significant impact. Action at system level may be required to co-ordinate, and improve the competence of, these stakeholders, in order to better support school heads.



Supportive relationships between school heads and stakeholders

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9. MANAGING SUPPORT STRUCTURES

The ideas in this Guide carry an underlying understanding that education systems must recognise and provide opportunities that respond to personal motivations in order to sustain the commitment, passion and enthusiasm that are fundamental to effective teaching and school leadership.

However, the focus on individual fulfilment is not intended to reduce the provision of support structures within the system. To the contrary, an education system that aims to accommodate professionals' individual ambitions will have to ensure that its structures are enabling this objective alongside national and regional priorities, school development plans and other expectations of school and the wider community on their staff.

In this chapter we consider three aspects of managing support structures to which policy makers might give attention in order for this goal to be achieved:

- Linking Continued Professional Development (CPD) to career progression
- Connecting and networking with supporting stakeholders
- A coherent approach to management and quality assurance

LINKING CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) TO CAREER PROGRESSION

The provision of high quality CPD is likely to make considerable demands on time and other resources. CPD represents a significant cost, whether it falls centrally or to devolved budgets in municipalities or to the schools themselves. It should, though, result in substantial benefit to the teachers and school leaders themselves, adding to their professionalism and expertise and so enabling

them to contribute more to the plans of the schools in which they work. At the same time the teachers and school leaders will equip themselves for further career progression. CPD is, after all, the teachers' professional development, and they must own it to some extent.

Some education systems in Europe are already actively managing the arrangements for CPD with a relatively high level of central influence. For example, in **Ireland** there are currently twenty-one full-time education centres that facilitate a portfolio of professional development opportunities for teachers (see box).

Hungary, too, organises support systematically, with district education centres that offer regional support. The arrangements enable individual choice and for teachers' and school leaders' careers to progress in different ways. Through its Methodological and Educational Center (MPC), the Ministry in **Slovakia** offers CPD in accredited educational programmes and carries out attestations of pedagogical employees (PE) and professional staff (PS) of schools and school facilities, in accordance with the priorities of the main tasks plan and the regional educational requirements. MPC carries out specialised seminars, conferences, and performs professional activities related to methodology.

Recent developments in **Greece** have likewise been introduced on a national footing, in a move that has broadened the possibilities for teachers to work together and collaborate beyond their own schools (see box below).

Different types of organisation can be responsible for providing professional development

While CPD is not mandatory in **Ireland**, most teachers participate in short focused courses on classroom practice. Middle leaders are also afforded opportunities to engage in short focused courses on the curriculum, pastoral leadership and programme coordination. There is an 'Aspiring Senior Leaders' programme organised in conjunction with Higher Education institutions (level 9 PG Diploma in school leadership). This is also not mandatory, but it is taken up by many teachers at this level. New principals and senior leaders can engage in induction programmes and dedicated leadership CPD. The [Centre for School Leadership \(CSL\)](#) also offers mentoring and coaching opportunities.

In **Greece** the new Law 4547/18 on Education Structures (Reorganization of primary and secondary education support structures and other provisions) provides for the establishment of a number of organisational bodies to support teaching and learning at schools. The structure makes the new regional bodies and personnel (mostly advisors) responsible for the support of teachers and schools in their region. The implication is that teachers and schools have more opportunities to collaborate and receive support provided that: the new structures' and agents' roles are clearly and reasonably defined; and training and support are in line with expectations.

Central involvement carries the risk of failing to effectively respond to regional and local variations all the way to the level of the teachers and school leaders themselves. However, it also has certain advantages, perhaps most significantly in providing shared understanding and commonly held standards. The approach taken by **Cyprus** to have a unified policy with a central Pedagogical Institute as the official body (see Chapter 5) illustrates this point.

The decentralised education system in The **Netherlands** has a strong focus on the autonomy of school

organisations. This autonomy, vested in school leaders and boards, already allows for local variation and strong school-based management policy. CPD is an important strategic consideration, and recent policy developments have included a focus on in-service Masters qualifications for teachers during their careers, and the funding of these programmes. This effort is seen explicitly as part of an important drive towards teacher quality, self-confidence and work satisfaction.

School Boards as career progression support

In **The Netherlands** there have also been decentralised initiatives by School 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. Within the city of Amsterdam, school boards, teacher education institutes and the city council have developed a collaborative strategy to increase the attractiveness of being a teacher in Amsterdam by focusing on career opportunities for teachers. Based on the career framework that has been developed nationally (see Chapter 3, figure 6), one-year programmes have been developed for teachers to develop as an expert in didactics or pedagogy or as a teacher leader. Additionally, efforts are made to support team leaders and school leaders to guide teachers in career decisions and to include career policies in HR policies of schools.

For more information see (in Dutch): www.leraareenkleurrijkberoep.nl

The commitment to national standards and qualifications noted in the European country examples supports teachers' mobility and contributes to equitable selection. If levels of achievement are clearly established as prerequisites for career progression then they will become part of a teacher's career progression plan.

These links have been recognised in **Bulgaria**, where, alongside salaries and working conditions, the government has identified better and effective CPD as a key factor in making the teachers' profession more attractive. In a project running till 2021 to increase the quality of CPD, the Ministry of Education will launch an accreditation process of qualification programmes, placing high requirements on the qualification providers.

Estonia, characterised as a decentralised system, nevertheless has a competence framework that includes qualification requirements, the requirements of teacher education and evaluation. The arrangements retain a strong sense of the individual's career path, which includes the variety in roles and responsibilities that might be sought, as well as an emphasis on self-assessment.

CONNECTING AND NETWORKING WITH SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDERS

A key idea of teachers and school leaders in schools as learning organisations is the benefit gained from ensuring that “no school, nor individual teacher, is isolated or is unable to participate effectively” and that “the motivation of staff to become involved in school development and act as change agents seems directly related with the attractiveness of the profession, both to serving staff and to potential new teachers”⁴⁶. The Working Group has previously recommended a number of policy approaches to overcome risks of marginalisation – both intellectual and physical – that teachers and school leaders might face. These strategies include:

- Processes that involve all partners (pupils, teachers, school leaders, stakeholders, teacher educators, and ministries)
- Shared vision and openness
- An atmosphere of trust

- A culture of informed risk-taking
- Recognition of the complexity of introducing change

It is heartening that these strategies should bring positive, constructive results at all levels of the system. For teachers and school leaders there will be increased and wider opportunities, responding to their personal motivation and encouraging the development of new or improved skills and competences. At the same time, schools will benefit from access to innovations shared across the education community, and in turn the system should be able through links at national and regional level to build capacity through shared vision and understanding.

In **Croatia**, it is usually the Ministry who draft policies and send them for public consultation. However, in 2019, a ‘bottom-up’ approach was taken whereby the Ministry opened public consultations at the beginning of the year on the ‘Draft of the Regulations on Promotion and Rewarding of Teachers, Professional Associates and School Heads in Primary and Secondary Schools and Dormitories’. Education staff employed in schools were purposefully consulted with result of nearly 1400 suggestions.

A number of education systems are already taking steps to connect stakeholders in ways consistent with the philosophy behind these policy approaches, in particular recognising the agency of individual teachers and catering for their hopes and ambitions.

For example, in **Estonia** the decentralised system nevertheless has established support structures, including resources for ITE, CPD and networks. These structures 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. Education policies in **The Netherlands** are also characterised by strong deregulation, leaving a large number of responsibilities at the school level, including matters of human resource policies and career development. To take up that responsibility, schools collaborate closely with teacher

46 See footnote 1.

education institutes in regional networks where the responsibility of the education of new teachers is shared. Up till now the focus of these networks has been on initial teacher preparation and induction, but slowly the collaboration is extending towards CPD and career support for teachers. A shared language, which has been developed in respect of teacher career possibilities, supports this progress.

School heads frequently have a major role to play in linking their staff with external stakeholders. In **Slovakia**, for instance, they provide a bridge between internal processes (observation, appraisal and bonus payments) and external processes (qualification frameworks, professional standards and accreditation programmes of continuing education).

In the Halsnæs Municipality in **Denmark**, networking is designed to promote the attractiveness of school leadership for recruitment purposes. A talent course is used to ensure the right match. Effective “stepping on”, or “on-boarding”, entailing planning and co-operation, helps the school head to start their work. Thereafter partnerships (internal/external) are established to achieve the best long-term leadership development. Internally there are networks, formal and informal, for knowledge sharing; the informal networks tend to be more successful. Support is given to the school head to fulfil their role, and to sustain motivation. Through external partnerships, school heads gain from “outside” expertise.

COHERENT APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The attractive vision of schools as learning organisations will not be realised in a vacuum. Policy makers should consider what is required systemically so that schools are supported and nurtured by their networks of stakeholders and other schools. These arrangements may involve a considerable number of different people and organisations, with interests in diverse aspects of school management, such as professional development, staff careers, support measures, leadership, and curricula. Dialogue among those involved is important, as are the four themes of Trust, Time, Technology and Thinking together.⁴⁷

Complex systems increase the requirements for checks and balances to ensure their smooth operation. Formal quality assurance plays a significant role, including the evaluation of teachers and school leaders. As discussed in Chapter 7, ‘Supporting teachers and school leaders across the system’, such evaluation should be carried out constructively, emphasising as far as possible the formative aspects of the process, but not losing the rigour necessary to ensure that performance meets expectations. To the aforementioned four themes might be added “**Transparency**”, avoiding the risk of misunderstanding.

Recent positive changes in **Hungary**, for example, include the introduction of clear and transparent structures in the public education system. Quality assurance processes include the self-assessment and inspection of both teachers and schools. In **Slovakia**, a new model has been approved at the start of 2020 for pedagogical and other employees of schools and school facilities. It was co-signed by the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Chairman of the Union of Education and Science Workers in Slovakia. The catalyst was that new legislation, in particular the Law on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff, highlighted the need for better protection against issues such as bullying and better regulation of conditions in the workplace without teachers having to seek legal action. The signed Staff Regulations will become the starting point for all schools and school facilities, which will draw up their own Staff Regulations with regard to their conditions and needs. This is believed to be an important step forward in improving the working conditions of teachers and school leaders, and demonstrating positive support to them as professionals.

47 See footnote 40.

Support to teachers and school leaders during quality assurance processes

The Internal Review and Support Unit within the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE) in Malta provides support to school heads and teachers in carrying out their school internal review and in drawing up school development plans. External reviews aim to evaluate how far schools are planning to and managing to achieve the quality standards so that the curricular and equitable entitlement of all learners is fulfilled. The Quality Assurance Department within MEDE performs external reviews through a developmental approach. The external review highlights and celebrates the consistent efforts of the school to plan diverse routes into a multiple teaching and learning journey by the particular learning community.

<https://education.gov.mt/en/qad/Pages/Resources/External-Review.aspx>

FUTURE STEPS IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- Teachers and school leaders should be assured that Continued Professional Development (CPD) contributes to both the improvement of their schools and their career progression. The link between CPD and career progression should be made explicit by whatever means possible. A commitment to national standards and qualifications can improve a sense of equity and transparency in career progression.
- Supporting teachers and school leaders in their career progression requires a considerable number of different support elements. Facilitating networking arrangements between teachers and school leaders, and other stakeholders is beneficial and may require an umbrella organisation. Setting up online networks can substantially improve communication and the sharing of good practice, with little cost involved.
- Developing system-wide approaches to school organisational practice (e.g. leadership teams and other specialised roles) and quality assurance (such as frameworks and evaluation processes) will enable schools to adopt new ideas in supporting teacher and school leader career progression.



Teacher roles in learner development often extend beyond classroom and curriculum boundaries
Image: @jessiedo81 unsplash.com

SUGGESTED WAYS OF USING THIS GUIDE

This Guide is primarily intended for policy makers but can be useful for anyone working in education who has an interest in supporting professional development and career progression. It could be used in a variety of contexts, including:

Beginning a new cycle of policy development relating to teachers and school leaders

Whatever the catalyst or focus, any new policy development relating to teachers and school leaders is an opportunity to better support career progression. The overview of challenges and different career paths (Figure 5) described in Part One, and the steps proposed in Chapter 5, 'Diverse choice and opportunities', may help with identifying and supporting the attractive new roles and paths that are made available by the policy action, and be a basis for stakeholder collaboration.

Developing new or existing frameworks for teachers and school leaders

Policy makers or other stakeholders may consider creating new, or developing existing, frameworks and guidelines. This Guide describes not only the importance of embedding a notion of "career progression" into supportive tools and processes but also gives many examples from European education systems. The template for a framework (figure 7.6 in Chapter 3) and Chapter 7, 'A framework for teacher and school leader careers', and Chapter 7, 'Supporting teachers and school leaders across the system', may be useful.

Reviewing in-school processes for staff evaluation and feedback, and career planning

School leaders and stakeholder organisations supporting professional development will find inspiration in Chapter 6, 'Supporting individual teachers and school leaders', and Chapter 7, 'Supporting teachers and school leaders

across the system'. This may also require dialogue with those responsible for the coherence of staff development process across all schools, including inspectorates.

Organising a meeting or creating a network for providers of professional development and career guidance

Local, regional or national authorities may be undertaking a review of the stakeholder organisations involved in teacher and school leader development, including Initial Teacher Education institutions, and these organisations may also review their own provision. Chapter 9, 'Managing support structures' will provide inspiration for this review and the Summary of the Guide might also be shared with stakeholders as a basis for discussion.

Reviewing qualifications and training for aspiring and existing school leaders and school heads

Chapter 8, 'Supporting the competences and careers and school heads' is a key source of inspiration for reviewing school leadership qualifications and training. Schools heads themselves and school boards (or other supportive actors) may also benefit from the ideas and examples.

Dialogue among a range of stakeholders

A Summary and Infosheets are available to assist in the sharing of new concepts and proposals with a range of stakeholders, for example as part of a conference.

Creating a promotional campaign or investing in projects and research about the varied career opportunities in school education

Policy makers may wish to incorporate ideas from this Guide into new promotional campaigns or calls for new projects and research.

KEY DOCUMENTS FOR FURTHER READING

Key documents, including books, research articles, webpages and other papers are referred to throughout the Guide and the details can be found in the footnotes.

The main publications of the European institutions that may be useful as further reading are:

European Commission (2013) **Study on Policy Measures to improve the Attractiveness of the Teaching Profession in Europe**. Available from: https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/library/study/2013/teaching-profession2_en.pdf

European Commission (2015) **Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching. A guide on policies to improve Initial Teacher Education**. Report by the ET2020 Working Group on Schools (2014-15) Available from: <https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/files/Shaping%20career-long%20perspectives%20on%20teaching.pdf>

European Commission (2017) **Teachers and school leaders in schools as learning organisations - Guiding Principles for policy development in school education**. Report by the ET2020 Working Group on Schools (2016-18). Available from: https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/Governance/2018-wgs4-learning-organisations_en.pdf

as part of

European Commission (2018) **European ideas for better learning: the governance of school education systems**. Report by the ET2020 Working Group on Schools (2016-18). <https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/resources/governance-of-school-edu.htm>

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2018). **Teaching Careers in Europe: Access, Progression and Support**. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available from: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/teaching-careers-europe-access-progression-and-support_en

European Commission (2019) **Innovating Professional Development in Compulsory Education**, Luxembourg: European Union. Available from: https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC115292/jrc115292_innovating_pd_analysis_final_upload.pdf

European Parliament (2020) **Briefing paper: Teaching careers in the EU**. Available from: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/642220/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)642220_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/642220/EPRS_BRI(2019)642220_EN.pdf)

Eurydice database of national education policies: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/national-description_en

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The ET2020 Working Group Schools is made up of representatives from European education ministries and stakeholder organisations.⁴⁸ Its mandate is to critically reflect on the governance of school education and how systems can address the serious challenges of quality and equity in order to strive for better learning outcomes for all young people.

This Guide is the result of the considerable efforts of all of the participants of the Group – sharing and discussing their varied expertise and perspectives over the course of nearly two years. Whilst all participants were invited to take part in meetings in Brussels, a number of participants also elected to take part in intensive Thematic Seminars and Peer Learning Activities, joined by other expert stakeholders. It is the discussions and shared examples of policy action from these events that form the content of the Guide.

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47 Further details about the ET2020 Working Group Schools can be found in the Registry of Commission Expert Groups. <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=3003>

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