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Schools policy

Education & Training 2020

Shaping career-long perspectives on teaching

A guide on policies to improve
Initial Teacher Education

ET2020 Working Group on Schools Policy (2014/15)

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http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups_en.htm

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Leading and supporting pupil learning requires every teacher to embark on a professional, social and personal journey that involves career-long professional development within collaborative learning environments.

Initial Teacher Education lays the groundwork and sets the direction for this journey.

National, regional and local governments and stakeholders have a shared responsibility to facilitate and sustain this in close collaboration.

ET2020 Working Group on Schools Policy
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1 Executive Summary

1.1 The urgent need to improve Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

Education systems are complex and have never been easy to govern. Recent changes, including decentralisation of systems and further recognition of the role of education for societal values, economic performance and personal development are adding to the complexity. Roles and responsibilities of public authorities, schools, higher education institutions and other agencies are shifting and new demands are being placed on education systems to adapt to the changing needs of society and the economy.

Against this background, ITE has become a key policy area for attention and governments are increasingly focusing on developing policies to guarantee and increase its quality. Debates on the future of education often question current ways of teaching and call for a profound shift away from isolated classrooms towards new methods based on broad collaboration. Such approaches require changes towards genuine, system-wide focus on teacher education. Moreover, when teaching is considered simply as a static craft, there will be reduced incentives for professional learning. In such contexts, teaching is unlikely to be attractive to ambitious and high-calibre candidates, which is becoming a significant problem in an increasing number of education systems.

Initial Teacher Education is a fundamental area in which to support the shift towards new working cultures and to lay the foundations for teachers' capacity to adapt to changing contexts and circumstances. It is ideally positioned to play a key role in achieving two key goals: improving the development of teaching practices; and, attracting more high quality candidates to the teaching profession.

Enabling these changes requires robust but flexible teacher education policies based on close discussions and interactions between stakeholders. In most European countries the provision of ITE has been entrusted to higher education institutions with government regulation and supervision. While in most countries educational authorities are already engaged in some form of dialogue and cooperation with ITE providers and the research community, a significantly lower number engage in discussions with other bodies and organisations, including municipalities, schools and teachers (trade unions, professional associations). This hampers the possibility of creating a comprehensive approach to teacher development, which can in turn have a negative impact on the overall attractiveness of the profession.

Targeted policy actions are required in order to strengthen: the role of ITE in changing work practices and cultures; position of ITE within broader teacher education policies to create incentives for professional development; and, ITE's governance, by recognising new structures of participation and new responsibilities of stakeholders.

The main purpose of this Guide is to support such efforts by gathering and building on current practices, research, and the knowledge and advice of experts.

1.2 Key principles

The transformation or modernisation of (Initial) Teacher Education can be achieved through a number of targeted policy actions, as outlined in this Guide. The Working Group on Schools Policy agreed on a set of principles which supported the development of these actions by reflecting the broader policy context and underpinning the work undertaken.

1. Education policies should be based on the understanding of the teaching profession and the professional development of teachers as a coherent continuum with several, interconnected perspectives, which include teachers' learning needs, support structures, job and career structures, competence levels and local school culture.
2. Attractive possibilities for professional development and diversification of careers should be important elements of such approaches.
3. Teachers should be able to develop and maintain a mindset and a practical approach which are based on reflection and inquiry, and focused on ongoing professional development.
4. Initial Teacher Education needs to be considered as a starting point for this ongoing process of professional development. It lays the foundation for this mindset and this approach.
5. School leaders and providers of Continuing Professional Development (including ITE providers) have key roles to play in creating opportunities and environments for practice-oriented and research-based professional development that will strengthen the agency (capacity for action) of teachers for learner-oriented teaching and innovation.
6. The professionalism of teachers, teacher educators and leaders in education should incorporate collaborative practices, and a collaborative culture. Both should therefore be promoted in the content and process of ITE. Leadership of collaborative practices should be given particular attention.
7. Schools and ITE institutions should be supported in opening up so they can benefit from engaging in networks, professional learning communities and other partnerships. Policy actions should enable such collaborative learning environments, with flexibility to allow for different contexts.
8. Governance of ITE should be based on collaborative approaches that involve all stakeholders (including providers of ITE and Continuing Professional Development, professional bodies and associations, social partners) in the processes of decision making, steering and monitoring.
9. Governments and all stakeholders should all take responsibility for (parts of) the system and should be involved in dialogue and cooperation. This implies, where necessary, the development of stakeholder capacity to take responsibility within the system.
10. The governance cycle needs to create balance between decision making, steering and monitoring processes and needs to focus on internal coherence and sustainable policies; in particular, by making effective use of monitoring data on the processes and outcomes of policy measures.

1.3 Suggested policy actions

The continuum

The teaching profession needs to be regarded as an integrated continuum, bringing together five interrelated perspectives: addressing teachers' learning needs; support systems; career paths; the organisation of competence levels; and, the impact of school culture. The key challenge for policy-makers is to ensure continuity and coherence for each of these elements, and establish interconnections between them.

In this context, ITE needs to be considered as the first part of a longer and dynamic process, not as a stand-alone and complete phase. Its success will also depend on mechanisms allowing for interaction with later stages of teacher development and its position within broader policies affecting schools and teachers.

Strengthening the continuum of teacher education by linking the different phases

Policies can stimulate and incentivise professional growth when they strengthen the interconnection between the different phases of teachers' professional development: ITE, induction and Continuing Professional Development (CPD).¹

This could include official recognition of the different phases and changes in status, including a compulsory induction phase with trained mentors.

Achieving continuity through institutional partnerships

There should not be any gaps, but smooth transitions and links between ITE and Continuing Professional Development, and between pre-service and in-service teacher educators, as this will create the continuity that is important to a teacher's development. Policy action should create incentives and provide dedicated resources to support a variety of partnerships between teacher education institutions and schools.

Shared understanding and ownership through coherent competence levels

A coherent competence framework which identifies different competence levels throughout the continuum, strongly supports a teacher's development throughout their career. Through such competence frameworks, policies can create a shared understanding, shared ownership, and shared language between stakeholders and between different phases of the continuum.

Developing such frameworks could be delegated to national teacher bodies or arranged in an interactive process involving a wide variety of stakeholders that are involved in different stages of teacher education.

Creating a balanced offer of CPD with strong impact

To improve the offer and impact of Continuing Professional Development across the continuum, activities should be both teacher-initiated and inspired by expectations and requirements at different levels including the school and the education system. Compulsory and non-compulsory initiatives can be identified and put in place by different stakeholders, including central government, local authorities, schools and teachers.

Additional policies for ITE and Continuing Professional Development could direct resources to supporting particular areas of current need or low achievement in school education.

¹ Suggested policy actions are followed by examples (*in italics*) for possible actions which are further illustrated in the chapters of the Guide.

<i>Teacher responsibility: self-directed learning for their own needs</i>	To ensure high quality practice is maintained, teachers need the ability and sense of agency to assess their own learning needs and self-direct their learning. ITE curricula could include explicit objectives for teachers to identify and assess their own needs for Continuing Professional Development.
<i>Recognising a wide range of professional development opportunities</i>	<p>Policies that aim to stimulate teacher development throughout the continuum need to recognise formal, as well as informal and non-formal, learning as valid and powerful means of professional development. This includes promoting group learning, experimental activities and the exchange of experience among teachers.</p> <p><i>Alongside accredited ITE programmes, or formal courses that enable and officially recognise continuing learning, actions could include national networks or initiatives with local representatives that stimulate engagement in informal teacher inquiry projects and the sharing of good practice.</i></p>
<i>Improving practice through links with research</i>	To achieve a creative and reflective teaching workforce, policies and actions should encourage student teachers and teachers to use and engage in new research in their learning and practice. While ITE lays the foundations for this, policy actions should foster innovative cultures in schools and ensure they have links with universities and other organisations that support research-informed development of teaching practices.
<i>Making the connection between teacher development and school improvement</i>	<p>Professional development activities and human resource policies, where they are organised at school level, should be connected to the wider agenda of the school to strengthen the impact of all three.</p> <p><i>In their dialogue with teachers, HR professionals and school leaders could consider how to link school improvement goals to Continuing Professional Development and teacher appraisal procedures.</i></p>
<i>Recognition of flexible career paths and multiple roles</i>	<p>To support teacher development and flexibility in teachers' careers, policy-makers should find ways of recognising the range of entry points and roles and create inclusive policies that value and certify different skills and experiences.</p> <p><i>For example, ITE programmes and certificated CPD courses could focus on specific teaching roles (e.g. counsellor, digital specialist, school-based teacher educator, teacher leader) which may additionally support midcareer entrance or departure from the teaching profession.</i></p>

Collaborative learning

While collaboration is an important and widespread expectation of teachers in Europe, a significant share of teachers has never experienced collaborative learning. Promoting it entails changes in practice, mindset and the development of new work cultures and environments. Building good relations and partnerships to support wider introduction of collaboration is a key challenge. It may require profound changes: collaboration needs to fit with both the context of the education system and the purpose of achieving particular learning goals.

Policymakers, educational leaders and all relevant stakeholders, including the social partners, should contribute to the preconditions required for a collaborative work culture by creating and strengthening mutual trust. This is a pre-condition for ensuring the effectiveness of particular measures and, more importantly, for designing system-wide adaptations.

From isolation to collaborative work culture

All relevant stakeholders should promote collaborative forms of teaching and learning so as to make them every day professional practice, widespread among teachers, teacher educators and educational leaders.

Measures could support reflection and ongoing professional dialogue on the characteristics and the effectiveness of different practices, not just within schools but between institutions and across the system.

Developing collaborative attitudes in ITE programmes

In order to prepare future teachers for collaboration, policy-makers and stakeholders should make sure that ITE programmes develop positive attitudes towards professional dialogue, sharing, collaborative critical thinking and peer learning. Teacher educators working within ITE and throughout the continuum should model collaboration themselves when providing education for (future) teachers.

Incentivising and supporting collaboration between institutions

When designing a new organisational or institutional structure, priorities should be given to solutions favouring collaboration both within the individual institution and between institutions - at the same level and across educational levels, and between educational institutions and the local community.

Supporting measures for ITE could include the creation of networks or clusters, or incentives such as credits or awards.

Autonomy and support for local collaboration

The best collaborative learning environments are those that are tailored to the local context and are accepted and monitored by local partners.

Policy-makers could ensure that school leaders have the freedom and support to establish and sustain close cooperation with social partners, institutions and organisations in the local community, other schools and educational institutions.

Supporting action research as a mode of collaboration

Action research may be aimed at finding a valid solution to a challenge in classroom practice. This should be promoted by stakeholders as a means to strengthen collaborative learning environments within and between schools and with providers of ITE.

Adequate and cost-effective investment

Initiating and sustaining collaborative work in teacher education typically requires investment: therefore, stakeholders should allocate adequate time and resources and avoid financial arrangements that are linked to individual achievements only.

This could be particularly important to encourage cooperation between schools in disadvantaged areas.

Supporting networking among teachers

Stakeholders should ensure that there is equality in direct networking among teaching professionals as a basis for collaboration and continued efforts for high quality practice.

This could be achieved not only by networks of innovative schools and ITE providers, but also through online platforms that offer e-learning courses and the sharing of resources.

Training for all teachers in collaborative

Effective collaborative learning is in part facilitated by collaborative - or 'distributed' - leadership involving teachers, and measures to include leadership in teacher education should

leadership make provision for all teachers.

Measures could include school-based or external leadership programmes that draw on the skills of existing leaders and involve team working, to prepare professionals to lead collaborative practices.

Sharing good practice to advance collaborative approaches in ITE

To support future development of ITE, there should be a mutual sharing between policy-makers and education professionals of the benefits of and good practice in collaborative learning.

Digital tools may play a role in enabling those involved in ITE to exchange experiences, approaches and outcomes.

Governance

Initial Teacher Education is a complex field involving an increasing number of stakeholders and, in some countries, different levels of government. The system of ITE is defined by its institutional framework, setting out the degree of providers' autonomy, and the extent to which it is subject to governmental influence. The role of stakeholders in these activities varies between countries, and it is evident that the process of governance needs to take into account the differences between stakeholders. Nevertheless, whether a system is more centralised or decentralised, more regulated or deregulated, it can still be collaborative.

Involving different stakeholders to create stronger systems

Involving different stakeholders in the policy-making process, whilst respecting each partner's autonomy, leads to stronger ITE systems, based on collaborative governance.

This could include reforms which bring together the national and local coordination of ITE, cluster providers at regional level, or help institutions work together to establish a joint core curriculum and final examinations.

Developing methodologies for better regulation

In designing regulation, the perspectives and concerns of different stakeholders should be taken into account through a collaborative process. Different methodologies could help achieve consensus on what should be regulated through formal legislation and what might be regulated at the level of stakeholder groups or individual institutions.

This may be achieved with the help of an independent body and/or regional conferences.

Providing special funding for collaboration

To meet the changing needs and demands of ITE specific policies, incentives or reward schemes can help the promotion of collaboration.

Specific measures could include rewarding ITE providers for high quality study programmes or providing a budget to support networking among them.

Maintaining high quality through teacher selection criteria and competence frameworks

In order to maintain high quality in a teaching profession that is driven by continuous development, it is important that competence frameworks covering the whole continuum of the profession use similar structures and a shared language, and that they are used and recognised by all stakeholders.

This could include, for instance, measures to link up or integrate

frameworks for both academic and for professional competences, or to create similar frameworks for teacher educators.

Consistency of methodologies and benchmarks in order to achieve effective quality assurance of ITE

For effective quality assurance and monitoring of ITE performance, policy-makers should check for consistency between objectives, processes and evaluation of programmes. All levels of governance should support the use of common methodologies, criteria, indicators and benchmarks and should recognise the coordination mechanisms to improve monitoring and evaluation of ITE.

Measures could include surveys of the teacher workforce carried out jointly by stakeholders; dialogue between the education and employment sectors; the setting up of monitoring committees; or, the joint professional and academic accreditation of ITE programmes.

Promoting collaborative governance based on dialogue and consensus

All stakeholders – governments, ITE providers, school leaders, and teachers - should share the same goal of achieving high quality ITE through collaborative governance.

This could be achieved by the setting up of regular fora for dialogue (formal or informal) or the creation of independent bodies to regulate the teaching profession and oversee cooperation.

Shared responsibility to maintain effective governance of the education system

Collaborative governance of ITE faces challenges in decentralised systems. Governance will only be successful if both ministries and all other stakeholders share the ownership of decisions, actions and the consolidation of measures to translate policies into practice. Capacity building for each stakeholder will help them strengthen both their ability and willingness to take responsibility for ITE in a way that exceeds local, institutional or individual perspectives and focuses on the system as a whole.

This can, for instance, be addressed through input from independent education experts or the setting up of thematic policy groups of key stakeholders.

1.4 Creating the Guide

The Guide presents the findings of the European Union's ET2020 Working Group on Schools Policy (2014-15) on its priority theme 'ITE'.² The objective of this Working Group was to assist countries in improving school education by advancing policy development through mutual learning and the identification of good practices. Through discussions and peer learning in different forms (quarterly meetings, in-depth country focus workshops, questionnaires, reviews of research literature), the Working Group collected evidence on successful policy practice and reforms of ITE.

The main Guide summarises the findings on three themes – the Continuum of the teaching profession, Collaborative Learning, and Governance – combining a discussion of the key concepts with an examination of recent policy action across Europe, recent examples for measures to support change, and concluding with suggested policy actions.

² The ET2020 Working Group on Schools Policy was one of six Working Groups under the Open Method of Co-ordination in Education and Training in 2014/15, bringing together experts on two priority themes (Early School Leaving and Initial Teacher Education). For more information see http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups_en.htm

The Guide reflects the results of the joint work of representatives of national governments from 30 EU countries and associated European countries, and European social partner organisations. The European Commission would like to acknowledge the contributions from all Working Group members and, in particular, the following: Liesbeth Hens, Hans Laugesen, Prof. Marco Snoek, Dr. Csilla Stéger and Dr. Daniela Worek. In addition, it would like to thank the Group's research consultant, Dr. Francesca Caena, as well as Dr Gill Whitting, for editing the text, and Prof. Kay Livingston, for reviewing the Guide as a 'critical friend'.

2 Introduction

2.1 Initial Teacher Education: the first, crucial step in a journey

Education systems all over the world are under constant pressure to adapt to the changing needs of society and the economy. The decentralisation of education systems has led to an increased number and variety of partners with new roles and responsibilities. Stakeholders are more informed than ever about education and pupil achievement, while schools are urged to deliver the best possible education and meet learners' needs.

There is a wide consensus that the complexity of education is increasing and with it the expectation towards teachers. Therefore, the quality of how teachers are prepared for their role has become a focus for policy attention.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is the first and crucial stage in teachers' professional journeys. By shaping future teachers' knowledge, skills and mindsets it lays the foundations for their capacity to lead and facilitate successful student learning. To consolidate, further develop and share best practice, teaching needs to be considered as a continuum of lifelong learning, starting with ITE and followed by an induction phase during the early stages of the profession, continuing into and throughout career development.

Designing and implementing this continuum requires coherent policies and, where necessary, new approaches to support both collaborative modes of governance for ITE and collaborative learning environments for teachers. The development of collaborative learning environments is essential for cooperation between all stakeholders including government, ITE providers, teachers, parents, trade unions and other experts and networks. Governance of ITE and the policy process need to focus on the continuum and to support and sustain partnerships and collaborative learning.

2.2 EU and international context

Ensuring the quality and attractiveness of teaching, ITE and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) are recognised as priority objectives in the Strategic Framework ET2020 (European Council, 2009), which is the basis of EU cooperation in education and training, and in the Draft 2015 Joint Report on its implementation (European Commission, 2015).

In their 2014 Council Conclusions on effective teacher education, EU Education Ministers agreed that 'ITE should provide prospective teachers with the core competences required to deliver high quality teaching, as well as stimulate the motivation to acquire and update competences throughout their careers. While taking full account of national contexts, it should not only include subject knowledge and pedagogical competences reinforced by integrated periods of practical teaching experience, but also encourage both self-reflection and collaborative working, adaptation to multicultural classrooms and acceptance of leadership roles.' (Council of the European Union, 2014)

In *Rethinking Education* (European Commission, 2012a), the Commission highlighted actions to support teachers, school leaders and teacher educators among key policy pointers for enhanced efficiency, consistency and coordination in education systems (European Commission, 2012b).

The prominent role of teachers as powerful shapers of pupil achievement has been highlighted by research and underscored by recent reports from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (OECD, 2009; OECD, 2013). They confirm

that raising teacher quality is a key factor in what makes schools successful and the most relevant route to improved student outcomes (OECD, 2009). Teachers' instructional practices are associated with positive student attitudes to learning and complex problem-solving. Incentives for quality teachers, positive behaviour among teachers and better student-teacher relationships are generating higher academic results (OECD, 2013).

The PISA surveys indicated that countries with improved performance and equity in education had introduced tighter requirements for teaching qualifications and incentives to attract high achievers into teaching, motivate teachers to professional development and increase the attractiveness of the profession. Systems that attain high levels of educational equity also tend to engage all stakeholders in school self-evaluations about lessons, teachers and resources; in turn, meaningful interpretation and use of such feedback require effective leadership, trust and commitment within a school community.

In parallel, the voices of teachers and school leaders, through the Teaching and Learning International Surveys (TALIS), underscore the contribution of feedback and appraisal for improvement and change in instructional practices (OECD, 2014). In turn, they are related to leadership in decision making, which varies widely across countries. Increased institutional autonomy has a greater potential for improving learning outcomes when paired with higher levels of accountability (OECD, 2009).

The TALIS survey considers the integration of three key components for teachers in ITE: sound academic knowledge of the subject(s) to be taught; the theory of teaching, including teaching skills, support for pupils and learning; and, practical classroom experience. Out of teachers in the EU who completed an ITE programme, 80 % said that their training included all three components (Eurydice, 2015). In almost three-quarters of the European education systems surveyed in TALIS (2013), the proportion was even higher (OECD, 2014). A higher proportion of teachers in the EU feel very well prepared for their work in all of the three areas when they completed an ITE programme. However, the same survey also pointed to urgent needs for professional development on a range of topics (identified by teachers) and to relatively low levels of collaboration between teachers. All of this points to the need for teacher education, at all stages, to further adapt to changing circumstances.

2.3 Policy challenges and opportunities

The need to improve ITE and Continuing Professional Development and to make teaching a more attractive career is therefore not in dispute. How to do this is more contested. Different views about teaching and schooling are rooted in local and national cultures (Menter et al., 2010). These views shape arrangements for teacher education and the professional status of teachers and are dependent on social, economic and contextual factors that can vary across geographical areas and time periods.

There is increasing agreement that the best teaching practice involves working with others and not in isolation; being reflective and engaging with others in school; and, experimenting through **collaboration** and sharing ideas. The policy challenge here is how to promote effective partnerships, create and sustain learning communities and clarify roles and responsibilities between stakeholders. Policy challenges arise because of the diverse range of stakeholders in ITE and the variety of providers and training schools. Fragmentation can hinder the **coherence** and effectiveness of ITE, causing problems for communication and coordination. These issues are significant in achieving a balance between **regulation, accountability, trust** and **autonomy** in ITE.

Teacher **competence frameworks** can play a powerful part in enhancing consistency, coordination, collaboration and dialogue along the continuum of teachers' development throughout their career (European Commission, 2013a). The provision of **induction and mentoring** are also key policy challenges, especially in supporting teachers beginning their careers (European Commission, 2010; OECD, 2014). Across the EU, provision has been found to be uneven and far from universal.

Removing barriers to teachers' **engagement** in Continuing Professional Development has been recognised as a matter of priority for policies to enhance teacher quality (OECD, 2014). Achieving a continuum in teacher education requires creative policies that look across the institution and profession, promote networks and partnerships and cultivate professional communities across settings and organisations. The aim is to achieve a reciprocal flow of expertise and knowledge development about learning and teaching (Lauer et al., 2005). The best practice is about fostering **collective responsibility, leadership** and **agency** (capacity for action) among education professionals and stakeholders, as change makers and brokers of innovation in learning organisations. Such practice can be fostered through **governance** that values and promotes stakeholder consultation, ownership and involvement.

Quality assurance policies also need to respond to diverse provision across institutions associated with differences in varying forms of governance, regulation and institutional autonomy (Zgaga, 2013; Eurydice, 2013).

New actions and measures also need to be evaluated so that policy lessons can be learned from ITE practice (Hagger and MacIntyre, 2006). Practice in the **evaluation** of teacher education (in terms of its frequency, scope and criteria and the actors involved) differs widely across countries (Eurydice, 2006).

2.4 Background to the development of the Guide

The Guide presents the findings of the EU's ET2020 Working Group on Schools Policy (2014-15) on its priority theme, 'ITE'.³ The objective of the Working Group was to assist countries in improving school education by advancing policy development through mutual learning and the identification of good practices.

Through discussions and peer learning in different forms (quarterly meetings, in-depth country focus workshops, questionnaires, reviews of research literature), the Working Group collected evidence on successful policy practice and reforms of ITE.

Between September 2014 and March 2015 the Working Group conducted three In-depth Country Focus workshops on:

1. 'Governance of ITE', Zadar (Croatia), September 2014;
2. 'Collaborative Learning Environments – from ITE to professional school practice', Malta, November 2014; and,
3. 'ITE in the continuum of teacher education', Stavanger (Norway), March 2015.

The aim of the workshops was to help countries draw policy lessons from analysing, contrasting and comparing approaches in different countries. Following the approach of peer learning – involving government representatives and stakeholders from different countries in collaborative learning – the focus was on identifying policy

³ The Guide reflects the results of the joint work of representatives of national governments from 30 European countries, and European social partner organisations. The ET2020 Working Group on Schools Policy was one of six Working Groups under the Open Method of Co-ordination in Education and Training in 2014/15. For more information see http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups_en.htm

actions that could be drawn on by all countries, or groups of countries. Elements of peer review allowed countries to draw specific lessons from these exercises.

In order to maximise the impact of this work, it was the Working Group's final task to bring together all evidence and recommendations into one document addressed to policy makers. The 'Guide on ITE' was written and edited by members of the Working Group with the support of the European Commission.

The three principal themes covered by the Guide reflect the Working Group's need to prioritise and focus on the most relevant issues to be tackled during the given timeframe and are linked to the work carried out during the three in-depth country focus workshops. They do not claim to represent an exhaustive take on all relevant aspects of policies to improve ITE.

The work of this Working Group builds on and needs to be seen in conjunction with the outputs of previous EU Working Groups in the field of teacher education and professional development, which include policy guidance on closely related issues such as induction for beginning teachers (European Commission, 2010), the development of teacher competences (European Commission, 2013a) and support to teacher educators (European Commission, 2013b).

2.5 The structure of this Guide

This Guide focuses on challenges and policy actions in relation to ITE. It combines the analysis of research with findings from surveys and peer learning activities carried out by the Working Group on Schools Policy to suggest a range of possible policy actions.

It is divided into four main chapters:

- **Chapter 1: introduces the Guide**, its policy context and background, as well as the approach used.
- **Chapter 2:** analyses **the continuum of the teaching profession** from different perspectives and, in particular, how ITE can be linked with the subsequent phases of teachers' professional development.
- **Chapter 3:** explores **collaborative learning** and its potential contribution towards raising the quality of ITE and the teaching profession through a shift towards collaborative learning environments within ITE and school practice.
- **Chapter 4:** argues that **the governance of ITE** needs to be based on collaborative approaches involving stakeholders in decision-making, steering and monitoring in order to raise the quality and effectiveness of ITE.

Each of the **chapters** is structured in the following way:

1. It is introduced through a set of **key principles** which reflect the broader policy context and underpin the work undertaken by the Working Group.
2. It explains the **main concepts and why they matter** in the policy context for ITE.
3. It gives an overview of **recent actions across countries**, based on surveys carried out by the Working Group.
4. It sets out the **key challenges** in this policy field, raising questions of particular importance to policy-makers
5. It explores **measures to support change** in response to these challenges, illustrating them with country examples and a number of more in-depth case studies of policies from across Europe.
6. It concludes by summarising the **suggested policy actions**.

The key principles and suggested policy actions in this Guide summarise the salient, general policy measures drawn from the various sources of data referred to in the Working Group's activities and which provided a guide for a series of animated discussions and meetings.

The collation of these policy measures are offered as an **invitation to policy-makers** and other users of this Guide to reflect upon and consider ways in which ITE and the continuum of the teaching profession in their countries can be modified and improved.

The Guide also contains an appendix with a **glossary of key terms** used.

3 The continuum of the teaching profession

3.1 Key principles

- Education policies should be based on the understanding of the teaching profession and the professional development of teachers as a coherent continuum with several, interconnected perspectives, which include teachers' learning needs, support structures, job and career structures, competence levels and local school culture.
- Teachers should be able to develop and maintain a mindset and a practical approach which are based on reflection and inquiry, and focused on ongoing professional development.
- Initial Teacher Education needs to be considered as a starting point for this ongoing process of professional development. It lays the foundation for this mindset and this approach.
- School leaders and providers of Continuing Professional Development (including ITE providers) have key roles to play in creating opportunities and environments for practice-oriented and research-based professional development that will strengthen the agency (capacity for action) of teachers for learner-oriented teaching and innovation.

3.2 Why the continuum of the teaching profession matters

Teachers as learners?

Although the importance of career-long professional development is increasingly recognised in educational systems, it is not necessarily reflected as a coherent structure in the teaching profession.⁴

During a large part of their daily job, many teachers work in isolation in their own classrooms with full responsibility for designing and implementing their lessons and evaluating teaching and pupil outcomes. Newly qualified teachers who start working in schools often have full responsibility for their classes, in the same way as teachers who have many years of experience, and are expected to be able to carry out the tasks that experienced teachers perform. This creates a context in which ITE is expected to cover all qualities that teachers need, leaving little stimulus for further professional development after qualifying as a teacher.

These two characteristics – working in isolation and taking full responsibility from day one of their professional life – limit the learning culture in schools. The isolation of teachers prevents them from engaging with colleagues during their daily work and puts pressure on Initial Teacher Education as ITE is expected to cover all the possible competences required by teachers. This leads to a packed ITE curriculum and conflicting needs – between ensuring minimum standards of teacher graduates and understanding teaching as a creative, innovative profession (European Commission, 2013).

⁴ In this Guide we use the term 'continuum of the teaching profession' to indicate that becoming and being a teacher – therefore being a member of the profession – spans a period starting with the selection into teacher education, and continuing with Initial Teacher Education and career-long professional development. This continuum is not only one of professional development and professional growth, but also a continuum of support systems, career structures, competence frameworks and local school contexts, which all contribute to creating a profession that is focused on ongoing development.

This tension creates a challenge for educational policies, school development and teaching practice. To strengthen the professional development of teachers, teacher education needs to be considered as a continuum of lifelong learning, starting with ITE, continuing into the initial phases of the profession and then into career-long development of teachers.

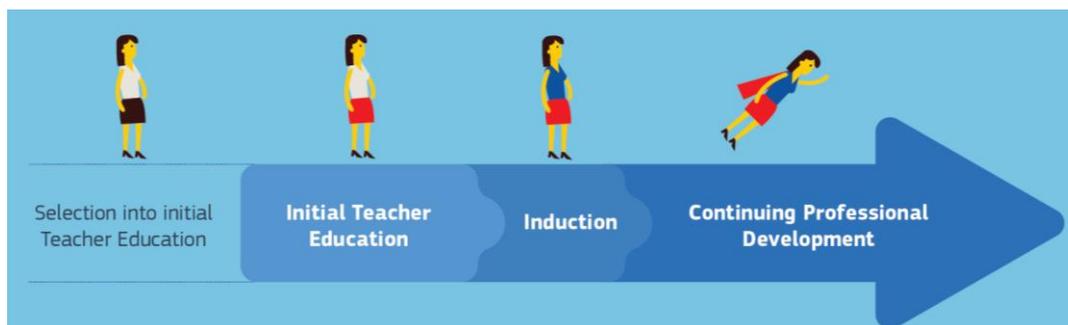
Achieving ITE qualifications should mark the beginning, not the end of a process of professional development and of relationships between ITE providers and new professionals. The reconceptualisation of a career in teaching 'as a journey and not a destination' (MacMahon et al., 2013) mirrors the growing awareness of policymakers and providers that the level of professionalisation required from teachers calls for the development of a teacher learning 'continuum'. This requires rethinking teacher education as a lifelong process and can contribute to more realistic expectations of ITE and relieve pressure from packed ITE curricula, extending professional learning expectations and support.

In addition, teacher development and school development are interconnected processes. The development of new skills, competences and qualities are expected to impact on daily practice in schools. Thus professional development is connected to school development, and these two processes need to be aligned as a way of strengthening each other.

Teaching as a continuum from different perspectives

The concept of a teacher education continuum spans formal ITE, induction and Continuing Professional Development. While each of these phases is unique in terms of learning needs, the notion of a continuum of learning implies a coherent integrated approach with each phase informed by the one before and influencing the one following (Schwille and Dembélé, 2007).

Figure 1: The continuum of the teaching profession



To create a coherent continuum for teacher development, it is necessary to address several perspectives of the educational process and their interconnections. Five of these perspectives are set out in Figure 2⁵ which takes into account that a newly qualified teacher is still developing after ITE completion and induction.

⁵ The figure is an outcome from the In-depth Country Focus workshop on ITE in the continuum of teacher education, organised by the Working Group on Schools Policy from 5 to 19 March 2015, in Stavanger, Norway.

Connecting different perspectives and stakeholders

The development of a profession that is founded on career-long learning presents challenges to teachers, governments and school authorities. It is essential to create career and support structures that recognise, reward and stimulate the different phases of the continuum. Therefore, it is important that all stakeholders – ITE providers, schools, education authorities, policymakers, as well as teacher unions and associations – work as partners at each phase and across these phases, aligning the different perspectives of the continuum. This can be considered as an overarching, **policy perspective** connecting the **five perspectives that will be discussed below**.

The policy perspective requires a shared vision, understanding and ownership based on a collaborative process.

i) The pedagogical perspective: teacher learning needs

The pedagogical perspective is at the core of the continuum and will therefore be dealt with first. It concerns the teacher and his/her learning needs, which can be characterised by different phases.

In the initial phase the focus is on *becoming a teacher*. Often, this phase is connected with the period of initial teacher training.

In the induction phase the focus is on *being a teacher*. This phase covers the first years of the profession, during which teachers develop their professional identity and confidence as a teacher. This intense period, which often influences whether teachers stay on in the profession and what kind of teacher they become, is a time of 'survival', adaptation and discovery. It entails changes in role, identity, and attitudes to knowledge from formal theory to practice challenges. It is argued that new teachers may find themselves in a paradoxical, vulnerable situation where they must demonstrate skills that are not fully developed, and can only learn by beginning to do what they do not yet fully understand (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

During the continuous professional development phase there is an emphasis on *staying and growing as a teacher*. In this phase, teachers usually undergo a phase of experimentation and consolidation, followed by a phase of mastery.

ii) The instrumental perspective: support structures

The support structure consists of structures, policies and support mechanisms that are in place to assist teachers in their reflective practice and development. This support structure begins in ITE during which student teachers are supported in becoming a teacher.

In the induction phase the support structure involves mentoring programmes and other activities. The focus of mentoring programmes is crucial in stimulating the development of teacher identity. Well trained mentors can support new teachers to move beyond an identity which is connected to teaching as a routine profession to an innovative identity in which teaching is considered as an inquiring and innovative profession.

The third element of support is career-long Continuing Professional Development. This period can cover a wide range of activities, including: learning from communities of practice, lesson study, action research, self-study and formal courses leading to qualifications. Support structures during this phase enable coherence between these different activities and relevance to the individual needs of teachers.

In all three phases, sources for learning come from *experience* (teaching and teaching practice), from *peers and other key stakeholders and providers* (in communities of practice and classroom observation) and from *theory*. Learning from theory is often limited in the teaching period after ITE. Theoretical ideas and research findings can help to build reflective teaching and this practice needs supporting. Career-long instruments, such as teacher portfolios can help to strengthen the continuum of teaching.

iii) The career perspective: job market and career structures

A career or job perspective refers to how the career structure affects the way teachers develop. Understanding the teaching profession as a continuum implies that the career structure should support continuous growth in several areas: growth in competence and qualities, in responsibilities, in tasks and functions, and in salary grades.

The career perspective initially refers to the qualification needed to be a teacher for example Bachelor's or Master's degrees. In some countries the second step is a probation period when a teacher works on a temporary basis in a school but is not yet granted the full teaching license that is acquired only after further assessment. The third step involves teacher appraisal and feedback; identification of personal development goals; and, moving through career phases.

iv) The professional perspective: competence levels

Formal recognition of competence levels begins with the qualifications that are expected from newly qualified teachers (NQTs). NQTs then continue to develop their individual competences while working as a teacher. Competence levels can be explicitly defined as landmarks for further development, connected with periodic teacher appraisal. These levels could be used as a framework to demonstrate learning and development in teachers' portfolios and connect to a probation period, teacher registration, or to recognition as an excellent or chartered teacher or as a teacher leader. Monitoring learning outcomes as part of teachers' professional development gives direction to teachers' career paths, and specialisation. Other expectations which might be externally imposed on teachers can lead to alienation of teachers from their own professional development.

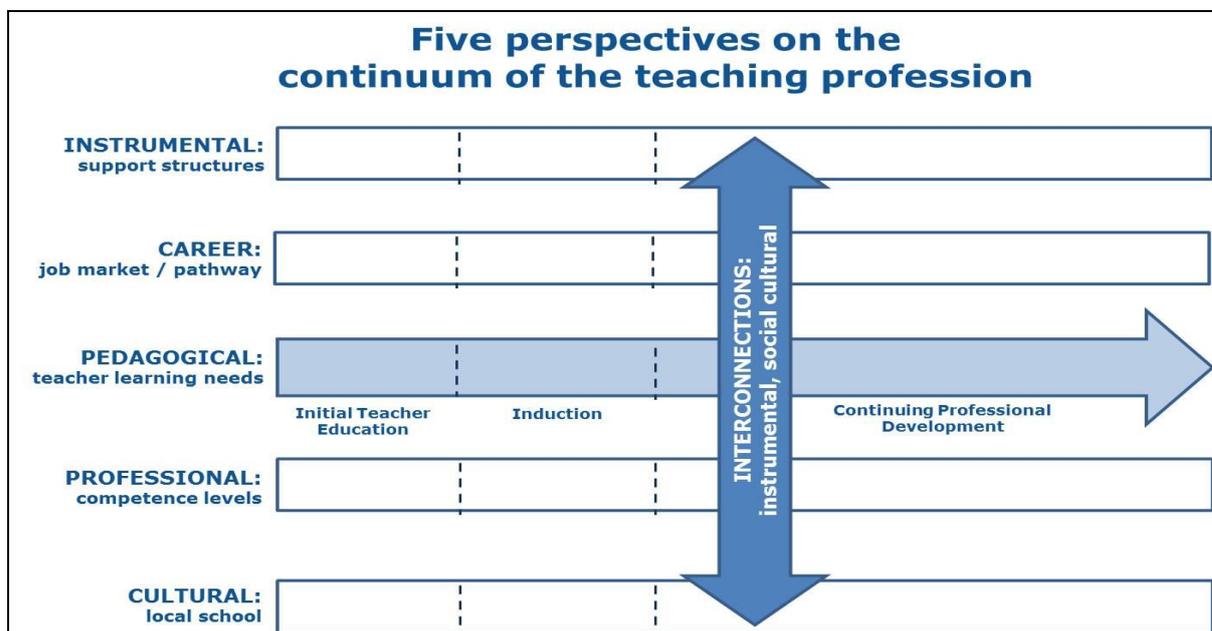
A coherent set of competences can strengthen the coherence of the profession. It is good practice to share language and agree frameworks for teacher development between the key institutions including training providers, educational organisations, government, local authorities, teacher associations, unions and employers.⁶

v) The cultural perspective: local school culture

Local school cultures support the continuing development of teachers. During ITE, the local culture is influenced by education providers and training schools and how far these organisations see themselves as partners in the education of new teachers and whether they invest in the training of mentors for student teachers. After ITE the local school culture is influenced by the extent to which learning and working as a teacher are integrated and stimulated through professional learning communities, team teaching and action research projects.

⁶ More background information on the importance of competence levels can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/doc/teachercomp_en.pdf.

Figure 2: Five perspectives on the continuum of the teaching profession



The next sections will focus on the opportunities for governments and stakeholders to strengthen career and support structures for teachers. Policies that build capacity across the continuum will help to build a sound profession. Such policies need to take account of the national context in terms of education traditions, the core tasks and challenges of teaching and learning at each phase, and the various dimensions and threads which achieve continuity.

3.3 Recent actions across countries

A survey on existing policies for the continuum of the teaching profession

Within Europe, the understanding that teacher education needs to be considered as a continuum with a close connection between ITE, induction and Continuing Professional Development is growing. This has led to a variety of policy initiatives at member state level to strengthen the continuum. To get an overview of the present situation regarding the continuum in European member states and to identify the differing extent to which policy and practice is developed, a **survey** has been conducted among the members of the Working Group Schools.

Twenty-three countries provided information about the **existence of actions in particular policy areas**, including:

- Selection of student entrants to ITE;
- Standard ITE routes, including types of qualifications and experiences;
- Alternative pathways, including flexible programmes;
- Induction programmes;
- Arrangements for continuing professional development;
- Teacher appraisal and evaluation; and,
- Arrangements of quality assurance for ITE, including organisation, roles and responsibilities.

With regards to **selection of students entering ITE**, 16 countries indicate that policies exist, while 10 countries also indicate that selection arrangements are part of the **induction phase**.⁷ Next to traditional routes into the teaching profession through ITE programmes at bachelor and master level, 18 countries also offer **alternative pathways**, creating opportunities for new groups to enter the profession.

The importance of **induction** is increasingly acknowledged through Europe. However, the length and intensity varies from one year to three years.

In most countries, **continuing professional development is regulated as a duty** or as compulsory (in 9 countries) or as a **condition for career advancement** (in 4 countries).

The **importance of networks and partnerships** in educating teachers is widely recognised; however, in most countries these partnerships and networks do not span the whole of the continuum.

Arrangements for **quality assurance** mostly differ in the different phases of the continuum, which hinders approaches that try to address the whole continuum.

Relevant examples of existing policies

The survey revealed several notable examples of existing policy action in countries (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 – Policy actions for a continuum of the teaching profession: (a) results of a survey of 25 European countries and (b) overview of examples by theme



⁷ More information on policies on selection into the teaching profession can be found in the Working Group report 'Policies to select the best for teaching' (2012): http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/archive/documents/best-for-teaching_en.pdf.



Connections between phases

The importance of making strong connections between different phases in the continuum of the teacher profession is recognised in **Luxembourg**, where a newly created National Institute for Teacher Training (IFEN) has been given the responsibility for Continuing Professional Development and induction, in cooperation with the University of Luxembourg. In **Estonia**, teacher educators working on subject didactics are required to keep in contact with the school context and the practice of teaching.

In **Estonia**, the link between ITE and induction is strengthened through the Innovation School Project which consists of 80 school mentors, who supervise student teachers for two years. This has resulted in a new school practice system which relies on 60 newly appointed mentors. The gap between theory and practice is bridged in Estonia where a Network of Innovation Schools, established at Tartu University, undertakes mutual learning and joint research (see text box in Chapter 3: Collaborative Learning).

In **Estonia**, the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020⁸ has set up competence centres in universities that are responsible for the provision of ITE, induction and Continuing Professional Development, as well as educational research.

Stimulating and facilitating CPD

Within the TALIS survey, a large proportion of teachers indicate that they lack time to be engaged in CPD activities.

In **Italy**, time allowances and study leave are given for professional development. According to contract, teachers may make use of five days per year of their scheduled time for professional development activities of their choice. According to the Workers'

⁸ https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/estonian_lifelong_strategy.pdf

Statute, teachers may also apply for an exemption right from 150 hours of service per year, in order to obtain a further degree or academic qualification.

A 2015 law makes provision for an electronic "CPD card" for the value of EUR 500/year, which is issued to every teacher with permanent status. Teachers will be able to use the amount on this card according to their professional development needs and objectives. This includes buying materials, hardware or software, using the services of accredited providers, subscribing to professional journals, taking further courses or qualifications at higher education level, furthering their broad culture in the arts, or any other professional development purposes set out in the obligatory School Plan. The objective is to both foster the take-up of CPD and give teachers the opportunity to take on responsibility for their own development.

In **the Netherlands**, teachers can apply for a study grant for an in-service Master programme, covering study costs and a study leave of 1 day a week during two or three years.

In **Spain**, regional educational authorities offer teachers the possibility to apply for a one year non-remunerated leave for professional development purposes.

Linking theory and practice

Strengthening the link between theory and practice can help to develop an inquiry-based profession. Teacher inquiry and action research can be important methods for Continuing Professional Development of teachers.

To support the development of an inquiry mindset of student teachers, **Norway** has set up the Norwegian Graduate School in Teacher Education, where funded PhD programmes for teacher educators are run. In **Austria**, the new teacher education continuum strategy also entails developing research and development. The implementation of teacher education reform strategies, ITE improvement or teacher Continuing Professional Development can also be supported by resources from the European Social Fund.⁹

Quality assurance and appraisal of expertise

In **Norway**, when an ITE reform for elementary and lower secondary teacher education was initiated in 2010, a national panel was appointed for five years. The panel's mandate was to follow up on the implementation and to report on developments every year. This was an entirely new way of providing the Ministry, teacher educators, higher education leaders and schools with knowledge on teacher education and on how the reform was being introduced across the whole country. A system for mentoring newly educated teachers was developed and is being used in the municipalities. School management programmes exist and are reviewed by a research institute (NIFU, Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education)

In **Hungary**, a new teacher career scheme has recently been introduced, under which teachers' competences are assessed before they enter a new career stage. A network of advisors and counsellors has been established in order to support teacher development and advancement under this scheme.

In **Croatia**, a national competence framework for teachers is to be developed within an education reform strategy.

In **Germany** and **Hungary**, portfolios are used to assess the newly qualified teacher's practice and for further career advancement. Although there is considerable diversity in approaches to the appraisal of teachers throughout their career, formal appraisal

⁹ For more information see <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=51&langId=en>

can be voluntary or compulsory. The evaluation of ITE staff in **Romania** is linked to salary incentives.

Italy has very recently, in 2015, introduced an annual fund of EUR 200 million with which schools will be able to award a “merit bonus” to teachers whose work fulfils certain criteria established by the new Evaluation Committee each school is required to set up. The Evaluation Committee is made up by the school head, three teachers selected by the teachers’ assembly and the school’s governing body, two parent representatives (in primary education) or one parent and one pupil representative (in secondary education) selected by the governing body, as well as one external representative designated by the regional branch of the Ministry of Education. The aim is not only to provide teachers with economic incentives for good performance but also to introduce a form of teacher appraisal.

3.4 Key challenges

The survey and the examples presented above indicate that awareness about teaching as a journey or continuum is growing within European countries. Policy makers need to understand what makes the journey a successful one. Teaching is complex and a continuum of teacher career-long professional learning and development embraces multiple levels and interconnections. Knowing about the different phases and understanding how the different perspectives work together will help in devising measures that strengthen structures and improve outcomes.

To devise these measures, a number of key challenges, which address the five perspectives above, need to be met:

- How can policies strengthen the continuum by linking phases and perspectives?
- How can policies contribute to teachers’ agency (capacity for action), so they can take responsibility for their own professional development?
- How can policies contribute to a support structure which meets the needs of teachers?
- How can policies contribute to a teaching profession that encourages teachers to be creative and reflective regarding their learning needs and professional growth?
- How can these support structures recognise a variety of learning activities, including formal and informal learning and non-formal approaches?
- What role can partnerships play in these support structures?
- How can career paths support the continuum of the teaching profession?
- How can a framework of teacher standards support teachers’ continuing development?
- How can collaborative teacher development in schools contribute to school improvement?

All stakeholders involved in ITE need to collaborate in helping to respond to these key challenges. In the next section we will elaborate on these key challenges.

3.5 Measures to support change

Starting from different practices in European countries, this section explores the conditions, enablers and obstacles for policies to tackle the key challenges outlined above.

Policy measures that address these key challenges and facilitate a continuum of teacher development require a shared vision and ownership of authorities and stakeholders and for a mutual understanding of the multiple interconnecting perspectives of the continuum. In this section we will elaborate on these key challenges, provide illustrations of how Member States try to answer these challenges and finally suggest possible policy actions to strengthen the continuum of the teacher profession.

Strengthening the continuum by linking the phases

To strengthen teacher development, policies need to target actions and instruments to different phases of the continuum, starting with ITE and supporting teachers with induction and mentoring schemes and CPD frameworks, and stimulating professional growth through career structures and incentives.

This could include legal measures to recognise different phases of teachers' development and changes in status; and, other legally based staff development initiatives, such as a compulsory induction phase with specially trained mentors.

Policies that aim to strengthen the continuum should take the five different perspectives of the continuum into account – teachers' learning needs, support systems, career pathways, competence requirements and local school cultures and structures – and ensure that these are interconnected and aligned with national structures and policies.

In the **Netherlands**, a coherent policy agenda for the teaching profession was introduced in 2013, covering the different phases of the profession and highlighting actions and instruments for the different phases of the profession. The policy agenda pays attention to: the selection of students into teacher education; the quality of the ITE curriculum; induction support for early career teachers; in-service Masters' programmes for teachers; and, the introduction of a professional register for teachers, where registration is based on a minimum annual amount of CPD activities. Addressing the different phases in a coherent policy agenda is a powerful catalyst for strengthening the continuum of the profession.

In **Germany**, there are more than 50 Centres of Teacher Education situated at universities all over the country. The aim is to strengthen the continuum of teacher education by linking its different phases. In addition, the Centres offer consulting and coordinating services and create links between teaching and research with the aim of lifting teacher education to a higher level.

In **Austria**, parallel to the introduction of a new teacher education programme, a new employment law for newly qualified teachers was issued, including a compulsory induction phase of one year. During this induction phase the newly qualified teachers will be supported by specially trained mentors who are staff at the schools. These mentors can also be 'teacher educators' in the parts of the ITE programme where school practice is relevant. These policy measures enable a connection to be made between different phases of a teacher's development through structures for legally-based staff development initiatives and through the involvement of teacher educators across different phases.

Case study: In **Switzerland**, the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK), representing the 26 Swiss cantons, agreed in 1999 on minimum requirements for ITE. These regulations have served as legal basis for a reform in teacher education implemented since 2000. The regulations also serve as a reference for accreditation of ITE programmes. Accreditation by EDK is a condition for the recognition of teaching diplomas (mutual recognition nation-wide and recognition of diplomas from other countries), which is necessary for employment.

The minimum requirements cover, *inter alia*, the objectives of ITE including the concepts of collaborative work and of teacher education as a continuum (through CPD). While there is no national regulation for induction, the cantons offer different types of induction programmes, mostly involving their ITE providers. The Universities of Teacher Education, as well as other institutions, offer a wide range of services, including continuing education, career consulting and supervising. Certificates of courses for school leaders, ICT counsellors in teacher education and counsellors for professional orientation on the lower secondary level can be recognised at the national level if they correspond to the profiles adopted by EDK.

More information: <https://swisseducation.educa.ch/en/coordination-area-universities-teacher-education>

In **Lithuania**, professional development of teachers is recognised and awarded by using career steps in the profession. After four years, a teacher can gain the status of Senior Teacher; after five, Teacher Supervisor; and, after six years Expert Teacher. This is to be decided jointly by the council of all school stakeholders and the school leader. This recognition is based on external evaluation which takes teachers' mastery, pupil results and other criteria into account. The status of Expert Teacher is based additionally on the evaluation of the teaching materials prepared, on mentoring and on other skills.

In **Croatia**, the law on teacher advancement recognises four stages in the careers of teachers: a teacher at the beginning of his or her career; a licensed teacher; a mentor; and, a teacher who has reached the stage of counsellor. These stages are also connected to salary grades. Advancement to the next stage requires the acquisition of qualifying Continuing Professional Development points and an assessment by the school based on observation criteria.

In **Slovakia**, teachers' careers are based on four grades that express the rate of development of their professional competences and the difficulty of teaching activity. The first grade comprises newly qualified teachers in their first employment, until completion of the adaptation education programme. Following this, teachers enter the second grade as 'independent teachers'. Teachers in the third grade need to pass a first attestation exam or have reached the third stage of university level education and have at least three years of teaching practice. Teachers who have passed the second attestation exam or have reached the third stage of university level education and have at least six years of teaching practice enter the fourth career grade. Teachers with first and second attestation can be mentors for newly qualified teachers.

The examples from **Lithuania, Croatia and Slovakia** illustrate how structures in the profession can strengthen the interconnection between teacher development, job structures and career steps, creating a stimulus for professional growth.

Teachers taking responsibility for Continuing Professional Development

For teachers to create the best learning opportunities for their pupils and to be able to assess their own learning needs for this challenge and to take responsibility for their own professional development, it is necessary that teachers have a mindset that is focused on growth. Policies should aim to support the development of this mindset through ITE curricula that support the development of teacher agency and the development of competences for self-directed learning.

The aims for ITE could include explicit objectives for teachers to identify and assess their own needs for Continuing Professional Development; and, a strategy where teachers are challenged to define their learning aims and study topics in all phases across the continuum, linking ITE to the acquisition of subject and pedagogical competences during the teaching career.

A teaching profession that is defined as one based on career-long learning relies on Continuing Professional Development. Whilst career and support structures and organisational structures in school are very important, the agency of teachers themselves is equally crucial. ITE must lay the foundation for teachers to adopt a mind-set of self-directed professional development and a sense of being able to make a change and take action.

During ITE, the curriculum needs to support student teachers to develop a growing awareness of professional values, norms, cultures and expectations. Therefore, it is good practice that the curriculum of teacher education continuously stimulates self-directed learning and agency of student teachers. Having this focus in ITE requires a curriculum where steps are taken to transfer responsibility to the students themselves, ensuring that student initiative and agency is fostered.

In **Slovenia**, ITE gives special attention to obtaining and developing the student's ability for professional development, independent work and personal initiative, as well as for cooperation with work and social environments. Set by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, the national criteria for the accreditation of ITE programmes define the competences graduates must have acquired through these programmes. Besides other professional competences they also emphasise the ability of critical self-reflection and of improving the quality of work through self-evaluation and continuing education and training, active participation in research and development projects as well as cooperation with colleagues, parents and other professionals.

In **Switzerland**, one of the explicit objectives in ITE is to build the competence of teachers so that they are able to identify and assess their own needs for Continuing Professional Development and to self-direct and organise this competence.

In **Spain**, regional educational authorities, on an annual basis, offer teachers a series of possibilities to design their own Continuing Professional Development based at their schools. These take the form of on-site seminars, working groups or school training projects that suit the specific needs of teachers from that school, as well as the priorities set by the educational authorities for that year.

Initiating and supporting Continuing Professional Development

Policies need to create a balance between professional development initiatives that are both needs-driven and challenging, that are both teacher initiated and inspired by external expectations and requirements and that include both activities that are initiated and chosen by teachers themselves to meet individual learning needs, and activities that are initiated at the national or local level.

This could include compulsory and non-compulsory initiatives that are identified and put in place by different stakeholders, including central government, local authorities, schools and teachers: the compulsory part could be based on annual themes decided nationally; the non-compulsory part to be decided locally by schools and teachers.

To create the best opportunities for children in a constantly changing future, teachers need to learn and develop continuously. The concept of teaching that guides a teacher's actions is influenced by ongoing learning experiences, as well as by the culture of the school where a teacher is working. The culture of schools will influence:

- The minimum requirements that are asked of teachers;
- The type of career steps that are created in a system; and,
- The type of competences and qualities that are emphasised in different phases of the profession.

Professional development and professional learning should not be an optional choice. The ongoing satisfactory performance of teachers who 'do not face too many problems' in their classrooms can not imply that there is no need for CPD and should not be considered as acceptable by school teachers and leaders. Nevertheless, imposed programmes on their own run the risk of reducing the professional responsibility of teachers and even the overall quality of the teaching profession. Balancing teacher initiated learning activities with clear expectations and requirements is good practice.

In return, support structures must meet the specific needs of individual teachers and also assist teachers to continually improve. A balance is required between needs-driven approaches that focus on individual learning needs and tailor-made solutions, with approaches that challenge teachers to continuously improve and develop.

In **Sweden**, initiatives for professional development involve a mixture of government initiatives, local authority initiatives and opportunities coming from teachers themselves. The Education Act states that the responsible local authority should ensure that staff at pre-schools and schools receive opportunities for professional development. Even though decisions are taken by the local authority (i.e. the responsible head of institution), teachers and pre-school teachers may suggest continuing education needed for professional development. It is considered important and a responsibility of the local authority that pre-school teachers, teachers and other staff acquire the necessary insights into the regulation of the school system. The government regularly intervenes in important competence areas that require improvement. For example, there is currently extra support provided for literacy and mathematics.

In **Spain**, initiatives for Continuing Professional Development have been adopted in conjunction with different educational authorities. The National Strategy for Lifelong Learning, issued in 2015 by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, and put forward in collaboration with all Spanish Autonomous Communities, aims at fostering innovation, increasing participation rates in CPD on new technologies and innovative teaching methods, as well as increasing the range of the offer.

In **Belgium (French Community)**, a distinction is made between compulsory and non-compulsory parts of Continuing Professional Development. The compulsory part, set down in two decrees adopted in 2002, is defined by a national institution, based on annual themes. Continuing training is organised by a specially created Institute for Continuing Training. Continuing training is targeted at all institutions organised or subsidised by the French Community, according to governmental priorities, which are defined every year to ensure consistency with the Decree on the Missions of Schools

and to tackle new emerging issues. Priorities also include transversal concepts such as inclusion, gender issues, participation and motivation both at network level and at school level. The non-compulsory part of CPD is a responsibility that rests with the school or at individual level.

Case study: In **Cyprus**, the Council of Ministers has recently approved a new policy for the professional learning of teachers, which is piloted during the school year 2015-2016. The Pedagogical Institute is the official body through which the professional learning and development of teachers take place, and its staff support schools as 'critical friends'.

To better address individual teachers' and schools' needs the focus of professional learning has been transferred to schools, through an individual and school-based professional learning plan. Teachers' professional learning is linked to the school improvement plan and is meant to be universal (i.e. addressed to all teachers), continuous and systematic. It is based on action research and requires most teachers to create individual portfolios.

Professional reflection and innovation

To achieve a creative and reflective teaching profession, policies and actions should support student teachers and teachers to use and engage in research in their learning and practice. They should enable an innovative teaching and learning environment in ITE and schools.

Specific organisations or measures could be established to promote collaboration between researchers and teachers and encourage teachers to analyse and critically evaluate their own work, either alone or with others.

Teacher progress can be strengthened through a shared understanding of the teaching profession as one that requires continuous reflection, innovation, improvement and development: also, one that can be made explicit in a set of professional rules and professional standards.

When teaching is considered simply as a static craft (the application of a fixed repertoire of skills that are learned during the phase of initial 'teacher training') or as a labour¹⁰ (following and implementing a given set of goals, lesson plans and skills that are designed by others), there will be reduced incentives for professional learning. In such contexts, there may be fewer career steps and teaching is unlikely to be attractive to ambitious professionals.

However, when teaching is seen as a profession (where teaching is considered as an adaptive process based on professional autonomy, responsibility and norms and also personal judgement) (See Biesta, 2014) or as an art (where teaching is considered as a continuous creative process of design and reflection), a teaching career is more likely to be an attractive and stimulating option. Teachers will be challenged to be innovative and entrepreneurial, to be critical and reflective, and to take responsibility for professional growth and improvement of teaching and learning.

¹⁰ The categories of teaching as a craft, labour, profession or art are based on Hoban (2002)

Case-study: Initial Teacher Education in **Finland** emphasises **reflection and problem solving**. ITE is research-based and the objective is to educate teachers to have the capacity to **utilise the most recent research** in the fields of education and the subjects taught. Teachers are required to have a Master's degree with the exception of kindergarten teachers and vocational teachers.

Teachers are professionally autonomous and they have opportunities to build their own work and the development of their work community. On a day-to-day basis this means that teachers should be capable of **analysing and assessing their own work**, and developing their work **alone as well as with others**. Reflection and the development of cognitive and metacognitive skills are regarded as very important considerations for managing the changing demands, environments and surroundings of today's teachers' work.

Universities decide independently on the content and curricula of teacher education. Students learn how to critically evaluate and interpret their observations and to investigate different phenomena themselves while adhering to the principles of research. **Collaboration between researchers and teachers** can be found in institutions such as the LUMA Centre, which was established to inspire and motivate children and youth into mathematics, natural sciences and technology through the latest methods and activities.

Formal and informal learning and non-formal approaches

Policies that aim to stimulate teacher development throughout the continuum need to recognise formal, informal and non-formal learning as valid and powerful means of professional development. It is essential that policies facilitate group learning, support experimental activities and promote exchange of experience between teachers.

Alongside accredited ITE qualification programmes or formal courses, measures that support teacher development throughout the continuum could include: face-to-face collaborative projects and on-line work to encourage informal and non-formal learning; a teachers' register where teachers need to show evidence of their continuing learning; and, national projects that stimulate engagement in teacher inquiry projects.

Systems of teacher appraisal and recognition of professional development can play an important role in strengthening the continuum of teacher development. Actual programmes and courses can significantly enhance professional development. However, professional learning can be both:

- formal programmes such as accredited qualification programmes or school-based training programmes; and,
- informal and non-formal learning activities such as engagement in action research, building professional learning communities, having peer support and giving feedback.

Within school, informal and non-formal learning activities which are team-based and directly related to the daily work context are the most prominent and most efficient and effective ways of learning (TALIS, 2014). Good practice learning activities are initiated in schools by teachers who take collective responsibility for their professional development. Such initiatives and arrangements need to be recognised as important levers for teachers' development.

In **Spain**, each regional education authority maintains a register of teachers' professional training to certify dates, length and names of courses taken by teachers. Upon completion of a set of hours within a six year period, certified and acknowledged by the regional authority, teachers serving at public schools receive an economic incentive.

In the **Netherlands**, a professional register for teachers was introduced in 2013 and the aim is to have all teachers registered by 2017. To be included, a teacher needs to show that he or she dedicates 40 hours on an annual basis to professional development. This can also include non-formal and informal learning and professional development activities initiated by schools and teams of teachers. Such activities can include, for example, engagements in processes of peer observation and peer feedback or engagement in research projects, and are judged by a panel of teachers.

Several countries, including **Finland**, **France**, **Germany** and **Italy**, emphasise the role of teacher inquiry as a means of professional development and learning throughout a teacher's career.

Case-study: In **Italy**, the notion of '**blended**' learning includes a **variety of informal and non-formal learning**. The Italian Ministry of Education launched an innovative up-skilling programme for secondary school teachers in the South of Italy (of Italian, mathematics, science, other languages and ICT), in which more than 12 000 teachers participated over three years. This constitutes a new model for teacher professional development in the country based on a 'blended' learning environment developed by the National Institute for Innovation and Research in Education (INDIRE). The programme involves groups of about 15 teachers meeting regularly together with a trained tutor/mentor in one of the schools in their region. Activities include sharing and **comparing teaching experiences and practices**, **engaging in experimental measures through action research** and carrying out other **online events**. About 25 hours of the 100-hour training programme are dedicated to face-to-face sessions, while the other 75 hours are for collaborative and individual online work. This programme emphasises **peer collaboration**. The programme has a 4-phase cycle, for which goals, activities, face-to-face meetings, tools, documentation and other outcomes are carefully designed. Phase I: Analysis and self-analysis; Phase II: Peer testing, making choices and planning; Phase III: Trying new practices out in class; Phase IV: Feedback. Monitoring of the project was carried out for the latest version of the programme (2012/2013). Analysis revealed strong participant satisfaction, a motivation to continue their professional development and a positive impact on students' educational success.

For more information: <http://formazionedocentipon.indire.it/>

For a free to use repository of didactic material and resources for CPD (in Italian) used in teacher education programmes and produced within PON:
<http://www.scuolavalore.indire.it/>

In **Germany**, there are mechanisms to link the different tiers of government in the coordination of ITE. The Kultusministerkonferenz (Standing Conference of Education Ministers) acts as a superior and connective institution linking the 16 *Länder*. Usually the coordination results from decisions, suggestions, agreements or conventions and involves only the main features and minimum standards. Still, the responsibility for the detailed regulations lies with the *Länder*. In order to realise shared goals and face similar challenges, peer learning activities have been implemented in some areas, such as the recognition of international teaching diplomas, with the aims of pulling

resources together throughout Germany and increasing teacher mobility throughout the country.

Sustainable partnerships

Policies should promote partnerships across the continuum: targeted actions should ease transitions and links between ITE and CPD and between different types of (pre-service and in-service) teacher educators; and, support this through incentives and dedicated resources.

This could include accredited and subsidised professional development bodies that support partnerships between teacher education institutes and schools; in-service training courses; and, programmes for developing and sharing educational materials.

Support structures are more coherent when the providers of initial and post-ITE programmes and schools work closely together to form long-term partnerships.

Three sources of influence are significant in supporting teachers' learning:

- Experience gained from teaching in schools
- Inspiration provided by colleagues, based on their feedback and input
- The contribution of theory and research, based on findings and reviews.

In many cases the influence of theory and research is restricted to formal accredited programmes. After graduation from ITE, the role of theory and research as an input into teaching and learning is limited in most schools.

In (post-initial) teacher learning, however, the scope for theory and research can be strengthened when ITE providers work closely together. Sustaining partnerships and collaborations throughout the continuum of teacher development with long-term partnerships works particularly well. Evidence shows that such partnerships are better when the collaboration is based on a mutual understanding of interdependency, rather than when the commitment is based on market approaches (where schools are consumers of services offered by the university or where services are negotiated through a formal contract). One way of achieving a balanced interdependency is where the role of the school is to create a support structure that is closely related to the specific context of the school and the needs of pupils and teachers, while the role of the university is to provide expertise and resources and to collect feedback on existing programmes.

In the **Netherlands**, long-term partnerships have been established between teacher education institutes and several schools that are identified as professional development schools. These schools receive an additional grant from the Ministry, to recognise their role in educating new teachers. Up to 40 % of the curriculum of ITE can take place in schools (mainly teaching practice and lectures and group work on teaching methodology). These schools are integrated into the accreditation procedure for teacher education. Several are also involved in research programmes and have their own research agenda where teachers can participate in practice oriented research projects. Teachers that are strongly involved in the supervision of student teachers are considered as school-based teacher educators and can be registered as teacher educators in the professional register of the Dutch Association of Teacher Educators.¹¹ These school-based teacher educators also play a key role in supporting professional development of colleagues within their school.

¹¹ <http://www.lerarenopleider.nl/velon/>

Case-study: In **Spain**, the Curricular Integration of Key Competences Programme (COMBAS) grew out of the **collaboration between the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and the educational authorities of the Spanish autonomous communities**. Teachers in 150 primary and secondary schools participated in the programme. This was an in-service training initiative helping teachers incorporate the development of students' key competences into their planning, teaching and assessment and to institutionalise key competence-based pedagogies in schools. To do this, the programme promoted teacher training in networking, virtual media, face-to-face meetings and discussion forums. The programme supported teachers' professional work and local educational policies by developing key competences in their curricula. The programme also encouraged the development of educational materials by participating teachers and resulted in a wide range of good educational practices that integrated active methodologies. In the last phase of the programme, in order to disseminate the experience, the Ministry made the materials and resources available to the entire educational community.

These materials have been made available at:
<https://sede.educacion.gob.es/publivena/detalle.action?cod=16109> , where the guide "Guía para la formación en centros sobre las competencias básicas" is also available.

The topic of sustainable partnerships will be elaborated in the chapter on Collaborative learning.

Supporting flexible career paths

To support teacher development and flexibility in teachers' careers, decision makers should recognise the range of roles and entry points to the profession and create inclusive policies that value and certify different skills and experiences and give opportunities for career steps, both within and outside the classroom.

Initiatives could focus on specific teaching roles (e.g. counsellor, ICT specialist, school-based teacher educator, teacher leader) through certificated Continuing Professional Development courses, or could focus on opening up the teaching profession by creating opportunities midcareer for entrance into or departure out of the teaching profession.

Professional development of teachers and growth in competences need to be recognised and rewarded within schools. This recognition and reward can be given through changes in roles and responsibilities or, where schools have an influence on this, through increased salaries or allowances. To benefit from increased competences of teachers, a single-minded focus on the traditional career step from teacher to school leader needs to be avoided. Within the teaching profession, challenging tasks and roles need to be created to keep excellent teachers in the classroom. Interesting career paths and appointments can vary, for example: teachers can have roles as school-based teacher educators, teacher researchers, teacher leaders, authors of lesson materials and learning media, or teacher-entrepreneurs.

Also, career schemes should avoid focusing only on the education sector. Closed and unidirectional perspectives on the profession are best avoided. Career paths in teaching are no longer one-dimensional, going from a novice to an expert.

Professionals can enter teaching mid-point in their careers or they can change over to other professional sectors during their careers. Different roles and tasks can be combined to enhance work experiences within schools and the professional world outside of education.

Newly qualified teachers bring unique qualities to a school. They should not be seen as teachers who are deficient in any way, for example lacking expertise, maturity or experience. New teaching graduates can also be an asset to schools as they bring fresh knowledge, often including skills, such as integrating ICT and new media and different perspectives on existing routines and cultures. The support programmes for newly qualified teachers should recognise that they still need to develop teaching skills but that they bring unique and fresh qualities, as well as the potential to innovate.

In **Switzerland and Germany**, different career steps and roles are recognised through certified Continuing Professional Development programmes which focus on specified roles such as counsellor, ICT specialist, and leadership roles.

Coherent frameworks of competence levels

A coherent competence framework which identifies different competence levels throughout the continuum, strongly supports a teacher's development throughout their career. Through such competence frameworks, policies can create a shared understanding, shared ownership and shared language between stakeholders and between different phases of the continuum.

Measures could involve the creation of coherent and detailed competence frameworks at different levels of performance, together with guidelines and legal requirements to encourage Continuing Professional Development; the development of such frameworks can be delegated to national teacher bodies or arranged in an interactive process involving a wide variety of stakeholders.

A framework of competence levels can help develop a shared language for all stakeholders throughout the continuum, connecting the different phases and perspectives. Coherent competence frameworks embrace the needs of all teachers including student, novice, experienced and expert or accomplished. If such a framework includes different levels of teacher attainment, it can act as a frame of reference for teachers to identify a 'zone of proximal development' (Vygotsky, 1978). This approach reinforces the teaching profession as a profession of continuous growth.

In several countries including **Belgium (Flemish Community)**, **Estonia** and **France**, coherent competence frameworks exist both for ITE and the wider teaching profession. These competence frameworks create a shared language between phases of the teaching profession and between stakeholder groups. In France these competence frameworks are developed into different competence levels with guidelines which encourage ongoing professional development.

In **the Netherlands**, the development and revision of such a competence framework is delegated to the national teacher body. In **Belgium (Flemish community)** and **Estonia**, the development of the competence framework for teachers was the result of an interactive process, involving many stakeholder groups.

Aligning with policies on school development and new agendas

Professional development activities and human resource policies, where they are organised at school level, should be connected to the wider agenda of the school to strengthen the impact of all three. In their dialogue with teachers, HR professionals and school leaders could consider how to link school improvement goals to Continuing Professional Development and teacher appraisal procedures.

This could be designed to achieve alignment between teacher development and school improvement and help to focus the goals of individual teachers on a day-to-day basis on the current issues for the school.

Teacher development and school development are interconnected processes. The development of new skills, competences and qualities are expected to impact on daily practice in schools. Thus professional development is connected to school development and these two processes need to be **aligned** as a way of strengthening each other. If this alignment is missing, it can be a source of frustration for teachers who have developed new qualities that they are unable to apply in their schools or are not recognised for having these qualities (Snoek, 2014). This implies that learning aims in professional development programmes are aligned with the change agenda of the school; that providers of CPD activities have a close interaction with the school; that school leaders are aware of the learning aims of their teachers; and, that teachers who are involved in professional development activities are challenged by school leaders and colleagues to apply the newly developed qualities in their daily practice.

In **Italy**, the 2010 law on ITE formally sets down that ITE programmes must provide student teachers with the necessary competences to contribute to the overall development and support of autonomy in the schools they will be operating in. This is meant to foster teacher agency for school development and improvement.

3.6 Suggested policy actions

As the teaching profession is increasingly regarded as an integrated continuum, the key challenge for policy makers is to make the overall journey and each phase within it, successful. Taking the five perspectives on the continuum of the teaching profession, there are different policies to be considered, addressing teachers' learning needs, the support systems, career paths, the organisation of competence levels and the impact of school culture, and the interconnection between these five perspectives.

Summarising the results of the previous section, suggested policy actions to meet the key challenges include:

Connecting phases and perspectives

- To strengthen teacher development, policies need to target actions and instruments to different phases of the continuum, starting with ITE and supporting teachers with induction and mentoring schemes and CPD frameworks, while stimulating professional growth through career structures and incentives.

Teacher learning needs

- For teachers to create the best learning opportunities for their pupils and to be able to assess their own learning needs for this challenge and to take responsibility for their own professional development, it is necessary that teachers have a mindset that is focused on growth. Policies should aim to

support the development of this mindset through ITE curricula that support the development of teacher agency and the development of competences for self-directed learning.

Support structures

- Policies need to create a balance between professional development initiatives that are both needs-driven and challenging and that are both teacher-initiated and inspired by external expectations and requirements. The initiatives should include both activities that are initiated and chosen by teachers themselves to meet individual learning needs, as well as activities that are initiated at the national or local level.
- To achieve a creative and reflective teaching profession, policies and actions should support student teachers and teachers to use and engage in research in their practice. They should enable an innovative teaching and learning environment in ITE and schools.
- Policies that aim to stimulate teacher development throughout the continuum need to recognise formal, informal and non-formal learning as valid and powerful means of professional development. It is essential that policies facilitate group learning, support experimental activities and promote exchange of experience between teachers.
- Policies should promote partnerships across the continuum: targeted actions should ease transitions and links between ITE and Continuing Professional Development and between different types of (pre-service and in-service) teacher educators; and, support this through incentives and dedicated resources.

Career paths

- To support teacher development and flexibility in teachers' careers, decision makers should recognise the range of roles and entry points to the profession and create inclusive policies that value and certify different skills and experiences and give opportunities for career steps both within and outside the classroom.

Competence levels

- A coherent competence framework which identifies different competence levels throughout the continuum and strongly supports a continuum of teacher development. Through such competence frameworks, policies can create a shared understanding, shared ownership and shared language between stakeholders and between different phases of the continuum.

School culture: the connection between teacher development and school improvement

- Professional development activities and human resource policies, where they are organised at school level, should be connected to the wider agenda of the school. HR professionals and school leaders in discussion with teachers could consider how to link school improvement goals to Continuing Professional Development and teacher appraisal procedures.

4 Collaborative learning in teacher education

4.1 Key principles

- The professionalism of teachers, teacher educators and leaders in education should incorporate collaborative practices, and a collaborative culture. Both should therefore be promoted in the content and process of ITE. Leadership of collaborative practices should be given particular attention.
- Schools and ITE institutions should be supported in opening up so they can benefit from engaging in networks, professional learning communities and other partnerships. Policy actions should enable such collaborative learning environments, with flexibility to allow for different contexts.

4.2 What is collaborative learning – and why it matters

What is collaborative learning?

Collaborative learning involves working together towards a common goal. Approaches include peer/team learning, collaborative learning communities (CLCs) and cooperative learning which all entail group work. In the literature, distinctions can be found between *collaborative* learning which is about the process of working or learning together and *cooperative* learning which is about achieving particular outcomes. In everyday practice, the two aspects often overlap (Johnson and Johnson 2009).

Collaborative learning requires two conditions. Firstly, it is vital that participants are **responsible** for each other's learning as well as their own. Secondly, participants **helping each other** to understand and learn, is a good way to reach desired goals.

Commitment to **the common good** and success represents a key value, as opposed to competitive drive or individualistic self-interest.

The practice of collaborative learning has strong foundations in cognition and sociocultural studies (Vygotsky 1978; Lave and Wenger 1991).

Why does collaborative learning matter?

Both research and international surveys point to the benefits of collaborative practice for the quality of teachers' professional development and job satisfaction, as well as school climate. The continuing development of teachers, discussed in Chapter 2, should therefore focus on collaborative learning. Where this develops into a cultural change, it reaches out to different levels, settings, actors and phases of career. The benefits of collaborative learning can impact on teachers, institutions, student outcomes and governance systems (Cordingley et al. 2003).

The most recent *Teaching and Learning International Survey* – TALIS (OECD 2014) underscores the value of collaborative learning and research to boost teachers' innovation and confidence in their own abilities ('self-efficacy'). It also highlights the need to further develop such approaches in several contexts, across countries: almost one fifth of teachers in the survey reported to have had no experience of collaborative professional learning. Collaborative attitudes and practices can represent the best fit for the complex competences required of teaching professionals (European Commission 2012b). Furthermore, teachers' capacity to collaborate within and beyond the school context - with education professionals, stakeholders, partners, and the local

community plays an important role in preventing early school leaving (Council of the European Union 2011).

Fostering collaborative learning environments is a challenge both for school and ITE leadership and governments and education authorities; but it is necessary in order to change the traditional school and ITE culture of teachers or academics working in isolation behind the closed doors of their classrooms.

A culture of collaborative learning is consistent with a continuum approach that sees teachers develop through ITE, induction and Continuing Professional Development. Schools can function as collaborative learning communities and partner with ITE providers to build collaborative learning environments (European Commission 2006, 2007; Feuerstein 2011; Mansbridge 1992; Stobart 2008).

Many studies underline the beneficial impact of collaborative learning on school outcomes (Johnson and Johnson 2009). Collaborative professional development helps teaching practice target students' learning needs (Cordingley et al. 2003). Longitudinal studies suggest that students of teachers engaged in whole-school collaborative development show significant gains, when compared with students attending schools without professional communities (Johnson et al. 2007, cit. in Coughlin and Kajder 2009). In schools, sustained collaboration between teachers is a most effective method of teacher development. Teachers working in teams report a greater variety of good teaching skills, better knowledge of students, and greater self-esteem, motivation and professional commitment (Pounder 1999).

Initial Teacher Education, induction and continuing professional development together with mentoring and school leadership play key roles in promoting collaborative cultures. Teachers who share knowledge and practices are able to enhance school-based professional development and improve the instructional design of ITE (Admiraal et al. 2012). Cooperation is required in setting up *collaborative learning environments* and best practices include partnerships with clear responsibilities and structures for planning, managing and assessing practice. Collaborative approaches to peer mentoring schemes are effective for induction, early career support, ongoing professional development and meaningful workplace learning (OECD 2014).

What forms can collaborative learning take?

Collaborative learning environments in ITE cannot exist in the absence of networks or partnerships. In relation to teacher education practice, the creation of collaborative learning environments is a fundamental challenge. Traditionally teachers work in isolated environments, with minimal interference and personal, introspective reflection. But setting up or participating in networks that promote real collaborative learning, signals an interest in sharing, discussing, negotiating and learning together with the ultimate goal of making teaching more effective, and promoting better student learning. Far beyond process or practice, this is a profound shift away from isolation, and toward deprivatised practice, away from the traditional silos of classroom, school, district or region and toward a genuine, system-wide learning organisation. (Ontario Leadership Strategy 2010, p.2)

Several key factors contribute to successful networks, partnerships and networking. These include:

- having committed people as drivers of the networks or partnership;
- the type of networks compatible with the education system within a country;
- the feasibility of networks taking account of regulation frameworks and the degree of centralisation and decentralisation in the education system; and

- an environment that promotes rather than hinders partnerships and networks.

Environments which support collaborative learning in ITE

Environments which promote collaboration are driven by participants who:

- agree to get together because of a common interest and a shared vision;
- are willing to work together in order to improve themselves, their learning contexts and their students' learning experiences;
- develop relationships based on professional approaches, mutual understanding and trust which are possible because of the multi-disciplinary nature of the partnership/network;
- operate within environments and structures which allow for genuine support, flexibility and eclectic approaches; and
- share commitment, perseverance, patience and understanding.

In ITE, ideal collaborative learning environments bring together teacher educators, practitioners and student teachers. Collaborative learning environments also require frameworks and agreements between teacher education institutions and school authorities. Such agreements help to clarify the terms of reference within which collaboration can be managed. Issues related to time, resources and funding need to be discussed and resolved. Agreeing roles and responsibilities will ensure that contributions are suitably accredited and recognised.

The composition of networks varies depending on the need to be addressed, on the type of collaboration sought and on what is possible within specific education systems. Networks can include individuals within a tightly knit community, such as professionals within one school or ITE institution. Professionals and practitioners can also be brought together from wider contexts at different phases of their career or working at different levels within the education system. Networks can be local, extended to the community, regional, national or international. Irrespective of the status, position or size of the network, participants facilitate the collaboration through openness to discussion, the drive to make change happen, and willingness to share ideas and resources. Participants in networks therefore create the environment that promotes and facilitates collaboration.

The role of leadership in collaborative learning practices

Education institutions are *nested* organisations, where policies and actions at any level of the system can enable or constrain at next levels. The quality of social capital in institutions (shared knowledge and competencies in professional communities) is crucial for quality education and there is a key role for 'boundary brokers' - school principals, teacher educators, school mentors, department coordinators - who work, interact and collaborate in multiple contexts, crossing institutional boundaries. They can help transfer practices, improvement and innovation across the system (Resnik and Scherrer 2012).

For such *boundary crossings* to enhance a collaboration culture, the role of *leadership* - of boundary brokers and other education professionals and practitioners - can be critical spanning different levels and settings (OECD 2014).

This kind of leadership involves providing direction and taking responsibility for making it happen. Within schools, it is essential that leadership supports the learning process and that it is based on good working relationships. Reciprocal exchange

between teacher leaders and principals is recognised as a way of developing Teacher Leadership.

Shared leadership supports the idea of “leaderful practice” (MacBeath and Townsend 2011; Raelin, 2003). This refers to the principle of a broad distribution of leadership skills across schools and their communities, so that “all members of a school have something to contribute”. “A successful school is one in which a maximum degree of leadership is exercised by a maximum number of people including teachers, pupils, parents and support staff” (Serbgiovanni 2001).

A broad view of leadership refers to head teachers, deputies and managers fulfilling different roles such as leading on institutional or collaborative learning. The institutional leader can be a role model who promotes and sustains the collaborative learning climate and structure, and the collaborative leader helps to build bridges across boundaries.

Teachers can be informal leaders in collaborative learning environments across schools and institutions and play the important role of integrating a learning culture into a work culture.

4.3 Recent actions across countries

A recent **survey of 21 EU countries**¹² showed that collaboration is an important and widespread expectation of teachers in Europe. The policy documents of most countries explicitly refer to the collaborative aspect of teaching (Figure 4).

Figure 4 Survey by the Working Group on Schools: references to collaborative learning in different types of policy documents¹³

Reference to collaborative learning in policy documents concerning:	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM-FR	BELGIUM-NL	CYPRUS	CROATIA	CZECH REPUBLIC	DENMARK	ESTONIA	FINLAND*	FRANCE	GERMANY	GREECE	HUNGARY	ITALY	LITHUANIA	LUXEMBOURG	MALTA**	NORWAY	POLAND	ROMANIA	SERBIA	SLOVENIA	SPAIN	SWEDEN
Teacher requirements (competences)																								
School organisation, curricula, pupil's outcomes																								
Guidelines/regulations for ITE curricula																								
Guidelines/regulations for induction programmes																								
Guidelines/regulations for CPD																								
Teacher educator competences																								

- 16 countries to **School organisation curricular and pupil outcomes**
- 15 countries made reference to collaborative learning with respect to Teachers' **competence requirements**
- 12 countries to **Guidelines and/or regulations for ITE curricula**

¹² Survey taken in preparation for the In-depth Country Focus Workshop in Malta on *Collaborative learning environments – from Initial Teacher Education to professional school practice*. In addition, three countries (Belgium (French Community), Cyprus and Spain) have subsequently submitted data for this Guide.

¹³ Country notes:

*In Finland, due to a high level of professional autonomy there are no official regulations or guidelines.

**In Malta, the need for teachers to be able to work collectively is stipulated in the Teachers' Code of Ethics and Practice.

- 12 countries to **Guidelines and regulations for Continuing Professional Development**
- 11 countries to **Guidelines and/or regulations for induction programmes**
- 7 countries to **Teacher educator competences.**

Of the **six themes**, five were referred to in policy documents from **Austria, Belgium (French-speaking Community) and Luxembourg**; four themes were referred to by **Croatia, France, Germany, Lithuania, Romania and Spain**. Most of the remaining countries make reference to collaborative learning in two or three types of documents.

The majority of countries referred to the first three types of collaboration in their policy documentation, namely:

- Teacher competence requirements
- School organisation, curricula and pupil outcomes
- Guidelines and/or regulations for ITE curricula.

Only 5 of the countries surveyed (**Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Luxembourg and Serbia**) mentioned the existence of at least **partial report or evaluation** on existing collaborative practices within teacher education and professional development, and only **two countries (Croatia and France)** mentioned a **country wide survey**. This information suggests that reliable data on collaborative practices is scarce.

The overall picture is of a strong commitment by governments to emphasise collaboration as a means of achieving educational goals. Since sustained and in depth collaboration cannot be imposed, it is a challenge for governments, for ITE providers, for schools or for any other stakeholder groups to initiate collaboration. Providing the right conditions, initiatives and ongoing support are the main areas for promoting collaborative learning within ITE and ongoing professional development. The key challenges and possible focuses of action are described in the following subsections.

4.4 Key challenges

Competition often hinders collaboration in education just like in many other sectors. This applies to educational systems competing in international rankings and surveys, to individual institutions competing for students and staff and also to professionals competing for access to positions or status. It is hard to break out of the general paradigm and collaboration requires this change.

Leadership is also important when developing a successful collaborative learning environment. It is a challenge to tackle the tradition where teachers and teacher educators work in an isolated way behind the closed door of the classrooms. Measures need to signal a more 'open door' policy in the individual teacher's classroom and need to emphasise more inspiring classroom practice and discussion about teachers' vision for teaching and learning.

Collaboration calls for new ways of working and new challenges to be met. In ITE the strong autonomy of faculties can lead to low levels of collaboration between teachers in even one institution, as well as being a barrier to collaboration across different institutions. Barriers between institutions may also be strengthened by criteria used to judge the performance of institutions and students' learning. A more favourable approach would be to include elements of collaborative learning in the curriculum and in teachers' competence frameworks.

The following set of challenges linked to establishing and sustaining collaborative learning environments in teacher education are faced:

- How to transform the competitive work culture into a collaborative one in teaching?
- How can ITE prepare for collaborative practices?
- How can schools and ITE institutions be assisted in opening up for collaboration?
 - Establishing institutional structures
 - Supporting collaborative, practice based action research
 - Supporting networking
 - Gathering and dissemination of data on effective collaboration
- How to develop capacity in leadership of collaborative practices?
 - through leadership training and requirements and
 - with the help of change agents
- What are the policy preconditions enabling collaborative learning environments in local contexts?
- How to provide adequate resources?

4.5 Measures to support change

Starting from different practices in European countries, this section explores the conditions, enablers and obstacles for policies to tackle the key challenges outlined above.

Developing and reinforcing collaborative work cultures

Polymakers, educational leaders and the relevant stakeholders, including the social partners, should contribute to preconditions for collaborative work culture by creating and strengthening mutual trust. They should promote collaborative forms of teaching and learning in becoming every day, widespread professional practice for teachers, teacher educators and educational leaders.

This could be done through supporting reflection and ongoing professional discussions on the characteristics and the effectiveness of different practices, not just within schools but between institutions and across the system.

Teachers and teacher educators often think about collaboration as an activity they should be doing occasionally, and on top of their normal workload in order to meet professional expectations. On the contrary: their everyday teaching and learning should take place through a range of collaborative actions. This means that in order to realise the potential benefits that exist in collaborative learning practices a shift in work cultures is needed.

A precondition for a collaborative culture is an open, sharing and equal based relationship between partners based on mutual trust. Therefore policy makers and all stakeholders should pay attention to keeping and further building up trust within ITE and the education system.

Collaborative learning environments that are based on sharing and discussing practices become arenas for reflective analysis, enquiry and innovation. A reflective analysis and stakeholder dialogue on aspects that hinder collaboration is very useful.

In the **Netherlands**, an innovation project with 150 primary and secondary schools¹⁴ focused on rearranging the teaching and learning process in schools. Schools used a variety of strategies ranging from collaborative team teaching, where several teachers, supported by teacher assistants, had a shared responsibility for a larger group of pupils, to teams of subject teachers from different schools that have the responsibility to develop teaching materials which they could share. Evaluative research showed that these collaborative approaches resulted in a reduced workload for teachers leaving more time to discuss educational issues with colleagues and to pay more attention to individual pupils' learning needs.

In **Spain**, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport has created the National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teacher Training (INTEF), whose main priorities are the creation of new models of ITE and CPD to promote professional collaboration. The Institute provides a very ambitious offer of online courses for teachers, organised twice a year. Its offer for teachers includes opportunities to engage in on-site training, such as congresses, seminars and summer courses, as well as staff to exchanges with other European countries.

Case-study: In **Austria**, a recent pilot project aims at developing a collaborative learning culture – both with regards to teaching methods and didactics and to team-oriented learning settings for students. The pedagogical concept of “Learning/Lesson Studies” is based on the educational approach of Prof Mun Ling Lo (“Variation theory and the improvement of teaching and learning”) and is now being implemented in the whole continuum of teacher education.

The aim is to improve the effectiveness of teaching and enhance the professionalisation of teachers. A team of teachers work together at school over a period of some months: teachers collaboratively develop a teaching unit (research lesson) on a certain subject; they decide on what to teach and how to teach it; then they conduct the lesson in a process of peer observation and reflect on it collaboratively according to the tradition of action research. In order to assess students' learning achievement, there are pre-tests and post-tests which are then analysed. The teachers are supported by a group of experts from a University or University College of Teacher Education. The focus of the project is on creating ideal learning opportunities for students in a collaborative setting. This fosters a learning culture which supports the school in becoming a learning community. The method also creates a culture of common responsibility among classroom teachers for improving the learning outcomes of their students. Information about this concept is made available to head teachers and inspectors in the context of a school quality improvement programme, where collaborative work culture is, or will be, highlighted as one approach. The project is also embedded in the new Teacher Education Programme which commenced at the beginning of the academic year 2015/2016 and integrated in the curriculum where it is concerned with educational practice and methodology.

The entire approach fosters team work and a culture of collaboration among teachers across classes and schools. It aims to bring a new culture of teaching and learning into the school system by building a shared responsibility for the learning environment among students.

¹⁴ www.innovatieimpulsonderwijs.nl

Collaboration incorporated into ITE

In order to prepare future teachers for collaboration, stakeholders should make sure that ITE programmes develop positive attitudes towards professional dialogue, sharing, collaborative critical thinking and peer learning. Teacher educators working within ITE and along the continuum should model collaboration themselves when providing education for (future) teachers.

This could be done through incorporating collaborative methods and work culture in ITE and establishing networks between ITE institutions to coordinate teaching and research activities.

Since the roles of different actors, expectations, circumstances and contexts change over time, ITE should prepare student teachers for the unpredictable future with the ability of reflection, critical thinking, capability of action research and constant professional dialogue. A significant share of teachers in Europe has never experienced collaborative learning. It is important that the formal learning opportunities provided for them use collaborative methods, and encourage them to a collaborative work culture.

In **Norway**, the Teachers as Students (TasS)¹⁵ research project explores student teachers' learning in ITE. The project introduced collaborative inquiry as a method, and studied its effects. It involved teacher students, researchers and practice teachers. Results are very promising showing increased engagement from student teachers, increased emphasis on knowledge and on teaching, and that student teachers are better able to observe students' learning.

In **Estonia**, quality assurance at higher education institutions is based on self-evaluation. Teacher education programmes are led by Programme Managers who coordinate the study process. Programme Councils made up of representatives of all stakeholders, including students and employers also support these tasks. In order to begin and sustain co-operation between staff members, regular meetings, conferences, joint research projects and publications are initiated.

In **Norway**, partnerships have been set up between universities providing ITE in Tromsø and Oslo and schools in the respective regions in order to enable transitions between different learning environments. Teacher educators from both schools and universities collaborate to create best possible learning opportunities for students.

In the **Netherlands**, a strong collaboration has been established between teacher education institutes and partner schools¹⁶. Educating teachers is seen as a collaborative engagement where an institution-based teacher educator and a school-based teacher educator are jointly responsible for the part of the curriculum that is located at the school. In 'academic partner schools' the collaboration includes research activities where teachers, student teachers and teacher educators are engaged in practice oriented research projects aiming to support innovation in the school. The partner schools need to meet accreditation criteria and are financially supported by the Ministry. They mostly operate in consortia of multiple schools. There are now 62 consortia all across the country, and this will be increased in 2016.

¹⁵ <http://www.uis.no/research-and-phd-studies/research-areas/school-and-learning/teachers-knowledge-for-teaching/tass-teachers-as-students/>

¹⁶ www.steunpuntopleidingsscholen.nl

In **Belgium (Flemish Community)**, some teacher education institutions have introduced co-teaching for the practical classroom training of their students. Originally, a lack of training places at schools for student teachers, meant that a single place had to be filled with two students. However, this practice was later developed to become a conscious choice, with the aim of introducing students to co-teaching.

Methods of opening up schools and ITE institutions to collaboration

Establishing institutional structures that favour collaboration

When designing a new organisational or institutional structure priorities should be given to solutions favouring collaboration both within the individual institution and between institutions, at same level and across educational levels, and between educational institutions and the local community.

This could be done by connecting ITE providers and practice schools or teachers and teacher educators, or by linking up teachers in their early careers, through the creation of 'thematic' networks on teacher induction, for example, where mentors are trained by the ITE providers.

Organisational structures either bring together or separate stakeholders. An innovative institutional structure or an organisational solution that provides room for collaborative elements in work may by itself boost collaboration.

There is a long standing tradition of Training or Practicing Schools in **Finland** and in **Hungary** (Gyakorlóiskola). These schools are owned and run by higher education institutions providing ITE. This organisational structure ensures in depth cooperation between school based and higher education based teacher educators in planning, organizing and assessing ITE practice, and also collaboration in the development of subject didactics.

In **Sweden**, a pilot scheme (2014-19) of special teacher training schools for student teachers enrolled in some of the ITE programmes is an example of reinforcing collaboration between institutional structures. Underlining the central role of the teacher training school for teacher education, the aim of the pilot scheme is to establish even closer connection and collaboration between ITE providers, the schools and local authorities. A national institute for school research (The Swedish Centre for Educational Research) and a number of centres for subject didactics support this by building a common knowledge base for research-based teacher practice in schools.

In **Belgium (French Community)**, a reform was introduced in 2013 to support collaboration across ITE. Five decentralised areas were created called "pôles académiques": Hainaut, Liège-Luxembourg, Namur, Leuven, Brussels. The main objective is to promote and support collaboration among institutions in order to offer and monitor a high quality service to students. The teaching is being reorganised based on a modular system within a credit-accumulation structure. With the "Academy of Research and Higher Education" (ARES), a structure was put in place to oversee the whole system. The main aims are to develop collaboration between institutions, coordinate teaching and research activities and students' education and training pathways. ARES also collaborates on international cooperation and representation, gathering and analysing statistics and providing guidance, information and advice on education.

In **Spain**, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport has been organising the National Education Awards for primary and secondary education since 2013. The Awards comprise several categories, including for the collaboration between institutions.

Case-study: In **Finland**, joint working in ITE is supported through a formal network. Teacher education institutions have established a **collaborative network** called Osaava Verme in order to support new teachers in their early careers. The network uses a peer group mentoring (PGM) model which was piloted using funding from the Finnish Work Environmental Fund in 2008-2010. Monitoring and development of this model is ongoing. A growing body of research literature on teacher induction is emerging in Finnish, Swedish and English languages. Peer group mentoring brings new teachers together to share and reflect on their experiences and discuss day-to-day problems and challenges. Mentors are trained regionally through collaboration between the teacher education departments of universities and the vocational teacher education institutions. The Osaava Verme network is also connected to an elective course of advanced studies in educational science called Paedeia Café. This course is a joint forum for newly qualified teachers and students in the final stages of teacher education. Paedeia Café meets 6-8 times during the academic year and is led by experienced teachers who have completed their mentor training. The aim is not only to share experiences and knowledge, but also to create new knowledge through collaboration.

<http://www.osaavaverme.fi/eng>

In **Switzerland**, Valais University of Teacher Education is located in the French part of the canton as well as in the German part and offers ITE in two separate curricula, in French and German. Every student of this institution aiming at a primary school teaching diploma has to spend one of three years in the other part of the canton where they follow the academic as well as the in-school programme in the local language. Thus, ITE students gain teaching experience with pupils in a foreign language. Most other Universities of Teacher Education in Switzerland offer exchange programmes on the national and the international level and have projects with other Swiss or foreign Universities and other institutions.

In **Spain**, the PROMECE project for the improvement of learning is part of the efforts to reduce early school leaving by changing school organisation and teaching methods. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport provides financial support to clusters of state funded schools belonging to at least to two different regions for jointly designing improvement plans.

Supporting collaborative, practice based action research

Action research is oriented at finding a valid solution to a problem in classroom practice. This should be promoted by stakeholders as a means to strengthen collaborative learning environments within and between schools and with providers of ITE.

This could be done through establishing networks between ITE providers, schools and teachers to develop projects aimed at collaboration in research projects to improve quality of teaching and focusing on the role of the teacher as a reflective practitioner.

Action research provides the knowledge base for practitioners' work at all levels of education but it is scarce in teacher educators' work. Practice based research can contribute to building a collaborative learning environment in a number of ways:

In **Serbia**, an EU funded action-research project called "Razvionica"¹⁷ aims to develop a sustainable system of collaboration between faculties of higher education institutions responsible for ITE and training schools that provide student practice. The project organises training for mentor-teachers within practice schools. Teacher educators are encouraged to collaborate with teams of mentor-teachers in conducting action research relevant for the practice school and the teacher-students' school practice. So far, the teachers participating in the training conducted 192 action research events to achieve collaborative learning. At the same time significant efforts were made to strengthen collaborative learning environments within and between schools and with providers of ITE.

In **Austria**, a university course based on action research focuses on the role of teachers and teacher educators as reflective practitioners. PFL (*Pädagogik und Fachdidaktik für Lehrer/innen*, Pedagogy and subject didactics for teachers and teacher educators) is a university-based course for the professionalisation of in-service teachers and/or teacher educators. The participants who are supported by university experts (academics and practitioners) develop teaching and school development projects. The teachers are organised into teams and give each other feedback and support. The courses are available for German, foreign language learning, mathematics and science.

In **Croatia**, a one-year action research project¹⁸ involved a group of English teachers collaborating online and offline. They were supported by a university expert and an Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA) Senior Advisor responsible for English language teachers. Using action research techniques, the aim was to support practicing teachers to identify areas and ways for improving the quality of their teaching, and methods for monitoring the changes introduced. Teachers' professional development is provided through the Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA).

In **Cyprus**, the Pedagogical Institute initiated a project for teachers' professional learning, which was based on action research (2014/15). The project acknowledged that teachers are active subjects in a dynamic learning process, through which they shape their personal theory of teaching, based on concrete pedagogical theories and analysis of daily educational practice. Working with school coordinators and critical friends (staff of Pedagogical Institute) teachers completed a full cycle of action research moving from diagnosing needs, to planning, implementation, reflection and reacting.

Supporting networking

Stakeholders should ensure that there is equity in direct networking between teaching professionals as a basis for collaboration and continued efforts for high quality practice.

This could include setting up a network of innovation bodies to encourage links between ITE providers and schools, to create meeting points for teachers to discuss and exchange teaching practice, and to upgrade teaching quality through new collaborative learning projects.

¹⁷ <http://en.razvionica.edu.rs/our-mission/>

¹⁸ Action Research and the Professional Development of Teachers
http://www.azoo.hr/images/izdanja/Akcijnsko_istranzivanje_web.pdf

Collaborative learning **networks** are usually self-organised and are run on the basis of being open and willing to share information and materials. They are usually based on a common aim and equal and inclusive principles and, with the support of ICT, are the natural environments for collaboration. Networking between members of the teaching profession (teachers, teacher educators and school heads) or student teachers may mean levelling the terrain for collaboration.

The following case study is a detailed example of a collaborative learning environment within a network of ITE institutions and schools¹⁹.

Case-study: In **Estonia**, in March 2013, the University of Tartu established a **Network of Innovation Schools**. The schools in this network include kindergartens (7), vocational schools (1), integrated elementary schools and gymnasiums (23), gymnasiums (4) primary schools (13), hobby schools (2) and schools for children with special needs (7). The schools are also very diverse in size (from 60 to 3500 students), in location (situated all over Estonia) and in language (Estonian and Russian speaking students).

The goal is to bridge the gap between theory and practice within the school and the university and to work as equal members and benefit from each other's strengths. University staff improve their awareness of practice-related problems and solutions. School teachers and principals improve their scientific thinking and become involved in educational research by conducting studies and writing research papers.

During the first years of the collaboration, the university is the initiator of different projects. One group of schools (Innovation Schools) conducts research and development work in teams and contributes to teaching, and another group of schools (Innovation Friends) implements innovations developed in the network and gives feedback on the ideas and outcomes.

There are four dimensions of collaboration between schools and universities: (1) traineeship, (2) professional development, (3) team teaching, and (4) research and development. After piloting the model for two years in one practice school, it was concluded that the synergy between these dimensions is leading to innovation.

The outcomes are published in two research papers in the European *Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences* (Elsevier). The development activities of this model are supported by the European Social Fund.

In **Spain**, the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (MECD) has created Procomún which is a **professional social network**. This network is a meeting point for teachers to exchange, evaluate and disseminate experiences and educational content, and discuss different aspects of professional performance. The network closely links users and educational resources through a tagging system, feedback, educational contexts, guidelines, and peer learning communities. The network allows teachers to find and use educational and learning resources through searches, within the framework of the so-called semantic web. This may be achieved by accessing the open digital educational resources repository of the MECD and the Autonomous Communities. The repository brings together more than 85,000 metadata standardised catalogued learning objects (LOM -ES standard), consistent with the

¹⁹ See Pedaste et al (2014)

Spanish pre-university curriculum. It also allows teachers to add educational resources of their own.

In **Greece**, the introduction of “NewSchool” is designed to meet the current needs and challenges in education through a collaborative learning project. Part of this initiative called the “National Programme of Teachers’ Training” is aiming to upgrade the quality of education. 150,000 public and private school teachers are being trained in the first instance. The methods will allow primary and secondary school teachers to take part regardless of their current skill base and extent of access to technology. The training programmes will allow maximum flexibility for students regarding time, distance and individual learning styles.

In **Poland**, a new initiative called 'the Bydgoszcz math bubble' was launched in 2012 to improve teaching of mathematics in the initial grades of elementary schools. Designed and implemented by the Institute of Educational Research (IBE) the initiative aimed to create a self-developing collaborative environment within the school system in Bydgoszcz, a medium-sized city in northern Poland. The project has been financed by the local authorities, who are responsible for the city schools. A group of 19 volunteer teachers started jointly working out more effective methods of teaching mathematics to the youngest pupils.

They were supported by mathematicians and psychologists from the Institute, mostly by creating opportunities to build up teachers’ self-confidence in smart experimenting and to facilitate free exchange of ideas among them. It took about a year to build enough trust within the collaborating group. After that, the students' learning outcomes have visibly improved and 'the bubble' has started growing - at present about 120 teachers across the city actively participate in the already self-sustaining collaborative programme.

Inspired by this positive experience, other local authorities decided to use the know-how to grow their own 'math bubbles'. A good example of an effective cooperation of the local authorities, a scientific institute and local teachers now spreads across the country, resulting in new 'bubbles' of productive collaboration communities among teachers.

In **Cyprus**, the Ministry of Education and Culture, through the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, implements different projects to promote networking and collaboration amongst teaching professionals. The projects are linked to integrating ICT in learning, as well as Internet safety.

Gathering and dissemination of data on effective collaboration

There should be a mutual sharing between policy makers and education professionals of the benefits of and good practice in collaboration learning, including through the use of new technology to exchange good practice, experience and learning outcomes.

This could be done by collecting and disseminating existing good practices, or successes for example through online collaborative platforms and networks.

A shared understanding of the need for change, or common aim are preconditions for collaboration. In an ideal setting these are based on data **and evidence on what works well**. For this reason it is important to foster data and evidence gathering at all levels of the educational system.

Teachers and leaders will be able to influence a traditional school culture more readily when they themselves are inspired and learn about good examples from other schools. Policy measures to support this approach can help to transfer positive results between schools and institutions and between different educational levels. A constructive dialogue with other schools as well as teachers and leaders can assist

schools with the implementation of wider political and administrative initiatives. It may also strengthen feedback to inspectors about school practice and provide lessons for new policy initiatives.

Luxembourg has introduced a hospitation (job shadowing) concept in order to promote exchange between teachers on their practice and to thereby create opportunities to learn from each other. The concept provides teachers on a voluntary basis the possibility to visit other teachers' classes. The visits are organised by the national institute for CPD, which also offers preparatory sessions. Teachers are supposed to meet before the visit and agree on aims and questions to guide the observation and the feedback session. Teachers can also visit schools and classes in neighbouring countries.

The **sustainability** of collaborative learning environments is a challenge in education. Collaborative learning produces results on a rather long term basis, and priorities in educational systems often change with political cycles. Thus the sustainability of collaborative learning environments is of key importance. Stakeholders need to find resources to **evaluate** such projects in order to make decisions based on good evidence, identifying how and why the successful partnerships are working well.

The **dissemination** of good practice also remains a challenge in countries. Understanding how and why successful collaboration has come about, and what the possibilities are, is therefore a significant pre-condition for bringing about cultural change. Transferring good practices to different settings may be possible and can help to create a collaborative learning environment.

Developing capacity in the leadership of collaborative practices

To achieve collaborative leadership, policies should respond to the need for inclusive decision making and proposals for change. Measures should help initiate and support programmes that are designed for head teachers, senior management teams, development groups and other "informal" leaders in school.

This could include actions that draw on the skills of a variety of leaders and involve team working and developing Leadership programmes that prepare professionals to lead collaborative practices.

The significance of leadership in the success or failure of schools is now widely recognised²⁰. School leadership is increasingly becoming a priority in the policy agendas of many intergovernmental organisations and national governments.

A leadership discussion needs to take a broad view that includes school heads as well as other formal and informal leaders.

The different roles played include the **institutional** leader who could be perceived as a role model who promotes a collaborative learning climate and sustains a supportive structure; and the **collaborative** learning leader who helps to build bridges between stakeholders across formal boundaries. **Participative** leadership and distributive leadership styles are more in the spirit of collaboration. These involve being a head teacher with strong leadership skills but also being prepared to distribute leadership to individual teachers and teams of teachers. Strong leadership means that the school

²⁰ In 2008, OECD published a report (Pont, B., Nusche, D. and Moorman, H. 2008) on School Leadership following several years of consultation with stakeholders. School leadership has also been addressed in the International Summits on the Teaching Profession, and UNESCO has started to work on school leadership issues. At the European level the EU has established a policy network on school leadership and promoted peer learning activities for school leaders.

head needs to create a shared understanding of goals with clear priorities, objectives and targets. These leaders must secure similar priorities for the school budget and the plans for teachers' professional development, and there needs to be clear leadership support for school staff in implementing goals. **Distributive** leadership involves a dialogue with social partners and stakeholders and enabling ownership of the shared goals and commitment to implementation. Teachers should be encouraged to be **informal** leaders in their local collaborative learning environments whilst also helping to transform the work culture into a learning culture. Measures to encourage trust between leaders and teachers are critical in underpinning a learning culture.

Good leadership of learning draws on the skills of a variety of leaders within the school and supports horizontal and vertical collaboration and learning processes. Trying to adapt and amend formal structures to accommodate the learning perspective might not be sufficient on its own; the best practice is to develop a leadership structure that promotes the learning perspective.

In 2012, a bottom-up initiative was launched in **The Netherlands** to support school leaders in strengthening collaborative cultures in schools. In this project²¹, 16 schools began introducing new collaborative strategies, where teachers met weekly to develop lesson plans in collaboration, observed each other's lessons and discussed pupils' learning outcomes. In staff rooms, data walls with pupils' learning outcomes were introduced, and staff meetings were restructured to stimulate active engagement. During six months, school heads received support from one of the coaches, who were supplied by the Ministry, teacher unions, and national boards for primary and secondary schools and teacher education institutes. Through this approach a snowball effect was created with now more than 200 schools participating.

Case-study: In **Slovenia**, a special programme is in place to support leadership in schools as head teachers must obtain a head teachers' license within one year of commencing their service. The Preparatory Programme for Head Teachers and Aspiring Head Teachers consists of 144 contact lessons, job shadowing (1 day) and project work. Collaboration practice and culture is promoted throughout the training including the following modules: i) Organisational climate and culture; ii) Leading teaching and learning; and iii) Leading people. The Networks of Learning Schools programme has been running for 15 years. School development teams from 8–10 schools meet regularly and coordinate activities in their schools. A collaborative culture is developed within schools and also among school development teams from different schools. The programme is implemented at three levels:

- school development teams who are trained to organise workshops and coordinate activities;
- whole school staff who participate in workshops about implementation;
- head teachers who participate in workshops together within teams and in a special workshop only for them: aim is to discuss how to support collaboration among teachers.

Evaluations show that most schools identify collaboration between teachers as the most significant change. Some schools participate in the programme more than once as they benefit from sharing experiences and knowledge. Head teachers appreciate that collaboration is not something that can be taken-for-granted. It must be supported and sustained.

²¹ www.stichting-leerkracht.nl

Leaders and potential leaders need preparation in order to effectively identify possibilities for collaboration, organise and launch collaborative learning processes and then sustain collaborative efforts till the shared goals are reached.

Leadership training and requirements

In order to nurture leadership in all teachers, stakeholders should make provision for a wide range of professionals to benefit from relevant professional development.

This could include training in leadership of collaborative learning, resources to support and sustain collaborative learning activities and bring together change agents to provide practical inspiration.

Developing leaders to support collaborative learning takes time and requires the promotion of a collaborative culture, sustaining collaborative learning at school, and monitoring the process to ensure that there is progress towards goals.

Leaders need to have a deep understanding of pedagogies, of the learning process, and of the specific school culture. It is therefore important that school leaders themselves having been trained as teachers and/or educational professionals and also having proficiency in leadership skills. Good practice in embedding these skills would be to include the 'collaborative learning environment' as a theme in pedagogical leaders' own initial and continuing professional development.

In **Norway**, the government funds a collaborative leadership training programme for school leaders, covering such areas as pupils' learning processes, leadership and administration, co-operation and organisation development, development and change and leadership roles. The aim of this course is to strengthen the pedagogical leadership competence of head teachers and other school leaders in secondary schools. The tradition of strong teacher autonomy and the fact that many school leaders have been assigned new administrative duties are perceived as factors that could increasingly weaken the possibility for active leadership.

In **Germany**, all sixteen Länder are interested in high standards when it comes to leading positions at school. Due to the autonomy of the Länder there are different approaches to preparing teachers for new tasks linked to school leadership, especially for aspiring head teachers. These preparatory courses cover the expectations and challenges faced by school leaders, and support candidates in the decision of whether they want to follow this path. Candidates for school leadership are supported in preparing for that position and, once they become a newly qualified head teacher, they receive support from advisors and coaches through joint seminars with other newly qualified head teachers. This approach, which is becoming a common feature, supports the creation of networks among school leaders, regional partnerships of schools as well as links between experienced and new school leaders. The resulting structured collaboration benefits small schools, in particular, by helping them share good practice and find solutions to joint challenges.

In **Serbia**, a one year **headship development programme** involves a combination of workshops, peer coaching and project work for groups of 25-30 head teachers. Some workshops involve the whole group of teachers. Other training takes place in smaller groups of 4-6 head teachers working closely together to share good practices, identify challenges and search for solutions in school leadership.

In **Cyprus**, the Ministry of Education and Culture, through the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, offers in-service training for newly promoted school leaders. The training takes place once a week throughout an entire school year.

The programme aims to enable school leaders to practice distributed leadership and to be a leader of change, organising, managing and mediating for the development of the school. The programme combines centrally organised seminars and school-based training with networking among school leaders and a mentoring scheme.

Change agents

Training all members of the teaching profession in the leadership of collaborative practices has wider benefits. It can be useful preparation for teachers who aspire to become school leaders and change agents in education. Positive outcomes will impact on local schools as well as the education sector as a whole. As **all teachers are leaders of the teaching and learning process**, arguably all would benefit from being trained in collaborative learning activities. Though this is a rather ambitious aim, the point to highlight is that people involved in collaborative learning leadership also need to engage with others who provide practical inspiration.

In **Lithuania** a recent leadership project involved 18,000 educational specialists during the period 2009-2015. The approach adopted starts with the assumption that leaders are not only principals of schools but also anyone who carries out assignments and who is able to generate a team approach to achieving high quality leadership. Leaders are not therefore merely 'produced'. The preferred approach is based on creating a safe environment for leaders to be nurtured. Leaders are encouraged to take responsibility, use external support and become supporters of others. The basic values are respect for individuals; maintaining professional rules and agreements; trust and empowerment. The aim is to establish a transparent system of responsibility and accountability.²²

Learning the lessons – enabling policy conditions

The best collaborative learning environments are those that are tailored to the local context and are accepted and monitored by local partners. Therefore policies should focus on these aspects of collaborative learning partnerships in order to build and keep the leadership required.

This could be done through ensuring professional flexibility for school leaders carrying out their managerial, administrative and pedagogical functions in schools and establishing/sustaining close cooperation between social partners, institutions in local community other schools and educational institutions.

When considering the role of schools in creating collaborative learning environments, their strategies benefit from greater chances of acceptance and success if they are **suited to the local situation**. This requires school leaders to have the right to exercise professional flexibility when carrying out their managerial, administrative and pedagogical functions at the schools. The quality of the local professional responsibility helps to develop wider collaboration with social partners, relevant institutions in the local community, other schools and educational institutions. Good practice is to establish a wider collaborative learning environment by forging partnerships that create a domino effect and increase the spread of professional collaboration and collaborative initiatives.

When relevant leaders are actively involved in this process they more easily become aware of any obstacles and it is easier to see the effects of different incentives. Monitoring and supporting the collaborative learning process works best if it is part of

²² See more at www.lyderiulaikas.smm.lt

a wider professional assessment process. Success needs to be based on a professional debate on what works and what is gained by implementing new activities.

In **Luxembourg**, primary schools do not have school based directors, but school committees. The members are elected by and from amongst the personnel of a school. The committee puts forward a proposal for school organisation, elaborates the 'school success plan' and approves the use of didactic material. The school committee is led by a president, who is elected, for a five-year period, by the teachers.

In **Italy**, as of the 2014-15 school year all schools are required to carry out a thorough self-evaluation exercise. One of the important process indicators on which schools are asked to reflect regards their ability to achieve greater synergy and collaboration with their local community and socio-economic environment in order to carry out their educational mission. School evaluation teams, also involving the school head, are asked to reflect on the extent to which their schools build partnerships and act as strategic partners of territorial networks, with the aim also of fostering collaboration and coordination with various local bodies sharing responsibility for local education policies.

Providing adequate resources

Initiating and sustaining collaborative projects takes time and money, therefore stakeholders should allocate adequate resources for making collaborative learning possible and avoid financial arrangements that are linked to individual achievements only.

This could include resources to encourage cooperation between schools in disadvantaged areas, promote innovative teaching practices, and enable teachers to improve their skills and pilot teacher education activities.

The envisioning and organisation of collaborative learning requires dedicated time and effort. Often the lack of time is the main obstacle to collaboration. Therefore stakeholders should pay attention to assuring that there is time and possibility in working arrangements for collaboration. The other often mentioned barrier to collaboration is the lack of funding for creating and sustaining collaborative learning environments. Also, financial arrangements are often linked to individual achievements only and thus demotivate teacher educators, teachers or student teachers in collaboration.

In **France**, resources are available to cover the costs of particular projects. For example, measures are in place to encourage cooperative activities in relation to 'priority education' (networks of primary and secondary schools with disadvantaged children, usually facing challenging circumstances). Secondary school teachers are able to devote 10% of their statutory teaching time for cooperation; in primary schools, 9 days per year will be set aside for the same purpose. The framework law on education also makes provision for the development of innovative teaching practices in schools. New projects in schools carried out in a cooperative way are eligible for remuneration on the basis of time spent.

Schools in **Italy** are able to bid for funds to enable teachers to improve their skills. Schools are encouraged to set up regional networks for teachers' professional development. This allows teachers to bid for Ministry funds within the National Plan. Bids can be submitted for teacher up-skilling in areas linked to school improvement, curriculum enhancement, safe learning environments, professional development and collaboration, student learning, home-school relations, learning through ICT, and partnerships with the local community. It is anticipated that schools will work together

to help selected teachers develop and enhance skills in these areas and equip them to act as “coaches” to other teachers in their own schools.

In **Spain**, training grants are available for University graduates to help to support schools. This pilot programme offers concrete support to low-achieving students in problematic state-funded schools. Selected university graduates carry out school and after-school activities in Primary Education (curricular accommodation plans, specific methodologies, individualised assessment). The programme is focused on students with special needs or low achievers, as well as students with school absenteeism above the Spanish average. Grant holders work closely together with teachers.

4.6 Suggested policy actions

Collaborative learning entails changes in practice, mindsets and the development of new cultures and environments. The building of good relationships and partnerships is a key challenge. Collaboration needs to fit with both the context of the education system and the purpose of achieving particular learning goals. Forms of leadership may need to adapt to provide direction and evaluation that is conducive to collaborative learning.

Summarising the results of the previous section, suggested policy actions to meet the key challenges include:

From a competitive to a collaborative work culture

- Policymakers, educational leaders and the relevant stakeholders, including the social partners, should contribute to preconditions for collaborative work culture by creating and strengthening mutual trust. They should promote collaborative forms of teaching and learning in becoming every day practice, widespread professional practice for teachers, teacher educators and educational leaders.

Collaboration incorporated into ITE

- In order to prepare future teachers for collaboration, stakeholders should make sure that ITE programmes develop positive attitudes towards collaboration and skills in professional dialogue, sharing, critical thinking and peer learning. Teacher educators working within ITE and throughout the continuum should model collaboration themselves when providing education for (future) teachers.

Opening up schools and ITE institutions to collaboration

- When designing a new organisational or institutional structure, priorities should be given to solutions favouring collaboration both within the individual institution and between institutions, at the same level and across educational levels, and between educational institutions and the local community.
- Action research is oriented at finding a valid solution to a problem in classroom practice. This should be promoted by stakeholders as a means to strengthen collaborative learning environments within and between schools and with providers of ITE.
- Stakeholders should facilitate and promote networking between teaching professionals in order to create equal based terrain for collaboration.
- Stakeholders should inform education professionals of the benefits of collaboration and enable the use of new technology to exchange good practice, experience and learning outcomes.

Leadership of collaborative practices

- To achieve collaborative leadership, policies should respond to the need for inclusive decision making and proposals for change. Measures could help initiate and support programmes that are designed for head teachers, senior management teams, development groups and other “informal” leaders in school.
- In order to nurture leadership in all teachers, stakeholders should make provision for a wide range of professionals to benefit from relevant professional development.

Preconditions for enabling collaborative learning environments

- The best collaborative learning environments are those that are tailored to the local context and are accepted and monitored by local partners. Therefore policies should focus on these aspects of collaborative learning partnerships in order to build and keep the leadership required.
- Initiating and sustaining collaborative projects takes time and money, therefore stakeholders should allocate adequate resources for making collaborative learning possible and avoid financial arrangements that are linked to individual achievements only.

5 Governance of Initial Teacher Education

5.1 Key principles

- Governance of ITE should be based on collaborative approaches that involve all stakeholders (including providers of ITE and Continuing Professional Development, professional bodies and associations, social partners) in the processes of decision making, steering and monitoring.
- Governments and all stakeholders should all take responsibility for (parts of) the system and should be involved in dialogue and co-operation. This implies, where necessary, the development of stakeholder capacity to take responsibility within the system.
- The governance cycle needs to create balance between decision making, steering and monitoring processes and needs to focus on internal coherence and sustainable policies; in particular by making effective use of monitoring data on the processes and outcomes of policy measures.

5.2 Why governance of Initial Teacher Education matters

A continuous and collaborative teaching profession grows out of ITE. This first, preparatory stage of a teacher's career should lay the foundations for a profession that strives for quality, efficiency and equity, and, as elaborated in the previous chapters, should build a culture of collaboration and continuous learning.

To ensure every novice teacher benefits from a start that is consistent with these ambitions for the profession as a whole, a priority objective for policy-makers should be to support the integration of such a continuous and collaborative approach into ITE. There is therefore a need for governance models and policies for ITE to **connect the different stakeholders, phases and perspectives**. A collaborative culture in ITE demands appropriate modes of governance, in which not only government, but also each stakeholder participates to share systemic responsibility.

Education systems, including ITE, are under constant pressure to adapt. This is generated by two forces. Firstly, although most governments (at different levels) are responsible for the performance of education systems, decentralisation has given schools and school leaders more responsibility and scope for decisions. Secondly, the contribution that education makes to a strong knowledge economy is increasingly recognised, and international comparisons including TALIS (OECD 2014) and PISA (OECD 2013) have increased the visibility and awareness of national circumstances.

There seems to be a wide consensus in the literature and among policy makers that the complexity of education is increasing. In many countries, education governance has shifted responsibilities from central government administration towards other regional and local levels leaving Ministries to steer by goals and objectives. In this context, new structures of collaboration, participation and networking are required (Hopfenbeck T. et al, 2013).

Against this background, ITE has become an area for policy attention. National governments have increasingly focused on developing policies to guarantee and increase the quality of ITE. In May 2014 EU Education Ministers agreed that ITE should provide prospective teachers with the core competences required to deliver high quality teaching. It was also acknowledged by the Council of the EU that teacher education programmes should draw on teachers' own experience and seek to foster cross-disciplinary and collaborative approaches. Ministers also agreed that dialogue and partnerships between teacher education providers and education institutions, as

well as with representatives of the labour market and the community, can provide useful insights into ideas when designing and delivering teacher education programmes (Council of the European Union 2014).

Understanding the governance process

The governance of ITE refers to:

- all processes, rules, structures and decisions that define actions and relationships, grant power and verify performance (e.g. about ITE curricula and routes, learning outcomes, roles and responsibilities, selection of teacher candidates, system management, quality assurance etc.),
- the way rules, mechanisms and actions are produced, sustained, adjusted and regulated (e.g. by stakeholder dialogue/consultations; by top-down and/or bottom-up processes), and
- the way collective interests are articulated, and rights/obligations established (with/without the involvement of stakeholders, professional bodies and external organisations) (Bevir 2012).

The governance process should be a cyclical process involving decision making, steering and monitoring:

- *decision making* includes decisions on new regulations, policy measures and implementation;
- *steering* such as strategic aspects of governance to make sure that decisions are implemented, regulations are followed and intended outcomes are reached. Communication and dissemination are key activities helping to raise awareness and support new regulations, reforms or initiatives.
- *monitoring* includes supervising, evaluating and checking system quality processes to ensure successful outcomes

In most European countries the provision of ITE has been entrusted to higher education institutions. ITE is, however, subject to government regulation. Higher education institutions typically cover matters such as study programmes, curricula and selection of candidates. Three dominant models of ITE governance can be distinguished: political, institutional and professional.

In the **political** model, government bodies dominate in terms of legal jurisdiction and authority, but also in terms of working with public officials in exercising this authority directly rather than delegating. In this model, the image of the teacher is that of a state agent, paid by the government to carry out the policy agenda for public education. This model mirrors a public policy agenda: an intensified interest of the state as the major funder, regulator and provider of services, and a proactive approach to ITE. The policy framework refers to setting/implementing general orientations and professional competences, coupled with programme accreditation and professional certification mechanisms.

In the **institutional** model, responsibility for governance is centred on the academic institutions in charge of ITE delivery and accountability structures. In this model, the image of the teacher is that of a public intellectual, informed by reflective practice, inquiry and the pursuit of social justice, and acting as a learner, leader and school reformer (Cochran-Smith and Fries 2005). In the faculties of education/ITE units, the university location can create tensions between conforming to academic expectations and remaining informed by practical school realities. The institutional model mirrors the value of critical inquiry, based on theoretically underpinned expertise and

knowledge, systemic inquiry for improved professional practice, and maintenance of a critical tradition (Bridge 1996).

In the **professional** model, the profession itself has a key role in controlling access into the profession through ITE. In this model, the image of the teacher is that of a member of a profession which draws on the embedded practical expertise of teaching. This reflects the value of professional self-regulation, with the underlying notion of a professional mandate to act on behalf of the state, in the best interest of citizens (Furlong et al. 2000). Public interest and protection from incompetence are addressed by the profession setting high entry standards and having a say in the provision and accreditation of ITE. The structures in place derive from governmental delegation of administrative authority to organisations whose governing bodies are mostly elected by the profession. The creation of these professional bodies can substantially alter existing patterns of ITE governance depending on the nature of relationships between key governance parties in a specific context.

The three governance models represent separate interests, expressed through specific structures and specific images of teaching. As a result, the reality of ITE governance, is often characterised by **competing claims of key parties** (government, ITE providers, the teaching profession, employers, trade unions and teacher education students). These competing claims might lead to a context for policy making as a one way process in which the role and influence of one stakeholder is dominant and the influence of other stakeholders is reduced. Alternatively, governance can be an interactive process in which several stakeholders are involved and influence the policy process and the desired outcomes. In other words, governance can be top down, bottom up, collaborative or interactive (Ansell and Gash 2007).

Since government, ITE providers and the profession each bring legitimate interests to ITE, it is important to develop systems of governance that effectively manage tensions between them, rather than assert the primacy of one governance model.

This chapter takes a closer look at the **governance system and the process of policy making** for ITE, including measures to support change and suggested policy actions.

5.3 Recent actions across countries

Levels of centralisation, standardisation and regulation

The balance between **regulation and autonomy** of ITE depends on national contexts and the different forms and terms of regulation and standardisation.

Centralised systems typically have one governing body at national government level directing guidance for ITE.

Most **decentralised systems** share the governance of ITE between the national and other levels, or distribute it to levels below the national level. This is most often the level of regions, provinces, *Länder* or territories (e.g. in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Switzerland and the UK). While in some countries the main responsibility for school education lies at the level of municipalities, this is rarely the case for ITE. In decentralised systems, agreement between local or regional authorities is necessary to ensure a certain level of mobility of teachers within the country.

In some countries, a distinction exists between public and private ITE providers. In such systems the governance role adopted by the ministry might differ between these two types of institutions.

In more **regulated systems** ITE is governed by detailed regulations and descriptions regarding the curriculum to ensure that each student meets the required qualities (steering by rules); while in more **deregulated systems** general guidelines for the output are given while the institutions providing ITE are autonomous and decide how to reach these outcomes (steering by goals). Deregulation in education systems can show variations, such as:

- the partial devolution of some powers, but with overall state control over budget and teacher recruitment (e.g. in France, Germany, Italy);
- the devolution of administrative and budgetary powers to education institutions and schools (e.g. the Netherlands, England).

Generally, across Europe, there is an increasing level of **deregulation with increased autonomy** for institutions in charge of ITE provision; they can take decisions about several aspects of high relevance for quality and effectiveness of ITE programmes.

Within different European countries various **mechanisms** are put in place **to regulate, steer and monitor ITE**. Figure 5 provides an overview of these mechanisms, with a particular focus on different elements of quality assurance for ITE²³.

Figure 5: Overview of mechanisms for the governance of ITE

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM-FR	BELGIUM-NL	CROATIA	CYPRUS	DENMARK	ESTONIA	FINLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	GREECE	HUNGARY	IRELAND	ITALY	LITHUANIA	LUXEMBOURG	MALTA	NETHERLANDS	NORWAY	POLAND	ROMANIA	SERBIA	SLOVENIA	SPAIN	SWEDEN
Regulation/ Legislation on ITE																									
Funding (incentives) targeting the governance of ITE																									
Teacher competence framework																									
Selection processes for teacher candidates																									
Policy evaluation																									
External evaluation of ITE provision																									
Structures for monitoring ITE																									
Dialogue/ Consensus																									

²³ Based on a questionnaire completed by 25 countries as part of the survey undertaken by the Working Group on Schools – *The Governance of Initial Teacher Education*.

Across countries it is common practice to base the governance of ITE on **legislation or regulation**, e.g. on curriculum areas, mandatory courses and delivery (reported by all countries).

Decisions were also taken to introduce **specific funding incentives** targeted towards ITE cation, but only 12 out of 25 countries reported these measures. As dedicated funding can be a powerful policy lever on ITE structure, planning and delivery, learning lessons from the initiatives currently in place will help to inform future practice in other locations.

Teacher competence frameworks are an important governance tool. These frameworks are recognised by 19 out of 25 countries as vital for ensuring shared quality structures and processes (e.g. as references for student teacher assessment and the design, evaluation and quality assurance of ITE programmes). However, teacher competence frameworks vary widely in their features, value, and level of detail, use and recognition.

Attracting high performing students is a priority in many countries, and **selection** processes focus on knowledge areas and the national development of standards and tests. Decisions about **ITE entry selection** processes were reported by 18 out of 25 countries.

Structures, roles and processes for **monitoring the ITE system** focus on continuously checking consistency between objectives, processes and outcomes. These steering mechanisms are less popular across the participating countries – 12 out of 25 countries.

Only 11 out of 25 countries reported the use of **policy evaluation** and monitoring, but 20 out of 25 reported a role for **external evaluation processes** as a part of ITE governance. All participating countries reported the use of **dialogue** as a steering mechanism. This is examined in the next section.

Cooperation and Dialogue

The governance of ITE needs to connect governments with different stakeholders. The following table provides an overview of which stakeholders are involved in cooperation and dialogue with the ministry and regional or local authorities to ensure the quality and effectiveness of ITE.

Figure 6: Overview of stakeholders involved in cooperation and dialogue on ITE policies in different countries²⁴

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM-FR	BELGIUM-NL	CROATIA	CYPRUS*	DENMARK	ESTONIA	FINLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	GREECE	HUNGARY	IRELAND	ITALY	LITHUANIA	LUXEMBOURG	MALTA	NETHERLANDS	NORWAY	POLAND	ROMANIA	SERBIA	SLOVENIA	SPAIN	SWEDEN
ITE providers/ institutions																									
(Teacher) Education researchers, research centres/communities																									
Professional organisations/ associations and bodies**																									
External bodies/organisations																									
School leaders, boards, committees involved in teaching practice																									

In all countries surveyed, education authorities are engaged in dialogue and cooperation with stakeholders in order to ensure the quality and effectiveness of ITE together with **ITE providers**. In most countries this also covers **professional organisations** (20 of 25 countries).

In the majority of countries, the **research community** on (teacher) education is seen as a partner (20 of 25 countries). Dialogue and cooperation on this subject with **schools and school leaders** is less common (17 of 25 countries).

Ten countries were involved with **external bodies and/or organisations**. The bodies/organisations that were mentioned are: associations of students, ITE providers, schools, teachers, school leaders, municipalities and accreditation/assessment bodies.

In seven countries (Flemish Community of Belgium, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Serbia and Sweden) all categories of stakeholders are involved in **discussion about the quality of ITE**, and even additional **external organisations were mentioned**. These included accreditation bodies and a range of umbrella organisations including networks representing school boards or ITE institutes, unions and NGOs.

Figure 7 summarises information from 25 countries about the measures in place to introduce improvements in ITE by **involving stakeholders** in different ways.

²⁴ Based on a questionnaire completed by 25 countries as part of the survey undertaken by the Working Group on Schools – *The Governance of Initial Teacher Education*.
Country notes: * In Cyprus, an Advisory Committee on Tertiary Education has been established in order to facilitate stakeholder dialogue in higher education (not specifically for ITE).

Figure 7: Mechanisms in place to use stakeholder feedback, monitoring and evaluation, data and research for ITE improvement in different countries²⁵

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM_FR	BELGIUM-NL	CYPRUS	DENMARK	ESTONIA	FINLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	GREECE	CROATIA	HUNGARY	IRELAND	ITALY	LITHUANIA	LUXEMBOURG	MALTA	NETHERLANDS	NORWAY	POLAND	ROMANIA	SERBIA	SLOVENIA	SPAIN	SWEDEN
Formal boards or committees for steering/monitoring/quality control																									
Liaison/communication/dialogue with professional organisations/external bodies																									
Commissioned policy reform analyses/studies/surveys																									
Other																									

In 14 of 25 countries **formal steering/monitoring/quality control committees or boards** are in place. 16 out of 25 countries identified **liaising and communication and/or dialogue with professional organisations/external bodies** as mechanisms in place to use stakeholder feedback. A minority of countries (11 of 25 countries) commissioned **policy reform analyses, studies or surveys**.

Of the seven countries which indicated the involvement of a large number of stakeholders (see Figure 6), only two identified all three principal mechanisms for stakeholder dialogue in place (**Flemish Community of Belgium and Sweden**).

In **Austria**, “other” mechanisms in place included ongoing communication and consultancy about curriculum planning and regional and national developments. These are especially in the field of cooperation between University Colleges for Teacher Education and Universities, and the results contributed to the National Development Plan and a new legal framework for teacher education.

In the **Flemish Community of Belgium**, “other” mechanisms included five “networks of expertise” with responsibility for the professionalisation of teacher educators, collaboration between teacher education institutes, research and organising seminars. In **Estonia**, “other” mechanisms included Advisory bodies of programmes or Programme Councils.

²⁵ Based on a questionnaire completed by 25 countries as part of the survey undertaken by the Working Group on Schools – *The Governance of Initial Teacher Education*.

A cyclical sustainable and long-term process

To create **sustainable policies in teacher education**, the governance process needs to be considered as a cyclical process, in which decision-making is followed through with steering measures and monitoring. This will trigger, in turn, a new cycle and move the system towards constant improvement of outcomes. However, in ITE policies the level of monitoring is often limited, resulting in a policy process which is only partly driven by data and evidence. Initiating new ad hoc policy initiatives, which may have little connection with previous measures, can disrupt the cyclical process of quality improvement.

Implementation of fundamental improvements or of a culture of quality is a slow process. This means that the cyclical approach to ITE governance needs to be based on a **long term vision and coherent strategy**.

As ITE is closely related to both school policy and teacher policy, sustainability can be increased when governance processes on school education and the teacher profession are coherent and integrated.

5.4 Key challenges

Education systems are complex and have never been easy to govern. Recent changes including decentralisation and further recognition of the role of education for economic performance are adding to the complexity. Roles and responsibilities of key institutions, schools and other agencies are shifting and new demands are being placed on governance systems.

At the same time, **all levels of government remain accountable** for ensuring high levels of quality and equity in education. Governments striving to create, maintain and develop a workforce of highly-qualified teachers face a **set of challenges** linked to the governance of ITE:

- How can the autonomy of ITE providers be balanced with the needs of teachers, schools, governments and society in this context?
- How can governance and policy processes steer, facilitate and monitor the quality of ITE, in particular in the following fields:
 - Regulation
 - Funding
 - Teacher competences and selection
 - Policy monitoring
 - Evaluating system performance
- How can **dialogue, consensus and collaboration** between governments and stakeholders be promoted and developed?
- What are the conditions, enablers and obstacles for **collaborative governance** of ITE?

5.5 Measures to support change

Starting from different practices in European countries, this section explores the conditions, enablers and obstacles for policies to tackle the key challenges outlined above.

How can the autonomy of ITE providers be balanced with the needs of teachers, schools, governments and society in this context?

*Governments should seek support from different stakeholders through both direct and indirect actions to steer ITE. Involving different stakeholders in the policy making process, while respecting each partner's autonomy, leads to stronger systems, based on **collaborative governance**.*

This could include, for example, reforms which bring together national and local coordination of ITE, cluster ITE providers at regional level or help institutions work together to establish a joint core curriculum and final examinations.

Generally, across Europe, there is a trend towards **deregulation** (or 're-regulation') **of ITE with increased autonomy** for providers; these institutions can take decisions about a range of aspects that are highly relevant for the quality and effectiveness of ITE programmes.

Whether a system for ITE is more centralised or decentralised, more or less regulated, it can still be collaborative. Examples of systems in which policies are based on an interactive and collaborative dialogue with stakeholders include the Flemish Community of Belgium, France, Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway. In these education systems, different concerns and perspectives are taken into account in a systematic way. The monitoring process is important in order **to collect data which feed back into the governance process**, making it a cyclical process with clear feedback loops.

Specific policy actions to support governance of ITE can be initiated by different stakeholders or levels of government and take various forms that include both **direct and indirect actions to steer the ITE system**.

Direct forms of steering involve the use of incentives to stimulate intended actions, or the use of sanctions on unwanted actions ('sticks and carrots'). The incentives can include **additional funding** (e.g. for a specific period or project) or **public recognition**. The sanctions can include a temporary reduction of the budget (e.g. based on underperformance), 'naming and shaming', intensified inspection or supervision.

More **indirect forms of steering** involve the following:

- the **building of consensus** and a shared understanding between stakeholders;
- **promoting ownership** by stakeholders through consultation, involvement and engagement;
- using forms of **peer pressure and peer review** e.g. through identifying forerunners that are used as examples of a good policy or good practice; and
- adopting an **evidence based approach** with pilots and evaluative research.

In 2002 a need was felt in **the Netherlands** for a teacher education system that was more responsive to the needs of schools. Through indirect steering the responsiveness of teacher education institutes has increased: in several national innovation projects, it was not universities that could apply for additional funding, but schools that could seek project funding, provided they had a collaboration agreement with a teacher education institute. This strategy, used in many innovation projects, stimulated closer cooperation between teacher education institutes and schools.

Initiated in 2013, an ambitious reform in **France** tries to bring together national as well as local coordination in a steering process which is:

- initiated, coordinated and supervised at local level by the regional director of state education services (recteur d'académie);
- in partnership with the local university or universities and steered and supported at the highest political and administrative levels by the joint action of Ministry's DG for Higher Education and Professional Insertion (DGESIP), DG for School Education (DGESCO) and DG for Human Resources (DGRH);
- backed up by research through partnerships with, e.g. Institut Français de l'Education (independent research institute) and the Academy of Sciences; and
- organised in a network to share innovative ideas and good practice.

The goals of this reform are to raise qualification standards across the board (5-year Master's degree for both secondary and now also primary school teachers), to move from a consecutive to a concurrent ITE model and to better articulate training and research.

In **Cyprus**, the Ministry of Education and Culture places emphasis on **monitoring the impact** of the autonomy of Higher Education Institutions on the provision of ITE. The Ministry and all stakeholders acknowledge the need to provide a framework within which ITE providers can achieve their objectives. This is required because providers are granted considerable financial and organisational autonomy to decide on ITE curriculum balance, the number of mandatory courses, the length and design of teaching practice, and the process for assessing ITE.

In the **Netherlands**, institutions have autonomy over the structure of the curriculum. In 2004 quality evaluations revealed that the knowledge level of graduates from ITE needed to be raised, the Minister invited the national boards for higher education to address this challenge. The collective of teacher education institutes started a large scale project (funded by the government) in which knowledge bases for every teacher education programme and subject were being developed, indicating minimum requirements for teachers. In the light of the project results, presented in 2009, the Minister suggested that ITE providers arrange a system of quality assurance with regard to the knowledge levels of graduates in order to strengthen trust of society in the quality of teacher education programmes. Institutions responded by developing national subject knowledge tests for some programmes and a system of institutional peer review for others (www.10voordeleraar.nl).

In **Switzerland**, the conference of rectors of the Universities of Teacher Education (UTE) offers possibilities for cooperation and coordination between ITE providers on such issues as curriculum development, research, continuing education, diversity, and mobility. Experts in these fields are mandated by the conference. For example, a working group of foreign language experts from all UTE has defined a profile of competences for foreign language teachers.

Due to local culture, the policy making process takes different forms in different countries. To achieve the planned outcomes of governance of ITE, it is very important that policies are supported and/or initiated by different stakeholders and include both direct and indirect actions.

The focus on a collaborative and continuous profession in which different phases (ITE, induction and Continuing Professional Development) and levels are interconnected requires a distinctive governance system and policy process. This involves forms of **collaborative governance** which are based on a policy process which includes different stakeholders willing to take responsibility.

How can governance and policy processes steer, facilitate and monitor the quality of ITE?

There are different ways in which collaborative governance can be executed and different ways in which the processes of decision making, steering and monitoring can be applied. This section takes a closer look at processes such as regulation, funding, teacher competences and selection, policy monitoring and the evaluation of system performance.

Regulation

In designing regulation, the perspectives and concerns of different stakeholders should be taken into account through a collaborative process. Different methodologies could help achieve consensus on what should be regulated through formal legislation and what might be regulated at the level of stakeholder groups or individual institutions.

For example, an independent body could oversee regulation and dialogue, and regional conferences could act to achieve dialogue between stakeholders about decision making and regulation.

Having formal regulations on ITE as part of a legislative framework is necessary to safeguard the quality of ITE graduates and to create consistency between different phases and perspectives within the continuum. The framework of regulations and legislation creates a common starting point for all stakeholders. Regulations include laws and procedures (e.g. on teacher education curricula, selection of teacher candidates, establishing alternative pathways, recruitment, ITE financing, standards or competence frameworks, quality assurance, monitoring). All countries surveyed by the Working Group base the governance of ITE on regulation (see Figure 5).

Although formal decisions on regulation are taken by public authorities, the process of preparing and developing regulations and legislation can be interactive and collaborative in order to incorporate the perspectives and concerns of stakeholders. Collaborative governance also implies a shared consensus over what needs to be regulated through formal legislation and what can be regulated at the level of stakeholder groups or individual institutions.

In **Poland**, the Ministry sets the standards and expected learning outcomes of teacher education. These are obligatory for all higher education institutions that train teachers. Regional conferences create the opportunity for dialogue between the main stakeholders about the Ministry's decision.

In **Spain**, a change in the regulation laying down the contents and structure of the Master's degree required for practising as a teacher determines that programmes must include adequate scientific preparation, as well as pedagogical and didactic training. This must be complemented with tutoring and counselling for new teachers, delivered by experienced professionals, both from Universities and the schools where the practicum is held. Coordination between these two institutions is meant to maximise the quality of the training. This approach, along with an increase in the number of hours that students spend in schools as part of the practicum phase, is meant to enhance ITE.

In **Italy**, the Ministry of Education, among other things, establishes the framework and criteria for the composition of the coordinating teams responsible for setting up the teaching practice in ITE, as well as the accreditation of schools providing this training and the selection of expert teachers wishing to act as mentors to the trainees.

It determines which players are involved in the monitoring and quality assurance process and the ways in which consistency between ITE provision by higher education institutions and Ministerial regulations will be ensured.

In **Cyprus**, a new law was adopted in July 2015 to establish an Agency for the Quality Assurance of Higher Education in Cyprus. The objectives of the Agency will be, firstly, to ensure the quality of higher education and, secondly, to identify weaknesses and disadvantages of Cypriot higher education institutions with a view to enhancing their quality. The Agency will carry out periodic evaluation and accreditation of public and private universities and higher education colleges as well as their study programmes, publishing a list of all recognised institutions and their study programmes. It will also give higher education institutions the opportunity of offering qualifications abroad, through cross-border education.

Funding

To meet the changing needs and demands of ITE, especially outside of the legislative framework, specific policies, positive incentives or reward schemes can help the promotion of collaborative learning.

Specific measures could include rewarding ITE providers for high quality study programmes, giving bonuses to students who become teachers in priority subjects, and providing a budget to support networking between ITE providers.

Funding arrangements for ITE programmes involve different sources including government grants to ITE providers and tuition fees paid by students. Tuition fees can take various forms (from full cost-recovery and for-profit programmes, to fully funded tuition as a recruitment strategy). Funding also comes in different combinations: targeting only higher education institutions/teacher colleges, or covering also alternative pathways into teacher education, such as the “Teach for All” programmes.

The specific mix and choice of funding sources and ranges is a powerful policy lever on ITE governance.

Since ITE programmes have been placed within the control of higher education institutions and related regulatory frameworks in most European countries, funding for ITE provision generally follows the same arrangements as for higher education. However, 12 of the 25 countries that responded to the questionnaire acknowledged that ITE has a particular status with special funding arrangements. This takes the form of regulations allocating dedicated, specific funding mechanisms or sources which can be in lieu of standard higher education resources, or integrated with standard higher education resources.

In **Sweden**, since 2010 higher education institutions with high quality study programmes are rewarded with increased funds. The Swedish Higher Education Authority has the responsibility for on-going monitoring, analysis and evaluation of quality and performance in ITE and other higher education programmes.

Teacher competences and selection

In order to maintain high quality in a continuum of the teaching profession it is important that competence frameworks for the different phases of the profession use similar structures and a shared language, and that they are used and recognised by all stakeholders.

This could include, for instance, measures to link up or integrate frameworks for both academic and for professional competences, or to create similar frameworks for teacher educators.

The criteria and competence standards that newly qualified teachers must adhere to are another mechanism for steering and safeguarding the quality of education. In many countries these criteria and competence standards form part of the legislative framework (see also 'Coherent frameworks of competence levels' in Section 2.5).

Competence standards, procedures and criteria for regulating entrance into ITE and for selecting candidates for ITE and the profession can be used to **strengthen and steer the quality of the profession**. Some countries also have a competence framework for teacher educators.

In 2013, **Denmark** introduced a selection model for candidates to the ITE programme. The model consisted of a central grade point average (GPA) prerequisite combined with an interview-based entrance exam for those applicants that did not meet the new GPA demand. The decision to introduce the new model was made by parliament; however the concrete process of developing the entrance exam involved key stakeholders, including leaders of ITE programmes, teacher educators and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. The entrance model is being evaluated annually by a steering group that consist of the above-mentioned stakeholders and also includes the national association of student teachers. The development of the model and the evaluation is jointly funded by the Ministry and the ITE providers.

In **Italy**, Ministry regulations specifically determine the process, criteria and procedures for selecting ITE candidates, which ITE providers are required to implement. The Ministry also annually sets the number of ITE candidates which authorised providers may enrol (in collaboration with the Finance Ministry & the Public Administration Ministry). Moreover, a 2015 law has established that 2010 legislation regulating ITE is to be overhauled and, among the elements to be realised soon, provision is to be made for the establishment of national standards for future teachers completing their traineeship and their specialist training diplomas.

In 2008, the **Flemish Community of Belgium** defined two competence frameworks:

Basic competences: the essentials that teachers starting out should know (the final competences provided through ITE)

Professional profile: what experienced teachers should strive for (the competences guiding Continuing Professional Development)

Both frameworks have been updated in 2007 (in conjunction with the reform of the teacher training programme).

Both profiles are based on 10 archetype functions, namely the teacher being:

- guide in the learning and developmental processes
- educator
- content expert
- organiser
- innovator and researcher
- partner of parents/carers
- member of a school team
- partner of outsiders
- member of the educational community
- participant in culture.

ITE providers are free to draw up their own curricula and education programmes as long as their students reach the basic competences upon graduation. This is evaluated through an external quality assurance process. School leaders in Flanders have to draw up a CPD plan for their teachers, and can use the professional profile as guidance.

To achieve coherent competence frameworks across the continuum frameworks should cover all phases of the continuum, as set out in Chapter 2. They should be used by all training providers across ITE and Continuing Professional Development. In order to accomplish this, governments should strive for modes of governance that enables stakeholders to participate in the developmental process.

Quality assurance and monitoring of system performance

For effective quality assurance and monitoring of ITE performance, ongoing checks of consistency between objectives, processes and outcomes and evaluation of programmes are a necessity. All levels of government and stakeholders should support the use of common methodologies, criteria, indicators and benchmarks and should recognise the coordination mechanisms to improve monitoring and evaluation of ITE as well as processes of feedback and learning.

Measures could include, for instance, periodic surveys of the teacher workforce carried out jointly by stakeholders, tripartite dialogue for the education sector to monitor labour market skill needs, the setting up of monitoring committees involving different levels, or the joint professional and academic accreditation of ITE programmes.

One of the key elements of the governance process concerns measuring system performance and quality. This covers three aspects:

First, the process of **policy implementation**: to what extent are new regulations and expectations implemented within the system and curriculum of ITE? Second, the actual **impact of the policy** on outcomes: to what extent do the policies lead to desired outcomes? What unanticipated effects can be observed? To what extent does the policy need to be adapted? Third, the **general performance of the ITE system**: To what extent does the ITE system lead to desired outcomes?

Policy evaluations are completed at system level, for example using ITE evaluation/monitoring data or policy evaluation studies, as a basis for policy reforms and ITE quality improvement.

In order to **monitor system performance**, ongoing checks of consistency between ITE objectives, processes and outcomes are a necessity. External evaluations of ITE are also conducted and can provide useful policy inputs. Both might include outside bodies and/or accreditation processes of ITE programmes and involve different stakeholders.

Austria provides reports on policy measures related to ITE quality monitoring, through the establishment of a **Quality Assurance Council** (including national as well as international experts) aimed at providing needs-oriented support for the development of new ITE programmes within recent reforms. The tasks of the Council include observing and analysing the development of teacher education and commenting on the curriculum, for example the extent to which it meets the needs of the profession (competence levels, qualifications and recruitment process).

In **France**, **monitoring at system level** is the responsibility of the Ministry for Schools, Higher Education and Research through a joint Schools Directorate/Higher Education Directorate committee. The Committee regularly meets and provides

support to directors of teaching academies. **Its aim is to identify opportunities and smooth out obstacles in the day-to-day implementation of reforms.** Accreditation of the teaching academies is for a limited period, varying in the transition phase from 3 to 5 years (with a few exceptions in the form of accreditations for one year only, usually pending further assurances).

Denmark organises their external examiners in associations called the 'Censor Corps'. The Corps for ITE collects data from all external examiners and all exams concerning the students' general level of competence and the degree to which the exams at the ITE reflect the competence objectives of the education. This data is collected in an annual report that is sent to the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. Other quantitative data in relation to the ITE programme is monitored, for example, information on applicants and accepted applicants, and graduates, including their subject specialisation. Forthcoming evaluations include an evaluation of competence-based curricula (2015) and a 360 degree evaluation of the whole ITE programme (2017/2018).

In **Ireland** the Inspectorate of the Ministry provides an assurance of quality and public accountability in the education system. It carries out inspections in schools and centres for education and conducts national evaluations. Advice is given to school leaders, teachers, boards of management and others in school communities about effective teaching and learning and good practice in the management and leadership of schools and school improvement in general. The Teaching Council provides professional accreditation for ITE programmes and the Higher Education Authority approves the academic accreditation of the programmes. The Teaching Council sets out the inputs, processes and learning outcomes for graduates of programmes of ITE and checks the consistency between them and provision by ITE providers. The learning outcomes encompass the standards of teaching, knowledge, skill and competence together with the values, attitudes and professional dispositions.

In **Ireland**, an international review panel carried out an evaluation of the Structure of ITE.

In the **Netherlands**, higher education institutions are responsible for the quality of their teaching and the systems they use to guarantee quality. Higher education courses have to be accredited by the Netherlands-Flanders Accreditation Organisation (NVAO) if they are to receive funding or recognition from the government. ITE institutions are required by law to train the students to the professionally required standard and within the accreditation process, the NVAO checks if the institution meets the standards. The Dutch Inspectorate of Education supervises the system as a whole including the functioning of the NVAO. A system-wide analysis will be made by the NVAO in 2015-2016, on the basis of accreditation of ITE institutions. Its outcomes will feed into the Minister's discussions with the national boards for higher education to identify necessary improvements.

Within collaborative governance, governments and stakeholders can take up responsibilities for evaluating the performance of some part(s) of the system and sharing the outcomes with other stakeholders. Stakeholders can evaluate to what extent the essential elements of the system are reached, which elements are missing or need more attention and which stakeholder or government can take responsibility for these elements.

How can dialogue, consensus and collaboration between governments and stakeholders be promoted?

National contexts define the composition and role of different stakeholders, but key stakeholders involved in ITE governance are: government, ITE providers, the teaching profession, employers and students. In collaborative governance of ITE all stakeholders should share the same goal and take up responsibility, in order to secure high quality ITE. Despite their differences, governments and stakeholders should act on the premise that they are dependent on each other; one cannot be successful without the others.

Measures could include the setting up of regular fora for dialogue, whether formal or informal, or the creation of independent bodies to regulate the teaching profession and oversee cooperation.

The role of stakeholders in ITE governance may differ from country to country; it depends on national contexts, cultures and the extent to which the governance process is seen as interactive and collaborative.

Key stakeholders include:

- The government/ministry level, with responsibility for education at national/regional/system level.
- ITE providers (mostly universities and university colleges)
- The teaching profession (for example represented by teacher unions or professional bodies), that can play a role with regards to entry into the profession
- Employers (for example local authorities, school boards or school leaders) that employ (newly-)graduated teachers and are concerned about the quality of graduates from ITE.
- The research community
- Teacher education students.

Within collaborative governance, policy making is understood as a **shared responsibility between stakeholders** who share the same long term goal: providing the best education possible for pupils and students. However, the stakeholders may have different perspectives, concerns, roles and responsibilities. Despite these differences, stakeholder groups are dependent on each other; one cannot be successful without the others.

In the **Flemish Community of Belgium**, ITE reform development is based on formal advice as well as formal and informal consultation with a wide array of stakeholders (the Flemish Educational Council, the Flemish socio-economic council, ITE providers, students' unions, teachers' unions, other educational institutions, policy groups). In addition to the formal social dialogue, which is obligatory for all regulatory initiatives affecting educational staff, there are multiple informal ways to enhance stakeholder involvement including policy groups, working groups, meetings with the (networks of) ITE providers.

In **Belgium (French Community)**, the Academy of Research and Higher Education (ARES) brings together all stakeholders responsible for higher education (Universities, Higher Schools, Higher Schools of Arts and Institutions for Social Advancement Education). The main aims are to develop collaboration between institutions, coordinate teaching and research activities and students' education and training pathways. ARES also collaborates on international cooperation and representation,

gathering and analysing of statistics and providing guidance, information and advice on education.

In **Italy**, partnerships for teaching practice are a crucial part of ITE programmes for student teachers preparing for all education levels, from pre-primary to secondary. Their pathways include a traineeship period carried out in schools including observation and active teaching under the guidance of mentors. The mentors' main task is to facilitate the trainees getting an insight into the organisational pattern and teaching methodologies adopted in class, to support and monitor the trainees' integration in the class as well as their understanding of management of processes. In addition, coordinating tutors, who are teachers working on a permanent basis selected and seconded to universities, collaborate with mentors, in particular for planning the traineeship project, monitoring and supervising its development as well as drafting the final report.

In **Norway**, The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR), funded by Education authorities, is the most important cooperative body for Norwegian universities and colleges. Its purpose is to develop Norway as a knowledge-based nation of high international standard. UHR aims to be a central supplier of terms to the parliament and government and an important education and research policy player. Bringing together all deans of Teacher Education, the **National Council for Teacher Education** is one of five councils under the umbrella of UHR.

All changes to regulation in Norway are submitted to public hearings, and all stakeholders are especially invited to comment. New regulations ("frameworks plans") for all seven types of teacher education have been suggested and new regulations and guidelines for six of them have been introduced since 2010. **Panels** for monitoring implementation of the reforms are in place and have been established to report annually during 5 years on implementation for the two largest types of teacher education.

What are the conditions, enablers and obstacles for collaborative governance of Initial Teacher Education?

Collaborative governance of ITE will only be successful if all stakeholders and government share the ownership of decisions, actions and the consolidation of measures to translate policies into practice. Capacity building for each stakeholder will assist them to strengthen both their ability and willingness to take responsibility for ITE in a way that exceeds local, institutional or individual perspectives and focuses on the system as a whole.

This could include the development of strategies by a large number of independent education experts and stakeholders or the setting up of thematic policy groups of key stakeholders.

The **decentralisation of education**, that has taken place in many countries, has been accompanied by the involvement of an **increasing number of actors and stakeholders**, including teachers, parents and students. One aspect of this trend has been to move power to the periphery, while national ministries of education remain responsible for ensuring high quality, efficient, equitable and innovative education (Wilkoszewski and Sunbuy 2014). Not only has the number of stakeholders increased but the group of stakeholders has become more diverse.

The involvement of different stakeholders will lead towards gaining a common understanding and achieving goals and outcomes. Collaborative Governance is concerned with the way collective interests are articulated in ITE, and rights and

obligations are established; for example, where dialogue is part of ITE reform, where funding is offered and/or where permanent dialogue structures are created.

In **Serbia**, the preparation of the Strategy for Education Development in Serbia 2020 resulted from the cooperation of a larger number of independent education experts and stakeholders. The whole process was managed by the Project Council, consisted of the highest representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science and presidents of three national councils (for pre-university education, higher education and science). More than 200 renowned experts from different institutions (ministry, universities, schools, teacher associations, industry, NGOs) took part in the development of Strategy, managed by two leading experts (one for education and the other one for strategic planning). The draft version was reviewed by critical friends and the final proposal of the document was discussed in wide and informed public debates. While it is yet to be implemented, the Strategy is considered as one of the rare examples of a holistic approach to policy development in education in Serbia. It covers education from preschool to doctoral studies, and it integrates human development, economic sustainability, governance and human resources issues. Restructuring of ITE is seen as an important part of the Strategy. Nevertheless, the lack of continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy leads to difficulties in the assessment of its results on the ground.²⁶

In **Ireland**, the Teaching Council is the regulator of the teaching profession and oversees extensive stakeholder cooperation. It promotes professional standards in teaching. It acts in the interests of the public good while upholding and enhancing the reputation and status of the teaching profession through fair and transparent regulation. The Council sets up, organises and manages ongoing communication between key actors and roles and facilitates stakeholder dialogue and consultations on key reform planning and implementation. Members include ITE providers, primary and post-primary teachers, school management organisations, National Association of Parents, Teacher Unions, Irish Business and Employers' Confederation, and the Ministry of Education and the Skills Inspectorate.

Case-study: Flemish Community of Belgium: policy groups

The Flemish Community of Belgium recently completed a process of running policy groups **where all stakeholders jointly discussed and made policy proposals to the new government** (report presented in June 2014). There were six policy groups:

- Entrance into ITE
- Content of ITE and exit of ITE (diploma of teacher)
- In school practice during ITE
- Induction (after acquiring the diploma)
- Teacher educators
- Structure of ITE (level, which programmes to offer)

The policy groups consisted of delegations of teacher educators, teachers' unions, experts and educational networks (representing the school boards). They were supported by the department of Education and Training. These policy groups resulted from a policy evaluation on Initial Teacher Education (report was published in October 2013) carried out by an independent commission of experts (foreign teacher educators, school principals). This commission was supported by the Department of Education and Training.

More information: <http://ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/leraar/Beleidsgroepen-lerarenopleiding.htm>

To safeguard the quality and efficiency of ITE, it is essential that policies require the **ownership of decisions and actions to be shared** between the different stakeholders including actions **to ensure that policies are translated into practice**. It is vital that stakeholders feel valued as partners in policy making so that they are able to fulfil their commitments to the quality of ITE.

5.6 Suggested policy actions

Initial Teacher Education is a complex field involving an increasing number of stakeholders and, in some countries, different levels of government. The system of ITE is defined by its institutional framework (setting out the degree of providers' autonomy) and the extent to which it is subject to governmental influence. The role of stakeholders in these activities varies between countries and it is evident that the process of governance needs to take into account the differences between stakeholders.

Summarising the results of the previous section, suggested policy actions to meet the key challenges include:

Achieving collaborative governance

- Governments should seek support from different stakeholders through both direct and indirect actions to steer ITE. Involving different stakeholders in the policy making process, while respecting each partner's autonomy, leads to stronger ITE systems, based on collaborative governance.

Steering, facilitating and monitoring ITE

- In designing regulation, the perspectives and concerns of different stakeholders should be taken into account through a collaborative process. Different methodologies could help achieve consensus on what should be regulated through formal legislation and what might be regulated at the level of stakeholder groups or individual institutions.
- To meet the changing needs and demands of ITE, especially outside of the legislative framework, specific policies, positive incentives or reward schemes can help the promotion of collaborative learning.
- In order to achieve quality in a continuum of the teaching profession it is important that competence frameworks for the different phases of the profession use similar structures and a shared language, and that they are used and recognised by all stakeholders.
- For effective quality assurance and monitoring of ITE performance, ongoing checks of consistency between objectives, processes and outcomes and evaluation of programmes are useful. All levels of government and stakeholders should support the use of common methodologies, criteria, indicators and benchmarks and should recognise the coordination mechanisms to improve monitoring and evaluation of ITE as well as processes of feedback and learning.

Dialogue and consensus

- National contexts define the composition and role of different stakeholders, but key stakeholders involved in ITE governance are: government, ITE providers, the teaching profession, employers and students. In collaborative governance of ITE all stakeholders should share the same goal and take up responsibility, in order to secure high quality ITE. Despite their differences, governments and

stakeholders should act on the premise that they are dependent on each other; one cannot be successful without the others.

Conditions for collaborative governance

- Collaborative governance of ITE will only be successful if all stakeholders and government share the ownership of decisions, actions and the consolidation of measures to translate policies into practice.
- Capacity building for each stakeholder will assist them to strengthen both their ability and willingness to take responsibility for ITE in a way that exceeds local, institutional or individual perspectives and focuses on the system as a whole.

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7 Appendix

Glossary of key terms²⁷

Continuing professional development (CPD)

Continuing professional development (also 'Continuous professional development' or 'in-service training') describes formal and non-formal professional development activities, which may, for example, include subject-based and pedagogical training. In certain cases, these activities may lead to further qualifications.

Induction

Induction (also 'Early career support') is a structured support phase provided for newly fully qualified teachers. During induction, new entrants carry out wholly or partially the tasks incumbent on experienced teachers, and are remunerated for their activity. Normally, induction includes training and evaluation, and a mentor providing personal, social and professional support is appointed to help new teachers within a structured system. The phase lasts at least several months, and can occur during the probationary period. For more information, see European Commission (2010).

Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

Initial Teacher Education (also referred to as 'pre-service training' or 'teacher training') is the first intensive phase of teacher preparation before becoming a fully responsible teacher. It is typically organised as a concurrent route – involving integrated work on candidates' intended school subject(s) and professional training – or a consecutive route in which professional training follows study of the subject(s) in question. For more information see Eurydice (2013; 2015) and European Commission (2014).

Social partners

At national level, employers' and workers' organisations in conformity with national laws and/or practices. At EU level, employers' and workers' organisations taking part in the social dialogue at EU level.

Teacher competence framework

Statements about what a teacher should know and be able to do. A more or less detailed description of skills and competences.

Teacher educator

A person actively facilitating the (formal) learning of student teachers. In a tertiary education institution, this can be a lecturer in a subject discipline whose classes are attended by future teachers of those subjects or a lecturer in specific disciplines, such as psychology, philosophy or pedagogy; staff in specialised teacher education institutions or any other tertiary staff supervising in-school placements or induction phases are also included in the definition, as are school-based mentors or tutors who support beginning teachers.

²⁷ This Glossary is based on a selection of entries from Eurydice publications, including "The Teaching Profession in Europe. Practices, Perceptions and Policies"(2015); "Key Data on Teachers and School Leaders in Europe, 2013 edition"

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