The EPNoSL Briefing Notes
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP POLICY DEVELOPMENT

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European Policy Network on School Leadership
BRIEFING NOTES ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP POLICY DEVELOPMENT & BACKGROUND PAPERS ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

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EUROPEAN POLICY NETWORK ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
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This publication is one of the outcomes of the work conducted in the context of the European Policy Network on School Leadership (EPNoSL) project.

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Preface

The European Policy Network on School Leadership (EPNoSL) is a partner-run consortium created in 2011 in response to the increasing European focus on school leaders' professional development, including preparation and selection of school leaders. EPNoSL aims at improving policy and practice on school leadership in Europe. To this effect, a collaborative network in which members co-construct, manage and share knowledge has been set up.

EPNoSL has grown into a wide network of stakeholders from more than 42 European institutions and intends to expand to all EU and Associated Member-States. EPNoSL partners include academic and other experts engaged in key thematic areas, representatives from more than 10 Education Ministries, policymakers at regional and local levels, as well as professional associations at regional, national and European levels. In addition, research and capacity-building actors serve a fundamental role in enabling and facilitating meaningful exchanges among partners, as well as evaluation and dissemination of findings. The EPNoSL partnership engages in diverse activities resulting in the production of different types of resources on school leadership, among which are National Case Study Reports, Synthesis Reports on specific themes, Typologies, Networking at national level as well as highlights on School Leadership issues and related research. EPNoSL has initiated learning exchange events with the participation of a wider community of stakeholders. It has also set up national-level networks of stakeholders functioning as “Communities of Practice” and has launched an international online forum, while it annually organizes two European Level Peer Learning Activity Events.

This publication is presenting the EPNoSL Framework on school leadership policy development, including also a number of background papers that offer an in-depth discussion of critical issues on school leadership. The EPNoSL Framework is designed to provide policy makers at local, regional, national and EU levels with the tools and analysis to meet challenges and identify areas for policy attention to support and enhance school leadership for equity and learning. Furthermore, the EPNoSL Framework is designed to help policy makers analyze the ways that different school leadership policies and programs interplay and influence the overall capacity of school leaders and their schools to effectively address equity and learning challenges in their schools. This publication also is anticipated to help the research and academic communities to identify key areas for further research on school leadership that are of high interest both to the policy making communities as well as to leaders in schools of all levels and types across Europe. It is also addressed to developers and providers of school leadership training programmes, aiming to raise their awareness for the need to place particular emphasis on training current and prospective school leaders on how to effectively manage and lead their schools through democratic decision making, and the creation of school learning cultures and practices that recognise and value diversity, combat exclusion, and promote fairness and high learning achievement. Finally, this publication is aimed to help school leaders identify areas where they need to improve on their competencies and daily practice and offer them a wider policy perspective to strategically orient, plan and implement initiatives that have the potential to create school environments that help all students, irrespective of their socio-economic and cultural background, gender, health condition or family circumstances, to develop to the best of their abilities.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This set of Briefing Notes aims to contribute to the specification and in-depth discussion of policies for the promotion of school leadership for equity and learning across Europe. It is based on the work conducted in the context of the European Policy Network on School Leadership (EPNoSL), which includes discussion papers prepared by its internal and external experts, some of which are included in Part II of this publication, research conducted by EPNoSL partners, discourse that took place during EPNoSL’s webinars and forums and national workshops organised in several EU countries, as well as the peer learning activities undertaken in the past two years. Building on in-depth insights that resulted from these activities, the briefing notes propose three policy goals as most critical to promote school leadership for equity and learning in all school systems across EU. The three most critical policy goals for all education systems to achieve are:

(a) The promotion of an enabling school leadership environment.
(b) The promotion of professional standards, evaluation and research on school leadership for equity and learning.
(c) School leadership capacity building for equity and learning.

A major criterion for selecting the specific policy goals and the action lines proposed by the EPNoSL Framework is that all of them can be directly shaped, to a great extent, by national governments and competent educational authorities through their decisions. The three highly interrelated policy goals (and action lines proposed) constitute a coherent system that addresses constraints and challenges that are faced to a greater or lesser degree by all school education systems across the EU.

For each of the policy goals identified above a number of action lines are proposed to become the focus of policy intervention in the form of policy measures, investments, programmes, data generation and mechanisms (Briefing Notes No. 2, 3, & 4). A number of factors are further identified as playing a critical role in the implementation of school leadership policies (Briefing Note No. 5). The discussion concludes with an indicators framework on school leadership policy development (Briefing Note No. 6).

Overall, the EPNoSL framework is designed to provide policymakers with the tools and analysis to meet challenges and identify areas for policy attention to support and enhance school leadership for equity and learning. Furthermore, the EPNoSL Framework is designed to analyze the ways that different school leadership policies and programs interplay and influence the overall capacity of school leaders and their schools to effectively and persistently address equity and learning challenges in their schools.

POLICY GOAL I: PROMOTION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ENABLING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ENVIRONMENT

According to the EPNoSL Framework, the promotion and establishment of an enabling school leadership environment is the foundation for school leadership policies that address effectively challenges of equity and learning performance:

- An enabling school leadership environment is reflected in the Room for Flexibility and Autonomy Granted to School Leaders for Making Important Decisions that aim to identify and respond to concrete school needs in relation to equity and learning challenges.
- The Distribution of Leadership Roles and Responsibilities in the context of autonomy empowers all school stakeholders to engage in collaborative initiatives that aim to combat inequalities and to improve learning performance.
- Accountability Mechanisms need to be enhanced to promote trust between school stakeholders, and more broadly to promote the legitimacy and transparency of school-based decisions.

SCHOOL AUTONOMY FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING

Policy makers are suggested to consider the following policy actions and related challenges regarding school autonomy:

1 For further information visit EPNoSL’s portal at: http://www.schoolleadership.eu
• Policies for the promotion of school autonomy should specify in what decision-making areas school autonomy should be widened (or even narrowed down), FOR WHICH PURPOSES IS AUTONOMY GRANTED, and what should be the appropriate mechanisms (accountability systems, overarching frameworks, standards) through which school autonomy can be controlled or counterbalanced. Policy makers need to ensure that policies on school autonomy are contributing in practice to an enabling school leadership environment that is based on TRUST IN THE PROFESSIONALISM OF SCHOOL LEADERS and on mutual understanding.

• Policies that grant more autonomy to schools and in parallel promote AN OVER-REGULATED, BUREAUCRATIC AND STIFLING ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM CAN BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE ROOM FOR MANEUVER THAT SCHOOL LEADERS ACTUALLY HAVE TO PROMOTE EQUITY AND LEARNING IN SCHOOLS.

• POLICIES ON SCHOOL AUTONOMY SHOULD INTEGRATE PRIORITIES FOR TACKLING INEQUITIES IN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE ON THE GROUND. School autonomy becomes a critical policy action for equity goals, as decreasing educational inequities within and amongst schools requires a vast array of initiatives that redress the entire range of discriminatory and exclusionary practices that are produced and reproduced within the school environment.

• Among the implications of policies that widen school autonomy is that THE WORK OF SCHOOL LEADERS BECOMES MORE DEMANDING AND COMPLEX. Therefore, reforms that introduce more decision-making powers at school level should be accompanied by targeted PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT opportunities for school leaders and CHANGES IN THE CURRICULA OF PROGRAMMES THAT PREPARE FUTURE SCHOOL LEDERS.

• Increased autonomy has an impact on the workload of school leaders. The WIDENING OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES is one important option that can help school leaders to deal more effectively with an increased workload.

• In education systems with comparatively low school autonomy IN CRITICAL DECISION MAKING DOMAINS DIRECTLY RELATED TO ISSUES OF EQUITY AND LEARNING SUCH AS PEDAGOGY, LEARNING CONTENT AND ASSESSMENT METHODS, THERE IS MORE PESSING NEED TO CONSIDER RELATED REFORMS.

• THE PACE WITH WHICH REFORMS THAT GRAND MORE AUTONOMY TO SCHOOLS ARE INTRODUCED, IS A CRITICAL FACTOR IN THEIR IMPLEMENTATION. Particularly in education systems with a long tradition of centralisation in decision making and relatively low school autonomy, changes in the governance of schools should be introduced in a gradual manner so that schools become more capable to cope with their new tasks and responsibilities.

DISTRIBUTED SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING

Distributed school leadership is considered as a culture that:

• views leadership as emerging from ongoing flows of interactions across the organisation and its hierarchy, not simply from the actions of the top school manager or a formal leadership team,
• values leadership contributions from across the school and its hierarchy, and
• recognises that this view of leadership can be deployed in order to improve organisational effectiveness,

accompanied by an institutional structure that

• spreads leadership opportunities beyond formal senior roles to enable different sources of expertise and perspectives to influence the school’s work, development and innovative changes,
• facilitates flexible, collaborative working relationships across traditional boundaries and hierarchies, and
• tends towards the creation of flatter hierarchies.

On this basis, policy makers are advised to consider the following policy actions:

• DEEPENING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP FOR ATTAINING BOTH EQUITY AND LEARNING GOALS SHOULD BECOME PART OF A WIDER POLICY STRATEGY based on the notion that participative and democratic decision-making can be more effective in identifying and meeting the local needs of disadvantaged groups of students as well as empowering staff and students in becoming active in the everyday operation of their school.

• MAINSTREAMING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP: it should be integrated into all areas of school leadership policy. Emphasis should be given in harmonising existing and future capacity-building education and training programs with a culture of distributed school leadership.
Factors such as education and school culture, existing degrees of autonomy and forms of accountability, school size, are critical in designing the implementation of distributed leadership models. The precise forms of distributed leadership that may be conducive to an enabling school leadership environment for equity and learning can vary since they heavily depend on context.

Important requirements to consider are the following:

• **Advancing the quality of school leadership requires developing the leadership capabilities of everyone in the school** - both those who are in designated leadership positions and those (such as many teachers, support staff and students) who are not.

• **Developing the leadership capabilities of all requires the development of school cultures and structures that provide the social, professional and institutional support** necessary to create environments that facilitate individual initiative and collaborative working and learning.

• **The development and sustaining of such school cultures and structures requires long-term investment** by schools and by the governments and other agencies that support schools.

• **Distributed leadership requires respect for both autonomy (individual views, professionalism, creativity and needs) and authority (school purpose, goals, values and structures)**, which means school members helping to shape schools’ educational purpose, values, etc. as well as working within these.

• **Helping distributed leadership to be fair and of benefit to the learning of all requires it to be guided by a broad concept of social justice** that encourages schools to ask critical questions about involvement (participative justice), respect (cultural justice), learning (developmental justice) and resources (distributive justice).

**School accountability for equity and learning**

The managerial logic has underpinned many education reforms related to accountability in various EU countries. A wider trend is observed in EU countries towards performance accountability. This is essentially based on test results that are assumed to allow for comparisons between the performance of schools and whole education systems. However, such results cannot reflect in a valid way the full range of valuable learning that takes place in schools. Therefore, **testing as well as system-wide, uniformly applied, criteria for internal and external evaluation of schools should be (re)considered along other methods and techniques that would allow for a more holistic account of how well schools meet the expectations of a wide range of education stakeholders, from central or regional governments to local communities, parents and students.** This is crucial also because the relationships between accountability policies, accountability practices and equity is complex and dynamic.

A major challenge for policy makers is to ensure that the **accountability mechanisms** that are established do not undermine the goal of empowering school leadership which is promoted by other policy actions. Accordingly, policy makers are called to consider the following policy actions and challenges:

• **As vertical and horizontal dimensions co-exist in all accountability systems that can be observed across Europe, policy makers are called to decide upon and implement the right mixture of accountability between the two dimensions.** Policy solutions should take into account that while governments are responsible for the overall quality of education and therefore they need to steer and control schools, schools are responsible for the quality of education provided in the children of specific local communities and families and therefore they have also to ensure that the legitimacy of their decisions and practices, their fairness, inclusiveness and quality, are also recognised and valued by the local communities they serve.

• **Accountability mechanisms should be better integrated with educational policies on equity. The over-reliance of existing accountability practices on school performance outcomes can limit the scope of policies promoting equity in education.** School performance accountability is relatively oblivious to the evaluation of other educational aims such as socialisation, inclusion, recognition and valuing of diversity and difference, and personal development, which are critical to the establishment of a more equitable school environment.
THE OPERATION OF ENABLING AND EFFICIENT ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICES ACROSS THE EDUCATION SYSTEM REQUIRES SUPPORTIVE POLICY MEASURES (e.g. provision of adequate training, open access to data) THAT PROMOTE EVIDENCE-BASED SCHOOL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES.

POLICY GOAL II: PROMOTION OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Policies that support the development and establishment of professional standards for school leaders can have many beneficial uses. They can:

- help school leaders reflect on their everyday practice and identify areas for further improvement,
- be utilised by current and aspiring school leaders to orient their engagement in professional development activities,
- contribute to the establishment of a shared understanding regarding what it means and what it takes to be an excellent school leader between policy makers, school leaders, teachers, parents, students and the society at large,
- promote the coherence and comprehensiveness of school leadership policy,
- provide a framework to guide curriculum development and accreditation of school leadership programmes/activities, and
- support the development of recruitment criteria and evaluation frameworks for school leaders’ appraisal.

Policy makers are advised to take into account the following considerations regarding the development of professional standards for school leaders:

- THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS SHOULD BE BASED ON A SOUND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH, should make explicit the epistemological assumptions upon which they are based and they should be thoroughly field-tested in a wide variety of school contexts (e.g. level of education, type of school programme, school size, student characteristics, etc).

- THE ENDORSEMENT OF NATIONAL OR REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS SHOULD BE BASED ON A WELL STRUCTURED AND TRANSPARENT PROCESS OF PUBLIC DELIBERATION in order to gain the legitimacy and political consensus that is necessary to fulfil their aims. Particular emphasis should be based on the engagement of a wide range of communities of stakeholders (school leaders, teachers, parents, students, teachers’ and school leaders’ professional associations, teacher training institutions, local, regional and national education authorities, etc).

- Professional standards for school leadership should be considered from a dynamic perspective. STANDARDS NEED TO BE REGULARLY UPDATED WITH NEW KNOWLEDGE BASED ON ROBUST RESEARCH AND ON LESSONS LEARNED IN THE PROCESS OF THEIR IMPLEMENTATION, and be responsive to new demands to the work of school leaders emerging from the introduction of education reforms as well as from challenges and changes in the social, cultural and economic context and circumstances that schools operate.

- It is important to ensure that THE STATEMENTS OFFERED ARE CLEAR, CONCRETE AND MEANINGFUL SO THAT IT IS EASY FOR AN INDIVIDUAL LEADER TO DEMONSTRATE THE DEGREE TO WHICH (S)HE MEETS THE STANDARDS. It is important for any criteria to be clearly understood by all parties and that evidence can be readily collected to demonstrate their fulfilment.

- PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO COMPETENCIES. Although competencies of individual school leaders such as their knowledge, skills and attitudes as they take form in concrete actions and practices are certainly key aspects to be considered, competence-based approaches to professional practice might often downplay other key factors for attaining effective school leadership, such as the dialectical nature of the relationship between leaders and teaching staff and the dynamics that this dialectical relationship produces, such as the establishment of a particular school culture and of bonds of trust.

SCHOOL LEADERS’ EVALUATION FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING

School leaders’ evaluation is a key dimension in school leadership policy development. School leadership policy development should consider establishing and updating research-based school leaders’ evaluation and
assessment systems on the basis of a comprehensive evaluation framework that takes into account the following:

- **School leaders’ evaluation systems should be framed within widely accepted professional school leadership standards so that evaluation is consistent with the expectations on school leaders’ performance**, the results are relevant to the improvement of school leaders’ work and are regularly updated and adapted to reflect the complex nature of the profession.
- **Policy reforms aimed to establish or improve the evaluation systems for school leaders require the engagement of multiple stakeholders and, importantly, of school leaders themselves.**
- **Evaluation systems should take into account the specific school contexts** in order to ensure that school leaders’ evaluation is sensitive to the challenges and demands in each school leaders’ work.
- **Evaluation systems should be predominantly oriented towards the improvement of school leaders’ capacity to lead their schools** and should not serve merely as instruments in external bureaucratic accountability mechanisms or be used as mechanisms of coercion and punishment.
- **School leaders’ evaluation systems should be based on a variety of sources and data on school leaders’ performance and on valid and reliable assessment tools.**
- **The quality of implementation is a critical element in effective school leaders’ evaluation systems.**

**Research on school leadership for equity and learning**

Policy makers should consider ways to enhance the use of robust research data for improving school leadership practices. In particular, policy makers are recommended to:

- **Ensure the persistent systematic development and availability of different types of data** on school leadership practices through targeted funding strategies.
- **Challenge the current emphasis of data collection and analysis on learning performance,** in particular for experimenting with **alternative ways for assessing the implementation of equity goals.**
- **Make sure that school leaders and the wider teaching community gets sufficient training and has access to the appropriate tools for analysing educational data.**
- **Broaden open access to educational data**, both in terms of scientific research publications and of student, class, and school data as long as their publication does not raise concerns for privacy violations and other kinds of misuse.
- **Support the development of indicators and associated data on school leadership policy development** that allow for valid and comparative analyses across EU’s school systems.

**Policy goal III: School leadership capacity building for equity and learning**

There is need for a conceptual shift in understanding school leadership, from the position, roles, responsibilities, traits and capacities of the individuals holding formally assigned leading roles in a school to leadership as a function inside schools. Such a conceptual shift consequently calls for a policy shift in **school leadership capacity building** that strengthens but also goes beyond the traditional repertoire of policy strategies and initiatives that focus on the preparation and professional training of school heads or other members of formal teams responsible for the day-to-day management of schools. **The policy implication of distributed leadership is that policy makers should consider strategies and initiatives that target whole school leadership capacity building.**

**Whole school leadership capacity building as well as capacity building that originates from collaboration and synergies between schools should go hand in hand with leadership capacity building activities that engage education actors functioning at all levels of the system of administration and management of school education,** such as local and regional education authorities, municipal departments responsible for running schools, school inspectorates, central education agencies, etc. Overall, **top-down capacity building strategies can be greatly enhanced when they recognize, value, and build upon existing or emerging capacity building activities originating from schools** and various forms of school networks, professional learning communities of school leaders and teachers, and from synergies between schools and research or higher education institutions, NGO’s, businesses etc.
The establishment of a compulsory qualification for school heads in those countries that currently do not require one, can be a policy lever to raise the overall quality of school leaders. This is particularly the case with countries where currently there is a scarcity of formal education/training programmes dedicated to the preparation of school leaders. On the other side, the establishment of a mandatory qualification obtained after participation in demanding programmes of study, may discourage many talented professionals from pursuing a career as school head for various reasons (heavy workload, no opportunity for obtaining a leave for studies, family obligations etc). This could also be the case with mandated qualifications which can only be obtained through programmes that are offered for a high fee that should be paid by the learners. In such circumstances a mandated qualification can increase vacancies in headship posts in schools. Therefore, the policy choice between mandated and non-mandated qualification programmes for the preparation of school leaders should be considered alongside a framework of incentives.

Policy makers are advised to consider encouraging the development of school leadership education/training and CPD programmes and activities that:

- Aim to develop school leaders’ capacity for critical reflection, substantiated by evidence, on the conditions and factors influencing teaching, learning, and equity in their local, school context.
- Promote a holistic approach of school leadership, incorporating the attainment of both equity and learning achievement goals in a balanced way.
- Acknowledge the existing variety of perspectives, experiences, knowledge, values, ways of learning; in short, stimulate the recognition of difference.
- Target whole school leadership capacity building, focusing on democratic, collaborative and innovative school management and pedagogic leadership methods.

A great challenge for policy makers is to design and support innovative, transparent mechanisms for selecting school leaders, design attractive career development opportunities, and establish replacement procedures that ensure a balance between school continuity and change. Policy actions should focus on ensuring that:

- Specialized leadership training as well as relevant skills and competences outweigh other criteria in the recruitment of school leaders.
- School leaders’ career paths become more mobile, allowing principals to move between schools as well as between leadership and teaching and other related careers.
- There are established transparent and impartial procedures in the selection of school leaders.
- The procedures for the replacement of school leaders include succession planning (proactively encouraging other staff - particularly within the same school- to develop leadership skills), as well as a process of consultation with school stakeholders as to strike a balance between continuity and change in relation to the existing school culture and mission.

An indicators’ framework for school leadership policy development

There is always some discrepancy between what has been institutionally established, through legislation or policy strategies for example, what school staff, students or parents believe that is the case, what they know to do and what is actually happening in every day school life. Therefore, policy development on school leadership can be best informed by indicators based on data that provide evidence on

four complementary levels: at institutional level, at the level of dispositions, at the level of capacities, and at the level of practice.

The review of existing indicators on the policy goals on school leadership identified in the briefing notes shows that most of them are institutional level indicators, and that there exists a scarcity of indicators and associated data on dispositional and capacity levels and at the level of practice. One important limitation with the data available is that they do not cover all of EU’s school systems, particularly in some countries where regional or state governments have a high degree of autonomy to shape school systems at sub-national level, such as Spain and Germany. Finally, these indicators do not cover different types of schools and related school programmes.

The indicators’ framework on school leadership policy development should be integrated into a wider framework guiding the identification of indicators and the
COLLECTION OF DATA REGARDING EQUITY AND LEARNING IN SCHOOLS. The heightened interest in the political discourse on average students’ performance indicators should widen to include indicators showing how well students perform by gender, socio-economic background, ethnic background, etc., so as to mainstream issues of equity in the policy agenda. Furthermore, more emphasis should be placed on how well students do in different types of schools and school programmes (i.e. general, vocational, comprehensive) and in schools with different student population compositions (i.e. schools with a high intake of students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds as compared to schools with more privileged students). It is only when school leadership policy development integrates in a coherent way with other policies targeting the promotion of equity and learning in schools, such as policies and measures to support low performing students, policies targeting to make schools more inclusive for children with a minority background, or policies that offer extra support to schools with a high share of students who have disadvantaged backgrounds, that policy making on school leadership can really make a difference in the capacity of every school to help all children learn to the best of their abilities.
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PART I: BRIEFING NOTES ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP POLICY DEVELOPMENT
BRIEFING NOTES ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
POLICY DEVELOPMENT FROM THE
PERSPECTIVE OF EQUITY AND LEARNING

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BRIEFING NOTE No.1
THE EPNOSL FRAMEWORK ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
POLICY DEVELOPMENT FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP, EQUITY AND LEARNING

How school leadership is understood shapes the development and implementation of school leadership policies as well as how school actors, from school boards and principals to teachers, parents and students will engage in it. The EPNoSL project considers school leadership as a multi-faceted process of strategically using the unique skills and knowledge of teachers, pupils, and parents, toward achieving common educational goals. It is more about relationships rather than people or processes. Under the EPNoSL’s perspective, within the framework of educational goals, leadership is present at all levels of an organization, directed at serving the most important stakeholders, through inspiring others in the organization to take part in the management process. Likewise, management in leadership involves making the best use of human, material and financial resources available. School leadership therefore conveys dynamism and pro-activity and is not restricted to principals or school heads but also includes other leaders in education, such as members of a formal leadership team and other persons who contribute towards the aims of the school, even including student leadership.

The EPNoSL project specifically focuses upon school leadership from the perspective of equity and learning. This implies that the EPNoSL project considers them as the most critical challenges in European schools has to address effectively. The EPNoSL project builds upon the conceptual framework defined by the OECD report “No More Failures” which suggests that equity in education can be understood through two closely intertwined dimensions: fairness and inclusion (Field, Kuczera and Pont, 2007). Fairness implies ensuring that personal and social circumstances, such as gender, socio-economic status, cultural background or ethnic origin, should not be an obstacle to students to achieve to the best of their educational potential. Inclusion implies ensuring a basic minimum standard of education for all. The perspective of learning in school leadership does not only refer to students’ experiences in the school but also to professional learning experiences of the professionals involved in the arena of schooling. Since learning is not a visible process, it cannot be observed or measured. In this sense, learning is always about something we do not know (yet). Tests both on the micro level (classroom) and macro level (system, i.e., PISA) do not assess learning as such, but only its results. Therefore, student achievement results only show how students respond to certain test items and do not mirror a student’s capacity for learning. Learning is characterised by a high interconnectedness between cognitive, emotional and action processes and, as such, is a total human experience (Schratz, this volume).

School leadership from the perspective of equity: Typically, in educational leadership and management discourse it is policy makers or family/society factors that are cited as maintaining inequality, and staff in schools depicted as constrained by the context within which they work. However, this is a misleading assumption. Schools and school staff also play a part in creating, maintaining or increasing inequality. School leaders who attempt to shift school priorities and practices in fundamental ways usually
encounter a modicum of support and a good deal of resistance from teachers and from parents. Teachers may argue, for example, that dismantling tracking jeopardises teaching their subject, or any other subject, well. School leaders who enrol students who are seen by others as “problematic” risk parents’ reactions to avoid their school. Flight from schools with a high percentage of immigrant students has been noted in different countries. Above all, school leaders sometimes face a belief that some children are not educable or only educable with great difficulty. The children of immigrant families or of minority ethnic groups are more likely to be seen as having special needs than are other groups, reflecting deeply embedded prejudices that link being perceived as different with being less able. In short, school leaders face unjust discriminatory convictions that underpin many teachers’ and parents’ judgements about what is right and possible in education. School leaders themselves are not immune from such beliefs or actions. Those who, for example, give entry preference to students with higher attainment, or who allocate the most inexperienced teachers to classes of those perceived as having lower ability, are enacting inequality (Lumby, this volume).

**School Leadership from the Perspective of Learning:** There is little research that indicates a direct relationship between school leaders’ behaviour and practices and students’ learning achievement or to teachers’ learning indirectly, through their influence on other people or features of their organizations”. As they argue, “leaders’ contributions to student learning, then, depend greatly on their judicious choice of what parts of their organization to spend time and attention on” (ibid.). On their part, Branch, Hanushek and Rivkin (2009, p. 18) argue that “understanding the impact of principals on learning is a particularly difficult analytical problem. The non-random sorting of principals among schools and consequent difficulty separating the contributions of principals from the influences of peers and other school factors raise questions about the degree to which principals are responsible for differential outcomes”. As they put it, “... it is often quite difficult to distinguish cause and effect, as those anointed as great leaders may simply have been in the right place at the right time” (Branch, Hanushek and Rivkin, 2012, p. 1). The difficulty in establishing a relationship between school leadership and student performance also surfaces in analyses of the PISA data. On the basis of the PISA 2009 dataset, a two-level regression model was tested where reading performance was regressed on all PISA learning environment and school climate (student and school level) composite indices. The results showed that before the socio-economic background of students and schools is taken into account the performance of students is positively related to higher values on the index of leadership only in Spain among the EU countries. In contrast, it is negatively related in Slovakia, Finland and Italy (see OECD, 2010, Table IV.2.13b, p. 186). After accounting for the socio-economic background of students and schools, reading performance is (negatively) related to leadership only in Italy.

An analysis of the “Teaching and Learning International Survey” (TALIS) data (OECD, 2009) also shows lack of strong relationships between school leadership behavior and teachers’ practices (related to structuring, orientation to the student and enhanced activities), beliefs about instruction (direct transmission or constructivist) and attitudes (teacher’s job satisfaction and self-efficacy) in the vast majority of the EU countries that participated in the survey. Only in Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal among the 15 EU education systems in TALIS (AT, BE, BG, DK, EE, HU, IE, IT, LT, MT, PL, PT, SK, SL, and ES), the instructional leadership style was positively related in a statistically significant way with increased teachers’ co-ordination and professional collaboration in lower secondary education. Furthermore, only in Denmark, Hungary, Malta and Portugal teachers are more likely to report better relations with students if they work with a principal who adopts a more pronounced instructional style of leadership. These findings are consistent with research such as those mentioned above that shows the impact of school leadership to be indirect and moderated by teachers and other factors.

According to Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2008), although we lack evidence in sufficient amounts and of sufficient quality to serve as powerful guides to policy and practice on school leadership, there are some quite important things that we do know from previous school leadership research, which can provide the ground for a number of strong claims on school leadership:

- School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning (leadership serves as a catalyst for unleashing the potential capacities that already exist in the organization).
- Almost all successful leaders draw on the same repertoire of basic leadership practices: a) Building vision and setting directions, b) understanding and developing people, c) redesigning the organization, and d) managing the teaching and learning programme.
• The ways in which leaders apply these leadership practices -not the practices themselves- demonstrate responsiveness to, rather than dictation by, the contexts in which they work (apply contextually sensitive combinations of the basic leadership practices described above).
• School leaders improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment and working conditions.
• School leadership has a greater influence on schools and pupils when it is widely distributed.
• Some patterns of distributed leadership are more effective than others (high levels of influence from all sources of leadership).
• A small handful of personal traits explains a high proportion of the variation in leadership effectiveness (such as open-mindedness, readiness to learn from others, flexibility, optimism, persistency).

The EPNoSL Framework

The EPNoSL Framework is designed to provide policymakers with the tools and analysis to meet challenges and identify areas for policy attention to support and enhance school leadership for equity and learning. Furthermore, the EPNoSL Framework is designed to analyze the ways that different school leadership policies and programs interplay and influence the overall capacity of school leaders and their schools to effectively and persistently address equity and learning challenges in their schools.

A comprehensive and coherent approach to policy development is critical. This is because policy decisions affecting school leadership in one area, such as, for example, reforms in the procedures and criteria for the selection of school leaders, or the introduction of new standards in the preparation of school leaders, can have multiple implications in others, including:

• the level of financing required for pre-service, induction and in-service training,
• the institutions and programmes required to prepare school leaders, or
• the degree and character of flexibility (over curricula, budget allocation etc.) that schools should have in order for a new generation of school leaders -emerging from targeted school leadership policies- to be able to actually shape and implement school policies and practices aiming to foster equity and learning.

Central government policy decisions create new realities that in turn pose new challenges for policy making. For example, central government policies that deepen the autonomy of schools can help to establish a fertile soil for the development of school leadership; however, wider autonomy in schools creates in turn new policy challenges related to how central governments can hold school leaders accountable for their decisions. Given the above, what school accountability forms and processes need to be established or extended and complemented so as to effectively support the legitimacy of school leaders’ decisions, and help governments steer the quality of education?

Based on an in-depth review of the literature, inputs from EPNoSL’s internal and external experts, research conducted by EPNoSL partners, the discourse that took place in EPNoSL’s webinars and forums and national workshops organised in several EU countries as well as the peer learning activities undertaken in the past two years, three policy goals are identified as most critical to promote school leadership for equity and learning in all school systems across EU. The three most critical policy goals for all education systems to achieve are:

(a) The promotion of an enabling school leadership environment.
(b) The promotion of professional standards, evaluation and research on school leadership for equity and learning.
(c) School leadership capacity building for equity and learning.

For each of the policy goals identified above a number of action lines are proposed as the focus of policy intervention in the form of policy measures, investments, programmes, data generation and mechanisms (Briefing Notes No. 2, 3, & 4). Furthermore, the EPNoSL Framework identifies a number of factors that have been found to play a critical role in the implementation of school leadership policies (Briefing Note No. 5). The discussion concludes with an indicators framework on school leadership policy development (Briefing Note No. 6). The EPNoSL Framework is based on the assumption that there is no unique road to policy development on school leadership for equity and learning. There are different ways for EU Member States to address each of the policy goals and related policy action lines to achieve an advanced level of school leadership policy
development. For example, EU Member States with a more centralized school system, such as France and Greece will possibly need to consider different policy solutions than Member States with highly decentralized school systems, such as Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands, or Member States where there exist more than one school system, such as the United Kingdom, Germany or Belgium. Furthermore, EU Member States which are strongly affected by the economic crisis and have implemented huge cuts in their public expenditures on school education will need to consider solutions that make more efficient use of less available financial resources as compared to EU Member States that have managed well during the crisis and have maintained or have even increased their public expenditure on school education.

**Figure 1: The EPNoSL Framework policy goals and policy action lines to school leadership policy development, and factors affecting policy response**

Overall, the EPNoSL Framework is going beyond one-size-fits-all solutions to place-based solutions that are context-sensitive and take into account the existing state of school leadership policy development in each EU Member State as well as their specific needs, constraints, and potentials.

A major criterion for selecting the specific policy goals and the action lines proposed by the EPNoSL Framework is that all of them can to a great extent be directly shaped by national governments and competent educational authorities through their decisions. The three highly interrelated policy goals and action lines proposed constitute a coherent system that addresses constraints and challenges to achieve effective school leadership policies that are faced to a greater or lesser degree by all school education systems across the EU.
This briefing note focuses on the policy goal of the promotion and establishment of an enabling school leadership environment and the following related policy action lines:

- School autonomy for equity and learning.
- Distributed leadership for equity and learning.
- School accountability for equity and learning.

For each one of the policy action lines, justifications are offered regarding their individual and combined potential to create an enabling school leadership environment for equity and learning. Under this perspective, the potentials of different approaches and existing traditions to school autonomy, distributed leadership and accountability are viewed from the perspective of school leadership for equity and learning.

**The Promotion and Establishment of an Enabling School Leadership Environment is the Foundation for School Leadership Policies that Address Effectively Challenges of Equity and Learning Performance:**

- **An enabling school leadership environment is reflected in the room for flexibility and autonomy granted to school leaders for making important decisions that aim to identify and respond to concrete school needs in relation equity and learning challenges.**
- **The distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities in the context of autonomy empowers all school stakeholders to engage in collaborative initiatives that aim to combat inequalities and to improve learning performance.**
- **Accountability mechanisms need to be enhanced to promote trust between school stakeholders, and more broadly to promote the legitimacy and transparency of school-based decisions.**

## School Autonomy for Equity and Learning

The policy of school autonomy has been at the centre of educational reforms in some EU countries since the 1980s. Although its implementation by European governments has been characterized by stark differences (mainly in terms of the time frame, of the degrees and the scope of the autonomy granted, and of how school autonomy has been combined with the introduction of accountability systems and national or regional frameworks and standards), there is currently a growing consensus amongst research and policy that school autonomy is a critical factor for improving learning outcomes (Eurydice, 2007). This consensus tends to prioritize the role of school leaders in making important decisions in terms of everyday and long term school management (OECD, 2008). On the other hand, in many countries the influence of central authorities in setting standards, curricula and assessments has been heightened (OECD, 2012a, p. 500).

There are many reasons for changes in patterns of decision making and responsibility, and they vary from country to country. The most common reasons to decentralise decision making are increased efficiency and improved financial control; reduced bureaucracy; increased responsiveness to local communities; more creative management of human resources; improved potential for innovation; and the creation of conditions that provide better incentives for improving the quality of schooling.


According to recent report by Eurydice, there appears to be wide autonomy within schools in EU’s school systems regarding the choice of teaching methods, the choice of schoolbooks, the students’ assessment methods, the curricular content of optional courses, and the grouping of students for learning activities, with the notable exception of Greece where these matters are mainly decided by the educational authorities (apart from students’ grouping) (see Eurydice, 2013a, p. 103-110). Specifically, according to the Eurydice data, in
primary and secondary education the choice of teaching methods is left to the discretion of teachers and or school heads/school boards in all EU countries. This is also true for schoolbooks, assessment methods, students’ grouping and content of optional courses for all EU school systems monitored by Eurydice. Apart from Greece, in Cyprus and Malta school books are specified by the education authorities, in France this is true for the curricular content of optional courses, and in Portugal and Slovakia for the grouping of students for learning activities. Regarding staffing and human resources in primary and secondary education schools, in most EU school systems decision-making is made at school level by the school heads or the school managing body. Overall, schools in Greece, France and Cyprus appear to have no autonomy to decide upon the selection for teaching vacancies, the selection for substituting absent teachers, the dismissal of teachers, the duties and responsibilities of teachers and the selection of school head; all these matters are responsibility of the education authorities. In Italy schools can only decide on the duties and responsibilities of teachers and in Malta on the selection for substituting absent teachers (ibid).

The “Education at a Glance 2012” OECD annual report indicates important differences in school autonomy policies in Europe. Data obtained from the 2011 OECD-INES Survey on Locus of Decision Making for the school year 2010-11 show that in only ten countries/regions over half of the decisions are taken in full autonomy by schools in public lower secondary education (NL, UKEN, SI, EE, CZ, BEFL, SK, HU, SI, and IE), while only in four of them (NL, UKEN, EE, BEFL) more than 70% of the decisions are taken at school level. In thirteen states/regions less than half of the decisions are taken in full autonomy by schools in public lower secondary education (UKEN, SE, DK, PL, IT, ES, AT, BEFR, DE, ES, PT, LU, EL) while in five of them (DE, ES, PT, LU, EL) less than ¼ of the decisions are taken at school level (OECD, 2012a).

In several EU school systems the percentage of decisions regarding the organization of instruction taken at school level (lower secondary education) has been dropped between 2003 and 2011. For example, in Hungary’s lower secondary education schools (see chart below left) the share of decisions on instructional matters taken at school level dropped by 22 percentage units between 2007 and 2011 (78% from 100%) and transferred to local and central level education authorities. Similar cases represent Portugal (56% from 75% in 2003-transferred to central level), Luxemburg (44% from 63% - to central), Slovakia (75% from 88% -to central), Italy (89% from 100% - to central), England (89% from 100% - to local). In only two lower secondary education systems there was observed a significant increase in the share of decisions on the organization of instruction that schools can take, the Czech Republic and Estonia (100% from 88%). Overall, it appears that education reforms have led to less autonomy in schools on matters of instruction over the last decade in many EU school systems at lower secondary education level.

### Figures 2, 3, 4 & 5: Percentage of decisions taken at school level in public lower secondary education in 2011 as compared to 2003 (Source: OECD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DECISIONS ABOUT THE ORGANISATION OF INSTRUCTION</th>
<th>DECISIONS ABOUT PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of decisions about organisation of instruction taken at school level in public lower sec. educ., year 2011</td>
<td>Percentage of decisions about personnel management taken at school level in public lower sec. educ., year 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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* For Slovenia the comparison year is 2007.

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2 Source: OECD, 2012a, Table D6.6a. (Web only). Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932668489

3 Ibid, data obtained from Tables D6.6a to D6.6d.
As shown on the charts above, between 2003 and 2011 reforms have transferred the decision-making power away from schools to higher decision making levels (especially to central level) in the decision making domains of personnel management, planning and structures, and resources in several lower secondary school systems monitored by OECD in EU. The findings indicate that although there is a growing emphasis in the political discourse on the importance to promote leadership in schools, reforms in many school systems in EU have left schools with less room for maneuver in various decision-making domains, and more critically in the organization of instruction.

Another source of data on school autonomy is offered by OECD’s PISA 2009. One important qualitative difference between the PISA data and the data from the 2011 OECD-INES Survey on Locus of Decision Making and the Eurydice data that we summarized earlier, is that the latter were obtained from experts while the former were obtained from school heads in the thousands of schools that participated in the PISA assessments. The PISA results regarding the autonomy that schools have to decide upon matters of curriculum and assessment are presented on the chart below.

Figure 6: Percentage of students in schools whose principals reported that only “regional and/or national education authority” have a considerable responsibility for courses and content, textbooks and assessment policies (Source: OECD, PISA 2009 Database, Table IV.3.6)
As shown on the chart above, in countries such as the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, Estonia, Slovakia, Lithuania, Finland, Poland, Slovakia and Sweden, curriculum and assessment methods are not exclusively decided at national or regional level and the schools have the complete autonomy to decide on these matters or they can take such decisions in collaboration with the education authorities. In contrast, in countries such as Greece (EL), Portugal, Bulgaria, and Croatia the regional or national authorities have a very decisive role to play with little involvement by the schools.

Figures 7, 8 & 9: Percentage of students in schools whose principals reported that only “regional and/or national education authority” have a considerable responsibility for recourse allocation (Source: OECD, PISA 2009 Database, table IV.3.5)

As shown on the chart above left, in more than half of the EU countries the decisions to hire and fire teachers are made either at school level or in collaboration with the authorities. In contrast, in most EU countries the salaries of teachers are usually determined exclusively by regional or national authorities. In very few EU countries, such as Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, the UK and Sweden, schools have a say on such matters (see chart above right). Comparatively, schools even in the most centralized systems in EU, such as Greece, Romania, Italy or Portugal, have more freedom to formulate and manage the school budget (see chart on the left).

The most critical finding of the PISA 2009 data analysis regarding the importance of autonomy is that school systems that grant individual schools authority to make decisions about curricula and assessments (while limiting school competition) are more likely to be performing above the OECD average and show below-average impact of students’ socio-economic background on their performance (OECD, 2010, p.27). Notable examples are Finland, the Netherlands, and Estonia all of which have a high degree of autonomy, particularly in matters of organization of instruction and manage to score at the top of the PISA 2009 assessments while recording comparatively low strength in the relationship between student performance and student socio-economic background.

School autonomy in the EPNoSL Framework is a term used to indicate that schools and school-level actors have been given some room for maneuver to take their own decisions in managing schools and dealing with everyday teaching and learning challenges, and that constraints from the outside - and inside - are reduced to the necessary and legitimate frames, values and norms (Moos, 2013). Under this perspective, policy makers need to consider the following policy actions and related challenges regarding school autonomy:

- Policies for the promotion of school autonomy should specify in what decision-making areas school autonomy should be widened (or even narrowed down), for which purposes is autonomy granted,
and what should be the appropriate mechanisms (accountability systems, overarching frameworks, standards) through which school autonomy can be controlled or counterbalanced. As a general principle, and depending on how these questions are answered, policy makers need to ensure that policies on school autonomy are contributing in practice to an enabling school leadership environment that is based on **trust in the professionalism of school leaders** and on mutual understanding.

To work properly, school autonomy must have political support at the central and local levels, it should have a legal framework that allows autonomy to function unimpeded, and should have the assent of teachers.

Arcia, MacDonald, Patrinos, and Porta, 2011, p. 8

- **Policies that grant more autonomy to schools and in parallel promote an over-regulated, bureaucratic and stifling accountability system can be detrimental to the room for maneuver that school leaders actually have to promote equity and learning in schools.** This is because school leaders may be required to spend more and more time reporting to educational authorities higher up in the hierarchy or performing administrative tasks than organising instruction and school life as a whole in order to promote equity and learning.

- **Policies on school autonomy should integrate priorities for tackling inequities in educational practice on the ground.** School autonomy becomes a critical policy action for equity goals, as decreasing educational inequities within and amongst schools requires a vast array of initiatives that redress the entire range of discriminatory and exclusionary practices that are produced and reproduced within the school environment.

- Among the implications of policies that widen school autonomy is that **the work of school leaders becomes more demanding and complex.** Therefore, reforms that introduce more decision-making powers at school level should be accompanied by targeted professional development opportunities for school leaders and **changes in the curricula of programmes that prepare future school leaders.**

  “The question for me is how schools and school heads can be supported to be able to make use of / exploit their autonomy the best in order to really improve learning and equity. E.g. when a very centralised system suddenly becomes decentralised and school heads can make decisions about lots of things that had previously been prescribed for them, but they are not prepared for this and are not supported, then their autonomy doesn’t necessarily further anything.”

  Contribution of Nora Revai (Tempus Public Foundation, Hungary) to the EPNoSL forum discussion on school autonomy

- Increased autonomy has an impact on the workload of school leaders. The **widening of the distribution of school leadership tasks and responsibilities** is one important option that can help school leaders to deal more effectively with an increased workload. Routine administrative tasks can be transferred to non-teaching support staff in order to leave school leaders with more time to deal with issues that are closely related to learning and equity. In the context of widening school autonomy, policy making should also consider measures that offer **attractive incentives** to existing and prospective school leaders.

- In education systems with comparatively low school autonomy **in critical decision making domains directly related to issues of equity and learning such as pedagogy, learning content and assessment methods, there is more pressing need to consider related reforms.** For example, in Greece, Luxemburg and Slovakia policy makers should consider granting schools **more autonomy to choose school books, and deciding on instruction time.** In several school systems in EU, policy makers should also consider reforms that give more power to schools to influence decision making on the selection of subjects to be taught in a particular school and the definition of **course content** (for example, in Austria, Denmark, Greece Ireland, Luxemburg and Spain). More power should also be given to schools to influence decisions upon the allocation of **reourses for school leaders’ and teachers professional development** (for example, in Austria, Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain).

- **The pace with which reforms that grand more autonomy to schools are introduced, is a critical factor in their implementation.** Particularly in education systems with a long tradition of centralisation in decision making and relatively low school autonomy, changes in the governance of

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4 See http://www.schoolleadership.eu/epnosl_vip/discussion/forum-1-diverse-perspectives-and-hopes-autonomy-school-leadership
schools should be introduced in a gradual manner so that schools become more capable to cope with their new tasks and responsibilities.

**School Autonomy Contracts in Portugal**

In 1998, with the publication of the autonomy decree, Portugal established the provision of autonomy contract amongst the Ministry of Education, each school or cluster of schools, the education municipal authorities and for the regional education authorities, as well as other partners. Autonomy contracts took effect in 2007 and were connected with requirements designed to foster knowledge and professional development, for school leaders and administration officers, required to be able to identify and justify priorities in school improvement, and to be aware of the frontiers of negotiation. This way, autonomy came together with the issues of self-evaluation and accountability, which, by the time, were relatively new areas of work for schools and for the administration officers. Current research on school autonomy in Portuguese schools shows that in spite of their limitations and ambiguities, autonomy contracts and the associated procedures have a value that relies in the fact of allowing shared decision-making, against the traditional top down and unilateral decisions, based on imposition of non-discussed rules. The explicit negotiation process has constituted a political and organizational learning process for all parties involved.

Silva and Climaco, 2013.

**Distributed Leadership for Equity and Learning**

In recent years, distributed school leadership has been increasingly identified as a key policy strategy for improving the quality of education (OECD, 2008; ETUCE, 2012). The distribution of leadership tasks and responsibilities across different people and organisational structures is expected to strengthen school management, to make school administration more effective and to improve learning outcomes.

21st century schooling necessitates a shift away from vertical, policy driven change to lateral, capacity building change. School leaders must still have sufficient knowledge of facilities, personnel, and finance management but effective leaders today must also foster learning environments where students and professionals in the school are encouraged to share knowledge, build trust and promote a sense of shared responsibility.

The need for distribution of leadership within the school is not only a pragmatic issue of proportionally dividing the school leaders workload, it has the positive impact on the self-efficacy of teachers and other staff members by encouraging them to show leadership based on their expertise and by supporting collaborative work cultures. This in turn is one of the most important conditions for a culture of improvement being at the heart of the school.


Although studies on the concrete impact of distributed leadership on education systems remain rather inconclusive (Harris, 2009), recent findings have shown that practices of distributed school leadership currently exist in many European countries, albeit in different forms (see, for example, Duif et al., 2013). Recent evidence shows that these forms fall under three broad categories: a) cases where **School Leadership Tasks are Distributed between Formal Leadership Teams** (for example, in EL, CY, PT, ES, FR, IE, LU, HR, SI, SK, CZ, and DK), b) instances when **Informal Ad-Hoc Groups Assume Specific and Time-Limited Leadership Tasks** (for example, in DE), and c) situations where **Local School Autonomy is Predominant**, meaning that each school can decide about leadership distribution (for example, in NL, SE, FI and EE) (Eurydice, 2013a, pp. 117-8).

Wide divergences and confusion about the meaning and implementation of distributed school leadership are indeed the norm in contemporary policy debates. The EPNoS framework on school leadership has proposed a working definition of the term that policy makers can consult in order to address these conceptual problems. Distributed school leadership is considered as a culture that:

- views leadership as **emerging** from ongoing flows of interactions across the organisation and its hierarchy, not simply from the actions of the top school manager or a formal leadership team,
- values leadership contributions from **across the school and its hierarchy**, and
- recognises that this view of leadership can be deployed **in order to improve organisational effectiveness**, accompanied by an institutional structure that
• spreads leadership opportunities beyond formal senior roles to enable different sources of expertise and perspectives to influence the school’s work, development and innovative changes,
• facilitates flexible, collaborative working relationships across traditional boundaries and hierarchies, and
• tends towards the creation of flatter hierarchies (Woods and Woods, 2013).

**Recent Reforms in Flanders, Belgium, Towards Distributed School Leadership: The Communities of Schools**  
Communities of schools are collaborative partnerships between schools from the same geographical area. Schools can form these communities voluntarily and receive some extra funding. The objective of the communities of schools was to make schools work in collaboration by sharing resources, to rationalise supply of courses and to promote cost savings across schools. The added value of school communities includes administrative increases of scale, more efficient use and distribution of human and financial resources, better harmonisation of study programme provision, and improved student guidance. Overall, it was hoped that working together would also help raise the quality of schools. The schools of a community must consult and decide collectively on the use of this additional funding: they may equally distribute the resources among themselves, allocate more resources to disadvantaged schools, and/or use some of the resources to appoint a community-level co-ordinating director.

There are now 115 communities of schools in secondary education, covering more than 95% of schools in Flanders, with an average of 6 to 12 schools belonging to a community. There are 360 in primary education, covering 97% of schools. It appears that these communities of schools have followed very uneven paths of development. Some have taken the concept far: they have created a post for a full-time coordinating director of the community, they have agreed on a common process for selection of students, negotiated common working conditions for teachers and created curricula for students with special education needs. In successful communities systemic leadership evolves locally: school leaders have made use of the community structure to establish mechanisms for peer support, school leaders of successful schools share best practices with more disadvantaged schools, and the coordinating-director of the community takes on a coaching and mentoring function to provide guidance for principals. There are some good practices of communities of schools where shared leadership evolved as each principal of the community specialised in a certain field such as personnel, pedagogy, or infrastructure. The quality of shared leadership at the community level seems to depend on local factors, especially on the involvement of committed individuals at the school, community, or Board levels. Leunis and Ballet, 2013.

Distributed leadership should not be treated as an end in itself because it cannot automatically lead to organizational improvement across the educational system. Addressing equity and learning challenges benefits from forms of distributed leadership that promote participation and the extension and deepening of democratic processes within and beyond the school environment. On this basis, policy makers need to consider the following policy actions:

- **Deepening Distributed Leadership for Attaining Both Equity and Learning Goals should Become Part of a Wider Policy Strategy** based on the notion that participative and democratic decision-making can be more effective in identifying and meeting the local needs of disadvantaged groups of students as well as empowering staff and students in becoming active in the everyday operation of their school.

- **Mainstreaming Distributed Leadership:** it should be integrated into all areas of school leadership policy. Emphasis should be given in harmonising existing and future capacity-building education and training programs with a culture of distributed school leadership.

Factors such as education and school culture, existing degrees of autonomy and forms of accountability, school size, are critical in designing the implementation of distributed leadership models. The precise forms of distributed leadership that may be conducive to an enabling school leadership environment for equity and learning can vary since they heavily depend on context.

“We have to remember that teachers’ primary concern should be the education and well-being of their students. The treatment teachers get from their superiors, their role in the decision-making process in the school reflects in their work. They will treat their students the same way they are being treated. If they feel they
We conclude with five requirements which we suggest it would be helpful for policy-makers wanting to develop school leadership to reflect upon (Woods and Roberts, 2013):

1. **Advancing the quality of school leadership requires developing the leadership capabilities of everyone in the school** - both those who are in designated leadership positions and those (such as many teachers, support staff and students) who are not.

2. **Developing the leadership capabilities of all requires the development of school cultures and structures that provide the social, professional and institutional support** necessary to create environments that facilitate individual initiative and collaborative working and learning.

3. **The development and sustaining of such school cultures and structures requires long-term investment** by schools and by the governments and other agencies that support schools.

4. **Distributed leadership requires respect for both autonomy** (individual views, professionalism, creativity and needs) and authority (school purpose, goals, values and structures), which means school members helping to shape schools’ educational purpose, values, etc. as well as working within these.

5. **Helping distributed leadership to be fair and of benefit to the learning of all requires it to be guided by a broad concept of social justice** that encourages schools to ask critical questions about involvement (participative justice), respect (cultural justice), learning (developmental justice) and resources (distributive justice).

### Accountability for equity and learning

There are presently rising demands from school leaders across Europe for being accountable for the performance outcomes of teachers and students as regular, standardised testing is becoming the norm for measuring the quality of education (Koren, 2013; OECD, 2008). Indeed, school autonomy and the distribution of leadership tasks and duties reinforce the need for internal and external accountability systems (OECD, 2012b).

The policy debate around appropriate accountability mechanisms has not been settled in Europe, with many divergent approaches currently in operation in EU countries/regions (OECD, 2012a). As Moos (2013a) indicates, this debate is governed by various, often implicit, logics, such as the:

1. **Market logic**: schools are seen as services, where service providers deliver educational goods to consumers. Core concepts are consumers’ choice, competition and efficiency.

2. **Managerial logic**: there is a focus on planning, control, standards, top-down management and transparency.

3. **Public logic**: the governance of schools takes place through political processes involving policy makers, parents, students and professionals.

4. **Professional logic**: schools are managed and led according to professional, educational standards and professional ethics.

5. **Ethical logic**: schools are held responsible for the comprehensive and overarching upbringing, the education to democratic citizens.

All of the above assumptions on accountability have important implications on school leaders’ roles and responsibilities, as well as on school leadership policy development. Furthermore, the impact of accountability systems adopting assumptions following one or a combination of the above logics on the wider school leadership environment is certainly interdependent with the degrees of school autonomy, the extent to which school leadership is distributed, and the extent to which a democratic culture is embedded in the school system. Among the different logics identified above, the managerial logic has underpinned many education

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5 See [http://www.schoolleadership.eu/epnosl_vip/discussion/forum-5-leadership-distributed](http://www.schoolleadership.eu/epnosl_vip/discussion/forum-5-leadership-distributed)
reforms related to accountability in various EU countries (see, for example, Eurydice, 2007). As Hooge, Burns and Wilkoszewski (2012, p. 5) argue, a wider trend is observed in OECD countries towards performance accountability that is essentially based on standardised testing. This approach is assumed to offer objective data that allow for comparisons between the performance of schools and whole education systems. According to them (ibid., pp. 5-6), “the drawback of school performance accountability is that standardised tests in and of themselves cannot reflect the full range of the purposes and goals of schooling such as social skills, moral development, preparation for the labour market, integration, etc., for which schools should be held accountable.” Therefore, testing as well as system-wide, uniformly applied, criteria for internal and external evaluation of schools should be (re)considered along other methods and techniques that would allow for a more holistic account of how well schools meet the expectations of a wide range of education stakeholders, from central or regional governments to local communities, parents and students. This is crucial also because the relationships between accountability policies, accountability practices and equity is complex and dynamic. As Skrla et al. (2004, p. 136) point out, these relationships are “... constantly changing due to frequent changes in state policies in addition to local mediation through interpretation and implementation”. Overall, as Niesche and Keddie (2011, p. 74) argue, “in the current educational climate of increased accountability frameworks and high stakes testing, it is ever more difficult for school leaders to play a key role in the implementing of schooling practices that work to support greater equity outcomes for marginalised groups.”

A CASE STUDY ON ACCOUNTABILITY IN SCOTLAND (UK)

Annually, in Scotland, pupil results and overall school performance information is collected nationally and used within the school audit process for focused discussion with external auditor teams from the local government. It is further supported in all schools through the line manager role (Quality Improvement Officer) appointed to ensure that ‘robust and rigorous’ dialogue takes place to account for internal school performance against external comparative data. School contextual information is fully evaluated and discussed as part of a school improvement process which includes individual school data reports being sent back to the school detailing where the school stands in comparison with the national and local results. The Scottish system also sees accountability judged by a regular cycle of school inspections, test results, local government monitoring visits and by the school’s governors. Therefore, the head teacher experiences accountability to their Governing Body, the Parent Council to the school community and to the local authority through external inspection. On his/her part, the Scottish head teacher sets the vision and the strategic direction of the school, manages the staff, the students/learners and the overall operation of the school. The head teacher ‘leads the learning’ and has leading responsibility for ensuring that, through monitoring, teaching and learning is successfully delivered and achieved. Again, the head has to track trends, identify successes and areas for staff and wider school development. Consequently, as part of the school improvement process, the head teacher can set individual performance management targets for teachers to contribute to the overall success of the school.

Excerpt from a report of case studies on accountability in Scotland, the Netherlands and Croatia, prepared by the European School Heads Association for EPNoSL (Moos and Hatzopoulos, 2014).

In general, THERE ARE TWO MAIN DIMENSIONS TO SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY: VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL. Horizontal accountability tends to correspond to educational contexts where schools are granted high degrees of school autonomy. It reflects non-hierarchical relationships amongst stakeholders, while it tends to prioritize professional accountability and promotes the reciprocity of accountability amongst all the main social actors involved in educational activities, particularly the students and the local communities. Vertical accountability, in contrast, tends to correspond to top-down, hierarchical relations amongst educational stakeholders and to centralised educational systems. It tends to be regulation-based and centred around testing and the continuous evaluation of school performance (Hooge et al., 2012).

The policy implementation of school accountability models needs to take into account these different dimensions. A major challenge for policy makers is to ensure that the accountability mechanisms that are established do not undermine the goal of empowering school leadership which is promoted by other policy actions. Accordingly, policy makers need to consider the following policy actions and challenges:

• AS VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL DIMENSIONS CO-EXIST IN ALL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS THAT CAN BE OBSERVED ACROSS EUROPE, POLICY MAKERS ARE CALLED TO DECIDE UPON AND IMPLEMENT THE RIGHT MIXTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY BETWEEN THE TWO DIMENSIONS. What an effective mixture can be surely depends on the particular educational context. Policy solutions should take into account that while governments are responsible for the overall quality of education and therefore they need to steer and control schools, schools are responsible for the quality of education provided to the children of specific local communities and families.
and therefore they have also to ensure that the legitimacy of their decisions and practices, their fairness, inclusiveness and quality, are also recognised and valued by the local communities they serve.

- **ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS SHOULD BE BETTER INTEGRATED WITH EDUCATIONAL POLICIES ON EQUITY.** The over-reliance of existing accountability practices on school performance outcomes can limit the scope of policies promoting equity in education. School performance accountability is relatively oblivious to the evaluation of other educational aims such as socialisation, inclusion, recognition and valuing of diversity and difference, and personal development, which are critical to the establishment of a more equitable school environment.

- **THE OPERATION OF ENABLING AND EFFICIENT ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICES ACROSS THE EDUCATION SYSTEM REQUIRES SUPPORTIVE POLICY MEASURES** (e.g. provision of adequate training, open access to data) that promote evidence-based school leadership practices.
BRIEFING NOTE No.3

PROMOTION OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING

The EPNoS framework is based on the notion that the quality of school leadership is key for dealing with equity and learning challenges in the school environment. Ensuring the quality of school leaders is critical since it can directly impact on improving the quality and on increasing equity in schools. This briefing note is focused on the policy goals of professional standards, research, and evaluation of school leadership and the following related policy action lines:

- Establishment and implementation of school leader professional standards for equity and learning.
- Establishment and implementation of school leaders’ evaluation for equity and learning.
- Promotion of research to identify school leadership policies and school leaders’ strategies and practices that promote equity and learning.

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

In Finland, as legislation does not determine school heads’ duties in detail and as local authorities’ contexts vary a lot, there is significant variation in school heads’ job descriptions. In general, this situation appears to cause a lot of contradictions in the practical work of school leaders, involving for example time management and well-being. Contradictions are caused by the pressures the different expectations create as school heads try both to secure school operations according to the obligations set out in legislation, and to act as representatives of the education provider (Risku and Alava, this volume). These well documented challenges are by no means specific to Finland. In many education systems in Europe, although the duties, responsibilities and tasks of school leaders are usually stipulated in official documents, one can find only scarce references to the competencies that school leaders should acquire in order to have a positive impact on the quality of education (Schratz, 2010). Currently, only a few European countries have officially set up professional standards for school leaders.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS AROUND THE WORLD

In Wales, the “Revised Professional Standards for Education Practitioners in Wales”,6 issued by the Welsh government in 2011, included a section for the “Leadership Standards” which replaced the “National Standards for Headteachers”. The new standard is consisted of 66 statements organised in the following areas of leadership: a) creating strategic direction, b) leading teaching and learning, c) developing and working with others, d) managing the school, e) securing accountability, and f) strengthening the community focus. Northern Ireland has also its own version of the National Standards,7 while in England, the “National Standards for Headteachers”8 have been somewhat overshadowed, but not replaced, by the “Teachers’ Standards”9, effective from Sept. 2012, which sets the standards against which teachers as well as school heads should be assessed. In 2005 the new version of the standards for head teachers was introduced in Scotland.10 This standard analyses the role of the head teacher into professional actions and three essential elements: a) strategic vision, values and aims, b) knowledge and understanding, and c) personal qualities and interpersonal skills.

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6 Available at: http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/110830profstandardsen.pdf
8 Available at: https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFES-0083-2004
There are also examples of EU countries where professional associations of school leaders have made efforts to develop their own standards. In the Netherlands, for example, the National Association of Secondary Education (a school leaders’ union representing 95% of all secondary schools in the Netherlands) set up in 2006 a group of experts (including academics, consultants, school leaders and members of school governing bodies), with the assignment to define a professional profile in the form of basic competencies for school leaders in secondary education. This initiative was expected to replace “long shopping lists of competencies, which are based neither on theory nor on empirical research results” (Krüger, 2009, p. 123) that were in circulation in the Netherlands for more than a decade. Based on a model of effective leadership the group arrived to the following set of five general basic competencies for school leaders: a) vision orientation, b) context awareness, c) deployment of strategies that match new forms of leadership, d) organisation awareness, and e) higher-order thinking. Under these general competencies, the group identified relevant sub-competencies and wrote instructions to enable school leaders translate the competencies to their own specific situation (Krüger, 2009). In Australia, the “Australian Professional Standard for Principals” was endorsed in 2011. This standard is based on three leadership requirements (vision and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal qualities and social and interpersonal skills) enacted through five key professional practices: a) leading teaching and learning, b) developing self and others, c) leading improvement, innovation and change, d) leading the management of the school, and e) engaging and working with the community. In New Zealand there are two standards effective from March 2013, one for primary school principals and one for secondary, which form part of each principal’s performance agreement. Both identify four areas of practice (culture, pedagogy, systems and partnerships and networks), and most of the statements describing standards are common, with some minor differences in some of them.

In the USA 43 states have used the 1996 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium’s (ISLLC) “Standards for School Leaders” in their entirety or as a template for developing their own standards. Each of the six standards described in this document is followed by the knowledge required for the standard, the dispositions or attitudes manifest by the accomplishment of the standard, and performances that could be observed by an administrator who is accomplished in the standard. The ISLLC in 2008 reconfirmed its standards, this time to guide state policy on a wide range of areas, from licensing to on-the-job training of principals.

In Alberta-Canada, the Principal Quality Practice Guideline (PQPG) introduced in 2007 by the Alberta Education Ministry includes a statement on Principal Quality Practice and seven leadership dimensions, with supporting descriptors, reflecting the Alberta context. The leadership dimensions are: a) Fostering Effective Relationships, b) Embodying Visionary Leadership, c) Leading a Learning Community, d) Providing Instructional Leadership, e) Developing and Facilitating Leadership, f) Managing School Operations and Resources, and g) Understanding and Responding to the Larger Societal Context.

Policy makers can facilitate, support and contribute to the establishment and wide endorsement of professional standards for school leaders, on the basis of a framework and statements describing the qualities (in terms of, for example, professional values and attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills and in terms of actions) that school leaders are expected to demonstrate in order to achieve in their work. The development of professional standards for school leaders can have many beneficial uses. They can:

- help school leaders reflect on their everyday practice and identify areas for further improvement,
- be utilised by current and aspiring school leaders to orient their engagement in professional development activities,
- contribute to the establishment of shared understanding regarding what it means and what it takes to be an excellent school leader between policy makers, school leaders, teachers, parents, students and the society at large,

References:

11 Available at: http://www.aisl.edu.au/school-leaders/australian-professional-standard-for-principals/australian-professional-standard-for-principals.html
14 Available at: http://coe.fgcu.edu/faculty/valesky/isllcstandards.htm
16 Available at: http://education.alberta.ca/media/949129/principal-quality-practice-guideline-english-12feb09.pdf
• promote the coherence and comprehensiveness of school leadership policy,
• provide a framework to guide curriculum development and accreditation of school leadership programmes/activities, and
• support the development of recruitment criteria and evaluation frameworks for school leaders’ appraisal.

Policy makers are advised to take into account the following considerations regarding the development of professional standards for school leaders:

• The development of professional standards for school leaders should be based on a sound theoretical framework and research, should make explicit the epistemological assumptions upon which they are based and they should be thoroughly field-tested in a wide variety of school contexts (e.g. level of education, type of school programme, school size, student characteristics, etc).
• The endorsement of national or regional professional standards for school leaders by central/regional education authorities should be based on a well structured and transparent process of public deliberation in order to gain the legitimacy and political consensus that is necessary to fulfil their aims. Particular emphasis should be placed on the engagement of a wide range of communities of stakeholders (school leaders, teachers, parents, students, teachers’ and school leaders’ professional associations, teacher training institutions, local, regional and national education authorities, etc) (see for example, Dinham et al., 2013).
• Professional standards for school leadership should be considered from a dynamic perspective. Standards need to be regularly updated with new knowledge based on robust research and on lessons learned in the process of their implementation, and be responsive to new demands to the work of school leaders emerging from the introduction of education reforms as well as from challenges and changes in the social, cultural and economic context and circumstances that schools operate.
• It is important to ensure that the statements offered are clear, concrete and meaningful so that it is easy for an individual leader to demonstrate the degree to which (s)he meets the standards. It is important for any criteria to be clearly understood by all parties and that evidence can be readily collected to demonstrate their fulfilment (Earley, 2012).
• Professional standards should not be limited to competencies. Although competencies of individual school leaders such as their knowledge, skills and attitudes as they take form in concrete actions and practices are certainly key aspects to be considered, competence-based approaches to professional practice might often downplay other key factors for attaining effective school leadership, such as the dialectical nature of the relationship between leaders and teaching staff and the dynamics that this dialectical relationship produces, such as the establishment of a particular school culture and of bonds of trust (Earley, 2012).

Core and multiple school leadership professional standards?

Professional standards that are common to all school leaders in a school system may be less relevant to some school contexts than others (for example, they may be more relevant to large schools as compared to small ones, to schools with a high share of high achieving students as compared to schools with a high share of low achievers, or to schools with a high share of native students as compared to schools with many students with an immigrant background). As Leithwood and Marcall (2008, p. 539) argue, “... the same [leadership] practices are unlikely to either have the same effects or result in the same influence in all settings. There is considerable evidence to suggest that variations in student population characteristics and organizational size, for example, call for different leadership enactments.” In such a case, common professional standards and their uses (for example, for guiding school leaders’ appraisal, or for orienting the identification of training needs) may privilege some school leaders over others.

Furthermore, in some education systems with great variety of types of schools in terms of their religious, philosophical or pedagogic affiliation, as well as with great variety in school organisation complexity, the need to consider core and alternative standards is quite necessary. This is, for example, the case with the Netherlands. In this country, it is not only the diversity in the religious or pedagogic orientation of schools that requires a more flexible approach in defining excellent leadership practice but also the diversity in the complexity of the schools’ organisation, from single schools with just one school leader to school clusters with several layers of management (see, for example, Bal and de Jonge, 2007).

While school leadership professional standards are (or should be) derived from scientific theories grounded on sound research evidence, are ultimately the product of political negotiation in democratic societies. Therefore,
it is to be expected that some, at least partially, valid perspectives on what should be considered as “excellent” school leadership will not be represented in the standards, because they did not find sufficient political support at the time of the standards’ adoption. One important implication is that school leaders who, in their daily practice, demonstrate “non-standard” (or else “unconventional”) but nevertheless valid and effective leadership qualities (i.e. qualities which are defendable on the grounds of scientifically grounded arguments, and are supported by evidence that they work in a given context and circumstances) will not get as much recognition and credit for their work as those school leaders whose practices are better aligned to the leadership qualities described in the standards. From a wider perspective, standards can contribute to a perceived over-regulation of the field of school leadership, failing to mediate between competing perspectives or frameworks on school leadership (Orchard, 2007).

**Equity and Learning Dimensions in School Leadership Professional Standards**

*Policy making is advised to consider how equity and learning dimensions are integrated into school leadership standards as well as their relative weight within them.*

As compared to learning, the dimension of equity is often less represented in school leadership standards and often is narrowed down to the school’s relationships with the local community. In order to further highlight this problem, the standards for school leaders in Wales (UK) and Australia are presented in some detail.

In the “Revised Professional Standards for Education Practitioners in Wales”, the “Leadership Standards” include one section (out of six) especially on “leading teaching and learning” with 16 statements that describe school leaders’ actions that are aimed to secure effective teaching and learning. Among them, only two are explicitly referring to equity issues in school learning (“Develops policies and practices to secure social inclusion for all learners to ensure their individual learning needs are met” and “Ensures that both school and classroom climates promote effective learning and teaching for all”). Among the 13 statements in “Developing and working with others” there is only one that is related to equity (“Treats people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive school climate”). It is predominantly in the section “Strengthening the community focus” that one can find more references to equity (in 3 out of 11 statements), namely “Builds a school climate and learning culture which takes account of the richness and variety of the school’s community including Welsh Language and culture”, “Creates and promotes positive strategies for developing good race relations and dealing with racial harassment” and “Promotes appropriate attitudes towards disability and additional learning needs that promote equality and inclusion”). Finally, there is no equity-related statement in the sections “Managing the school” and “Securing accountability”.

Regarding equity, the “Australian Professional Standard for Principals” specifies that a principal’s requirement to lead and manage under the general requirement “Vision and values” is to “promote democratic values including active citizenship and inclusion”. In the other general requirements “Knowledge and understanding” and “Personal qualities and social and interpersonal skills” there is no direct reference to equity issues. Indirectly, the emphasis to knowledge of “... relevant national policies, practices and initiatives as well as relevant federal and state legislation, agreements and policies” points to knowledge of legislation and policies that actively promote equity in Australia. Beyond the three general principalship requirements there are identified five key professional practices. Under the “Leading teaching and learning” professional practice, the Australian Standard indicates that school leaders should “develop educational strategies to secure equity of educational outcomes to enrich the school as a learning environment for its students, families and carers and the wider community”. This reference to equity of educational outcomes is quite critical because it directly urges principals that they should combat inequalities in students’ learning performance. In the “Leading teaching and learning” professional practice the Australian Standard also urges school leaders to work through distributed leadership in order to implement strategies so that “... all students can achieve to the best of their ability and become engaged in their own learning”. In this passage it can be assumed that school leaders’ practices should be aimed to eliminate the impact of inequality factors originating from the economic, social or cultural background of students that prohibit them to perform to the best of their ability. Under the second professional practice “Developing self and others”, there is a passage stating that “Principals support others,”

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17 Available at: http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/110830profstandardsen.pdf
18 Available at: http://www.aitsl.edu.au/school-leaders.australian-professional-standard-for-principals/australian-professional-standard-for-principals.html
build capacity and treat people fairly and with respect”. Fair treatment is a core equity issue, but in the context of this general practice this term is used only in relation to principals’ treatment of teachers and other staff in the school. Under the “Leading improvement, innovation and change” there is no direct reference to equity issues, while in the “Leading the management of the school” practice, there is one reference on the need to “Evaluate the use of resources to improve the quality of education and learning outcomes for all students”. Similarly to the Welsh Standards, the Australian Standard deals predominantly with equity issues in the “Engaging and working with the community” professional practice. As it is stated “Principals embrace inclusion and help build a culture of high expectations that takes account of the richness and diversity of the school’s wider community and the education systems and sectors”. Furthermore, principals “… recognise the multicultural nature of Australian people. They foster understanding and reconciliation with Indigenous cultures. They recognise and use the rich and diverse linguistic and cultural resources in the school community”. Finally, principals should “Develop strategies to ensure educational opportunity including countering discrimination and the impact of disadvantage”.

**CONSIDERING NEXT PRACTICES IN POLICY MAKING ON PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

Traditionally professional standards on school leadership are focusing upon leadership as it is exercised by an individual, usually the school head. So far, little attention has been paid on developing standards on school leadership teams or on whole school leadership, i.e. on leadership as an organisation-wide quality.

**Figure 10: Average number of students in (secondary) schools in EU countries (Source: OECD PISA 2009 database)**

Given that leadership in schools is often collectively exercised, standards that focus exclusively on individual qualities and actions cannot capture in a holistic way the dynamic and interpersonal nature of excellent leadership practice in schools. Considering the development of standards for leadership teams is perhaps more justified in education systems where clusters of schools are managed by a management team (for example, in the Netherlands and in Malta) or where the average size of schools is quite large (for example, in Luxembourg, Portugal or Romania).

**SCHOOL LEADERS’ EVALUATION FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING**

School leaders’ evaluation is a key dimension in school leadership policy development. However, in some education systems across Europe school leadership is rather indirectly evaluated in the context of school internal and external school evaluations (Schleicher, 2012, p. 29). Particularly in decentralised education systems a critical policy challenge is the possible large variations in the ways external and internal evaluation and assessment is undertaken by the responsible regional or local level school evaluation/inspection bodies. From a wider perspective, in all school systems school leaders’ evaluation should align to national school evaluation and assessment frameworks providing an overview and reference for all actors across the school system (e.g. teachers, school leaders, school inspectorates, local and regional education authorities, central governments).
School leadership policy development should consider establishing and updating research-based school leaders’ evaluation and assessment systems on the basis of a comprehensive evaluation framework that takes into account the following:

- **School leaders’ evaluation systems should be framed within widely accepted professional school leadership standards so that evaluation is consistent with the expectations on school leaders’ performance,** the results are relevant to the improvement of school leaders’ work and are regularly updated and adapted to reflect the complex nature of the profession.

- **Policy reforms aimed to establish or improve the evaluation systems for school leaders require the engagement of multiple stakeholders and, importantly, of school leaders themselves.** The participation of school leaders in the national or regional discourse about the (re)design of evaluation systems is essential to ensure that they can effectively support school leaders to improve on their work.

- **Evaluation systems should take into account the specific school contexts in order to ensure that school leaders’ evaluation is sensitive to the challenges and demands in each school leaders’ work.** Some key contextual factors and circumstances that need to be considered when assessing an individual school leader should include the school’s student intake in terms of socio-economic and cultural background, the school’s size and the complexity of its organisational structure, the availability and quality of school resources, the availability and quality of teaching staff etc.

- **Evaluation systems should be predominately oriented towards the improvement of school leaders’ capacity to lead their schools and should not serve merely as instruments in external bureaucratic accountability mechanisms or be used as mechanisms of coercion and punishment.** Therefore, capacity-building evaluation systems should provide feedback to school leaders that is timely, accurate, valid, reliable and applicable and should include support and resources for professional development at any stage in their careers.

- **School leaders’ evaluation systems should be based on a variety of sources and data on school leaders’ performance (e.g., portfolios, self-assessments, 360-degree feedback, outcome-based assessments) and on valid and reliable assessment tools.**

- **The quality of implementation is a critical element in effective school leaders’ evaluation systems.** Of particular importance is the training of the evaluators and the standards that should be followed in the evaluation process.

The design of school leadership evaluation systems that place emphasis on equity and learning is a very challenging endeavour. One major reason, as it was already pointed out, is that leadership is predominantly indirectly related to learning that takes place in schools and that the contextually sensitive combinations of the basic leadership practices is what makes a difference in effective leadership.

Secondly, school leadership practices that demonstrate fairness and inclusiveness (or the opposite) often need extensive documentation to facilitate valid and reliable assessments of school leaders’ performance. The use of professional standards on school leadership can contribute to the identification of evaluation dimensions but they can be of little help to the identification of a myriad of different practices (in for example, budget allocation, grouping of students in classrooms, appointment of teachers in classrooms, selection of learning materials, disciplinary actions, preferred extra-curricular activities, etc) that may indirectly or even unintentionally be unfair, may lead to the systematic exclusion of a group of students or teachers from learning opportunities, reproduce existing negative stereotypes that are detrimental to the learning motivation and positive self-image of low performers, alienate members of the school community that do not belong to the culturally dominant group etc. For example, as Mac Ruairc (this volume) observes, the practice of overt and covert selection of certain types of students and the resulting commodification of children leading directly to patterns of ‘chosen and unchosen’ schools is a widespread practice in many communities. The patterns of practice contributing to this reproduction of privilege are not accidental requiring very specific and distributed patterns of leadership in order to ensure that it functions in the interest of dominant/middle class groups. Which students are assigned to ability groups in streamed/ banded classes, sometimes at very young ages, also requires the specific action on the part of school leadership at many levels. This type of leadership practice which, although localised, is not exceptional and is repeated in a range of contexts with the result that these forms of practice collectively contribute to school cultures and patterns of discourse within which exclusion prevails and is justified.
Another reason why design of school leadership evaluation systems is a challenging endeavour is that low performing schools in poverty areas have different leadership needs as compared to high performing schools which have a high share of middle class students. In the former the role of the school head is much more critical as compared to the latter (Branch, Hanushek and Rivkin, 2009; Kollias, this volume). The variability in needs for leadership between schools, also in relation to each school’s specific development plans and goals, calls for flexibility and context-sensitivity in the specification of core and alternative evaluation and assessment areas for school leaders.

“It is important for leaders not only to rely on external assessments and evaluations (tests, indicators, audits, visits of inspection) but to be able to develop and sustain self-evaluation of schools in order to focus on teaching and learning issues, to develop cooperation between teaching teams, and to enhance school improvement. Self-evaluation of schools is also a mean to contribute to the professional development of teachers, making them inquiring on their own practices.”

Contribution of Prof. Romuald Normand, (Faculty of Social Sciences, Université de Strasbourg) to the EPNoSL forum discussion on accountability

RESEARCH ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP POLICIES AND SCHOOL LEADERS’ STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE EQUITY AND LEARNING

Policies and initiatives are often shaped and crafted not on the basis of research evidence but simply on the beliefs and commitments of policy-makers and their advisers. Furthermore, the processes of policy enactment often involve ad-hocery, borrowing, reordering, displacing, making do and reinvention (Bagley and Ward, 2013). Data collection and analysis has been widely recognised as a crucial factor for improving the quality of education (Kikis-Papadakis and Villalba, 2012). For school leadership policy, in particular, OECD has emphasised the need for a “data-wise school leadership”, calling school leaders to develop skills in “interpreting test results and using data as a central tool to plan and design appropriate strategies for improvement” (OECD, 2008, p. 52). Along these lines, policy makers should consider ways to enhance the use of data for improving school leadership practices. In particular, policy makers are recommended to:

- Ensure the persistent systematic development and availability of different types of data on school leadership practices through targeted funding strategies.
- Challenge the current emphasis of data collection and analysis on learning performance, in particular for experimenting with alternative ways for assessing the implementation of equity goals (e.g. through equity scorecards).
- Make sure that school leaders and the wider teaching community gets sufficient training and has access to the appropriate tools for analysing educational data.
- Broaden open access to educational data, both in terms of scientific research publications and of student, class, and school data as long as their publication does not raise concerns for privacy violations and other kinds of misuse.
- Support the development of indicators and associated data on school leadership policy development that allow for valid and comparative analyses across EU’s school systems (see Briefing Note No. 6).

At the level of policy design, sound empirical evidence can be proved of great help to top and middle-level policy makers as well as to school leaders, to, for example, identify areas where targeted policy initiatives are mostly needed and orient policy priorities, identify existing good practices, and indicate strategies that have been proved effective in the past given the context of their implementation. In the implementation of policies, research evidence can also be very supportive. Overall, the complexities involved between policy and implementation need to be better understood in order to ensure that the intended outcomes are indeed realised. Therefore, research evidence that would inform formative and summative evaluation of specific policy initiatives is of outmost importance. In particular, policy makers should consider supporting further research on the following topics:

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19 See http://www.schoolleadership.eu/epnosl_vip/discussion/webinar-3-and-forum-4-accountability
• Rigorous empirical evidence regarding good practices in principal evaluation is scarce and therefore it is difficult to assert the effects of evaluation on important school outcomes, or to generalize effective school leaders’ evaluation practices.

• There is little research on the effects of the implementation of school reforms that have taken place the last 10 years, particularly on the effect of school accountability mechanisms and their impact on schools in areas with challenging socio-economic and cultural issues (e.g. high unemployment, violence, racial tensions etc) (Johansson and Höög, 2013).

• Further research is needed in order to identify how and under what conditions different types and levels of school autonomy enhance school leaders’ capacity to effectively address issues of equity and learning.

• Further research is needed on the manner in which leadership functions may have negative or positive consequences by highlighting the impact of some practices, at local school level, which contribute to patterns of exclusion/inclusion and unfairness/fairness in individual schools. In this way particular aspects of practice can be overtly challenged by scholarship in order to deliver a better outcome for all students (Mac Ruairc, this volume).

• Another area of research has to do with the extent to which training programs address issues of equity and learning and the effectiveness of such programmes in actual school leaders’ practice (Johansson and Höög, 2013).
his briefing note is focused on the importance on devising a school leadership capacity framework and presents a range of pathways that can scaffold school leadership capacity building for equity and learning, focusing particularly on policies related to:

- Flagship initiatives that can build momentum.
- Establishment and/or upgrading of the school leaders’ system of initial education and training.
- Curricula and CPD activities on school leadership for equity and learning.
- Incentives for the participation of school leaders in professional development activities.
- Selection, career and succession of school leaders.

**WHAT IS SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CAPACITY?**

A school’s leadership capacity for equity and learning can be defined as the collective ability of a school to harness the potential of the established and emergent processes and dynamics of:

a) the *school system* (institutional level, e.g. legislative framework, structure, education policy goals and strategies, reforms, decentralization and school autonomy/room for manoeuvre, public financing, national curricula),

b) the *school* (organisational level, e.g. mission and goals, values, school management style, organisation of teaching and learning, learning culture, expectations, dominant dispositions towards equality and excellence in learning, beliefs and attitudes towards pedagogy, collegiality, commitment, communication patterns, relationships with other organisations, infrastructures, size, student intake),

c) the *school’s formal and informal groups* (group level, e.g. task groups, intimacy groups, professional groups) and
d) the *individual school members* (individual level, e.g. skills, motivation, values, involvement, networking),

**IN ORDER TO:**

achieve wide consensus on a purpose, generate and lead coordinated action between individual members of the school community and groups that results in changes which address challenges of inclusion, equity and learning, in the management and learning from these changes, in the sustainment of those changes that work best for the benefit of all the students in the school and in reflective inquiry and experimentation upon further changes or new methods and novel activities that have the potential to respond effectively to emerging challenges related to equity and learning.

**DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP: IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CAPACITY BUILDING POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

School leadership is not confined to the formal boundaries of the school head’s responsibilities, roles and actual practices. Leadership is often –usually less formally or informally- exercised by a wide range of school actors such as teachers responsible for subject areas, school labs or the school library, parents’ committees, student committees, the teachers’ council, influential individuals such as senior teachers, teachers who are active members of teacher unions, teachers who are innovators or teachers who have some sort of expertise in an area that is of importance for the school, for example teachers who are experts in using ICTs for teaching purposes, or teachers who have strong connections to the local community.
The above stress the need for a conceptual shift in understanding school leadership, from the position, roles, responsibilities, traits and capacities of the individuals holding formally assigned leading roles in a school to leadership as a function inside schools. Such a conceptual shift consequently calls for a policy shift in school leadership capacity building that strengthens but also goes beyond the traditional repertoire of policy strategies and initiatives that focus on the preparation and professional training of school heads or other members of formal teams responsible for the day-to-day management of schools. **The policy implication of distributed leadership is that policy makers should consider strategies and initiatives that target whole school leadership capacity building.**

Whole school leadership capacity building activities for equity and learning can include:

- Study/discussion group activities with the participation of members of the school management team, teachers, parents, community members, and even students that study and discuss on issues of high relevance to equity and learning as these are experienced in the school, such as issues of cultural diversity in the classroom and in the local community and its impact on student learning.
- Action research activities undertaken by teams or individuals that identify a problem or a challenge in school life, such as bullying or the use of drugs, and conduct research to collect data that will support evidence-based action.
- Curriculum development activities undertaken by teams or individuals that do research on new and innovative curricula, identify elements of the curriculum that are working well for the needs of the students in their school and others that will need revision in order to remain relevant. Such teams may also suggest a curriculum and choose the resources that best meet the needs of the students.
- Teacher-training and professional development activities undertaken by teams or individuals that work to improve teachers’ knowledge and skills on an area of high interest, such as training to teachers in the school on how to use ICT in their classroom.
- School self-evaluation activities on equity and learning.

Distributed leadership further asks for a wide distribution of learning opportunities on all levels of the system and both horizontal and vertical connections between them.

**Policy makers should consider a range of pathways for school leadership capacity building for equity and learning, together with their potentials as well as challenges in promoting them. Whole school leadership capacity building as well as capacity building that originates from collaboration and synergies between schools should go hand in hand with leadership capacity building activities that engage education actors functioning at all levels of the system of administration and management of school education, such as local and regional education authorities, municipal departments responsible for running schools, school inspectorates, central education agencies, etc. (see, for example, the Leadership Academy in Austria in the next sub-chapter).** Overall, top-down capacity building strategies can be greatly enhanced when they recognize, value, and build upon existing or emerging capacity building activities originating from schools and various forms of school networks, professional learning communities of school leaders and teachers, and from synergies between schools and research or higher education institutions, NGO’s, businesses etc.

**Flagship initiatives that can build momentum**

**Policy makers should consider initiatives regarding school leaders’ capacity building that have the potential to energize the whole school leadership community in the country.**

One such example is offered by the initiative that established the **Leadership Academy** in Austria, a non-compulsory innovative training scheme that since 2004 has managed to engage thousands of school leaders across the country. In Sweden, the initiative that boosted school leaders’ engagement in professional development was the establishment of the new **National School Leadership Training Programme** in 2009. This programme is compulsory for newly appointed school heads but it is also open to experienced ones. The data show that by May 2013 about 5,700 principals and deputy principals were enrolled and of these about 1,900...
had successfully completed the programme. This is approximately 60% of all 8.000 principals and deputy principals in schools in Sweden (Kollias, this volume).

**THE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY IN AUSTRIA**

The Leadership Academy (LA) in Austria, established in 2004, offers a good example of leadership training programme, blended with knowledge sharing activities, which brings together, under a common leadership capacity building framework, school heads, middle management staff, members of school inspectorates and central government staff. The mix of professionals from various levels in the management of the school system that work in learning groups is considered the key to professional development and to reforming the whole school system in Austria. The programme is not compulsory. The concept was that it should be so interesting and challenging that everyone would think that “this is something that I have to participate in”. This approach has worked very well so far because of positive word of mouth. The LA operates on the basis of some principles. The basic one is “take people out of the school system hierarchy and put them together in a more dynamic setting where each participant leaves behind the perspective of his/her formal position in the hierarchy”. This is considered as key to mutual understanding. Another principle is “work in large groups, does not just train individuals”. This is aimed to help participants develop a sense of community that shares a common purpose, to change the whole system.

**THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME IN SWEDEN**

In Sweden, for example, the Swedish National Agency for Education, on behalf of the Ministry of Education, commissioned six universities in 2009 to run a new National School Leadership Training Programme. This programme is based on a set of goals-standards, corresponding to what the Agency defines as the head teacher’s tasks, roles, and responsibilities, that are organised in three broad knowledge areas: a) legislation on schools and the role of exercising the functions of an authority, b) management by goals and objectives, and c) school leadership (see Skolverket, 2009). The programme lasts 3 years and includes 36 meeting days. It is offered for free, but the participants’ organizations pay housing costs, travel, study materials etc. For head teachers appointed after March 2010 it is compulsory to complete this programme within four years (school heads are not required to have a teaching degree, although teaching is the most common background of head teachers). The participants are expected to use 20% of their time studying. Head teachers and deputy head teachers appointed prior to 2010 are not required completing it but they can also enrol. New cohorts enter the programme twice annually; in May 2013 about 5.700 principals and deputy principals were enrolled and of these about 1.900 had successfully completed the programme. This is approximately 60% of all 8.000 principals and deputy principals in schools in Sweden (Kollias, this volume).

**Establishment and/or Upgrading of the School Leaders’ System of Initial Education and Training**

In some education systems in the EU, national or regional governments have already established a mandatory qualification for school heads (to be obtained prior or after their appointment on top of the teaching qualification, which is the case in most EU countries) as a means to control and promote their quality. However, there is great variability in the duration, goals, level, type of provider and organisation of the programmes leading to the mandated qualifications (Eurydice, 2013a). In 3 EU countries, Malta, Sweden and Austria, the compulsory education/training for prospective school heads is provided by universities or training centres through study programmes where the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is implemented (MT=60 ECTS, SE=30 ECTS, and AT=12 ECTS). In 13 other EU countries/regions there are compulsory initial training programmes for prospective or newly appointed school heads, ranging from 1 week (in Romania) up to 14 months (in a Spain’s autonomous community)\(^1\). Recently, Greece also mandated a qualification for aspiring school heads on “administrative competence”, obtained after successful participation in a programme offered by the National School of Public Administration and Local Government, which includes 96 hours of “theoretical” training and 80 hours of “practical” training. In most of the countries with a mandatory national professional qualification for school heads, this should be obtained prior to appointment (with the exception of SK, CZ, SE, AT, and FR).

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20 For more about the LA see EPNoSL interview with Prof. Michael Schratz, one of the Academic Directors of LA, at http://www.schoolleadership.eu/portal/resource/interview-prof-michael-schratz

21 BE\(_{FR}\)=120h, BE\(_{DE}\)=150h, CZ\(_{100h}\), DE\(_{100h}\), EE\(_{240h}\), ES\(_{40h-14\text{ months}}\), FR\(_{1\text{ year}}\), IT\(_{3-4\text{ months}}\), PL\(_{210\text{ hours}}\), PT\(_{250h}\), RO\(_{1\text{ week}}\), SL\(_{144\text{ hours}}\), SK\(_{160\text{ hours}}\).
On the other side, in several countries/regions in EU there is no mandatory national professional qualification for school heads that should be obtained before or after their appointment (BEfr, BG, DK, IE, CY, LV, LT, LU, HU, NL, FI and HR) (Eurydice, 2013a). In England (UK) from 2012 the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) is no longer considered a compulsory requirement for head teachers in the maintained school sector.

**The establishment of a compulsory qualification for school heads in those countries that currently do not require one, can be a policy lever to raise the overall quality of school leaders. This is particularly the case with countries where currently there is scarcity of formal education/training programmes dedicated to the preparation of school leaders.** In Estonia, for example, the Tartu and the Tallinn University offer only special courses but no dedicated programmes of study to prospective and servicing school leaders. In Lithuania, school management and leadership courses are offered by universities in the context of various Masters-level programmes which are not dedicated to school leadership. In other countries were there are ample opportunities for participation in formal high quality programmes of studies for school leaders, offered for example by universities at a Masters level, the establishment of a mandatory qualification for current or aspiring school heads should be carefully examined as a policy option. This is because the establishment of a mandatory qualification for school leaders, obtained after successful participation in a low demanding training programme, is likely to affect negatively the demand for more challenging and better quality postgraduate-level programmes currently on offer by universities. On the other side, the establishment of a mandatory qualification obtained after participation in demanding programmes of study, may discourage many talented professionals from pursuing a career as school head for various reasons (heavy workload, no opportunity for obtaining a leave for studies, family obligations etc). This could also be the case with mandated qualifications which can only be obtained through programmes that are offered for a high fee that should be paid by the learners. In such circumstances a mandated qualification can increase vacancies in headship posts in schools. Therefore, the policy choice between mandated and non-mandated qualification programmes for the preparation of school leaders should be considered alongside a framework of incentives.

**Some important policy questions when considering mandating a qualification programme for current and aspiring school heads and other members of formal school management teams are the following:**

**A) Target learners**

- Should all serving school heads obtain a mandated qualification or just the newly appointed?
- Should the qualification become a requirement for school heads or also for a wider range of staff in schools that belongs to the formal leadership team (for example deputy heads, heads of departments, coordinators of curriculum areas, members of school boards etc)?

**B) Providers’ and programmes’ accreditation/quality assurance**

- Which institutions are going to provide the qualification programme? Should it be a single institution under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education or independent providers? Should providers be exclusively traditional formal education providers, such as universities/teacher training institutions, or should also other non-formal education providers such as training centres, professional associations or NGO’s be allowed to become providers?
- What will be the system of accreditation of programmes and providers? What institution(s) is going to be the accreditation/quality assurance agency (independent or government controlled)?
- Should all school leadership programmes be aligned to a common national/regional standards framework or providers can develop/adopt different school leadership standards upon which to build their programmes?

**C) Curricula**

- Should different providers be able to develop and offer their own (accredited) curricula or all providers should have to offer a common curriculum? In case of a single national/regional curriculum, which institution(s) should take the responsibility of developing it, by following what kind of processes?

**D) Costs**

- What are the costs involved in setting up and running the education/training programmes leading to the mandated qualification?
• What are the costs involved in accrediting programmes and providers and implementing quality assurance for their services?
• What finance mechanisms should be established? (Should such programmes be offered for free or learners or should learners also pay?)

**Curricula and CPD Activities on School Leadership for Equity and Learning**

School leadership forms an applied field that combines theoretical and practical knowledge from a diverse set of academic disciplines, while it intends to intervene in multiple educational environments. Among other things, this diversity and multiplicity accounts for the lack of consensus on defining a core knowledge base for school leadership, even in cases where national standards have been implemented (Jenlink, 2009).

As a set of general principles, policy makers are advised to consider encouraging the development of school leadership education/training and CPD programs and activities that:

• Aim to develop school leaders’ capacity for critical reflection, substantiated by evidence, on the conditions and factors influencing teaching, learning, and equity in their local, school context.
• Promote a holistic approach of school leadership, incorporating the attainment of both equity and learning achievement goals in a balanced way.
• Acknowledge the existing variety of perspectives, experiences, knowledge, values, ways of learning; in short, stimulate the recognition of difference (El Haj, 2007).
• Target whole school leadership capacity building, focusing on democratic, collaborative and innovative school management and pedagogic leadership methods.

In terms of their overall organizational rationale, school leadership educational and training programs and CPD activities should accordingly be designed to fulfill the following criteria:

• Close relevance to the concrete challenges of leading schools in local contexts (Hess and Kelly, 2007; Levine, 2005).
• Promotion of a practice-oriented curricular sequence and of instructional coherence (Gaetane et al., 2008).
• Adoption of an international perspective on school leadership education and training that emphasizes the practical benefits of international networking and that challenges ethnocentric and cultural biases (Lumby et al., 2009).

Currently in most EU countries school leaders have little opportunities to participate in pre-service, induction and in-service training programmes and other capacity building activities that are specifically aimed to enhance their knowledge and skills on how to deal with everyday challenges related to equity and learning, and, even more importantly, how to plan and implement strategies at school and local level that would target inequalities in access, opportunities, and learning outcomes. Repeatedly, research has found that those who lead training programmes feel that they do not have the time or skills or sometimes the necessity to address such issues explicitly as a priority in leader preparation programmes and that leaders themselves see the issues as taken-for-granted, and not demanding specific attention. Leaders and those who prepare them should genuinely wish to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills that would allow them to tackle inequalities head on and to withstand the resistance they are likely to encounter in their school community (Lumby, this volume).

Working for promoting equity and learning demands that school leaders enter into ongoing negotiations about educational practice in specific local contexts, in dialogue with all school stakeholders, such as teachers, students and community members. In this respect, the real world application of school leadership practices that promote equity and learning can be supported by applicable knowledge of methods and techniques designed to face these challenges. The relatively neglected dimension of equity in school leadership education/training programmes and CPD activities, makes it important to (re)design curricula and activities that integrate methods and techniques for promoting fairness and inclusion in school practice.
Policy makers are thus advised to support the incorporation of methods and techniques in the curricula of school leaders’ education and training programmes as well as in CPD activities such as the following:

- Activities that stimulate the development of self-reflection and respect for difference. Examples include: cross-cultural interviews (where participants engage in a one-on-one encounter with an individual who is different from them in ethnicity/race/religion/sexual orientation); diversity panels (where participants engage in a sharing of their educational experiences, and participate in informal question and answer sessions); activist action plans (where participants identify issues that can trigger conflicts, i.e. unequal distribution of material/social resources or differing values, beliefs, and cultural expressions, and then develop practical, doable strategies for avoiding them and/or resolving them (Brown, 2004).

- Activities that enhance a data-wise, localized, practice-oriented approaches for dealing with equity challenges. The most relevant example, here, is the method of equity audits that can be applicable at school or school-cluster level. Equity audits include the collection of relevant data to equity issues, their analysis, the group discussion on possible solutions, the adoption and implementation of proposed solutions, and the monitoring and evaluation of these solutions. School leaders should be educated in organizing and acting as the facilitators of these audits; during all the steps of the process, where all relevant stakeholders should be invited to participate and share their views (Skrla, 2004).

**INITIATIVES TARGETING TO TRAIN SCHOOL LEADERS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH EQUITY ISSUES IN SCHOOLS**

In Slovenia, a project was carried out in 2006 at the National School for Leadership in Education aiming at reducing occurrence of violation of human rights in schools. The purpose of the project was to train school heads and teachers in systematically monitoring and implementing children’s rights in order to reduce the number of instances of violation of these in schools. The following objectives were stated: better knowledge and awareness of children’s rights by the professional staff in education; training of a number of school heads, deputy school heads and teachers; development of case studies on which professional staff would be trained in preventing and recognizing violation and in acting appropriately; and publicity. Based on the project results, the National School for Leadership in Education developed new teaching contents for school heads in the area of children’s rights and active citizenship.

In Sweden, three examples of special training for principals so that they become more capable to handle ethical matters better are described below. The first example dates about ten years back in time. The Principal Training Centres at the universities were asked by the National Agency for Schools to plan and do courses in relation to the basic democratic values in the curriculum. These courses were given over a period of four years and the purpose was that this subject focus should be integrated into the regular principal training programs. The next example of special training courses were training of principals on how different value systems, beliefs and perceptions can create different dilemmas for school leaders and educators in relation to how honor-related problems are interpreted and handled in school. The third example is related to old phenomena that have changed in character. Sweden during the last 50 years had always immigrant children in its schools. The number has lately increased a lot and the administration and the political leadership have also identified a new growing group of immigrant children who are of school age and who arrive in Sweden unaccompanied. Again, the Principal Training Centres were asked to provide training to principals on how to deal with this new situation.

In the United Kingdom (England) as a result of the emphasis by the school inspection body Ofsted on the progress of those pupils identified as potentially belonging to vulnerable groups, one of the training programmes offered by the trade union ‘National Association of Head Teachers’ NAHT (2013) is entitled Leading on Learning for Vulnerable Groups - Changes, Challenges and a Chance to do Better. The course identifies the main issues and assists participants, through presentations, question and answer sessions, and small group discussions, to consider how a school might become more effective in meeting the needs of all its students.

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22 See http://www.schoolleadership.eu/epnosl_vip/discussion/webinar-6-and-forum-6-leadership-inclusive-education
pupils, and especially those from vulnerable groups\textsuperscript{23}. The availability of such training throughout the UK, whilst commendable, is voluntary and does rely upon individual senior leaders identifying a need and deciding to enrol.

In Austria, in 2012/13 the National Center for Learning Schools (CLS) was established to coordinate efforts and continue development of the “Neue Mittelschule” (NMS), a new school form which suspends tracking in compulsory lower secondary schools. Equity is a central topic of CLS’s national network meetings and qualification programmes. A new teacher leadership role introduced with the reform, the so-called Lerndesigners, was established in order to function as teacher leaders and change agents. Lerndesigners are offered a 2-year qualification programme (12 ECTS) focused on equity and achievement. It is organized in the context of a joint MA programme between CLS and Pädagogische Hochschulen (Teacher Education institutes at regional level). Finally, all NMS school heads have to attend to at least one national learning atelier or symposium per year with their Lerndesigners. In the current school year, the influence of social background and academic language competence were the main focus of all national events for the NMS.

**INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION IN INITIAL EDUCATION/TRAINING AND CPD FOR SCHOOL LEADERS**

**Policy makers should consider the establishment of a coherent, varied and flexible set of explicit incentives for current and prospective school leaders for participating in leadership study programmes and undertaking CPD activities for equity and learning.** A comprehensive incentives’ framework can combine direct monetary incentives (such as salary increases or additional allowances paid within the same occupational grade), career advancement/retaining incentives (promotion to a higher occupational grade, retaining the same occupational grade), and time compensation (paid leave, time off). Furthermore, policy making should consider similar incentives for participation in informal CPD activities, provided that they have established mechanisms for the recognition (and hence valuing) of such kind of activities.

Currently, in many EU countries school heads are not entitled to a salary allowance explicitly linked to extra formal qualifications obtained (Belgium’s French and German Community systems, the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxemburg, Austria, Portugal, Slovakia, and the United Kingdom). In Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Cyprus, Italy, Latvia, Luxemburg, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Scotland and Croatia school heads who participate in non-formal continuing professional activities are not entitled to an allowance.

**Financial incentives to school heads in order to obtain formal education qualifications**

According to the Eurydice (2013c) report on school heads’ salaries, some EU countries offer financial incentives to school heads to obtain formal education qualifications (bachelors, masters or doctoral degrees obtained on top of those formally required to become a head teacher). In Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Romania, and Croatia there is a fixed allowance depending on the level of qualification obtained. In Hungary, head teachers can get an increase in their salary, provided that their extra qualification is related to at least 10% of their compulsory teaching hours. In Greece the highest additional formal qualification obtained leads to faster upgrading in the teachers’ grade/pay scale. In some of the above countries, due to budgetary constraints, theses allowances were lowered but still exist.

In some other countries there exists a similar allowance, but those who now get or plan to get extra formal qualifications are no more entitled to it. This for example is the case of the Flemish System in Belgium, where there is a fixed extra monthly allowance depending on the level of qualification obtained; however, school heads who obtain(ed) their extra qualifications later than 2010 are no more entitled to this allowance. In Ireland there also exists an allowance depending on the qualification; however, since 2012 newly appointed teachers (and hence future head teachers) are not entitled to such an allowance.

In Finland and Denmark salary allowances to school heads who obtain extra formal education qualifications are not centrally defined and depend on local level agreements.

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\textsuperscript{23} See more at: http://www.naht.org.uk/welcome/naht-events/courses-list/keeping-on-top-of-the-send-agenda/
The effectiveness of school leadership capacity building is reflected upon how well school leaders can adapt to their new roles and how competent they can become in co-designing and co-implementing policies for equity and learning in their school, as well as in encouraging the establishment of participative, democratic school cultures.

Policy makers should focus, along these lines, on promoting processes of selection, career development and replacement of school leaders that facilitate the transition of future school leaders to these emerging roles. The current state of the recruitment and development of school leaders varies widely across Europe and in this context it is not viable to provide a uniform, one size fits all model (Kikis-Papadakis and Villalba, 2012).

The conditions of school leader positions are indeed very different from one European country to the other. What is yet similar, partly because of a common European history, is that there are times when we see an almost complete change of a generation of school leaders. That is why for many countries the question of finding and recruiting the right people in larger numbers comes before selection or succession. I believe it is a task of policy makers to use focused and foresightful measures to make sure that those most suitable are supported in becoming school leaders. It has to become a common task of experienced school leaders, school inspectors and policy-makers to encourage teachers and support them with the right programmes so that they can tackle the challenges of the 21st century. Assessments and coaching can play a key role in that.

Bernd Jankofsky, Head of Departement School and Staff Development, State Institut for School and Media Berlin-Brandenburg (LISUM), Germany

The challenge for policy makers is to design and support innovative, transparent mechanisms for selecting school leaders, design attractive career development opportunities, and establish replacement procedures that ensure a balance between school continuity and change. Policy actions should focus on ensuring that:

- Specialized leadership training as well as relevant skills and competences outweigh other criteria in the recruitment of school leaders.
- School leaders’ career paths become more mobile, allowing principals to move between schools as well as between leadership and teaching and other related careers.
- There are established transparent and impartial procedures in the selection of school leaders.
- The procedures for the replacement of school leaders include succession planning (proactively encouraging other staff - particularly within the same school- to develop leadership skills), as well as a process of consultation with school stakeholders as to strike a balance between continuity and change in relation to the existing school culture and mission.

Financial incentives to school heads in order to participate in continuing professional development (CPD) activities

A small number of EU countries have centrally defined salary allowances for school heads who undertake further CPD activities (i.e. non-formal education activities) (Eurydice, 2013c). In Bulgaria there is a fixed monthly allowance; in Estonia head teachers receive a fixed extra salary supplement provided that they have participated in a specified number of CPD activities within a period of six years; in Hungary head teachers who have completed a specified number of hours in further CPD activities within a period of seven years can progress in their wage scale by one year; in Malta school heads receive a fixed allowance for the three two-hour compulsory professional development sessions held after school hours during each school year.

In Denmark and Finland salary allowances to school heads for further CPD activities are not centrally defined and depend on local level agreements. Finally, in the United Kingdom (England & Wales and Northern Ireland) school governing bodies may decide to award school heads additional payment for continuing professional development undertaken outside the school day.

Selection, career and succession of school leaders

The selection, recruitment, preparation and retention of the most competent staff for leadership positions in education institutions, and the provision of favourable conditions for their professional development, are accordingly of crucial importance and require careful attention by decision makers. Council conclusions on effective leadership in education, Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting, Brussels, 25-26 November, 2013

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This note deals with factors that are considered as critical in school leadership policy implementation. From a wider perspective, policy implementation unfolds through complex processes and interactions deeply embedded in long-standing traditions, ideological and political antagonisms, habitual modes of thinking and acting, and established power relations. Among them, of particular importance in policy implementation are the following (Bagley and Ward, 2013):

- History and culture are very powerful influences on policy and practice. Each nation or each region within a nation thinks and acts within its history, national ideology, and its own political sense of what is right. Policy ideas are formulated, interpreted and acted upon differently within different nation states.
- Social class, language, religion, ethnicity, the structure of political institutions and the nature of political culture affect the way in which policy is played out.
- Policy decisions are by their very nature highly political and may be shaped not least by the requirements of staying in office - governments are as much about staying in office and getting elected as achieving particular policy goals.
- Policies may be shaped and crafted not on the basis of any evidence-based research but simply on the beliefs and commitments of policy-makers and their advisers.
- Policy-making may be substantially shaped by symbolic considerations that may have little to do with the real effects of policies. For example, political talk and action might be intended to shape and then respond to politically created issues and problems as much as to any real practical concerns. Equally, political spectacle might be used to hide policies and actions that might have material advantages for some groups over others.
- Policy reforms may be crafted simply to focus on the politically salient; in other words what can be done instead of what might really make a difference.
- Policies that evolve from the political process are quite often unclear and ambiguous, containing divergent meanings, contradictions and structured omissions. Moreover, they are to be interpreted and implemented often by institutions and individuals - such as schools and teachers - who have had no hand in their drafting or planning.
- The entire process of policy development and implementation takes place in a wider political context that is constantly changing, multi-faceted, and in a constant state of flux.
- Institutions such as schools possess considerable ability to resist or alter policies to fit their own dynamics or to maintain the status quo and to avoid change in response to external demands. Moreover, schools are operating in a complex environment in which they are likely to be required to respond to multiplicity of policy demands and expectations simultaneously. Thus the nature of institutional interaction with policy at the local level is critical in determining policy response and framing its implementation.
- Policies are transformed by those who have to turn them into practice. Key actors within institutions such as head teachers and teachers within schools have the capacity – even with nationally prescribed policy initiatives – to alter, shape and craft policy texts in accordance with their own professional and personal values, beliefs, understandings and goals.

According to the EPNoSL Framework, critical factors in school leadership policy implementation are the building blocks of a specific strategy or policy initiative that policy implementers can and even cannot control and manage in order to increase the chances of achieving the intended policy goals. Policy implementation is a complex and dynamic process in nature and therefore at different implementation phases it is likely that some factors may be proved more critical than others for its success. The EPNoSL Framework identifies the following factors that are likely to affect the realization of the three school leadership policy development goals:

- Political commitment and priorities.
- Financial resources.
- Policy coherence.
- Policy ownership.
- Empowerment of different stakeholders and trust in their professionalism.
Given the high diversity in the political, social, cultural and economic realities and traditions between and even within EU countries, some of the factors identified in this note may be less important than others in different countries or school education systems; it is also to be expected that the relative importance of different factors even in the context of a single country or education system may change with time or circumstances. Therefore, the scheme that is discussed here is neither exhaustive of the possible factors of some crucial importance to effective school leadership policy implementation nor rigid regarding its building blocks and their interrelationships.

POLITICAL COMMITMENTS AND PRIORITIES

Within the wider context of political debate over how to distribute limited public resources, it is important that governments clearly recognise the need to combat inequalities in access, opportunities and outcomes of schooling and prioritise measures that are aimed to address this problem. However, within the EU different national governments are facing diverse economic challenges and circumstances and there is clearly the need to recognise that issues of equity in schools are likely to have become much more pressing in some of them after 2008. The austerity measures that have been introduced by several EU governments, notably Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Ireland and more recently Cyprus, as a response to the economic crisis as well as the slow or even negative economic growth have hit harshly their spending on education. In these EU countries where cuts in education spending have been introduced there is a need to reformulate a wider consensus on the place of education in national policies and its role in the new economic environment. Such a consensus will also be helpful to orient school leadership policies and to establish priorities regarding equity and learning.

A new analysis of the PISA 2009 datasets undertaken in the context of EPNoSL shows that, in several EU countries, and most prominently in Malta, Bulgaria, Belgium, Austria, Germany, Luxemburg and Slovenia, there are wide gaps in average student performance in reading, mathematics and science between schools with low, medium and high share of low SES students (Kollias, 2013). The above findings indicate that in these countries there is clearly the need to reaffirm policy commitment and devote more efforts aiming to reduce such gaps. Among other things, policy commitment and prioritisation of action targeting schools with a high intake of low SES students has to be accompanied by a heightened focus on the specific needs and challenges that school leaders face in such schools in order to better inform school leadership policies. International cooperation and knowledge and experience sharing is also important. On this front there is a lot to be learned from the cases of Finland and Poland, but also of Latvia and Denmark, which managed to achieve both comparatively high average overall performance and low variation in the average performance of students in schools with low, medium and high share of low SES students.

At school level, school leaders and teachers, though often sincerely convinced of their commitment to equality, and consider themselves as acting with fairness and inclusiveness, sometimes tend to prioritise other aims, such as maintaining their subject, the school’s prestige, their own daily professional survival. The causes of inequality are multiple and complex and not all under the control of educators, but school leaders have their own share in minimising or exacerbating the effects of economic inequality and exclusion within their schools. It is their determination to minimise these effects and the degree to which they prioritise this aim that is the foundation of action for equity and improved performance at school level (Lumby, this volume).

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The level of spending, the sources of funding, the processes through which funding is becoming available to schools and the flexibility with which school leaders can use school funds to promote equity and learning are particularly important parameters to policy implementation. Across EU countries the level of public expenditures varies widely as percentage of GDP and it is to be expected that in countries where public expenditures are comparatively low less funds are becoming available to schools to promote programmes and interventions, such as extra classes for weaker pupils, greater variety of learning opportunities, meals to poorer pupils etc, that would scaffold school leaders and teachers’ efforts to promote equity and learning.

In 2011 and/or 2012, cuts in education budgets were made in twenty countries/regions in the EU. Nine member states/regions (GR, IT, CY, LV, LT, HU, PT, RO, UKwales) have suffered budget cuts of more than 5%,
whereas decreases between 1 and 5% were reported in eleven countries/regions (BE, BG, CZ, IE, EE, ES, FR, PL, SK, SI, UK). These drastic reductions in education expenditure were made possible through teacher salary cuts or freezes that have been implemented in most EU member states, with a few exceptions where teacher salaries increased in 2012 through reforms of the salary structure (CZ, PL, SK, RO, IS) (Eurydice, 2013b). Things are becoming worse in countries hit by the economic crisis, given that increased unemployment and cuts in salaries and pensions have reduced the capacity of many families to spend more on the education of their children and hence offer financial support to improve school services and infrastructure.

In this critical juncture, the challenge for policymakers is to ensure that persisting economic challenges do not become an overwhelming obstacle for the establishment of an enabling school leadership environment. In particular, policy makers need to address the following policy actions for overcoming the pressing challenges brought by the economic crisis:

- It is essential to work towards more efficient, better targeted, and more participative funding strategies for the promotion of equity and learning outcomes in schools.
- Financial support for developing capacity-building programs needs to be safeguarded.
- Financial support to the most disadvantaged students and schools needs to be reaffirmed through more flexible and responsive financial strategies that can be adaptive to the conditions of precarity caused by the continuing economic crisis.

As the causes of inequalities in education become more complex and diverse, funding mechanisms should also adjust to needs of disadvantaged students and schools that transcend immediate instructional concerns (e.g. earmarked support for students from families hit by the economic crisis, providing meals for poorer pupils and so on).

### Policy coherence

Socio-economic and cultural factors that cannot be controlled directly by school leaders and teachers can greatly affect equity and learning in schools. From this perspective, it is of critical importance in EU countries were austerity measures have been introduced as a response to the recent economic crisis, to take efforts so as to ensure that these do not further deepen inequalities in income distribution, especially in communities and regions where there was already a high share of low income households. It should be stressed and become better understood by all stakeholders involved in policymaking and implementation that in order to promote equity and learning in schools there should be a deepening of sectoral coordination between education policies and other government policies that target to improve the socio-economic situation of the most socio-economically disadvantaged regions and communities through, for example, welfare policies, employment policies, LLL policies etc.

At school level policy coherence can be exemplified through coordinated leadership action involving the formulation of the school’s mission, development plans and priorities, school spending, curricula, staffing, professional development, extra-curricular and out of school activities, networking, engagement in community projects etc. targeting specific school and community needs in relation to equity in access, opportunities, and outcomes and improved learning performance for all. At this level, given that the socio-economic and cultural background of students has been found to play a considerable role in student performance in many EU countries, leadership policy coherence particularly in schools with a high share of low SES students, is greatly enhanced through the deepening of involvement of schools in the local community, serving its needs as community learning centres.

### Policy ownership

Policy ownership can be conceptualised as a (perceived) state of belonging to, and responsibility for, the implementation of a strategy or initiative. A dispersed, rather than a top-down, model of implementation is more likely to ensure that various stakeholders (e.g. school leaders, parents, pupils and local authorities) view policy as benign, rather than an alien interloper (Bagley and Ward, 2013). An initiative that is adopted willingly, even though it may have arisen externally, is much more likely to be successful than one that is imposed externally or internally on unwilling or unconvinced staff (Earley, 2013). The way that people perceive change will affect the way that they respond. Therefore if they perceive that the change has been forced on them they
may well resist it, particularly if they feel it is counter to their interests. It follows from this that it is important to ensure that implementers at least understand what the change involves and that ideally they should feel some involvement with, and ownership of, the policy.

Policy ownership at school level can be greatly enhanced through distributed leadership and the widening of participation of school level stakeholders in decision making and in implementation of policies and projects aimed to promote equity and learning.

**EMPOWERMENT OF DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS AND TRUST IN THEIR PROFESSIONALISM**

Policy ownership is supported and enhanced by the sharing of power between different stakeholders. Policy empowerment and trust in different “key actors” shapes the degree and the nature of their involvement in the implementation of a policy or initiative. In school education systems where power is more widely shared and devolved it is likely that the implementation of strategies and initiatives targeting to promote school leadership for equity and learning will be handled more smoothly and successfully than in highly hierarchical systems.

At school level, school leaders must try to empower staff by making explicit their own professional and educational values and sharing them. This way, an agreed collegiate culture can be created, encouraging a learning environment for all staff and pupils. Commitment and collegiality in others has to be developed, and leaders need to involve staff in decision making, allowing them to take ownership of their work, valuing them, and translating clear vision and purpose. Trust, empowerment and engagement are key components of collegiate cultures where change is not seen as a threat but as part of everyday practice (Earley, 2013).

**SUPPORTIVE SHARED DISPOSITIONS TO INCLUSIVE, NON SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY SEGREGATED SCHOOLS**

Beliefs about capacity to learn and how far it relates to innate ability or to effort and beliefs about the impact of families on early learning are culturally shaped. School leaders who, for example, give entry preference to learners with higher attainment, or who allocate the most inexperienced teachers to classes of those perceived as having lower academic potentials are enacting inequality. Unpacking one’s own culture and its assumptions about people and about learning may move school leaders out of their habitual thinking and behaviours, raising awareness of how they are shaped by gender, ethnicity, class and societal culture (Lumby, this volume).

From a policy perspective the capacity of governments to devise policies that would promote schools with balanced student intake in terms of their socio-economic background is rather limited because of the complexity and the highly controversial nature of the issues involved. What they can do is to promote among the population the belief that all schools, irrespective of their intake and hence irrespective of the economic and social conditions in the place where schools are located, can promote equally well the well being and learning performance of students. Such beliefs can be established through strategies and coordinated policy initiatives that aim to reduce inequalities in income distribution, to improve the standards of living in poorer neighbourhoods and regions, to enhance the quality and diversity of the services and infrastructure (schools included) available to the citizens living in such areas etc.
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olicy development in the context of school leadership is defined as the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies, strategies and measures that promote school leadership, particularly from the perspective of equity and learning. Policy makers in EU Member States can utilize indicators based on qualitative and quantitative data to identify priorities, and develop, implement, monitor and assess the impact of policies on school leadership from the perspective of equity and learning. Policy development indicators on school leadership, based on reliable, comparable data, can further support analysis and comparison of performance across time and within and between school systems. This briefing note reviews existing policy indicators (as well as their data sources), which are directly related to the school leadership policy goals and action lines proposed in the previous sections. In addition, this briefing note identifies policy areas where new indicators should be developed, and discusses how existing and new indicators can be utilized under a coherent framework that can inform policy making on school leadership.

Currently there are few sources of quantitative or qualitative data which can be used as indicators in the field of school leadership policy development in EU’s school systems. Important contributions in terms of indicators and comparative data have been offered by the Eurydice network (2007, 2013a & 2013c). For example, a recent publication, entitled “Key Data on Teachers and School Leaders in Europe” (2013a), presents indicators with quantitative data and qualitative information on teachers and school leaders. Indicators and related data specifically on school leaders refer to conditions of access to the position of school head, initial and in-service training requirements, recruitment procedures, salaries, forms of distributed leadership and the activities of school heads. The most recent data come from the academic years 2011-2 and 2012-3. Furthermore, the 2007 Eurydice report includes several indicators on school autonomy and on school-level distributed leadership. The vast majority of the data presented in the Eurydice reports are obtained from expert panels. Indicators and data related to the policy goals and policy action lines on school leadership policy development have also been developed by OECD (see, for example, OECD, 2010; 2012a). For example, OECD’s “Indicator D6: Who makes key decisions in education systems?” (OECD, 2012a), aims to show where key decisions are made in public institutions at the lower secondary education level. Specifically, the publication estimates the percentage of decisions taken at specific decision-making levels. The most recent data for this indicator were collected through the 2011 OECD-INES Survey on Locus of Decision Making with the use of expert panels. The data refer to 46 types of key decisions that are made in school systems, organized in four domains by 17 decision making levels, ranging from full central government autonomy to full school autonomy. Another set of indicators on school autonomy is based on OECD’s PISA school principal questionnaire data. The OECD PISA school questionnaire that is completed by school principals (in most EU countries at secondary education level schools) includes a set of questions that are directly related to the locus of decision-making in two broad areas: allocation of resources and curricula and assessments.

Overall, existing indicators and associated data on EU’s school systems cover more extensively the “enabling school leadership environment” policy goal and its two out of three policy action lines (school autonomy and distributed leadership) (see Annex I in this briefing note). On the other side, there are a few indicators and associated data on accountability, as well as on the two other policy goals (and their related policy action lines), namely the “promotion of professional standards, evaluation and research on school leadership for equity and learning” and the “school leadership capacity building for equity and learning”. Furthermore, most of the existing indicators are based on data derived from experts’ judgments and only a few data are obtained from school heads or other school-level stakeholders, such as teachers, parents or students. Experts’ judgments can provide an informed view of the room for maneuver that schools are institutionally allowed to have, for example, in relation to selecting the teaching content. This type of data cannot validly inform us, however, on what school heads believe about the room of maneuver that they actually have in making their own decisions on this matter or on other issues such as how teaching and learning is organized and delivered in schools.

THERE IS ALWAYS SOME DISCREPANCY BETWEEN WHAT HAS BEEN INSTITUTIONALLY ESTABLISHED, THROUGH LEGISLATION OR POLICY STRATEGIES FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT SCHOOL STAFF, STUDENTS OR PARENTS BELIEVE THAT IS THE CASE, WHAT THEY KNOW TO DO AND WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING IN EVERY DAY SCHOOL LIFE. THEREFORE,
Institutional level indicators can help policy makers to identify areas where there is need to introduce reforms, or take measures that will create an environment that is more supportive to school leadership development. For example, such indicators may help policy makers to identify the need to introduce reforms that leave more room for maneuver to school leaders to choose the textbooks or make their own arrangements regarding teaching methods, under the assumption that school leaders and teaching staff know best what are their students’ needs and what methods and contents will help them to do better in school subjects.

Dispositional level indicators can help policy makers understand better what school leaders believe about a policy area or about what should be done in order to help them improve equity and learning in schools. For example, indicators about what school heads believe they need in terms of further training can help policy makers formulate professional development policies that are better adapted to their needs. School leaders’ and teachers’ views about how students with an immigrant background can be better supported in their learning can help policy makers identify priorities in the design and funding of initiatives that respond to their needs. Capacity level indicators can help policy makers to identify areas where there is need to introduce measures that will enhance the capacities of school leaders to manage and lead their schools. For example, indicators on how many school heads or other members of school leadership teams participate in professional development activities each year, or how many of them have obtained qualifications related to school leadership, can help policy makers assess the outcome of their professional development policies or take measures to strengthen the existing ones. Capacity level indicators include not only human resources but also other resources, such as funding and infrastructures, which are available to initiatives, projects, programmes etc with the aim to promote school leadership. Such capacity level indicators can inform policy makers about the feasibility of specific policy goals and the cost-effectiveness of different policy solutions, given the constraints and potentials of available budgets or infrastructures. Indicators at the level of practices can be utilized by policy makers to make formative and summative assessments of the degree to which policy goals have been achieved at school-level implementation, to identify areas and specific priorities for policy intervention, etc. For example, indicator data related to whether or not school leaders have established on a regular basis activities that aim to uncover, understand, and change inequities in the learning experiences and opportunities of students (with the use of, for example, equity audits or other techniques), can offer valuable feedback on the actual impact of school leadership training on equity issues to everyday school life.

Different sources and types of data are more suitable and cost-effective for different indicator levels. Institutional level indicator data on policy areas such as school autonomy, accountability or school leadership programmes can be cost-effectively collected through expert panel methods. This is because just a few experts can offer an informed and valid view of the legislation, strategies, funding schemes, or policy measures that have been established in a given school system. On the other side, dispositional and capacity level data and data on the level of practice can be best served through surveys with the participation of fairly large and representative samples of school actors such as school leaders, teachers, students and parents. Objective data such as data on the performance of students by gender, socio-economic background or immigration background, data from records on the number of participants and graduates of professional development programmes for school leaders or data on public spending on the training of school leaders can also serve indicators at the level of practice or at the capacity level.
Overall, the review of existing indicators on the policy goals on school leadership identified in the briefing notes shows that most of them are institutional level indicators, and that there exists a scarcity of indicators and associated data on dispositional and capacity levels and at the level of practice. Furthermore, while Eurydice’s indicators are covering both primary and secondary education levels, OECD’s indicators cover only the secondary education level. One important limitation with the data utilized by Eurydice and OECD is that they do not cover all of EU’s school systems, particularly in some countries where regional or state governments have a high degree of autonomy to shape school systems at sub-national level, such as Spain and Germany. Finally, these indicators do not cover different types of schools and related school programmes (for example, general, vocational or comprehensive schools, schools for children with special education needs, etc). In the following paragraphs, the indicators are organized on the basis of the three policy goals identified in the EPNoSL Framework and the policy action lines suggested for each policy goal.

**Indicators and Data on the “Enabling School Leadership Environment” Policy Goal**

**Policy action line: School autonomy on equity and learning**

The indicators based on the OECD-INES survey on locus of decision making (OECD, 2012a) and the related Eurydice (2007; 2013c) and OECD’s PISA indicators provide information on school autonomy at the institutional level in many EU school systems; however, there is lack indicators and data on the level of dispositions, i.e. how much room for maneuver school leaders believe they actually have to choose, for example, learning content or teaching methods in each of EU’s school systems, etc. Also we lack data at the level of practices regarding school autonomy. For example, there are no data covering EU’s school systems regarding the range of schoolbook titles that are used by schools at a certain school level and grade for a specific curriculum area. Such an indicator, for those school systems where schools have a relative autonomy to choose schoolbooks, could show how much school leaders and teachers actually make use of their freedoms on this matter, indicate possible discrepancies between school autonomy policy goals and policy implementation, and hint to possible inconsistencies in policy that may effectively limit considerably schools’ actual room for maneuver (due, for example, to parallel policies that promote highly prescriptive performance based accountability based on standardized testing).

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**Who makes key decisions in education systems? (OECD, 2012a, Indicator D6)**

This indicator is aimed to show where key decisions are made in public institutions at the lower secondary education level. Specifically, it shows the percentage of decisions taken at specific decision-making levels. The most recent data for this indicator were collected through the 2011 OECD-INES Survey on Locus of Decision Making with the use of experts’ panels and refer to the school year 2010-11. The data refer to 46 types of key decisions that are made in school systems, organized in four domains by the following decision making levels:

- Central in full autonomy, Central after consultation with state level, Central other
- State in full autonomy, State within framework set at the central level, State other
- Regional in full autonomy, Regional within framework set at the central level,
- Local in full autonomy, Local within framework set at the central level, Local after consultation with central level
- School in full autonomy, School within framework set at the central level, School within framework set at the state level, School after consultation with regional level, School after consultation with sub-regional level, School after consultation with local level

**Level of government at which different types of decisions about organisation of instruction are taken in public lower secondary education (2011)**

School choice, School attended, Pupils’ school careers, Grouping of pupils, Choice of textbooks, Choice of software/learningware, Instruction time, Teaching methods, Assessment of pupils' regular work, Assistance to pupils

**Level of government at which different types of decisions about personnel management are taken in public lower secondary education (2011) about Principals, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff (separately)**

Hiring, Dismissal, Duties, Conditions of service, Fixing of salary levels, Influence over the career
### Level of Government at Which Different Types of Decisions about Planning and Structures Are Taken in Public Lower Secondary Education (2011)

Creation or closure of school, Creation or abolition of a grade level, Designing programmes of study, Selection of programmes of study offered in a particular school, Selection of subjects taught in a particular school, Definition of course content, Setting of qualifying examinations for a certificate or diploma, Credentialing

### Level of Government at Which Different Types of Decisions about Resource Management Are Taken in Public Lower Secondary Education (2011)

Allocation of resources to the school
- Teaching staff, Non-teaching staff, Capital expenditure, Operating expenditure, For principal professional development, For teacher professional development

Use of resources in the school
- Teaching staff, Capital expenditure, Operating expenditure, For principal professional development, For teacher professional development

### OECD’s PISA Composite Indexes of School Responsibility for Resource Allocation and for Curriculum and Assessment (OECD, 2010)

The OECD PISA school questionnaire that is completed by school principals (in most EU countries in secondary education level schools) includes a set of questions that are directly related to the locus of decision-making in two broad areas: allocation of resources and curricula and assessments. The principals’ responses on the related questionnaire statements provide the data for the construction of two composite indexes.

#### Allocation of Resources to the School

**Composite Index of School Responsibility for Resource Allocation**

This index is based on the percentage of students in schools whose principals reported that only “principals and/or teachers”, only “regional and/or national education authority”, or both “principals and/or teachers” and “regional and/or national” have a considerable responsibility for the following tasks: Selecting teachers for hire, Dismissing teachers, Establishing teachers’ starting salaries, Determining teachers’ salaries increases, Formulating the school budget, Deciding on budget allocations within the school.

#### Curricula and Assessments

**Composite Index of School Responsibility for Curriculum and Assessment**

This index is based on the percentage of students in schools whose principals reported that only “principals and/or teachers”, only “regional and/or national education authority” or both “principals and/or teachers” and “regional and/or national education authority” have a considerable responsibility for the following tasks: Establishing student assessment policies, Choosing which textbooks are used, Determining course content, Deciding which courses are offered.

### Eurydice Indicators on Decision-Making Levels (Eurydice, 2007; Eurydice, 2013c)

School autonomy to take decisions about the organisation of instruction (Curricular content, Teaching methods, Textbooks, Grouping of students, Assessment of students, Grade repetition, Content of examinations for certified qualifications)

- School autonomy regarding the content of the compulsory minimum curriculum, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (Full autonomy, Limited autonomy, No autonomy) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School autonomy regarding the curricular content of optional subjects, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (Full autonomy, Limited autonomy, No autonomy) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School autonomy regarding the choice of teaching methods, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (Full autonomy, Limited autonomy, No autonomy) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School autonomy regarding the choice of school textbooks, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (Full autonomy, Limited autonomy, No autonomy, Delegation is possible) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School autonomy regarding the basis on which pupils may be organized into groups for compulsory learning activity, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (Full autonomy, Limited autonomy, No autonomy) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School autonomy regarding the criteria for the internal assessment of pupils, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (Full autonomy, Limited autonomy, No autonomy) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School autonomy regarding decisions as to whether pupils should repeat a year, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (Full autonomy, Limited autonomy, No autonomy) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School autonomy in preparing the content of examinations for certified qualifications, ISCED 2, 2006/07 (Full autonomy, Limited autonomy, No autonomy, Not a school responsibility/No examinations for certified qualifications) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
The room for manoeuvre they have in organising instruction to promote the learning opportunities of students.

Schools offer to students that can be utilised as an indicator of the extent to which school leaders make use of equity and learning. OECD’s PISA school questionnaire includes a question on different types of activities that schools offer to students, from different socio-cultural backgrounds. PISA data on the frequency with which different methods are used to assess students can also serve this purpose. Indicator data at the level of practices in organizing instruction can be compared to indicator data on autonomy at the institutional level in order to identify discrepancies between the institutionally established room for maneuver school leaders have and the room for maneuver they actually utilize to promote equity and learning in their schools.

In some cases there are comparable, cross-country data available that can be used with the purpose to develop indicators at the level of practices that make use of school autonomy in organising instruction to promote equity and learning. OECD’s PISA school questionnaire includes a question on different types of activities that schools offer to students that can be utilised as an indicator of the extent to which school leaders make use of the room for manoeuvre they have in organising instruction to promote the learning opportunities of students.

Regarding indicators on school autonomy, further indicators and data collection mechanisms should be developed in relation to the curriculum and assessment, because these are the areas where the quality of school learning and equity is likely to be directly affected by school leadership (for example, in choosing content, textbooks, instruction time, teaching methods, grouping of students, etc) at:

- **The level of school leaders’ and teachers’ dispositions** (i.e. how much room for manoeuvre they believe they actually have on these matters, how well they think they are prepared to make informed choices on these matters, etc),
- **The level of school capacities** (for example, what is the share of school leaders that have received initial training or have participated in professional development activities on how to choose between and implement different teaching methods or learning materials for students with diverse needs and backgrounds, what is the share of school leaders that have received training on alternative assessment methods, etc), and
- **The level of school leaders’ and teachers’ actual practices** (for example, to what extent they use a variety of assessment methods, to what extent they use alternative teaching methods to respond to the needs different students, what are different types of learning activities that schools offer to students, how much time devoted to organising instruction as compared to time devoted to administrative tasks etc).

Q13 <This academic year>, which of the following activities does your school offer to students in the <national modal grade for 15-years-olds>? (Yes-No)

- a) Band, orchestra or choir,
- b) School play or school musical,
- c) School yearbook, newspaper or magazine,
- d) Volunteering or service activities,
- e) Book club,
- f) Debating club or debating activities,
- g) School club or school competition for foreign language, math or science,
- h) <Academic club>,
- i) Art club or art activities,
- j) Sporting

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team or sporting activities, k) Lectures and/or seminars (e.g. guest speakers such as writers or journalists), l) Collaboration with local libraries, m) Collaboration with local newspapers

Q14 DOES YOUR SCHOOL OFFER ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS TO STUDENTS IN <NATIONAL MODAL GRADE FOR 15-YEAR-OLDS> WHOSE <FIRST LANGUAGE> IS NOT <THE TEST LANGUAGE>? (Yes-No)
a) These students attend regular classes and receive additional periods of instruction aimed at developing <test language> skills, b) Before transferring to regular classes, these students attend a preparatory programme aimed at developing <test language> skills (e.g. reading literacy, grammar, vocabulary, communication) (e.g. reading literacy, grammar, vocabulary, communication), c) Before transferring to regular classes, these students receive some instruction in school subjects through their <first language>, d) These students receive significant amounts of instruction in their <first language> aimed at developing proficiency in both languages, e) Class size is reduced to cater to the special needs of these students.

Q15 GENERALLY, IN YOUR SCHOOL, HOW OFTEN ARE STUDENTS IN <NATIONAL MODAL GRADE FOR 15-YEAR-OLDS> ASSESSED USING THE FOLLOWING METHODS? (NEVER, 1-2 TIMES A YEAR, 3-5 TIMES A YEAR, MONTHLY, MORE THAN ONCE A MONTH)
a) Standardised tests, b) Teacher-developed tests, c) Teachers’ judgmental ratings, d) Student <portfolios>, e) Student assignments/ projects/homework.

Another source of data to serve an indicator on school autonomy at the level of practice is offered by OECD’s Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) questionnaire for principals.25 In this questionnaire there is a question about the share of time principals devote to different tasks. An indicator based on these data can help to identify the degree to which the administrative burdens of running a school and the demands for responding to school authorities higher up in the hierarchy limit (or not) the actual level of autonomy that school leaders have to organize how teaching and learning is taking place in their school. These data can be combined with data from the TALIS teacher questionnaire on the time teachers devote to teaching and planning of lessons as compared to time devoted to administrative tasks.

OECD’S TEACHING AND LEARNING INTERNATIONAL SURVEY (TALIS) QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS:
SHARE OF TIME DEVOTED TO CURRICULUM AND TEACHING-RELATED TASKS
17. AS PRINCIPAL OF THIS SCHOOL, ON AVERAGE THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR, WHAT PERCENTAGE OF TIME DO YOU ESTIMATE THAT YOU SPEND ON THE FOLLOWING TASKS IN THIS SCHOOL?
Percent of time devoted to the following tasks:
Internal administrative tasks (including human resource/personnel issues, regulations, reports, school budget, timetable), Curriculum and teaching-related tasks (including teaching, lesson preparation, classroom observations, mentoring teachers), Responding to requests from district, state, or national education officials, Representing the school at meetings or in the community and networking, Other.

OECD’S TEACHING AND LEARNING INTERNATIONAL SURVEY (TALIS) QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS:
HOURS DEVOTED TO TEACHING AND PLANNING OR PREPARATION OF LESSONS
8. IN A TYPICAL SCHOOL WEEK, ESTIMATE THE NUMBER OF (60-MINUTE) HOURS YOU SPEND ON THE FOLLOWING FOR THIS SCHOOL.
A) Teaching of the students, b) Planning or preparation of lessons either in school or out of school, c) Administrative duties in or out of school

POLICY ACTION LINE: DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING

Regarding distributed leadership for equity and learning, there is a set of institutional level indicators and associated data offered by Eurydice (2007) for most school systems in EU (apart from sub-national school systems in Spain and Germany). However, most of the data available were collected during the academic year 2006/7 and they should be, therefore, (regularly) updated in order to be of use to current and future policy making on this domain.

Another source of information related to distributed leadership in schools is offered by OECD’s TALIS teacher questionnaire data. These data can be utilized in indicators at the level of practice. In particular these data refer to the frequency with which teachers are engaged in the organization of instruction in their school and the frequency with which teachers are appraised by other teachers or other (apart from the principal) members of the school management team. OECD’s PISA school questionnaire data provide information on the influence that is exerted by parents, teachers and students in decision making at school.

THE REVIEW OF EXISTING INDICATORS AND ASSOCIATED DATA ON DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP SHOWS THAT THERE IS LACK OF INDICATORS AND UPDATED DATA AT INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL, such as data on existing legislation or policy strategies that support the formal distribution of decision making roles and responsibilities to different staff members or bodies within the school, as well as to students and parents. Furthermore, THERE IS LACK OF INDICATORS AND ASSOCIATED DATA ON DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AT THE LEVEL OF DISPOSITIONS (i.e. what are the views of school leaders, teachers, parents, students or other members of the school community about how decision making should be done in schools or the extent to which parents or students should be allowed to exert influence in decision making) AND AT THE LEVEL OF CAPACITY (i.e. do teachers, parents or even students receive some kind of training or engage in learning activities to develop skills and knowledge on how to participate in decision making, do they know their formally established roles, responsibilities and rights in decision making in schools etc).

**EURLYDICE INDICATORS ON DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP**

**RE)DISTRIBUTION OF TASKS AT SCHOOL LEVEL**

- Forms of distributed school leadership promoted by the top level education authority from pre-primary to upper secondary education (ISCED 0, 1, 2 and 3), 2011/12 (Redistribution of tasks among formal leadership teams, Informal ad-hoc groups, Schools decide about leadership distribution, No distributed school leadership) (Source: Eurydice, 2013a)

**TEACHERS’ INVOLVEMENT IN THE ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION (TEACHING METHODS, CURRICULAR CONTENT, TEXTBOOKS, GROUPING OF STUDENTS, ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS, GRADE REPETITION, CONTENT OF EXAMINATIONS FOR CERTIFIED QUALIFICATIONS)**

- Teachers’ involvement in the grade-retention process in primary and general (lower and upper) secondary education (ISCED 1, 2 and 3), 2011/12 (Local autonomy on teachers’ involvement, Teachers’ involvement, Automatic progression -no grade retention, Automatic progression except in certain years) (Source: Eurydice, 2013a)
- School decision-makers involved in determining the content of the compulsory minimum curriculum, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (School head, Teachers individually or collectively, School management body, Not a school responsibility/Not applicable) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School decision-makers involved in determining the curricular content of optional subjects, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (School head, Teachers individually or collectively, School management body, Not a school responsibility/Not applicable) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School decision-makers involved in determining teaching methods, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (School head, Teachers individually or collectively, School management body, Not a school responsibility/Not applicable) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School decision-makers involved in the choice of school textbooks, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (School head, Teachers individually or collectively, School management body, Not a school responsibility/Not applicable) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School decision-makers involved in determining the basis on which pupils may be organised into groups for compulsory learning activity, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (School head, Teachers individually or collectively, School management body, Not a school responsibility/Not applicable) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School decision-makers involved in determining the criteria for the internal assessment of pupils, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (School head, Teachers individually or collectively, School management body, Not a school responsibility/Not applicable) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School decision-makers involved in determining whether pupils should repeat a year, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (School head, Teachers individually or collectively, School management body, Not a school responsibility/Not applicable) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- School decision-makers who may be involved in preparing the content of examinations for certified qualifications, ISCED 2, 2006/07 (School head, Teachers individually or collectively, School management body, Not a school responsibility/No examinations for certified qualifications) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
- Promotion of teamwork included in the tasks of teachers, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (on school development, school-wide curriculum planning, cross-curricular activities, school self-evaluation, pupil assessment) (required, depending on the institution) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)

**COLLECTIVE EVALUATION OF TEACHERS**

- Official methods for the individual or collective evaluation of teachers, ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07 (Individual evaluation by peers) (Source: Eurydice, 2007)
**OECD’s Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) Questionnaire for Teachers**

**Frequency of Appraisal and/or Feedback about Your Work as Teacher – Other Teachers Members or Members of the School Management Team**

21. From the following people, how often have you received appraisal and/or feedback about your work as a teacher in this school?
(Never, Less than once every two years, Once every two years, Once per year, Twice per year, 3 or more times per year, Monthly, More than once per month)

a) Principal, b) Other teachers or members of the school management team, c) External individual or body (e.g. external inspector)

**Frequency of Teachers’ Engagement in the Organisation of Instruction in the School**

30. How often do you do the following in this school?
(Never, Less than once per year, Once per year, 3-4 times per year, Monthly, Weekly)

a) Attend staff meetings to discuss the vision and mission of the school, b) Develop a school curriculum or part of it, c) Discuss and decide on the selection of instructional media (e.g. textbooks, exercise books), d) Exchange teaching materials with colleagues, e) Engage in discussion about the learning development of specific students, f) Observe other teachers’ classes and provide feedback, g) Engage in joint activities across different classes and age groups (e.g. projects), h) Discuss and coordinate homework practice across subjects

**OECD-PISA School Principals Questionnaire (OECD, 2010)**

**Influence Exerted by Parents, Teachers and Students in Decision Making at School**

Regarding your school, which of the following bodies exert a direct influence on decision making about staffing, budgeting, instructional content and assessment practices?

(Area of influence: Staffing Budgeting, Instructional content, Assessment practices)

a) Regional or national education authorities (e.g. inspectorates), b) The school’s <governing board>, c) Parent groups, d) Teacher groups (e.g. Staff Association, curriculum committees, trade union), e) Student groups (e.g. Student Association, youth organisation), f) External examination boards.

**Policy Action Line: School Accountability for Equity and Learning**

Regarding school accountability for equity and learning, OECD’s PISA school questionnaire data have been utilized as indicators at the level of practice. Specifically the data refer to the use of assessment or achievement data for decision-making and benchmarking and information purposes, as well as on school accountability practices to parents. Other indicators on accountability at the level of practice are provided by data obtained from OECD’s TALIS principals and teachers’ questionnaires.

At the level of dispositions OECD’s TALIS teacher questionnaire data offer a large variety of information about the teachers’ views regarding appraisal and/or feedback to teachers. The TALIS principals questionnaire also includes questions on the views of principals on the importance of different evaluation parameters in the school internal and external evaluations and the impact of school evaluation activities (in terms of the influence of school evaluations). Further questions offer information on principals’ views on the importance of different teacher appraisal dimensions, the importance of different teacher appraisal objectives and the impact of teacher appraisal activities.

At institutional level, Arias et al. (2011) have proposed a set of indicators, but currently there are no data on these indicators. The lack of such indicators reflects, in a way, an assumption that indicators at the level of practice can indirectly reveal what is the case regarding the existing legislation, policy strategies, etc. on school accountability in a given school system. However, this may not be the case, because schools may engage in various accountability-related activities without having to do so because this is demanded by laws and regulations governing schools (and vice versa).

**Overall, the Review of Existing Indicators and Associated Comparable Data Reveals That There is Lack of Indicators on School Accountability for Equity at All Levels (Institutional, Dispositional, Level of Capacities and Level of Practice). Therefore, There is Need to Develop Such Indicators and Associated Data Collection Mechanisms and Instruments.** For example, there are no comparable data on what are the demands of legislative frameworks and regulations governing school accountability on issues of equity in school life, or how much issues of equity weight in external school evaluations and in teacher appraisals. Furthermore, there are no comparable data on school leaders, teachers or other school stakeholders’ views about how much issues of equity should be taken into account in school evaluations, and in school leaders and teachers’ appraisals. Also there are no comparable data on how well are prepared school leaders, teachers or external evaluators to
perform school evaluations or school staff assessments and appraisals on issues of equity, and, finally, there is lack of data and indicators related to the actual practices of such evaluations or appraisals on issues of equity as well as their impact on schools, school leaders and teaching staff.

**OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) Questionnaire for Principals**

How often during the last 5 years did this school produce a school self-evaluation document and/or was the school evaluated by an external agency or body (e.g. external inspector)?

(Never, Once, 2-4 times, Once per year, More than once per year)

a) A school self-evaluation report was produced
b) An external evaluation was conducted

To what extent did these school evaluations have an influence upon the following?

(No influence at all, Low level of influence, Moderate influence, High level of influence)

a) The school budget, b) The performance feedback to this school, c) The performance appraisal of the school management, d) The performance appraisals of individual teachers, e) The assistance provided to teachers to improve their teaching skills, f) The remuneration and bonuses received by teachers

Are these school evaluations published? (Yes-No)

Are these school evaluations used by <government> in the publication of tables that compare the performance of individual schools? (Yes-No)

How often is the work of teachers in this school appraised by either you, other colleagues in the school, or an external individual or body (e.g. inspector)?

(Never, Less than once every 2 years, Once every 2 years, Once per year, Twice or more per year)

a) You (the principal), b) Other teachers or members of the school management team, c) External individual or body (e.g. external inspector)

**OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) Questionnaire for Teachers**

This questionnaire includes a whole section devoted to teachers’ views regarding teacher appraisal and feedback. Therefore, a large number of different questions/statements in this section can serve as indicators at the level of dispositions regarding school accountability. One of them can be the following.

**Teachers' views on the use and impact of appraisal and/or feedback to teachers**

We would like to ask you about appraisal and/or feedback to teachers in this school more generally. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(Strongly Disagree, Disagree Agree, Strongly Agree)

a) In my opinion, in this school the principal takes steps to alter the monetary rewards of a persistently underperforming teacher, b) In my opinion, in this school the sustained poor performance of a teacher would be tolerated by the rest of the staff, c) In this school, teachers will be dismissed because of sustained poor performance, d) In my opinion, in this school the principal uses effective methods to determine whether teachers are performing well or badly, e) In my opinion, in this school a development or training plan is established for teachers to improve their work as a teacher, f) In my opinion, the most effective teachers in this school receive the greatest monetary or non-monetary rewards, g) If I improve the quality of my teaching at this school, I will receive increased monetary or non-monetary rewards, h) If I am more innovative in my teaching at this school, I will receive increased monetary or non-monetary rewards, i) In my opinion, in this school the review of teachers' work is largely done to fulfill administrative requirements, j) In my opinion, in this school the review of teachers' work has little impact upon the way teachers teach in the classroom.

**OECD-PISA School Principals Questionnaire (OECD, 2010)**

The OECD PISA school questionnaire that is completed by school principals (in most EU countries in secondary education level schools) includes a set of questions that are directly related to the use of assessment or achievement data for decision making or for benchmarking and information purposes, as well as data on school accountability to parents.

**Use of assessment or achievement data for decision making**

Percentage of school principals that: Make curricular decisions, Allocate resources, Monitor teacher practices

**Use of assessment or achievement data for benchmarking and information purposes**
### School Accountability Practices to Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does your school provide information to parents of students in &lt;national modal grade for 15-year-olds&gt; on their child’s academic performance relative to other students in &lt;national modal grade for 15-year-olds&gt; in your school? (Yes-No)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does your school provide information to parents of students in &lt;national modal grade for 15-year-olds&gt; on their child’s academic performance relative to national or regional &lt;benchmarks&gt;? (Yes-No)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your school provide information to parents on the academic performance of students in &lt;national modal grade for 15-year-olds&gt; as a group relative to students in the same grade in other schools? (Yes-No)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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### System Assessment and Benchmarking for Education Results (SABER) (Arias et al., 2011)

#### School Autonomy and Accountability Assessment Scale (SAAS) - Indicators of School Accountability

- Is there a manual regulating the use of the results of the yearly assessments of school and student performance by the School Council?
  - No. Assessments are only available to the educational authorities and to school personnel
  - Yes. School Councils have guidelines for using the assessments, but the recommendations do not include personnel actions
  - Yes. School Councils have guidelines for using the assessments, including recommendations about personnel actions

- Is the school assessment of school and student performance part of a national or regional assessment system?
  - No. Assessments are set by the school for its own use
  - Yes. Assessments are components of a national or sub-national exercise but there is no long term plan for the use of the results
  - Yes. Assessments are components of a national or sub-national exercise and they form part of a long term plan for the use of the results

- Are the results of the assessments used to compare school performance with schools in similar conditions?
  - No. Assessments are managed by the national and sub-national authorities for their own use
  - Yes. Assessments results at the school or sub-national level are made public but school-specific data are only known by school authorities.
  - Yes. Assessments results are made public at the school level and comparisons are made with other schools and regions.

- Do School Councils have the legal authority to hire external auditors to perform financial audits at the school?
  - No. School Councils have no legal authority over the school financial affairs
  - No. School councils can be consulted over the school finances but legal authority is outside of their realm
  - Yes. School Councils have legal authority to perform external financial audits

- Is there a manual to guide the School Council in the use of financial audits to evaluate school performance?
  - No. School Councils have no legal authority over the school financial affairs
  - No. There is a manual guiding the participation of the School Council that excludes financial audits because the Council lacks legal authority over the school finances
  - Yes. School Councils have a manual for guiding them in the use of external financial audits in school accountability
INDICATORS AND DATA ON THE “PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP” POLICY GOAL

Regarding this policy goal, there is great lack of indicators and indicator data that would allow for evidence-based school leadership policy development, drawing upon on comparative analyses of EU’s school systems and policy development trends within them. Therefore there is need to develop indicators and data collection mechanisms and instruments on the respective policy domains.

On the policy action line of the Establishment and Implementation of School Leaders’ Professional Standards for Equity and Learning, indicator data at institutional level would provide comparative information about the extent to which there are established national/system-wide professional standards for school staff holding school leadership positions, the scope of these standards (do they cover all school levels and school types within school systems?), and the emphasis placed in the professional standards for school leaders on their responsibility to promote equity and learning in schools. Furthermore, institutional level indicators should provide information about the relative importance of professional standards in the formulation of school leaders’ evaluation criteria and the accreditation of school leadership programmes.

At dispositional level, indicators should be developed reflecting School Leaders and Other Stakeholders’ Views about What are their Expectations from School Leaders, how well existing school leaders’ professional standards are reflecting their expectations, and what is the relative weight of expectations from school leaders to promote equity and learning as compared to other types of expectations related to managing and leading schools.

At capacity level, indicators and data should be developed to provide information on the extent to which School Leaders engage in training and other professional development activities related to established professional standards, or how well school leadership preparation programmes and CPD initiatives respond to professional standard demands on equity and learning.

Finally, at practice level, indicators and data should be able to reveal possible discrepancies between what is described in standards in relation to equity and learning and what is the case in actual school leadership practice.

Indicators and data related to the policy goal of the Establishment and Implementation of School Leaders’ Evaluation for Equity and Learning, are often closely related to school accountability indicators and associated data, but this can be misleading regarding the quality of school leaders. More specifically, School Evaluations Performed for Accountability Purposes Based Heavily on Student Performance Criteria, do not necessarily reflect the Quality of School Leaders’ Work, because Student Performance is not directly Related to School Leadership Practices. For example, performance-based school evaluations may not reflect the high quality leadership that is been practiced by some school leaders working hardly to improve the situation on the ground in schools with students that on average achieve very low in standardized tests. Therefore, the evaluation of school leaders’ work should be viewed within a wider framework of policies aimed to help school leaders develop professionally and improve their daily work to manage and lead schools.

Indicators and data at institutional level on school leaders’ evaluation should provide data on existing legislation, regulations and policy strategies on this domain, as well as the Relative Weight of Evaluation Criteria for School Leaders, Particularly on Equity and Learning Issues.

Dispositional indicators and related data is proposed to emphasize on school leaders’ views about evaluation criteria, procedures and use of results, as well as on the Perceived Usefulness of Evaluation for their Professional Development and its Impact on Leadership Practices.

At the level of capacities, it should be placed emphasis on the Knowledge and Skills of Those who Perform Evaluations of School Leaders’ Performance, and the training that is available for them.
Finally, at the level of practice, indicators and associated data is proposed to focus upon the impact of school leaders’ evaluation on their work and their career. For example, do school leaders actually engage in professional development activities in areas that evaluation showed that they have to improve?

Regarding the policy action line of the promotion of research to identify school leadership policies and school leaders’ strategies and practices that promote equity and learning, institutional level indicators and associated data are proposed to provide information on legislation, policy strategies and measures taken to support research related to school leadership. Overall, at institutional level what matters most are indicators and data that show how enabling is the legislative and policy framework to the conduct of research in school contexts, the formal requirements needed to be fulfilled to conduct research in schools, how much time passes between a formal application to conduct research in schools and its approval by the competent authorities, and the locus of decision making in matters of research in schools.

At dispositional level, indicators and data is proposed to be developed on school leaders’ perceived usefulness and applicability of existing research to their work, and what are school leaders’ views regarding needs for further research on school leadership.

At capacity level, indicators and associated data is proposed to be developed to provide information about the availability of resources and channels for the dissemination and sharing of research results on school leadership (i.e. journals, on-line portals and professional networking services, conferences, etc), the level of public funding on research on school leadership, the knowledge and skills of school leaders to conduct research and utilize research results in their practice, the availability professional development programmes and initial training for school leaders on research methods and techniques of data analysis, etc.

At the level of practice, indicators and associated data can provide information on how often school leaders engage in research in their schools, what are the research-based interventions they have implemented to improve equity and learning in their schools, how often they study research publications on school leadership to find ideas and answers to school management and leadership challenges as compared to other, less formal, forms of professional learning such as peer learning, networking, etc.

**INDICATORS AND DATA ON THE “SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CAPACITY BUILDING” POLICY GOAL**

Comparatively, there are currently more indicators and available data on the policy action line of selection, career and succession of school leaders than other capacity building policy areas.

**Indicators on the selection, career and succession of school leaders (Eurydice, 2013a)**
- Professional experience and headship training officially required to be a school head, from pre-primary to upper secondary education (ISCED 0, 1, 2 and 3), 2011/12
- Minimum number of years of professional teaching experience required to become a school head from pre-primary to upper secondary education (ISCED 0, 1, 2 and 3), 2011/12
- Principal methods of recruiting school heads from pre-primary to upper secondary education (ISCED 0, 1, 2 and 3), 2011/12 (competitive examination, open recruitment, candidate list)
- Percentage of female school heads in primary and secondary education (ISCED 1, 2 and 3), public and private sectors combined, 2010 ( Adopted by Eurydice, 2013a; Source: Eurostat)

**Indicators on school heads’ salaries, allowances and supplementary payments**
- Minimum and maximum basic annual statutory salary for school heads in PPS EUR from pre-primary to upper secondary education (ISCED 0, 1, 2 and 3), 2011/12 (Source: Eurydice, 2013a)
- Annual gross salaries of full-time fully qualified school heads in pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary public schools, 2012-3 (Basic statutory salary: minimum-maximum, average actual salary) (Source: Eurydice, 2013c)
• Salary allowances for school heads regarding: Additional responsibilities, Geographical location, Teaching/coordinating classes with pupils/students with special education needs or challenging circumstances, Participation in extracurricular activities, Overtime, 2012-3 (Eurydice, 2013c)
• Changes in teachers’ statutory salaries in absolute terms in the public sector in 2011/12 and 2012/13 compared with the previous year (ISCED 0, 1, 2 and 3) (Eurydice, 2013c)

Such indicators and associated data have been developed recently by Eurydice (2013a) and they mainly provide information at the institutional level of analysis of policy development on school leadership (criteria and methods of selection) and at the level of recourses (salaries, allowances and supplementary payments to school heads). However, there is lack of comparable data on the dispositional level, providing information about current and prospective school leaders’ views about the fairness and relevance of the criteria used in the selection, promotion and replacement of school leaders, and the fairness and transparency of the procedures followed on these matters. At the level of capacities, indicators and data are needed on the knowledge and skills of those responsible for recruiting school leaders, and whether or not members of school leaders’ recruitment teams have received training on how to select the best candidates for the job. At the level of practices, indicators and data could provide information on the representation of staff in formal school leadership posts by gender, immigration background, age, area of teaching specialty, etc. Such information is expected to indicate possible negative biases in the selection procedures or criteria for school leaders, and possible needs in the formulation of policies for the attraction of candidates having more diverse backgrounds.

Regarding the policy action line of the Establishment and/or Upgrading of the School Leaders’ System of Initial Education and Training, existing indicators and associated data are rather scarce. From Eurydice (2013a) it is offered such an indicator on the existence of specific academies or programmes for school leaders (“Existence of specific academies and/or training programmes for school leadership in pre-primary to upper secondary education -ISCED 0, 1, 2 and 3-, 2011/12”). This indicator is at the capacities level of policy analysis.

Overall, at the institutional level of analysis, indicators and associated data could be developed to provide information on the legislative framework and policy strategies that shape the system of preparation of school leaders, such as what is the role and responsibilities of authorities in different levels of governance of education (central, regional or local education authorities) as well as of different stakeholders (such as school leaders and teachers’ associations) to the formulation of curricula for school leaders, what bodies are responsible for accrediting initial preparation providers and programmes for school leaders, what is the duration of such programmes, what is the level of qualifications that are provided to graduates from these programmes (Masters degree, etc), are there quality assurance mechanisms in the system of initial preparation of school leaders, etc.

At the level of dispositions, indicators and associated data could provide information about the views of current and prospective school leaders on the relevance of initial preparation programmes to the needs and challenges school leaders are facing in managing and leading schools, their opinions regarding the necessity or not to establish a mandatory qualification related to school leadership for becoming eligible to get a leadership post, what they think are the learning areas where initial preparation should pay more attention to, and what is the relative weight school leaders give to initial training on how to deal with issues of fairness, inclusion and learning in schools as compared to other school leadership and management areas.

At the level of capacities, indicators and associated data can inform policy making about the level of public investments available in initial school leaders’ preparation, the training capacity of existing initial training programmes for school leaders, the variety of providers, etc.

At the level of practices, indicators and associated data could offer information on the actual participation in school leadership preparation programmes by gender, level of school, type of school, region and locale of school. For example, such an indicator could be the percentage of school heads who have received, prior to or within a year of their appointment, formal or non-formal education/training on school leadership.

Regarding the policy action line of CPD Activities on School Leadership for Equity and Learning, Eurydice (2013a) offers an institutional level indicator and data on the “Status of continuing professional development for school heads from pre-primary to upper secondary education (Professional duty,
The indicators’ framework on school leadership policy development outlined in this briefing note should be integrated into a wider framework guiding the identification of indicators and the collection of data regarding equity and learning in schools. The heightened interest in the political discourse on average students’ performance indicators should widen to include indicators showing how well students perform by gender, socio-economic background, immigration background, etc., so as to mainstream issues of equity in the policy agenda. Furthermore, more emphasis should be placed on how well students do in different types of schools and school programmes (i.e. general, vocational, comprehensive) and in schools with different student population compositions (i.e. schools with a high intake of students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds as compared to schools with more privileged students). It is only when school leadership policy development integrates in a coherent way with other policies targeting the promotion of equity and learning in schools, such as policies and measures to support low performing students, policies targeting to make schools more inclusive to children with a minority background, or policies that offer extra support to schools with a high share of students who have disadvantaged backgrounds, that policy making on school leadership can really make a difference in the capacity of every school to help all children learn to the best of their abilities.

Concluding recommendations

The indicators’ framework on school leadership policy development outlined in this briefing note should be integrated into a wider framework guiding the identification of indicators and the collection of data regarding equity and learning in schools. The heightened interest in the political discourse on average students’ performance indicators should widen to include indicators showing how well students perform by gender, socio-economic background, immigration background, etc., so as to mainstream issues of equity in the policy agenda. Furthermore, more emphasis should be placed on how well students do in different types of schools and school programmes (i.e. general, vocational, comprehensive) and in schools with different student population compositions (i.e. schools with a high intake of students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds as compared to schools with more privileged students). It is only when school leadership policy development integrates in a coherent way with other policies targeting the promotion of equity and learning in schools, such as policies and measures to support low performing students, policies targeting to make schools more inclusive to children with a minority background, or policies that offer extra support to schools with a high share of students who have disadvantaged backgrounds, that policy making on school leadership can really make a difference in the capacity of every school to help all children learn to the best of their abilities.

REFERENCES


PART II: BACKGROUND PAPERS ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND EQUITY: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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3 Professor, School of Education, University of Hertfordshire, UK
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The aim of this chapter is to provide policy with an evidence base on school leadership from the perspective of equity. We do so by: (i) considering how discourses constitute objects; (ii) exploring the rationale of policy on school leadership and equity; (iii) considering the various models of school leadership and equity; and (iv) examining literature on the practical application of ideas about school leadership and equity. In so doing, we draw attention to the positive claims made internationally about the utility of school leadership strategies to promote social justice through critical reflection and ‘transforming dialogue’ (Woods, 2011, p. 134). Although cognisant of the benefits of creating a shared vision of equity in schools, we draw upon Foucault’s (2009) account of discourse formation, and caution that literature on school leadership and equity may help constitute a “de-stated” account of governance that places onus on school leaders to take responsibility for social processes that may, in reality, lie beyond their control.

DISCOURSE FORMATION ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND EQUITY

When commencing a literature review of school leadership and equity, it is helpful to consider Foucault’s account of discourse formation. According to Foucault (2009, p. 49), ‘Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own intervention’. Thus, the discourse on school leadership and equity constructs the phenomenon that researchers seek to identify, and researchers contribute to discourse formation through their publications. Although inequalities and injustices are not merely “constructs” in various researchers’ discourses, critical postmodernism serves to remind us that policy (as the political enactment of discourse) is both an attempt to solve real world problems and an attempt to persuade social actors to subscribe to particular beliefs that delineate action (Nudzor, 2009). Researchers’ empirical enquiries thus play a significant role in constructing the social landscape. Because researchers utilise various perspectives in their accounts of school leadership and equity, the emergent discourse is diverse and complex. For example, in their paper on school leadership practice and preparation across seven nations, Ylimaki and Jacobson (2013, p. 6) discuss organisational learning (OL), instructional leadership (IL), and culturally responsive practices (CRP). Meanwhile, in their paper on how leadership influences student learning, Leithwood et al. (2010, p. 673) talk about four leadership ‘paths’: ‘Rational, Emotions, Organizational, and Family’.

In spite of the enormous variety of papers about school leadership and equity, researchers are able to produce literature reviews that identify overarching narratives by categorising disparate accounts under discrete headings. For example, in their review of the literature, Ross and Berger (2009, p. 464) organise discussion using headings based on what they describe as the ‘three main conceptions’ of leadership: (i) transformational leadership; (ii) distributed leadership; and (iii) instructional leadership. Similar conceptions are identified by Earley et al. (2012, p. 21) in their review of the literature on school leadership, where they discuss (i) transformational leadership; (ii) instructional leadership; and (iii) pedagogic or learning-centred leadership. Consistency of categorisation implies consensus, yet Foucault’s (2009) assertion that writers help create what they aspire to discover alerts us to the danger of producing a literature review that implies homogeneity in accounts of school leadership and equity, and conceals our intervention in the construction of consensus. The authors of the present literature review therefore attempt to highlight the salient features of the literature on school leadership and equity, whilst acknowledging that the identification of broad themes does not render
interchangeable disparate ideas about leadership and social justice. Because the reading process is disrupted by parenthetic lists of multiple authors, we do not provide extensive lists of authors who have written upon a particular topic in this chapter, but instead reference texts by authors who do provide such lists.

**THE RATIONALE OF POLICY ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND EQUITY**

Goddard (2007, p. 5) identifies an ‘increasingly ethnoculturally diverse global community’ and suggests that the discourse of leadership and equity has developed in response to the ‘great movements of people taking place around the world’ (ibid, p. 1). While it appears that there is agreement that the discourse of school leadership and social justice is bound up with the concept of ‘equity for all’ in modern multicultural societies, it is less clear how this ‘new mantra’ (Brown, 2004, p. 80) came into being. Most papers on school leadership and equity focus on why it is necessary (for example, to enhance race relations) and how it might be implemented (for example, through prejudice reduction workshops), without interrogating the foundation of these ideas about social justice. Instead, much of the literature contains assertions that are presented as self-evident truths, for example that school leaders are acting in ‘increasingly complex environments’ (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003, p. 2) and that we need to ‘trust schools more and see them as the levers of reform’ (Collarbone & West-Burnham, 2008, p. 6). The tendency to ignore the ideological basis of policy on equity means that the promotion of school leadership strategies is presented in much of the literature as a “natural” and non-contestable offshoot of policies, rather than a political action performed on the individual.

When authors do attempt to locate policy on school leadership and equity within a wider socio-political narrative, they tend to position it as a global expression of neoliberal marketisation. For example, Serpieri (2009, p. 123) is highly critical of the introduction of ‘homogenous head teacher training models’ in Italy which, he claims, are designed to reposition head teachers as managers/entrepreneurs as part of the ‘marketisation of the public service’ (ibid, p. 130). In her study of school leadership and equity in Slovenia, Trnavcovic (2007, p. 79) states that Slovenia has undergone ‘a radical adjustment from a socialist, planned economy to a market-driven economy’, and argues that school leaders are employing inclusion strategies to ‘strengthen the market position of the school’ (ibid, p. 88) rather than promote social justice. Fitzgerald (2009, p. 155) condemns the marketisation of education in New Zealand, claiming that ‘access to schools has been rationalised’ so that ‘a particular group, the middle classes, can exercise their choice with regard to the school, and ultimately the university, to which they send their child’. Fitzgerald claims that teachers have been repositioned as ‘producers of commodities’ (i.e. students’ skills and knowledge) that can ‘contribute to the national and global economy’ (ibid, p. 157), and suggests that the identification and measurement of “standards” in education is ‘a compensatory attempt to create an imagined community of sameness’ that obscures the advantage that marketisation confer upon the elite (ibid, p. 158). Fitzgerald calls upon school leaders to resist the abuses of marketisation by promoting a ‘social justice agenda’ in schools (ibid, p. 159), but this possibility rests upon the assumption that the discourse of school leadership and equity stands outside, rather than within, the metadiscourse of neoliberal marketisation; a theory refuted by Serpieri (2009) and Trnavcovic (2007). Foskett and Lumby (2003, p. 181) claim that ‘macro changes sweeping the world’ translate into ‘micro changes within the work of leaders in schools and colleges’, and it seems that these changes entail the adoption of micro policy on leadership and equity informed by macro neoliberal economic principles. Evidence for this is found in the OECD (2010) report on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), in which it claims that ‘educational outcomes are a strong predictor of economic growth’ (ibid, p. 3), and argues that educational outcomes (and thus economic growth) may be enhanced through effective school leadership strategies.

In spite of the apparent international consensus over the function of school leadership as a means to foster equality of opportunity in local and global contexts, Foskett and Lumby (2003, p. 183) argue that ‘ubiquitous western concepts such as transactional, transformational and instructional leadership’ are not universally applicable, as ideas about such things as gender equality vary widely between cultures. In the absence of a universal definition of “leadership”, Foskett and Lumby (2003, p. 195) suggest that we might conceive of leadership as ‘the individual’s moral agency’; an idea that features widely in the literature. For example, Sergiavanni (1992) talks about sources of moral authority in school leadership; Fullan (2003) considers the moral imperative of school leadership; Bosu et al. (2011) discuss the moral use of power, and Bottery et al. (2012) explore how school leadership is guided by a sense of moral purpose. Whether or not the concept of leadership is held to have a moral foundation, much of the literature suggests that the overriding aim of policy on school leadership and equity is to promote equality of opportunity for pupils in the global free market economy, irrespective of race, gender or class. The extent to which this aim is realistic is, of course, challenged
by those writers on school leadership and equity who subscribe to Sandel’s (2012) view that the act of commodification corrupts education and undermines social justice. For example, in his study of leadership, personalization and high performance schooling, Fielding (2006, p.353) argues that market values render the personal ‘subservient to the functional’, and Hatcher (2005) critiques the tension between democratic principles and managerialism in his study of the distribution of leadership and power in schools in the market society.

Having briefly considered the socio-political basis of policy on school leadership and equity, the following section of this chapter looks at the models of leadership and equity that might be said to emerge from the literature.

MODELS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND EQUITY

As stated previously, the literature on school leadership is replete with terminology, and for the sake of simplicity most authors subsume accounts of leadership under various typologies. Of these, the most prevalent are:

- **TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP**, which posits a ‘leader-follower dichotomy’ (Harris et al., 2003, p. 16) and is associated with a central command model of governance.
- **TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP**, which is associated with inspiring others, building a shared vision, providing support and developing a collaborative culture (Yu et al., 2002, pp. 372-373).
- **DISTRIBUTIVE LEADERSHIP**, which is associated with the distribution of the performance of tasks across the ‘three constitutive elements of leader, follower and task or situation’ (Robinson, 2008, p. 243). A more radical reframing of how leadership is understood sees leadership as an emergent phenomenon that arises through complex, interactive processes across organisations and groups (Gronn, 2002; Woods & Woods, forthcoming).
- **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**, which is associated with ‘setting and communicating clear instructional goals and expectations’ and ‘promoting and participating in teacher learning and development’ (Brown & Chai, 2012, p. 753).

Writing in the 1990s, Clegg and Palmer (1996, p. 212) identified a ‘popular trend’ for leadership to be considered in terms of ideas like ‘empowerment’, ‘vision’, and ‘culture’. This trend shows no sign of abating, and the leader-follower transactional model does not feature strongly in the literature on school leadership and equity. Instead, the other more “negotiated” styles of leadership identified above are described, and these models are contextualised through reference to social justice. For example, Capper et al. (2006, p. 218) discuss how leadership preparation programmes aimed toward social justice tend to focus on developing educators’ ‘critical consciousness’ and sense of shared responsibility.

Perhaps surprisingly, given the amount of literature on school leadership and equity, Furman (2012, p. 192), flags up the paucity of literature about the actual practice of social justice leadership in K-12 schools and the capacities needed by school leaders to engage in social justice. Furman (ibid, p. 192) also notes that the ‘literature on leadership preparation is thin in regard to explicit methods for developing these capacities’. Furman suggests that a preoccupation with the raising of consciousness, rather than action-oriented behaviour, may account for this deficiency in the literature, which she attempts to address through her account of praxis. However, a second explanation offered by Furman is perhaps more likely, in light of our earlier discussion of the socio-political basis of the discourse of school leadership and equity. Citing North (2006), Furman (2012, p. 193) describes social justice as an ‘under-theorised concept in education’ and calls it an ‘umbrella term’ with ‘multiple meanings’. A possible explanation for why social justice is presented as a nebulous construct in the literature is found in Harris et al. (2003) account of school leadership policy. According to Harris et al. (ibid, p. 164) policy serves the demands of governments ‘for raising standards of school performance in terms of the economic “market-led” agendas’. Equity, or social justice, is positioned under the market model as “equality of opportunity” in terms of access to education and the global standardisation of education (measured through such things as PISA). This policy has, Harris et al. (ibid, p. 164) claim, in fact disadvantaged ‘many inner-city, migrant and socially deprived communities’, where ‘an increasing number of children’ are, for whatever reason, ‘unable to cope with a national curriculum’. The pervasiveness of the market model may have stifled the development of competing theories of social justice. Evidence of this is provided by Goddard and Hart (2007) in their study of school leadership and equity in Canada. Goddard and Hart (2007, p. 15) found that Canadian principals ‘actively resisted any attempts to recognize diversity and difference’, as they were wedded
to the notion that all students should be ‘treated the same’. Goddard and Hart (ibid, p. 16) are uncomfortable with this finding, arguing that ‘such an assimilationist approach limits the experiences of the minority-culture child’, yet the principals’ attitude is obviously consistent with the concept of social justice as “equality of opportunity”.

In a report commissioned by the OECD, Levin (2003) identifies the respective positions on equity held by the Canadian principals and Goddard and Hart:

Historically there have been two main approaches to addressing equity in education. One focuses on what is called ‘equality of opportunity’. In this view, it is access to education that is critical. The responsibility of the state is to provide opportunities to participate; whether people choose to take advantage of that access or are successful in doing so should not be a primary focus of public policy. The second view is more concerned with equity in the results of education, such as graduation and access to employment. From this perspective, providing the same opportunity is not enough because different people will need different kinds of opportunities and some people will need more support in order to be successful (Levin, 2003, p. 8).

The desire to enhance ‘graduation and access to employment’ through equity of results (Levin, ibid) is symptomatic of the re-conceptualisation of education as a means to serve the needs of industry by cultivating individuals’ employability (Ward, 2012), a project that has been promoted internationally by US backed multilateral agencies (such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) and the European Union (Connolly, 2013). In spite of the unease over performativity evident amongst authors identified in this chapter (e.g. Fielding, 2006; Hatcher, 2005), a ‘paradigm convergence’ (Ball, 2001, p. 48) over the efficacy of the market model of education has created political consensus around the idea that marketisation automatically creates a meritocracy based on the pursuit of self-interest (Ward, 2010). Under this model, we are all ‘free to make the most of our talents’ (Ward, 2010, p. 203), and actions and outcomes are the result of the exercise of free choice, rather than compulsion. Thus, the role of government is to ensure that standards of education are consistently high (hence the standards agenda); parents must choose their children’s schools wisely (hence the league tables), and pupils must work hard to maximise the utility of their education by gaining credentials for employment (ibid). In theory, the market model of education supports and sustains economic development by ensuring that every member of society is educated to be a productive component of the knowledge economy (Ball, 2001; Ball, 2010), and it is possible that the equity of results approach to education may prove more conducive to this aim than equality of opportunity. Indeed, Levin (2003) claims that the equity of results model of social justice is gaining in popularity, and the OECD (2010) report mentioned earlier appears to confirm that governments around the world are increasingly interested in implementing leadership strategies to enhance educational outcomes. However, in spite of international attempts to promote equity of results, Brown (2006, p. 394) argues that we have entered a ‘zero-sum game’, where the winners take most, if not all, of the opportunities available in the free market; a supposition which may lead us to question the idea that social justice is guaranteed in a neoliberal meritocracy. Furthermore, given that the concepts of equality of opportunity and equity of results have become embedded in policy stances that aim to promote markets, competition and neoliberal ideas about education, we might argue that Levin’s (ibid) identification of ‘two main approaches’ is something of a false binary, and that policy makers are in fact mired in a monodiscourse of neoliberal free market fundamentalism.

Although literature on social justice and school improvement constitutes a significant research field in the area of school leadership and equity, Heck and Hallinger (2010, p. 678) identify a paucity of large-scale, longitudinal empirical studies of the relationship between school leadership and academic performance. To explain this phenomenon, Heck and Hallinger (2010, p. 880) cite research that indicates that the ‘inherent complexity’ of organisations makes it ‘difficult to establish empirically a causal linkage between changes in leadership or organizational processes and changes in performance over time’. However, another possible explanation (which is not considered by Heck and Hallinger) is researchers’ incredulity towards the idea that school leadership produces equity of results, and this scepticism is evident in some of the literature. For example, in her study of social justice and school improvement in the poorest neighbourhoods, Lupton (2005, p. 591) criticises the English initiative, ‘Schools in Challenging Circumstances’, on the grounds that its discussion of inequity of results is ‘dominated by references to the poor practice of heads and teachers’. Lupton argues that, in reality, inequity of results is the product of ‘widespread material poverty’ outside the school (ibid, p. 594) that obliges teachers to divert teaching time into pastoral activities (ibid, p. 598) and forces principals to divert strategic planning time into policing pupil behaviour and liaising with external agencies (ibid, p. 599). Lupton (ibid, p. 602) argues that equity of results will not be achieved through improvement measures that
concentrate on ‘upskilling and motivating staff’, and that fail to address systemic constraints on social justice. Interestingly, this theory is endorsed in Levin’s (2003, p. 8) report for the OECD, where he states: ‘efforts to promote equity in education cannot rely solely on schools but must also include policy options around issues that are largely outside the educational system’, and there is evidence for the existence of these policy options within the literature. For example, Harris et al. (2006) report on a UK government sponsored project that specifically aimed to address the effects of local contexts, and in particular deprivation, on school performance.

In the next section of this chapter, attention is turned from theory to practice, and a review is presented of literature about the implementation of ideas about school leadership and equity.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF IDEAS ABOUT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND EQUITY**

As stated previously, the literature on school leadership puts forward three dominant models of leadership: transformational; distributive and instructional. These models are readily adapted within the literature on school leadership and equity to serve the interests of social justice, and writers typically focus on: (i) distributive justice, or the fair distribution of social and material goods (Yavuz, 2010); (ii) a cultural approach, where marginalised groups are more strongly acknowledged and supported (Gewirtz & Cribb, 2002); and (iii) relational or participatory justice, where individuals are empowered to take a full part in relationships and in society (Lumby, 2013a). These categories of social justice are not discrete, nor are they aligned to particular models of leadership. In much of the literature all three approaches are described simultaneously, to produce what might be described as two main “paradigms of action”: (i) the cultivation of critical reflection, where educators look inwards to discover and challenge personal beliefs about equity, and/or teach for critical engagement (ii) the cultivation of a common vision, where educators look outwards to negotiate a shared policy on social justice (in some instances this common vision is co-created with pupils and the wider community).

In order to consider the value that authors attach to these paradigms of school leadership and equity, accounts of how various strategies have been successfully implemented in schools are detailed below. While this appraisal of practical ideas for policy implementation is by no means exhaustive, it should be noted that, within the literature on school leadership and equity, there is a paucity of guidance for practitioners on how they might enact leadership strategies for social justice (Furman, 2012).

**CRITICAL REFLECTION**

Brown (2004, p. 77) seeks to develop a ‘process-oriented model’ to prepare educational leaders who are ‘committed to social justice and equity’, and she argues that critical reflection is the first step towards transformational practice. Brown (ibid, p. 89) defines critical reflection as ‘the examination of personal and professional belief systems, as well as the deliberate consideration of the ethical implications and effect of practices’. Brown recommends a number of activities to stimulate the development of critical reflection:

- **Cultural Autobiographies**, where participants identify their ethnic/cultural group;
- **Life Histories**, where participants ‘identify and interview a person who is older than 65 years of age and attended school in the United States’ (ibid, p. 100);
- **Prejudice Reduction Workshops**, where participants take part in ‘a series of incremental, participatory activities that empower individuals of all ages and backgrounds to take leadership in building inclusive communities in their workplaces, schools, and neighbourhoods’ (ibid, p. 100);
- **Reflective Analysis Journals**, where participants record their thoughts throughout the semester ‘as a means of identifying and clarifying thoughts, feelings, beliefs, perspectives, worldviews, challenges, hopes, and aspirations’ (ibid, p. 100);
- **Cross-Cultural Interviews**, where participants engage in a ‘one-on-one encounter with an individual’ who is different from them in ‘ethnicity/race/religion/sexual orientation’ (ibid, p. 101);
- **Educational Plunges**, where participants are encouraged to ‘select an activity that will challenge them to move beyond their present level of comfort, knowledge, and awareness and yet not be so uncomfortable or threatening that they are unable to be open to the “minority experience”’ (ibid, p. 101);
TEACHING FOR CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT

In their study of plural conceptions of social justice, Gewirtz and Cribb (2002, p. 506) identify an approach to teaching that involves ‘a redistribution of the cultural tools needed to decode and critically engage with dominant cultural forms’, and they support their discussion through reference to the Citizen School in southern Brazil:

The starting point for the construction of curricular knowledge is the culture(s) of the communities themselves, not only in terms of content but in perspective as well. The students are not studying history or social or cultural studies through books that never address the real problems and interests they have. The students learn history by beginning with the historical experience of their families. They study important social and cultural content by focusing on and valorizing their own cultural manifestations. A real shift is occurring because the focus is not on the ‘core/official’ knowledge organized around dominant class and race visions of the world, but on the real problems and interests of the students and the community (Gandin & Apple, in Gewirtz & Cribb, 2002, p. 508).

Teaching for critical engagement is similar to Brown’s (2004) process-oriented model of critical reflection, as both seek to cultivate the individual’s understanding of his/her subject position. However, there is a significant difference between the two approaches. Brown’s methodology aims to eradicate feelings of cultural superiority/otherness by engaging school leaders with the experiences of marginalised groups. The methodology identified by Gewirtz and Cribb (2002) aims to eradicate feelings of inferiority held by marginalised pupils by valorising their cultural manifestations.

THE CULTIVATION OF A ‘COMMON VISION’ OF EQUITY

In their study of leadership practices within a secondary school in Australia, Niesche and Keddie (2011, p.66) describe how ‘a common vision about the significance of equity’ has been developed and sustained through the work of the school’s Equity and Action Group (EAG). This group was established in 1996 ‘in conjunction with a state government initiative encouraging schools to address issues of social justice’ (ibid, p. 69). The weekly EAG meetings are open to all staff members and attendance is voluntary. The meetings enable guidance officers, administrative staff, teachers and therapists to meet and share their ideas and concerns about social justice, and Niesche and Keddie praise the collaborative and flexible approach to responding to issues of equity that is fostered by the EAG. Members of the EAG describe it as:

…the school’s ‘guardian of equity’; as a ‘powerful’ mechanism to ensure that ‘equity is never off the agenda’ (senior school head of curriculum); as ‘taking the pulse of the school’ in terms of equity (creative arts teacher 2); and as a way to ensure that the school ‘walks the talk’ in relation to equity (principal) (Niesche and Keddie, 2011, p. 70).

The interventions that are developed by the EAG are ‘geared towards reducing the negative effects of the students’ specific material and cultural disadvantages’ (ibid, p. 69). They include the successful development of support groups for refugees and immigrants; extra language and mathematics support; music and art therapy; family services, and ‘acknowledgement of Indigenous heritage and issues through the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee week’ (ibid, p. 69). The variety and scope of the initiatives developed by the EAG appear to confirm that the EAG has enabled the school to develop ‘a “collective wisdom” on addressing the barriers to student learning’ (ibid, p. 72).
‘Transforming Dialogue’

Within the literature on the cultivation of a common vision of equity, the development of collective wisdom is often linked to transformational language practices. For example, in his study of how we might shape a democratic future by transforming education policy, Woods (2011, p. 134, italics in original) identifies a ‘democratic approach’ to leadership that ‘reflects a valuing of student voice and professional participation’ and in particular aspects of ‘transforming dialogue which aims to enhance understanding’. Woods describes a UK secondary school that has a Leadership Forum similar to the EAG reported by Niesche and Keddie (2011), but which supplements this forum with a School Council. The School Council meets once a month to discuss problems and develop action points in response to issues that pupils put forward via ‘student representatives’ (ibid, p. 137). These issues include such things as the school dress code and access to the library at lunchtime, and the pupils believe that the School Council system ‘works well’ and is democratic (ibid, p. 137). In the words of the Head Boy: “The smallest person with the quietest voice can make a difference” through the School Council’ (ibid, p. 137). According to Woods, the model of distributive leadership adopted by this school enables the school principal and ‘students in key positions’ to both play roles ‘as critical democratic actors’ (ibid, p. 135). Similarly, in their study of school leadership and equity in New Zealand primary schools, Robertson and Miller (2007, p. 100) identify ‘Team Talk’ as ‘a very inclusive way of actively including every child in the school in discussion and play’. Before lunch and playtimes, ‘the class, as a community’, sits together in a circle, and the children ‘plan among themselves what would happen when they went out to play, as ‘an inclusive way of dealing with any potential problems’ (ibid, p. 100).

In some of the literature on leadership and equity, the development of transforming dialogue is supplemented by the gathering of background data. For example, in her study of the utility of transformational leadership theory in practice, Shields (2010, p. 560) explores the practice of two US school principals ‘who have successfully “turned their schools around,” making them more inclusive, socially just, and academically successful’. The first principal identified small groups of ‘willing teachers’, and asked them to collect data about the background and progress of every child in the school (ibid, p. 575). The principal then convened a series of staff meetings to develop teaching methods informed by the pupils’ disclosed needs:

[The] teachers, beginning with the data they generated, spent long hours in dialogue, in newly created team meetings, trying to develop new approaches to achieving success with all students...The constant questioning about what they would do if there were no constraints led to creative new approaches and to a shared rejection of after-school tutoring, noon-hour instruction, or Saturday school - in favour of strategies that placed the onus on teachers and did not “punish students.” In fact, they recognized that too many of these common practices arise from deficit thinking—a belief that children need to be cured rather than a belief that teachers using multiple pedagogical strategies can help all children to attain high standards. (Shields, 2010, p. 576)

The second principal that Shields writes about made use of frequent staff meetings, similar to those reported by Niesche and Keddie (2011) and Woods (2011). These meetings focused on ‘trying to understand the needs’ of students from disadvantaged families (Shields, 2010, p. 576) and led to pedagogic and pastoral interventions. For example, a ‘community partnership’ was developed with retirees from the community to benefit those pupils who lack ‘the consistent presence of a caring adult in their lives’ (ibid, p. 576). Although the approaches of both principals led to school improvement, Shields (ibid, p. 578) expresses the belief that the principal who collected data about the background and progress of every child ‘was more explicit and more intentional in her use of power to transform’.

This section of the chapter has considered various strategies for the implementation of school leadership and equity. Some of these strategies are directed inwards, to raise educators’ consciousness of racial, sexual and cultural discrimination and to valorise pupils’ own cultural manifestations, while others are directed outwards, to create spaces for democratic discussion about how we might enhance the social and educational inclusion of all pupils. Common to these diverse accounts of school leadership and equity is the desire for positive change. For Brown (2004), change is achieved through the individual’s clarification of thought, while for Niesche and Keddie (2011) change comes about through dialogue that cultivates a common vision of equity. Woods (2011, p. 134) uses the term ‘transforming dialogue’ to capture how democratic communication enables the development of this negotiated understanding of equity. What is clear from the studies cited above is that the educators who encountered the real world application of these particular ideas about school leadership and
equity are convinced that critical reflection and the cultivation of a common vision through transforming dialogue are beneficial to pupils, teachers and (in many instances) the wider community.

CONCLUSION

The literature on school leadership and equity is both complex and simple. This apparent contradiction stems from the contrast between the straightforward aim of school leadership and equity to make education fair, and the abundance of complicated terminology that is used to describe styles of leadership and the structure of organisations. Of course, the issue of ‘fairness’ is far from simple, and this literature review has demonstrated that the dominant concepts of equality of opportunity and equity of results are both underpinned by neoliberal economic theory, which is condemned by some as inherently un-equalitarian (see for example, Harvey, 2009). Ramonet (2008) describes how ‘the market penetrates all society’s interstices, like a liquid, that leaves nothing and spares nothing’. Although numerous researchers identified in this chapter, such as Fielding (2006) and Hatcher (2005), have spoken out against marketisation, our review of the literature suggests that the discourse of school leadership and social justice is largely saturated with market principles. In support of this diagnosis, Ball (2012, p. 34) argues that the construct of school leadership is bound up with performativity and ‘governing by numbers’, rather than equity. Ball claims that ‘leadership is a means of reworking and narrowing the responsibilities of the practitioner by excluding ‘extraneous’ issues that are not directly related to performance outcomes’ (ibid, p. 34), and we might consider here the use of “metrics” and so called “big data” in the USA. The implication of Ball’s theory is disturbing: this paper has highlighted a number of school leadership and equity strategies, such as educational plunges (Brown, 2004); Equity and Action Groups (Niesche & Keddie, 2011), School Councils (Woods, 2011), Team Talk (Robertson & Miller, 2007) and pupil data collection (Shields, 2010), that have been implemented around the world in good faith by educators who are interested in establishing equity in education. However, if Ball (2012) is correct, then policy on school leadership and equity has, in fact, been implemented by governments as a means to identify and exclude factors that inhibit national education performance, which is measured through PISA to produce performance league tables for international comparison (OECD, 2010). The standards agenda is, arguably, incompatible with the account of equity as the reduction of social injustices that affect people’s lives: as noted previously in our discussion of Fitzgerald’s (2009) critique of education policy in New Zealand, the standards agenda creates a spurious meritocracy that favours the interests of middle class pupils.

Lupton (2005) argues that government policy on school leadership and equity lays responsibility for both equality of opportunity and equity of results firmly at the door of principals and teachers. Ball (2012, p. 35) is highly critical of what he terms the ‘new professionalism’, whereby social actors are required to take ‘responsibility’ and have “appropriate” reflexive moral capacities, often in relation to issues that reside beyond their understanding or control. A prime example of this is the structural constraints on equity identified by Lupton (2005): it is simply unreasonable to expect educators to ‘take responsibility’ for issues of material poverty that undermine pupils’ educational performance. Various researchers identified in this literature review describe earnest attempts by educators to develop their critical consciousness and foster democratic governance, yet if Ball is correct, these educators are in fact engaged in a process of destatization – which involves ‘re-drawing the public-private divide, reallocating tasks, and rearticulating the relationships between organisations and tasks across this divide on whatever territorial scale(s) the state in question asks’ (Jessop, 2002, in Ball, 2012, p. 36). It is not surprising then, that the attempt to make school leaders, rather than the State, responsible for the integration of immigrants and/or minority groups into the dominant culture is found to falter in some of the literature reported in this chapter (see for example, Goddard and Hart, 2007).

While we agree with Ball that educators should not be held responsible for the effects of an unequal society, we also recognise that the idea that individuals’ social and economic prospects are bound up with their education is longstanding, and pre-dates the instigation of the market society by many decades. Indeed, going back to Waller in 1932, it is clear that schools and school professionals embody a ‘grammar’ of schooling, which advantages some and disadvantages others (Lumby, 2013b, p. 3). This ‘grammar’ has, it seems, proved difficult to modify: in their account of schooling in Western Europe, Jones et al. (2008, p. 10) claim that despite the ‘verve and energy of alternative or critical educational projects’ during the 1960s, ‘the curricula and pedagogies developed in earlier periods remained dominant’. Jones et al. (2008, p. 18) show how the ‘grammar’ of advantage was vehemently reasserted in England in the wake of the 1970s economic crisis by neoliberal politicians who linked the ‘populist energies of regressive campaigners’ against progressivism with the ‘modernising’ claim that ‘the school was out of step with economic needs’. Although teachers should not be considered helpless victims in this scenario, Jones et al. (ibid) point out that resistance to neoliberalism has been destabilized by the weakening of trade unions, media campaigns against child-centred and radical
classroom practice, and market-friendly legislation that has undermined local comprehensive systems. Lamentably, neoliberalism has resulted in a ‘social polarisation’ that has further undermined the post war project of educational equality (ibid, p. 94). The literature reviewed in this chapter demonstrates that strategies to enhance equity through individual action, systemic change, and complex processes of interaction and initiative at different levels are available to educators for use in schools today (see Woods, 2011), but these practices take place within a neoliberal culture that is as intractable as anything encountered by would-be reformers in the 1960s. For example, the UK Coalition’s Education Secretary, Michael Gove (2013), recently gave a speech entitled ‘The Progressive Betrayal’, in which he condemned progressive education and praised ‘the leadership of brilliant head teachers’ who had helped inspire his ‘uncompromisingly radical’ educational philosophy.

In spite of the questionable socio-political rationale of discourses of school leadership and equity, this literature review has demonstrated that policy on school leadership and equity produces results in real world settings that are often found to be positive and, indeed, life enhancing. Summing up the findings of their research into primary school leadership and equity in New Zealand, Robertson and Miller (2007) state:

Schools such as Fern, Rainbow and Daffodil represented more than a child receiving an education. These schools that have an inclusive philosophy of community contribute, in their unique ways, to a more culturally inclusive society. These schools became a vital community connection for the families as they attended functions and made friends, helping to dispel any sense of isolation and trauma that immigrant families would have experienced in coming to a new country. Parents had the opportunity for input in the classroom curriculum concerning their land and culture. (Robertson and Miller, 2007, p. 101)

Notwithstanding such enthusiasm, Foucault’s (2009) theory of discourse formation reminds us that literature on leadership and equity helps create the discourse that constructs social phenomena. With this in mind, we should perhaps exercise caution when making claims about the utility of policy on school leadership and equity. As demonstrated by Jones et al. (2008), politicians and the media in England and elsewhere have undermined attempts to promote educational equity by simultaneously ignoring pupils’ material poverty and ridiculing progressive pedagogy, advocated by researchers such as Gewirtz and Cribb (2002), that might help raise marginalised pupils’ critical consciousness. Without due caution, literature on school leadership and equity that fails to acknowledge structural constraints on social justice in neoliberal societies may help constitute a “de-stated” account of governance that places onus on school leaders to take responsibility for social processes that may, in reality, lie beyond their control.

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In many parts of Europe the context in which school leaders must work is changing dramatically: change is both large scale and speedy. Financial insecurity is rising as global economic trends favour Asian and South American nations while much of Europe faces increasing austerity and uncertainty. Resulting youth unemployment is at disquieting levels, particularly in Eastern Europe, and around 50 per cent in Spain and Greece (Eurostat 2012). Migration is increasing rapidly. The proportion of children in school 'who are foreign-born or have foreign-born parents now exceeds 10% in Germany, Belgium, Austria, France, the Netherlands and Sweden, and is above 20% in Switzerland and Luxembourg' (Nusche, 2009, p. 5). These changes are overlaid on the perennial challenges schools face in meeting the needs of children from very diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. As Brown (2004, p. 79) states 'the evidence is clear and alarming that various segments of our public school population experience negative and inequitable treatment on a daily basis'. Schools have grappled with achieving equality for along time, but as the issues Europe faces become more testing, so schools are faced with intensifying difficulties in offering an equitable education to all. System level choices, for example about different categories of school, the method of distributing funding and the terms and conditions of teachers' recruitment and employment, are all critical in shaping equality (Nusche, 2009). This chapter, however, does not focus on these system-level factors but on school-level issues; that is, how school leaders can embed equality within their school.

Defining equality

Deciding what equality means and what it would look like in practice is one of the challenges. Equality is one of the most contested concepts in education, repeatedly debated along with related terms such as equity, social justice, fairness, equal opportunities (Morrison, 2009). Many people link achieving equality with offering the same treatment to all. However, over time it has become clear that equality is not about providing the same educational experiences for all, or even about achieving the same outcomes for all groups irrespective of their characteristics (Lumby with Coleman, 2007). Individuals and families do not necessarily value similar life trajectories, and in particular, not all valorise the kind of academic pathway into a professional job sought by many from a socio-economically advantaged background. Counter-intuitively, rather than equality meaning same treatment, equality may be better understood as 'giving all children an equal chance to be equipped to live a life they value' (Lumby, 2013, p. 19), which implies giving each child what is needed from their perspective, and this will not be the same in all cases. What each family and individual values is culturally nuanced and, although children and young people should not be bounded by the family and community culture in which they grow up, neither should the aspirations and values of their community be disdained or rejected as deviant from or lesser than those of other groups. As Fitzgerald (2009, p. 157) asserts, 'social justice is an impossibility if it rests on notions of deficit'.

Leading for equality matters fundamentally to us all. There is considerable evidence that giving some children fewer chances than others to live a life they value rebounds on the whole of society, including those who are apparent recipients of a relatively privileged education (Connell, 1995; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). Equality is a necessary foundation for the social and physical health of the entire community and not an add-on relevant only to those born into a stigmatised group or an economically poor family.

Approaches to leading for equality

Synthesising the literature of leading for equality, there are three major approaches that leaders may adopt. The approaches were first highlighted by Fraser (1995) and have since been developed by others (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2003; Gewirtz, 1998):
• **Redistribution:** ensuring that available resources are reshaped to enable those who have less physical or social capital, or have greater need, receive sufficient additional help to enable them to make choices and be enabled to take part in society in ways that they value.

• **Recognition:** recognising difference, insisting on respect for different values and cultures, ensuring that those likely to encounter negative responses or discrimination are particularly supported.

• **Participation:** ensuring that children are equipped to take their place as citizens, to have a voice, to challenge societal assumptions and practice, the better to shape the future.

The three approaches outlined above are not mutually exclusive. Together they translate to an agenda for action. There are many examples from throughout the world of school leaders taking action related to redistribution, recognition and participation. For example, in England, the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (2012) documents a range of redistribution actions in schools, including using additional funding provided by the government to give one-to-one tuition and small group teaching to learners who need extra help. Shah (2006) describes a range of recognition actions for leaders in UK schools to achieve greater recognition of the lives and needs of Muslim students in the UK. Flecha (2011, p. 8) writes of participation work with migrants and Romani children in Spain which provided “the tools both to transform injustice and to gain access to socio-economic benefits”.

**Maintaining inequality**

Despite many examples of school leaders acting to achieve greater equality for learners, there are also examples of indifference and active maintenance of existing inequalities. In Spain a different interpretation of redistribution is apparent when a local administration decided immigrant students must be 'redistributed' to other schools ‘when the percentage of immigrant students in a given centre passed 15%, based on the belief that a larger percentage of immigrants in schools would impede adequate learning for the others and thus lead to school failure and violence’ (Flecha, 2011, p. 10). Belief that a particular percentage of immigrants in a school is disadvantageous is not supported by empirical evidence (Song, 2011). Concern such as the example in Spain seems to relate more to fears of harming the education of advantaged learners rather than prioritising the needs of those who may be in poverty and using a second language for instruction: not concern for greater equality, but for protecting advantage from erosion.

A second example is the use of tracking, that is, organising children into classes according to perceptions of their ability. Leaders persist in using tracking despite considerable international evidence that it exacerbates disadvantage and does not particularly help the advantaged (Ammermüller, 2005; Gamoran, 2001; Flecha, 2011; Schneeweis, 2006). Additionally, individual or group classes for those with perceived lesser attainment or ability are often staffed by the least qualified and experienced teachers. Consequently children may experience a double disadvantage, placed in classes which engage with a less challenging curriculum and taught by less expert teachers.

Learners whose first language is not the language of instruction in their school are sometimes seen as a problem. Their language education is often viewed as the responsibility of specialist staff rather than an integral part of the remit of all teachers (Karsten, 2006; Nusche, 2009). Under such circumstances, the provision of specialist language staff may disadvantage rather than help children (Nusche, 2009). In the examples given, whether explicitly stated or not, the primary concern is maintenance of the standards of education for the advantaged. The choices made reflect teacher and parent preferences, where some children are perceived as different to a norm and so in deficit, rather than potentially advantaged by being bilingual.

**Attitudes to equality**

This chapter opened by describing structural changes in Europe. Many would argue that there are cultural changes also, austerity driving a focus on protecting self-interest. If this is the case, the rhetorical commitment to equality in education which threads through most European policy documents, school missions and educators’ discourse cannot be assumed to reflect a determination to enact such assertions. On the contrary, Kohl (2001, no p.n.) writes:

One problem is that many people – children as well as adults – do not believe that justice is worth fighting for. One cannot assume an idea or cause will be embraced merely because it is just, fair, or
compassionate. Contemporary society values self-interest and personal gain over compassion and the communal good.

Evidence supports Kohl, in that children themselves may resist attention being given, as they see it, to the less able or less well behaved (Lumby & Morrison, 2009). There is also overwhelming evidence that leaders and teachers, though often sincerely convinced of their commitment to equality, prioritise other aims, such as maintaining their subject, the school’s prestige, their own daily professional survival. Since Waller (1932), research has repeatedly recognised the ‘grammar and deep structure’ (Pajak, 2012, p. 1187) of schools that, rather than move towards greater equality, supports a continuation of what is (Delpit, 2006; Gamoran, 2001; Reay, 2001; Shields & Mohan, 2008). Consequently, leaders require considerable preparatory and ongoing development in order to attempt to dismantle inequalities in education.

EMBEDDING EQUALITY IN SCHOOLS

The impression is sometimes given that we know too little about how to embed equality in schools. This is not the case. There is considerable guidance about how to lead to be more inclusive (Henze et al., 2002; Rusch & Douglass Horsford, 2008; Shields & Mohan, 2008). Failing to achieve equality in schools relates not so much to a lack of technical know-how, but to issues of ethics and priorities. Leaders who attempt to shift school priorities and practices in fundamental ways usually encounter a modicum of support and a good deal of resistance from teachers and from parents. Teachers may argue, for example, that dismantling tracking jeopardises teaching their subject well, or any subject well (Oakes et al., 2000). Leaders who recruit learners seen by others as problematic risk parents’ response to avoid their school. Flight from schools with a high percentage of immigrant learners has been noted in Denmark (Bloem & Diaz, 2007), and Sweden (Rangvid, 2007), amongst other countries. Above all, leaders face a belief that some children are not educable or only educable with great difficulty. The children of immigrant families or of minority ethnic groups are more likely to be seen as having special needs than are other groups (Field et al., 2007; Nusche, 2009) reflecting deeply embedded prejudices that link being perceived as different with being less able (Lumby with Coleman, 2007). In short, leaders face unjust discriminatory convictions that underpin many teachers’ and parents’ judgements about what is right and possible in education.

Leaders themselves are not immune from such beliefs. Those who, for example, give entry preference to learners with higher attainment (Björklund et al., 2004), or who allocate the most inexperienced teachers to classes of those perceived as lower ability, are enacting inequality. In the light of overwhelming evidence that leaders, teachers and school communities do not act in the best interests of all learners, that they may embody inequality, the preparation and development of leaders has the aim of heightening awareness of how inequality is maintained and how it might be countered.

PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Leaders themselves and those who design programmes to educate them are often resistant to making such an aim central. Henze et al. (2002, p. 4) found that only lip service is paid to preparation for leading diverse schools and that ‘leaders had not been prepared with tools to analyse racial or ethnic conflict, or with specific strategies for building positive interethnic communities’. Similarly, Marshall (2004, p. 5) suggests that:

In the push toward credentialing, many faculties and curricula trip lightly on the ways in which education policies are framed without a critical, contextual, or historical understanding of social inequities, equity concerns, or desires for social justice.

Many others reviewing their national system to prepare leaders have made the same point (Brundrett & Anderson de Cuevas, 2007; Shields & Mohan, 2008). Repeatedly, research has found that those who lead programmes feel that they do not have the time or skills or sometimes the necessity to address equality issues explicitly as a priority in leader preparation programmes and that leaders themselves see the issues as taken-for-granted, and not demanding specific attention (Lopez, 2003; Rusch, 2004). Strategies and practice related to poverty, gender, ethnicity, immigrant language or sexuality are often aggregated within a general rhetorical commitment to equality. Programme leaders and school leaders collude to accept token gestures towards equipping senior and middle leaders. This is only possible because, though they may protest to the contrary, the majority do not wish it to be otherwise. The premise for progress is therefore that leaders and those who
prepare them should genuinely wish to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills that would allow them to tackle inequalities head on and to withstand the resistance they are likely to encounter in their school community. Policy makers also need to enable freedoms so that organisational level choices about resource distribution, curricula and pedagogy can be fitted to the needs of the whole school community.

LOOKING FOR GUIDANCE

Leaders might look to learn about meeting the social, curricular and pedagogic challenges from a number of perspectives.

Understanding oneself
An initial focus might be to look more objectively and critically at oneself, scrutinising those characteristics as taken-for-granted and used as an unconscious norm; for example, whiteness and its implications are rarely the subject of interest in the way that black principals expect their colour to be; whiteness is pertinent in all schools, but particularly in the many with black and Asian heritage learners (Lumby & Heystek, 2012). Additionally, leaders are acculturated into particular assumptions that they may view as being universal truths, although they are not (Hopkins, 2013). For example, beliefs about capacity to learn and how far it relates to innate ability or to effort and beliefs about the impact of families on early learning are culturally shaped. Very different assumptions about such issues are held in different cultures and correspondingly promote or inhibit learning. Unpacking one’s own culture and its assumptions about people and about learning may move leaders out of their unconscious habitual thinking and behaviours, raising awareness of how they are shaped by gender, ethnicity, class and societal culture. If the leader is more aware of how his or her thoughts and actions reflect a specific location in a particular society, a deeper understanding of learners and particularly of those deemed ’other’ in the school, may be possible.

Understanding the experience of disadvantaged groups
Leaders might also be supported to better understand the experience of minority groups within their school, whether characterised by ethnicity, gender, religion, language or a range of other factors. They might also focus on groups disadvantaged by poverty, and plan to act upon what is learned. There is no shortage of materials. Norte (1999) offers five key categories to frame an action agenda to organise a school for positive interethnic equality. Shah (2006) provides an explicit agenda for leaders who have Muslim children in their school. Cook-Sather et al. (2010), and Nagda and Gurin (2007) offer techniques to facilitate dialogue to confront perceptions of difference within school. These are merely examples of the rich literature offering frameworks, processes and materials to address particular needs and to properly equip leaders. Rather than some learners being seen as in deficit, preparation and development programmes might characterise the leader and school as lacking, in that leaders do not adequately understand their own limitations and the experience of all their learners and need to equip themselves with better knowledge and ideas for action.

Challenging curricula and pedagogy
A third focus might be, to use Flecha’s (2011, p. 8) phrase ‘both a curriculum of access and a curriculum of dissent’. Again there is help for understanding how methods might be used to challenge the embedded grammar of teaching and move to a more inclusive approach. Hayes et al. (2009) studied high poverty schools and devised a programme of working with researchers and teachers to change habitual teaching practices unsuccessful with many students. Furman (2012) highlights the developing toolbox for pedagogic development in relation to equality, pointing the way to researchers who offer equality audit tools, cultural competency assessments, community outreach ideas and a range of other methods to develop leaders and teachers to achieve more inclusive schools. Given the will to learn how to create greater equality, there is much material to use in support. The issue is not technical knowledge of how to act, but the will to do so.

Leading for equality

This chapter suggests that Europe faces something of a crisis. The economic and societal pressures are likely to intensify negative attitudes towards those deemed different, for example immigrants (Collett, 2013), or the poor (Jones, 2012). In this context, schools will come under pressure to ensure those currently advantaged suffer no detriment, and that provision of those seen as in some way in deficit is tackled in discrete ways, for example, ability sorted classes for those deemed of lower attainment, or specialist language teachers to deal with language issues, exclusion of those children who behave in ways that are deemed unacceptable, or careful
quotas maintained for the entry of the proportion of those learners perceived as problematic. Typically, in educational leadership and management it is policy makers or family/society factors that are cited as maintaining inequality, and staff in schools depicted as constrained by the context within which they work. This is a misleading assumption. Schools and school staff also play a part in creating, maintaining or increasing inequality.

It has become a cliché that leadership is above all a moral task (Begley, 2003). A changing Europe has made this more so than ever. Policy makers, leaders and teachers share a discourse with a commitment to equality, and yet educational inequality persists. The causes are of course multiple and complex and not all under the control of school leaders, but the latter have the opportunity to minimise or exacerbate inequality. It is their determination to do so and the degree to which they prioritise this aim that is the foundation of action. Should leaders, those who prepare them and teachers genuinely wish to change things, there is much research and practice guidance available to help.

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INCLUDING INCLUSION: EXPLORING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

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In order to clarify what an inclusive model of schooling might look like it is necessary to examine how the idea of inclusion has developed over time. In the first instance, inclusion draws on a range of ideas and concepts developed in other domains and in other cognate disciplines i.e. it draws on discourses within fields such as social justice, diversity, equality, democracy, citizenship and identity. Consequently, it could be accused of exhibiting high levels of conceptual borrowing. Arguably this contributes to a degree of eclecticism, creating some difficulty when offered as a rationale or framework upon which to base and shape a system of schooling. Secondly, what inclusion means in different school systems is varied. This diversity is derived from how inclusion is filtered through and mediated by different national, cultural and socio-historical contexts. The manner in which many of the discourses that serve to construct the idea of inclusion are contested within their own fields also contribute to this variation in interpretations. It is not surprising, therefore, that the sum of the parts becomes overwhelming, resulting at times in conceptual fuzziness which in turn contributes to practices that, while claiming to be inclusive, are far from it. In essence, the discourses that frame what inclusive schooling looks like are formed of many different contested concepts mediated by very specific, deeply rooted and sedimented (Layder, 1997) assumptions about what education should be like.

When the process of leading inclusive schools is considered, many of the flaws in current approaches to professional development of school leaders become evident. The instrumentalist ‘what works’ approaches that frequently inform programme content fall very short of the mark with respect to the type of thinking school leaders need to engage in if they are to work towards the goal of an inclusive school. A key issue here is the imperative for current and future leaders to engage, in a reflective and intellectual way, with the constituents of the socio-cultural context of the diversity of school communities. The development of ‘inclusion leaders’, therefore, could be described as a process of fine-tuning a mindset – a deliberative and critical way of looking at the world thereby impacting very decisively the way one acts in the world. Essentially this process is ideological ‘based upon alternative views of the world and the nature and form of schooling that will build that world’ (Slee, 2011, p.25). Striving for inclusion and inclusive schooling explicitly requires a particular value base and a very clear sense of vision for a particular type of education system that will contribute to a much more broadly experienced common good. It cannot be assumed that this value base is a naturally occurring attribute of all leaders and consequently all dimensions of the socio-cultural field as they relate to inclusion need to be problematized in any development work with school leaders. This paper seeks to begin to do this for the purposes of framing a discussion with respect to inclusive schools system in the broadest sense of the concept.

BROADENING PERSPECTIVES ON INCLUSION

The idea of inclusion is ‘generally understood around the world as part of the human rights agenda that demands access to, and equity in, education’ (Florian, 2008, p. 202). As a concept, it was originally aligned to the developments within the field of special education needs (SEN) when thinking shifted from the idea of integration to the more challenging idea of inclusion, resulting in a preference for the mainstreaming of special education provision (Warnock, 1978). The imperative that inclusion should replace integration stems from a view that integration had become a reductive mechanism for measuring students’ disability with a view to calculating the resources required to make the student fit into the mainstream system. The initial move towards inclusion as the mainstay of policy was given added impetus by a range of international developments which strongly supported this model of schooling (see for example the World Declaration on Education for All (UNESCO, 1990), the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) and the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000). The Salamanca statement presented inclusion as a two-dimensional process of increasing participation and removing barriers. Despite this broad support, an examination of current practice and much of the scholarship in the field reveals that inclusion has not being achieved for students with SEN. Many agree that what happened in practice was little more than a recalibration of inclusion so that in effect what has emerged is, at best, a model of integration (Dyson, 2001).
From 2005 onwards, the concept of inclusive education was broadened to include the full diversity of learners (Opertti, 2010). UNESCO’s defined inclusion as,

> a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children. (UNESCO, 2005, p. 13)

Scholarship from the field of social justice and equality has also contributed to the discourse surrounding inclusion. Legislative changes in some countries added a legal imperative to the drive towards inclusion. In the Republic of Ireland for example, the Equal Status Acts (Government of Ireland, 2000–2004) names 9 grounds where discrimination is prohibited in the provision of goods, accommodation and education (see Lodge and Lynch, 2003). In this framework disability is included alongside race and ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender, membership of the travelling community, age and marital status. UNESCO’s 48th International Conference on Education in 2008 (ICE) strongly reaffirmed this ‘broadened concept of inclusive education.... as a general guiding principle to strengthen education for sustainable development, lifelong learning for all and equal access of all levels of society to learning opportunities’ (ICE, 2008 cited in Opertti 2011, pp. 21–22). All of these developments have implications for schools and in all cases education providers of all types are mentioned explicitly in legislation and policy documentation.

**INCLUSION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PROVISION**

Inclusion as a construct is a highly contested area in education both in terms of what is encompassed by the term inclusion itself and by the variety of attempts, in practice, in various contexts, to deliver an inclusive education system. It is clear from the literature that inclusive education has experienced significant operational/implementation difficulties in many countries, most notably in those who have a long track record in pursuing the inclusion agendas (see Allan, 2008). Within the context of Special Educational Needs (SEN) inclusion has been challenged by a number of scholars. Teacher unions cite ‘strain on teachers and the damage done to children and young people by inclusion’ (Allan, 2008, p. 9) questioning ‘teachers capacity to keep up with the demands of inclusion’ (Allan, 2008, p. 1). Within the more specific field of SEN, inclusion has been critiqued with some dismissing it as ‘an ideological and unproven bandwagon’ (ibid). Julie Allan in her seminal review of the idea of inclusive education begins her analysis be mapping out what she calls territories of failure with respect to inclusion; ‘there is little doubt that inclusion has a troubled existence and that it is being written off, at least in some quarters, as an abject failure’ (Allan, 2008, p. 9). The exclusion of certain children from mainstream schools has become legitimate especially if it can be argued that they would have a potentially negative effect on the majority of children within the mainstream (Slee, 2011; Allan, 2008).

One of the key problems for the construct of inclusion may be that it is largely constructed within the domain of special education needs. In this context, all too often, special means exclusionary (Mittler, 2008) and needs signals dependency (Corbett, 1996). In this way the idea of inclusion constructs winners and losers delineated by the normative and competitive nature of our schools (Benjamin, 2002). It is here that there is considerable evidence of problematic practice especially for children who have moderate to severe profound difficulties and very often children who exhibit moderate or severe emotional and behavioral problems. This results in these areas being prioritized in much of the discourse in relation to inclusion. Broader notions of inclusion seem to get less of a hearing. Even when the idea of equality and social justice are mentioned there are either linked directly to SEN (Florian, 2008) or the argument quickly slips back to the consideration of SEN. This paper seeks to keep the consideration of inclusion firmly in the broader context and to decouple the discussion from SEN or at least to hold is static while consideration is given to the broader remit of the construct. Approaching inclusion from the perspective and politics of difference rather than the deficit focus of SEN may begin to facilitate alternative thinking and allow the reality of diversity in all its forms into the debate. It is unlikely, one would hope, if approached in this way, that a school would be required to build up a case for additional resource hours/teaching time to deal with an A-stream, well-behaved, LGBT student. This is not in any way to deny the specific issues of resource that are absolutely essential to deliver robust SEN support, it is rather to move us away from an impasse that seems to have prevented the idea of inclusion developing, to any great extent, in a broader field of praxis. It may also serve to challenge to the orthodoxy of the standard, the normal curve and the tyranny of outcome focused accountable models of schooling. This trinity has framed the school
experience of students with any kind of additional learning need or claim to any non-dominant identity position for far too long.

It is argued here that this pursuit of diagnosis and the practice of labeling associated with it has resulted in the reification of the individuals’ special educational need which sometimes resulted in the individual being recognisable to others and even to themselves primarily by their special need. This in itself is problematic but also neglects the idea of the complex nature of identity and the manner in which the intersectionality (Anthias, 2008) of gender, race, class, ethnicity etc. impact the individual’s ability to derive maximum benefit from education. The ‘single axis framework’ (Crenshaw, 1994, p. 40) driving SEN and the manner in which praxis relating to SEN plays out in schools have too often precluded the idea of intersectionality. A fundamental question here is the lack of a dominant approach within education to take the individual from where they are at and include them in a school system that views differing abilities and backgrounds as strength rather than a contextual space to engage in multiple forms of educational triage. It may well be that the source of the reading problem of a working class boy with a diagnoses of dyslexia may be culturally located with the result that the boy may not see any purpose or meaning in reading. All the phonics programmes in the world, targeting at fixing the child, may well fail as they do not address the root cause of the problem (Mac Ruairc, 2009).

Within the context of the broader notion of inclusion, some attempts have been made to include students from the diversity in society more proactively. Recent change to the demographic in Irish society resulting in the inclusion of students from different ethnic backgrounds is a case in point (Devine, 2012). While there is some evidence of good practice, in many cases, the form inclusion takes can resemble a type of tokenistic lip service to difference where an acknowledgement of race and ethnicity often involves a fetishized international day or international week. This form of inclusion family, food, fashion and festivals (Banks 2002) does little to address the fundamental exclusionary thrust of issues such as school curricula, cultural norms and expectations or the benignly perceived, but powerfully exclusionary notion, of ‘tradition’. Some fundamental traditional views in relation to patterns of participation in education prevail either tacitly in terms of assumptions or explicitly in terms of particular forms of practice that continue to exist in schools. In summary, it is clear from the breadth of scholarship and the range of different discourses that feed into a consideration of inclusion, and the number of stakeholders involved that it is a very contested terrain. Tinkering at the edges produces little real change. A more systematic consideration is necessary in order to map out the main issues that are contested.

**Why inclusion?**

The type of school system that is envisaged by an inclusive model of schooling shares many of the aspirations of other cognate areas. Those who call for great equity in school systems, those who seek a greater focus on social justice and equality all share a similar platform and hold compatible views on what schools should be like. Within the field of leadership, those who call for a truly transformative type of leadership are strongly aligned with the idea of inclusive school system (see for example Shields, 2013). What a consideration of inclusion brings to the discourse is another set of concepts, many of which are directly traceable into practice, that can be used in an analytical way to disrupt the assumptions and reproductive practices that characterise our deeply unequal school systems. The remainder of this paper, therefore, will focus on this by problematizing the construct of inclusion itself (Graham and Slee, 2008), challenging the focus on the exceptional (Allan, 2008) as well as critiquing the deeply seated patterns of practice that continue to exclude certain groups from the maximum benefits of the emancipatory power of education broadly defined.

**The heart of the matter – deconstructing the discourse**

In order to fully appreciate the complexity of the idea of inclusive schooling, it is necessary to examine the term itself. It is argued that the term inclusion implies a ‘bringing in’ and therefore carries within it a presupposition of a centre / an ideal centre or a place worthy of being brought into. Whether this is viewed as a tightly bound spatial metaphor or a more loosely formed socially constructed space, particular patterns of prestige and privilege are identifiable. Inclusion within the perspective can be viewed as a discursive strategy that constructs a range of positions and the rules by which the borders and limits are conceived (Graham and Slee, 2008). What is required is a making visible and a deconstruction of the centre from which the different forms of exclusion and exclusionary practices are derived. It can be said that inclusive education invites the denaturalisation of normalcy to arrive at a ground zero point from which we banish idealisations of the centre...
(Graham and Slee, 2008). This essentially draws on the work of Derrida (1982) who argues that there is no centre but an absence of centre for which infinite substitutions are made. Essentially a postmodern perspective, it challenges truth claims among those who attempt to attest that they have a legitimate claim on the centre. The centre is therefore contestable but not often fully contested or exposed because of the manner in which power and position function to produce discourses that function as a substitution for the centre while making claims to be the one true centre. When this view acquires legitimacy it privileges those who are aligned to the predicated social norms. Through the normalisation of these culturally specific performances particular ways of being are naturalised. It is thus that particular discourses and practices become conflated with a social imaginary centre, human essence, human nature and a whole range of tactical statements (Graham and Slee, 2008). The imperative for maintaining the centre is derived from this view that humanity needs a centre, that it needs a cohesive system. The idea that this cohesive centre privileges and has continued to privilege particular social groups is somehow decentred from this fundamental truth and it order to ensure that this is not disturbed it become necessary to appear to be active in the pursuit of the ideal, while at the same time doing very little to challenge the status quo.

Two imperatives for consideration arise from this position. In the first instance, it is necessary to seek an alternative approach to the underpinning philosophy which frames thinking in the field in order to create a space for difference as a point of departure for practice rather than the search for the exception or the hunt for disability (Baker, 2002). While this on its own will help, its impact will be severely limited unless accompanied by a much more systemic reworking of current thinking at a political and policy level in order to impact practice and outcomes. An essential component in the examination of inclusion is the need to make explicit and interrogate the normative assumptions that lead us to think that we can even talk of including. To do this it is necessary to deconstruct the norm (Foucault, 1977, 1980), the construction of which has provided the context for the differentiation, categorisation and spatialisation of individuals (Foucault, 1972). Within this Foucauldian framework used by other scholars in relation to inclusion (Graham, 2006; Graham and Slee, 2008) the norm is viewed as a fiction. A fiction that attributes value to culturally specific performances (Graham and Slee, 2008) and in doing this privileges particular ways of being and stigmatises others. This is an uncomfortable perspective, challenging particular accumulations of power, privilege and forms of capital and risks the disruption of these patterns if challenged at any fundamental level. In order to understand how it functions we need to examine the manner in which relations of power circulate through discourses to define not the law but the norm so that the norm actually appropriates law like qualities which extend to a sense of inevitability, a position that precludes the notion of an alternative norm so that is functions in a hegemonic way to define one true reality (Bourdieu, 1986). This is a form of power that makes individuals subject to the discursive dividing practice that categorises the individual by marking them out by their own individuality. In education contexts, particularly with respect to SEN but not in any way exclusive to it, this results in a compartmentalisation of students, constructed primarily through psychological and SEN discourses and knowledge claims which result in the identification of a range of target groups – all of which are defined against the centre where the centre is not challenged but reproduced. In fact in the SEN field the norm acquires an additional legitimacy, functioning as it does as a statistically derived construct that serves to rank and classify with notable regularity and widespread legitimacy. What we have is on the one hand statements of desirable ways of being and statements of deficit, conceptualisations of those other than the norm. Within this centre we have the privileged notion of normal, alongside, but always within relational existence to it is the negative, deficit, exterior other (Graham and Slee, 2008). Some scholars have focused on a much more empowering alternative to this perspective, citing the work of Derrida and Deluze to enable a broader more open understanding of the field of enquiry. This has been a very worthwhile application of the work of the philosophers of difference to the field of inclusion and this has much more empowering potential than the more traditional trajectories of enquiry. Although, the arguments here are complex and a full explication beyond the scope of this paper, it is possible to identify clear implications for leadership practice from this line of enquiry. Essentially what is required is a shift in perspective that takes on board the concept of a Derridian type of deconstruction with all the associated lack of closure in terms of definitions, ‘the right way’ and ‘the best method’. The ambiguity inherent in the workings of deconstruction prevents the development of a totalizing system. This is the essence of good practice in relation to inclusion and the process whereby the reading of texts (here I include practice as texts) always involves a double reading. This always ‘seeks to locate a point of ontherness and opens up a discourse on the other: (Critchley cited in Allan, 2008, p. 79) thereby ‘showing the flows of thought and assumptions which direct it and what it excludes’ (ibid). In this way, there is always space for an alternative, the mindset is always reflective and never fixed. There is a tolerance for ambiguity which creates a natural space for a multiplicity of norms (Graham, 2006). However, this is not an easy task and it is acknowledged that it can be particularly difficult for schools where norms and uniformity so often define the way school works and where moral closure (Goffman, 1959) and (sometimes) the tyranny of the right answer/correct approach so often prevail in both the tacit and explicit assumptions that so often inform practice.
And furthermore

It is possible to argue that this broader idea of inclusion and the associated the removal of barriers so that all can participate on his or her own terms is very persuasive. In practice, however, it could be viewed as a broadly utopian idea that took little account of the reality of schools in context or the extent to which schools are part of an overall state apparatus that functions to reproduce patterns of privilege in society. In this regard, it could be argued that the idea is underpinned by a benign view of power and the manner in which power is used to shape and appropriate forms of educational capital to suit the needs of dominant social groups (Bernstein, 1996; Bourdieu 1984, 1986, 1990; Brantlinger 2003; Giroux and McLaren 1989; Lareau 2003; Willis 1977, 1990 among others). Although it is derived from sources demanding a more equal society with much greater systems of equal opportunity underpinned by greater degrees of social justice, and an increasing range of legislative attempts prohibiting discrimination (Thomas and Vaughan, 2004), it can be argued that the attempts at achieving inclusion exhibit a lack of a conceptualisation of schools in the broader societal framework; a factor which presents a fundamental flaw in the overall thinking. The extent to which schools can ‘do it alone’ and sort out all society’s ills is widely contested (Ainscow and Sandill, 2010). The transfer of learning experience from school to the outside school setting is by no means guaranteed. The fundamental functional correspondence underpinning the desire to have schools contribute to a more inclusive world is by no means conclusive. Fundamental to the perspective underpinning this paper is that in its original iteration there were aspects of the construct that were very attractive to people who were striving to articulate and argue for a more egalitarian model of society. It called for a radical rethinking of education, a call that is still implicit in the construct. However, the extent of the radical reappraisal required became clear the more the concept was interrogated. What was needed was a fundamental rebuilding of a school system and the broader society from the core out – and this is in all probability is unlikely to happen. In the absence of this, we are left with a utopian idea that relies for its very existence on many problematic components some of which have been referred to here. What follows is clearly identifiable in educational practice in many countries. Many systems now have a proliferation of a range of initiatives, programmes and policies to support SEN students, students from ethnic minorities and students of particular social class groups; No Child Left Behind (US); Every Child Matters (UK); DEIS (Ireland). All initiatives targeted to ensure that the semblance of proactive policy and practice is identifiable while the cause/centre remains unchallenged. When, for instance, literacy initiatives and programmes targeted at particular underachieving groups fail – it has to be poor teaching, a badly designed programme, lack of parental interest and/or little home support for literacy (Freebody, 2007; Gee, 2004, 2008; Luke, 1998; Street, 1995). The search begins for another policy and programme to produce a quick fix that rarely translates into sustainable improvements in the real meaningful literacy standards of the target groups. At no point are the fundamental patterns of inequality that produce different cultural circumstances and perspectives with respect to literacy as a cultural and social practice considered (Smagorinsky, 2001). To do this threatens the status quo and those who benefit from it. Instead the naturalised centre, in this case the school type literate culture, continues to efface. It exists beyond interrogation ‘a ghostly centre which eludes critical analysis and thus recognition of the power relations embodied within notions of normalcy which exert influence over other ways of being’ (Graham and Slee, 2008, p. 287).

Conclusion: Implications for school leadership?

In the Irish context there have been considerable developments in relation to the manner in which schools support the diversity in the student population in recent years (Drudy, 2009). Notwithstanding this work, there are many exclusionary factors embedded in systems, structures and practices leading directly to the marginalisation, non-recognition and ‘othering’ of certain groups of students in schools (O’ Higgins et al., 2010). Bernstein’s reference to the stratifying function of social class in education can be extended, within the debate around inclusive schooling, to a range of other cultural and socially constructed categories that penetrate schools so that patterns of domination are reconstructed and reproduced within and through education which, while following a nominally inclusive policy trajectory, continues to privilege the centre. This pathway will most likely continue to view difference in terms of its distance from the centre thereby ensuring that the range of diversity within the student population remains fragmented and marginalised. When the habitus and hegemony (Bourdieu, 1986) of the dominant and the privileges that ensue are not challenged they continue to be reaffirmed. Similarly when key systems such as education continue to seek out and label difference, the power of the norm is re- established. Leadership is central to changing the model, articulating alternatives and moving closer to a more inclusive society. This begs two key questions; what leadership and where is leadership needed? It is now widely recognised that schools alone cannot solve the problems of society. What
is clearly required is leadership at a societal/governmental level committed to the broad values of an equal society. However, education, as a very significant component of state systems and economic apparatuses occupies a central role in the future development of societies. Some argue that its power is derived from its presence as one of the last remaining spaces for public discourse (Fielding and Moss, 2011). If this is the case, all is not lost and education retains a powerful potential to shape change at a societal level. This is an added imperative to ensure high quality leadership within the sector. But how can one school leader in one school make a difference to the overall bigger picture? In dealing with this issue, articulating different models of leadership is sometimes the focus of scholarship. This can be worthwhile because it provides a range of perspectives on school leadership that can enrich and inform improved practice. There is another more critical dimension to this field of enquiry; it is possible to produce scholarship relating to the manner in which leadership functions with negative consequences by highlighting the impact of some practices, at local school level, which contribute to patterns of exclusion in individual schools – a focus on what is sometimes called the darker side of leadership practice. In this way particular aspects of practice can be overtly challenged by scholarship in order to deliver a better outcome for all students. In Ireland, for example, the practice of overt and covert selection of certain types of students and the resulting commodification of children leading directly to patterns of ‘chosen andunchosen’ schools (Mathews, 2010, p. 107) has existed for years. The patterns of practice contributing to this reproduction of privilege are not accidental requiring very specific and distributed patterns of leadership in order to ensure that it functions in the interest of dominant/middle class groups. The manner in which students are assigned to ability groups in streamed/banded classes, sometimes at very young ages (8 or 9 in some disadvantage primary schools), also requires the specific action on the part of school leadership at many levels (McGillacuddy, 2005). This type of leadership practice which, although localised, is not exceptional and is repeated in a range of contexts with the result that these forms of practice collectively contribute to school cultures and patterns of discourse within which exclusion prevails and is justified. Not enough has been done at the level of the state, the profession itself or the academy to challenge this type of practice and meanwhile the asymmetrical pattern in the distribution of the benefits of education persist.

REFERENCES


BEYOND THE REACH OF LEADING: EXPLORING THE REALM OF LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING

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In almost all countries around the world the education systems are presently under significant pressure. Discussions on the implementation of standards (for teaching, school quality, the profession etc.) suggest that professionals in education will undergo stricter external control in their work than ever before. Rhetoric on quality improvement dominates educational policy discourse in many areas, and policy borrowing and lending dominates national and international policy arenas (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). The side effects of these debates on reform and renewal appear at all levels of the system, where they have a formative effect on the professional work and professionalism of educators. On the micro-level, the arena where the actors have to put national/global policy aspirations into practice, school leadership has become the buzz word which seems to carry all the hopes and expectations for the transformation of school systems.

On the publication front, however, leadership has experienced several turns which signal a number of paradigms, particular modes (sometimes even fashions) of certain times and sometimes also reflecting certain values. These leadership trends and orientations are apparent in the following titles: Why leaders can’t lead (Bennis, 1989), leadership as an art (Pree, 1989), transformational leadership (Tichy & Devanna, 1990), visionary leadership (Nanus, 1992), principle-centered leadership (Covey, 1992), moral leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992), authentic leadership (Terry, 1993), the leadership paradox (Deal & Peterson, 1994), the leadership trapeze (Wilson, George, & Wells, 1994), enlightened leadership (Oakley & Krug, 1994), leadership from within (Bender & Hellman, 1997), alpha leadership (Deering, Dilts & Russell, 2002), ethical leadership (Strike, 2007), distributed school leadership (Harris, 2008), motion leadership (Fullan, 2010), blundering leadership (Arnott & Holmgren-Hoeller, 2010) dealing with missteps by school administrators, radical leadership (Sprenger, 2012), and self-leadership (Furtner & Baldegger, 2013).

The different interpretative turns have rendered the term “leadership” multifaceted, which – in its over-use – could devaluate it to a so-called “plastic word” (Pörksen, 1995) losing its inherent potential. The present debates linking leadership with learning opens new possibilities, which is the theme of this paper.

SHIFTING THE RESEARCH FOCUS ON EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Since John F. Kennedy’s quotation “Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other” in his speech for delivery in Dallas the day of his assassination, leadership and learning have meanwhile been discussed as an indispensable pair in the context of schooling. However, there seems to be a long way between a president’s vision and the transfer of school leadership into classroom learning. This has to do with the organization of schools: School leaders can only indirectly influence the learning processes of the students (Hallinger & Heck, 1998), since they spend most of the time outside the classroom. Their influence only materializes through other people, measures and organizational factors like school climate. School heads have become important advocates for creating favourable conditions for teaching and learning and for setting and reaching ambitious goals. They spur the performance of others by influencing motivation, commitment and working conditions of the teachers who work face-to-face with students in classrooms. Blase and Blase (1994) and Blase (1995) tried to instantiate what effective, facilitative, empowering leadership looks like and what approaches to leadership produce the remarkable benefits that are the trademark of empowered teachers. They concluded that strategies, structures and activities differ considerably from one school leader to another and from one school to another.

Pont, Nusche, and Moorman (2008) direct attention to the decisive role of school leadership for school reform. They assert that “It bridges educational policy and practice” (p. 19). To fulfill this visionary goal researchers have shifted their efforts by bringing school leadership in closer contact with student learning (MacBeath et al., 2006; MacBeath & Moos, 2004; MacBeath & Townsend, 2010; Schratz, 2007). The term Leadership for Learning

27This paper is an expanded version of ideas developed in Schley & Schratz (2010) and Schratz (2013).
was introduced to bridge the gap between the two paradigms. At its heart are the following key questions, which are of far-reaching significance:

1. What is understood by the term “leadership?”
2. What is the role of learning in schools?
3. What connection exists between leadership and learning?

The answers to these important queries may help to reveal the complexity of leadership, learning and leadership for learning in individual schools and in school systems as a whole. Each of these central concepts – that is, leadership, learning and leadership for learning – will now be briefly unpacked.

**Focus on Leadership**

In several countries the ascendancy of school leadership is linked to government’s goals of raising educational standards and modernizing the education system and therefore “the primacy of leadership is part of a wider agenda of transformation across public services where leaders are the vehicle by which policy reforms can be implemented and change realized” (Forrester & Gunter, 2009, p. 67). This kind of “functional organizational leadership” is a managerial approach of neoliberal policy-making rather than leadership which is associated with being visionary, motivational, inspirational and innovative. Due to the discrepancies between reality and the ideal, conceptions of leadership in recent years have been increasingly characterized by notions of personal leadership. As a result, there is a delineation of characteristics which apply to individual leaders and strategies for influencing the behavior of their associates. According to Staehle, “A concept of leadership represents a (normative) system of recommendations for action on the manager’s part, both in reference to personal responsibility and their personal leadership tasks. Leadership concepts are based explicitly or implicitly upon one or more leadership theories.”

In order to characterize the qualities of both management and leadership, Hinterhuber’s theoretical model (2003) can be helpful, in that it attributes differentiating attitudes, mindsets, and actions to Management and Leadership, modelling them along the Eastern conception of Yin-Yang (see Figure 12).

According to the Yin-Yang metaphor, there is no clear-cut division between management and leadership, and yet their features are distinct. There is no “either-or” but an “as well as.” Management carries elements of leadership and vice versa. They can be differentiated in theory, but, in practice, they are interwoven. Management is more a state of behavior referring to norms; leadership is more a (moral) attitude of influence. Managing without a moral attitude is just as problematic as leading without acting according to (given) norms. Competency in management is easier to acquire than the capacity to lead, not the least because leadership is never a solo act. This is because leadership is a social activity, which enables others to rise to their individual challenges and meet them with the necessary measures. It is the school leaders who are in contact with many different stakeholders (not just within the school but in society at large: the community, politicians, the public, etc.) and they are also the ones to register and respond to differing (and at times conflicting) interests. Leadership can only be effective in so far as leaders are willing to accept and work to their own moral (and policy) agendas, but these need to be grounded within the political framework in which their education systems operate, since the weight of normative pressures bears differently upon varying educational contexts (Portin, et al., 2005).

The culturally embedded trends, according to Scharmer, "are based not on the laws of physics but on human habits, albeit habits on a large scale. These habitual ways of thinking and acting become embedded over time in social structures we enact, but alternative social structures can also be created" (Scharmer, 2007, p. xiii). In his structuration theory, Giddens (1984) "talks of the duality of structure in which social structures are not fixed

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28 Translations from German original texts into English were made by the author.
sets of rules and resources but are features of social systems that have to be recreated in the specific moment action. Such recreation can only take place when human agents act in this way or that and powerful influence at that point is the reflexivity and knowledgeability.” (Frost, 2006, p.23) Therefore the implication of Giddens’ theory of action is that social (or organizational) structures are modified by the agency of individuals.

In the context of daily work, management and leadership are social activities which cannot be separated from each other: They are relational concepts and not individual activities. Therefore, they can only be dealt with separately for analytical purposes. In this respect, leadership is a social activity setting a direction and developing a vision. It is about aligning people and inspiring them, which should enable others to rise to their individual challenges and meet them with the necessary measures. Leadership is also about agency: “We make choices which have moral dimensions ... agency as a capacity to act and reflect on the consequences” (ibidem). Management is more a state of behaviour referring to norms; leadership is more a (moral) attitude of influence. This is important because it views agency as a driving force for leadership for learning.

**Focus on Learning**

In the context of “Leadership for Learning” learning does not only refer to students experiences in the classroom but also to professional learning experiences of the professionals involved in the arena of schooling. Since learning is not a visible process, it cannot be observed or measured. In this sense, learning is always about something we do not know (yet). Tests both on the micro level (classroom) and macro level (system, i.e., PISA) do not assess learning as such, but only its results. Therefore, student achievement results only show how students respond to certain test items and do not mirror a student’s capacity for learning. Learning is characterised by a high interconnectedness between cognitive, emotional and actional processes (Schratz, 2011) and, as such, is a total human experience—“Learning is the most personal thing in the world. It is as personal as one’s own face or a fingerprint.”(v. Förster, cited by Kahl, 1999, p. 109).

Rather than focusing on the results of learning further research in the context of leadership for learning calls for a reappraisal of the relationship between teaching and learning. Only if teaching is regarded as a responsive, interdependent and relational encounter (Tomlinson, 2008) it can be mindful of learning (Schratz, 2009) and is constituted by the experiences both teachers and students make. Understanding learning as experience (Meyer-Draue, 2008) rather than learning as a product out of experience, it becomes evident that learning and teaching processes are irrevocably intertwined and codetermining. In a phenomenological approach Schratz, Schwarz, and Westfall-Greiter (2012) used vignettes as a means of capturing in words the researchers’ experiences of the experience of others. Their findings do not only render deep insights into phenomena of learning but also offer a fresh look at the relationship between teaching and learning on the one hand and leading on the other.

A distinguishing feature of learning is that it possesses the potential for development. How ready, however, are all actors involved to express this potential? It depends on whether they move from unconscious incompetence to conscious incompetence and from conscious competence to unconscious competence (Robinson, 1974; see Figure below).

**Figure 13: From unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence**

What we require in order to develop is not immediately evident to us. When learning something new, we perceive it as a time of emotional incompetence and loss of security. The old competence does not work anymore; the new one has not yet been experienced. Each step away from a hitherto existing state of competence ushers in uncertainty — but it also opens the way towards the possibility of embracing something new. Experience proves, however, that new knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to face impending challenges, must first be acquired. In a school setting it is very important that teachers create confidence and belief into the students’ capacity as learners. To gain competence students have to be
confident that they will succeed. Believing in our own capacities plays a significant role here, as does the appreciation expressed by others, who value the mistakes we might make along the way from conscious incompetence to conscious competence as necessary steps in our learning process. Schein (2003) pointed out “In order for creative learning to start, our urge to survive must be greater than our fear of learning. Somehow we must reach the psychological condition where our fear or sense of guilt in not learning is greater than our dread of moving into something new, something unpredictable – into the state of temporary incompetence.” (p. 5)

When newly-gained knowledge, skills and attitudes are mastered to the point of becoming unconscious, they can be perfected and integrated into our repertoire, so that it is no longer necessary for us to consider each step to take. Only then do we reach a certain self-assurance and independence in dealing with such knowledge or skills even in unusual, unforeseen circumstances. Students learning, however, never takes place in a vacuum, but is intertwined and co-determined by the actions taken by the teachers (directly) and the school leader (indirectly).

**Focus on Leadership for Learning**

After examining the notions of management and leadership and after considering learning as an experience between (un)consciousness and (in)competence we still have yet to find the answer to the question how leadership and learning relate to each other. The terms “leading” and “learning” belong to different domains of the pedagogical discourse, and they are associated with different actors in the educational arena. Leadership is characterized by the fact that people are ‘led’ to interact in certain settings so as to perform according to the desired aims or to undertake certain tasks. Learning, on the other hand, is a process which should lead to the acquisition of new knowledge or skills. Leaders, teachers and learners are the protagonists who have to interact in a meaningful way to achieve the desired results. This leads to the following questions: How does leadership interact with teaching and learning? How do school leaders, teachers and learners interact? In practice, these questions cannot be answered separately since leadership resides “in a collective relationship where participants are both ‘shapers of’ and ‘shaped by’ one another” (Donaldson, 2001, p. 41).

Research findings from a multi-lateral project (MacBeath et al., 2006) show that the following three learning spheres have to complement each other: the learning of the students, of the professionals and of the system (see Figure below).

**Figure 14: Connecting leadership with learning**

The model in Figure 6 points to the ideal situation of matching learning experiences on all three levels: The more coherence there is between school (system) policies and practice, the more successfully leadership will be connected with practice. If all members in school see themselves as learners then the chances are high that the school is a learning school (Schratz & Steiner-Löffler, 1998) and as such a successful school, which makes connections between leading learning and teaching, leading change, leading the organization, leading self and others. In Kruse and Seashore Louis’s (2009) words, “More leadership from more people is not a goal in itself, but is one of the means of enriching your opportunities and potential for improving learning processes and outcomes ... The foundation of intensified leadership is rooted in the interactions between school organization members” (p. 79). It is the teachers who are leaders of learning – as individuals, as teams, and as a profession. Therefore, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that “sustainable improvement can ... never be done to or even for teachers. It can only ever be achieved by and with them ... If we want to improve teaching and teachers, we must therefore improve the conditions of teaching that shape them, as well as the cultures and communities of which they are a part. We must invest in developing teachers’ capabilities and give them time to sharpen these capabilities to a high standard.”(p.45)

The stronger learning cultures in individual schools are in an education system, the more successful countries are. A good example of such a cohesive system is Finland, which has often been portrayed as the “miracle of education,” but whose success is only seen as a “side product” in the development of the country’s educational system by the Finns themselves (Niemi, Toom, & Kallioniemi, 2012, p. 20). Policies build on the expertise of
teachers, who are many-sided experts in their fields. “They must have a wide view of every aspect of education and schooling. Teachers need content knowledge and the pedagogical knowledge integrated with it ... An understanding of the wholeness of education and schooling is important for developing curricula” (ibid., p. ix). Purposeful policies build on the high standards of teachers and form a learning system from preschool education to the end of upper secondary education. Equity, learning and education have long been the central factor in Finnish history and teachers used to be called “candles of the nation” (ibid., p. 21). Therefore, teachers have become key actors in the transformation of teaching and learning in particular and schooling at large.

**Educating leaders as change agents**

School leaders are an important link for the synchronization of top-down and bottom-up processes (cf. Fullan, 2005) and are the key actors in promoting quality processes in schools (Hall & Hord, 1987; Firestone & Riehl, 2005). Reform policies can only be coherently integrated into the life of schools and classrooms, if a capacity building approach for professional school leadership pays attention to system-wide change (Stoll, Bolam & Collarbone, 2002) which tries to deal with the following questions:

- How can the complex decision-making structure be disentangled and the different demands of central and peripheral interests brought into balance?
- How is it possible to coordinate communication and actions both of policy and practice among the different levels of the system?
- How can a learning context be created which aims at influencing the pattern of how professionals go about changing their organizations?
- How can the system be energized by more individual and organizational empowerment?
- How can leadership be more closely connected with learning by creating better conditions for student achievement?
- How can professional development create system-wide culture change and be linked with the improvement capacity of the actors on the different horizontal and vertical levels?

As teachers are the key actors in the process of leadership for learning, we have to look closer at the connection between school leaders and teachers. According to depicted findings in Figure 3, schools are successful when there is coherence between (school) policy and practice. However, suggested that the “challenge of coherence is not to clone or align everything so it looks the same in all schools ... The challenge, rather, is how to bring diverse people together to work skillfully and effectively for a common cause that lifts them up and has them moving in the same direction with an impact on learning, achievement, and results.” (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009, pp. 94-95) The leadership challenge how to get diverse people moving into the desired direction lies beyond the reach of an individual (school) leader. The book titles on leadership mentioned in the introduction give a vivid impression of the different leadership voices in taking up this challenge.

Implementing leadership concepts for innovation and change is often seen as merely organizational or technological question, turning complexity into a series of (trans)actions from policy to practice. However, dealing with complexity does not mean creating more complex structures of planning, acting, controlling and developing systems. The shift to an organic understanding of growth is related to openness and trust, which best help in reducing complexity of systems: Speaking openly opens others. In our leadership work through the Austrian Leadership Academy (Schley & Schratz, 2010; Stoll, Moorman & Rahm, 2008), we have been actors and observers of a shift in mindset and culture, overcoming the traditional abyss between policy and practice. The fieldwork with many stakeholders on all levels of the system has taught us the wisdom of many in the collective intelligence of practice and opened up new dimensions of dealing with system-wide development.

The performance of the school system is based on an understanding of the different situations, contexts, demands and challenges within each organizational unit. Consequently, developing performance is not simply achieved by sending individuals on a training course but a journey through the “field structure of attention” (Scharmer, 2007), which builds on different modes of (self)-awareness. Self-awareness, in Owen’s view, “is knowing how your actions affect other people” (Owen, 2009, p. 287). We are becoming aware of an emergent leadership culture which can be characterized by a spirit of innovation, commitment and new attitudes for dealing with complexity, facing dynamics, taking risks and learning from mistakes. After all, for Stenhouse “It is teachers who in the end will change the world of the school by understanding it” (Stenhouse, Rudduck & Hopkins, 1985).
DEALING WITH COMPLEXITY

Creating a mindset of change cannot be imposed or enacted on a person; it is a human being’s innate capacity to create new knowledge leading to new practice. Otherwise, as C. O. Scharmer (2007, p. 119) argues, we are “downloading” patterns of the past, which prevents us from creating a new future. In his “Theory U” he develops a systemic theory of leadership which centers on “presencing”, a term which merges “presence” and “sensing”. For him the essence of leadership builds on the capacity to feel in the here and now which future possibilities urge for evolvement. Repeating what is well known from the past gives security, but might not be useful for future practice. For Scharmer, the greater a system’s hyper-complexity, the more critical is the capacity both for individuals (e.g. school leaders) and school systems to operate from deeper sources of intention and creativity (see Figure below).

The educational systems and institutions “face three types of complexities: dynamic complexity (defined by cause and effect being distant in space and time), social complexity (defined by conflicting interests, cultures, and world-views among diverse stakeholders), and emerging complexity (defined by disruptive patterns of innovation and change in situations in which the future cannot be predicted and addressed by the patterns of the past” (Scharmer, 2007, pp. 242-243). The three stages (redesigning, reframing and presencing) are according to Scharmer new intelligences which every leader has to nurture and cultivate like precise instruments helping to create the best possible future.

Leadership, he argues, “in its essence is the capacity to shift the inner place from which we operate” and “leaders who understand how can build the capacity of their systems to operate differently and release themselves from the exterior determination” (p. 373). This leads eventually to a “shift from sensing exterior causation to sensing something collective that is emerging from within” (ibidem).

CREATING A MIND-SET FOR INNOVATION

In many ways, knowledge and excellence based on past experiences have lost their validity as a promise for future success. What we learned about management and processes and what has worked for us until now does not necessarily give answers to the diverse problems of today and less so of tomorrow. Very often education systems have reacted to pressure with an attempt to improve achievement within the existing framework of functionality. This “more of the same” often only leads to little improvement, since a typical learning curve reaches the upper limit of further outreach. The old pattern seems to strike against the limitations of the possible solutions. Sometimes, special arrangements are made (e.g. through incentives) to reach best practice status, which, however, are difficult to implement because of their special status (e.g. model schools). Hentig (1993) therefore argues that it is not enough to renew or improve schools; he calls for rethinking school, which demands a new mindset for how we envisage school. In research theoretical and methodological discussions have taken place in the process of re-framing the ‘classical approach’ on changing the patterns of schooling at large and teaching and learning in particular (see Vosniadou, 2008). We can see this re-framing process as a shift of pattern from best practice to next practice.
For new patterns to emerge, critical incidents or interventions are necessary to enable the opening of the perspective for next practice (Krusse, 2004). However, leaving the trodden path initially causes insecurity and instability: The old patterns of mind do not function any more, and the new ones have not yet gained stability. The experience is similar to an incubation phase for the emergence of the new, which mixes up the old or even questions it. Creating a mindset of sustainable change is a key concept in innovative education programmes for leaders.

**Using energy as the currency of engagement**

Changing the culture of an organization is not easy to achieve. We use energy as a lever for promoting change, because it is easier to influence the energy of a system than to change the culture. Loehr & Schwarz (2003) argue that “positive energy rituals ... are key to full engagement and sustained high performance” (p. 16) and not the time invested. Productive energy is an important driver in leadership development. It creates a positive collaborative culture for full engagement. Organizational energy is the power which helps organizations to move into a certain direction. The intensity of organizational energy is an indicator of how much emotional, mental and behavioral potential can be mobilized to reach the goals. It is an indication of the vitality, intensity and velocity of innovation processes. Bruch & Vogel (2005) offer an energy matrix which helps in assessing organizational energy according to intensity and quality of innovation processes.

The matrix in the Figure above depicts four quadrants of organizational energy in the field of tension between low/high intensity and negative/positive quality characteristics school leaders need to learn how to deal with the different modes of energy in their schools. Schools with low energy with a negative quality level often leads to resigned indolence. If there is a positive quality level, they rest in comfortable indolence and do not see much need for change. There are also schools with a high energy level but negative quality characteristics, which are characterized by corrosive force: There is a lot of energetic activity, but it is not used productively towards the future. Leadership for learning aims at reaching the top right quadrant with high energy and positive quality characteristics, which comprises the creative and productive impetus necessary for development processes.

**Conclusion**

This chapter explores the relationship between leadership and learning in the school context, where school leaders form the important link for the synchronization of top-down and bottom-up processes. School leaders are the key actors in promoting quality processes in schools, but there is no linear transfer from the school heads’ leading to the students’ learning unless a more dynamic view of a learning school is taken up which is anchored in the relationship between the people involved. In complex change processes successful leadership for learning depends on the interplay between thinking, feeling and doing.

Steps towards systemic innovation require a new understanding of professionalizing leaders on all levels of the school system. The implications for future practice suggest that a shared understanding among the actors involved is necessary to construct meaning in the reciprocal process that defines relationships. Leadership has to be shared through collaborative cultures, in which students take up leadership roles as well.

The implications for policy work suggest that leadership education should not only be built into professional development programmes for (future) school leaders. Distributed leadership asks for a wide distribution of learning opportunities on all levels of the system and both horizontal and vertical connections between them. The implications for future research ask for new ways of exploring the dynamic complexity of leading and learning from the interior conditions of the actors involved in a change process.
Introducing innovation and change in leadership programs are often seen as merely organizational or technological questions, turning complexity into a series of (trans)actions from policy to practice. However, dealing with complexity does not mean creating more complex structures of planning, acting, controlling and developing systems. The shift to an organic understanding of growth is related to openness and trust, which best help in reducing complexity of systems. School leadership education which aims at sustainability has to engage participants in leadership for learning. Instead of perpetuating good practices in school leadership qualification next practices should be explored and shared among all relevant partners in the education system.

References


EDUCATING SCHOOL LEADERS FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING: A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN SELECTED EU COUNTRIES

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In all EU countries matters of equity in access to education, equal learning opportunities and learning outcomes of pupils, irrespective of their socio-cultural background, age, gender, health condition, etc, are attracting for over a decade now increased policy attention in EU and often become object of occasionally heated public discourse. Such discourse, particularly in the media, is often grounded on the results obtained from international large scale assessments but also from national level research. Issues of equity and learning outcomes are addressed through various strategies and reforms across EU; perhaps the most common policy response to these challenges is an increased emphasis on improving the quality of the teaching staff in schools; however, as we shall discuss further in this chapter, there is currently little emphasis on issues of equity in the discourse and practice related to the education, training and professional development of school leaders. This chapter offers an analysis of policy briefs from 15 EU countries that were drafted by EPNoSL partners, namely from Austria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

THE POLICY EMPHASIS ON EQUITY AND IMPROVED LEARNING OUTCOMES

In the case of Austria, TIMMS or PISA results have fuelled public debates about why the education system does not succeed in reaching high levels of academic achievement and why some groups of pupils (e.g. low socio-economic background pupils, pupils with an immigrant background) appear not having the same opportunities as other groups to succeed in the school system. These results and the discussion that followed their publication have put pressure on policy makers to act in order to address problems of low academic performance, particularly among socio-culturally disadvantaged groups of pupils. In Austria’s National Education Report 2012, social background and language competences were the two factors which were addressed in detail as significant negative factors on learning results and access to education. Overall, equity is a highly politicized issue in Austria. It should be noted that while equal access to compulsory education is articulated in Austria’s constitution, the fundamental right to education for all is not.

The new school quality programme for compulsory schools (“SQA” in grades 1-9) focuses on the learning of all students as a central quality issue. Under the current Minister of Education, equity is central in several reform efforts. A newly established Department for Diversity in the Ministry has brought together all ministerial offices related to diversity and is focused on inclusion in policy, research and practice. Equity is also a main driving force of the lower secondary school reform in Austria. The “Neue Mittelschule” (NMS) was piloted 2008-2011 and mandated in April 2012. The new school form suspends tracking in compulsory lower secondary schools, although the fundamentally selective two-track system (4-year compulsory schools and 8-year academic-track schools) is still in place and requires parents to choose a school type for the lower secondary education for their children when they are around 10 years of age. Support and resources for the NMS reform and implementation are provided on all system levels. Furthermore, expert lectures on equity are also recorded

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29 Annexed in Kollias (2013).
and made available on Austria’s educational video platform BildungsTV and webinars open to all are being planned for the coming school year.

The issue of equity is also gaining a growing attention by the public and policy makers in France due to the publication of the 2009 PISA results which showed a gap in the achievement of pupils as compared to other countries. School drop-outs is also another issue which raises concerns in the policy making community and the public. Equity is largely considered the result of the work of educators who are called to reduce social inequalities through the transmission of knowledge to all and through the promotion of equal treatment in relation to school provisions.

Currently there is an intensive discussion in Germany about social injustice and the lack of equity in education. The Vodafone Foundation (2013) in Germany has recently published a survey that was conducted by the renowned Allensbach Institute for opinion and market research. The study gives a voice to those who are often somewhat excluded from the dominant political discourse on education – i.e. pupils and teachers - and focuses on social mobility, educational goals, opportunities and equity for pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds. According to this study, 61% of the teachers feel that, due to their different social backgrounds, not all children have equal opportunities in access and learning outcomes. As it was concluded, whereas in all societies the social background influences cultural interests and patterns of behaviour (like reading behaviour), in Germany the influence of social background is much stronger than elsewhere. Both teachers and parents who participated in the study agreed that factors having to do with family background are the main reason for some children having fewer learning opportunities than others. Above all, 84 percent of teachers and 79 percent of parents stressed the lack of interest on the part of parents in engaging with their own children. Teachers and parents also mentioned shortcomings in pupils’ upbringing in respect of working conscientiously (77/76 percent), parents’ failure to act as role models for their children (75/78 percent) and a lack of time on the part of parents to spend with their children (69/65 percent). This study – as various OECD publications before – points to considerable challenges for the education system in Germany. It is reasonable to argue that instead of shifting the responsibility to parents from lower socio-economic backgrounds for “deficits” in supporting their children, schools should provide equal opportunities for all children regardless of their social background. Therefore, promoting equity in schools is becoming a major field of work for political decision-makers, education authorities, school leaders, teachers and, last but not least, researchers. It should also be pointed out that in Germany, with the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2009, the right to inclusive education in the general education system defined in Article 24 has become legally binding in Germany. Article 24 postulates the right to inclusive education and the attendance of regular schools for disabled children. Currently, about 80 percent of all children with special educational needs are taught in special schools; only about 20 percent of them attend a regular school. However, there are large differences among the federal states. While in Bremen and Schleswig-Holstein 36 and 45 percent of children with special educational needs attend a regular school, 7 percent in Lower Saxony and 12 percent in Hesse do so. Overall, different states face different kinds of challenges regarding the inclusion of children with special educational needs.

In the Netherlands during that past few years seven themes have been examined more closely from a policy perspective for further improvement: learning inside and outside the classroom: cross-links and responsibilities; targets and standards as a guarantee for accessibility; concentration and segregation within and between schools; systemic approaches and exclusion; responsibility for accessibility; integrated or specific accessibility policy; and lifelong learning and accessibility. The Education Council, an independent governmental advisory body, has repeatedly highlighted equity challenges in the education system. According to a 2011 exploratory study by the Education Council (2011, p.1), “the level of educational attainment of the parents is still the best predictor of the school career and the social success of children. The children of low skilled parents tend to follow a programme of education at a lower level than the children of highly skilled parents. This means that they are more vulnerable in the labour market. A low level of educational attainment is not only associated with poorer skills in language and arithmetic, but also poorer skills in foreign languages, a lack of flexibility and poor data processing skills”.

In Portugal, the traditionally grave problems of inequality in education opportunities and of low education attainment have been object of public discourse and policy reforms since two decades now. Legislation introduced from 1991 onwards (1991 – 2001 – 2011) focused on the need to respond to the diversified pupils’ needs, and specifically the needs of pupils coming from poorer social and familiar backgrounds who were frequently at risk of dropping out, of retention or even of schooling evasion. Organizational solutions to increase attendance and achievement were implemented, covering either the number of pupils per class, or the selection of teachers and class tutors to be in charge of specific programs oriented to improve learning, self
confidence, motivation and achievement. Schools were also granted higher levels of autonomy, especially the ones serving socially deprived populations, so that they could find more adjusted solutions for these “priority territories”. Teachers followed specific training programs (specialized training) focused on curriculum management, didactics and testing, aiming at reinforcing their teaching competencies, as well as their scientific and pedagogical knowledge. The specialized training courses became part of the continuous education and training of teachers, having in mind either the mainstream pupils in regular courses, or pupils with specific learning needs. Equally, principals were offered courses in school management and administration to reinforce their competences (Decree-Law 95/97, 23rd April). These courses were established as prerequisites for Headship. Overall, issues of equity and improved learning outcomes were for two decades at the core of training and professional development for teachers and principals alike. The 2012 National Report entitled “The State of the Art on School Education” (CNE Report – 2013) indicated that “Portugal presents a complex educational situation. On one hand following a very positive evolution, we reached acceptable levels of education in the younger generations, either in terms of access and quality, or in terms of equity, showing a good capacity to recover in almost all domains. On the other hand, the still existing lower levels of education in the less younger population which mirrors the past educational policies” (p.8). According to the same report, “... it was made necessary to intervene and invest in almost all components of the education system: from buildings, to equipment, social support, teachers’ training, system restructuring, responding to a never seen demand for education. Nowadays, educational results are expressive in what concerns quality and equity in education and scientific and technological development. […] The results in the international tests have clearly improved, either in terms of equity (PISA 2009) or in terms of quality, namely in math’s, reading and science in primary education (PIRLS and TIMMS 2011) (ibid., p. 9). The results of these international tests have become object of public discourse and have exerted pressure on schools to improve further on the learning outcomes of pupils. This pressure is placed specifically upon school leaders; they are demanded to become more accountable to parents, to the municipal councils of education and to the society at large. This has in effect raised the issue of the professionalization of school leaders and the need to improve their competencies by attending to more courses on school management and leadership.

In Greece issues of equity and learning outcomes are framed within the wider logic of the historically excessive centralisation of the education system. This system was justified on the basis that it ensures equity in learning opportunities and outcomes because each and every school in the country is in principle no better or worse than other schools, given that all schools teach the same things, from the same schoolbooks, in the same pace, with the same, more or less quality of human or other resources. The results of PISA occasionally become object of public debates but only at a superficial level. What is attracting more the attention of the public, the media and the politicians is the level of average performance of pupils in Greece as compared to other countries; on the other hand, issues of equity in outcomes that arise from PISA results almost never become object of public discussion. Nevertheless, some trends observed in policy making in other EU countries, such as the devolution of some powers to regional authorities are gradually becoming object of policy reforms along with the highly politicised issue of the evaluation of the teaching staff. There are fears on the other hand that huge cuts in public education spending will effectively increase inequalities in opportunities and learning outcomes of children coming from a rapidly widening share of socio-economically disadvantages households.

In Sweden, even though low-performing schools are not targeted by the Swedish educational policy, policymakers do seem to think that there are problems with Swedish schools. The status of the educational system is frequently debated in the media and schools are clearly on the political agenda: according to the poll survey performed by Swedish television at the national election in 2010, the schools’ issue was rated as the most important policy area among voters (Johansson, Nihifors and Stark, 2013).

In Slovenia issues of equity are debated from the perspective of children’s rights but also the rights of teachers and parents. On national level, care for children’s rights is in the domain of the office of the Human Rights Ombudsman. In parallel, a number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as the Amnesty International Slovenia (AIS), the UNICEF Slovenia, the EIP Slovenia – School for Peace, the Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth, the Association for Nonviolent Communication, and TOM – Telephone for children and youth. Discussion on problems of inequality can also be found in scientific journals. For example, in the Sodobna pedagogika (Contemporary Pedagogy)30 journal within 2013 there are articles on concealed gender inequalities, cultural differences, immigrant students, Roma, justice in education, etc. Besides this also some books have been published on this topic (see, for example, Sardoč, 2011; Trtnik, Herlec and Urh, 2006). The Human Rights Ombudsman’s annual reports show that in Slovenian schools the following children’s rights are most frequently violated: the right to education; the right to safety; the right to freedom of expression; the

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30 See http://www.sodobna-pedagogika.net
right to freedom of conscience; the right to privacy, and the right to family life. With teachers the following rights can be endangered: the right to dignity; the right to privacy; the right to freedom of expression; the right to freedom of conscience; the right to safety; the right to freedom of work. Regarding parents the following human rights can be violated: the right to responsible and independent parenthood; the right to privacy and the right to family life. As it becomes evident from the report, in Slovenian schools problems with the protection of human rights are most often related to safeguarding confidentiality, privacy, the right to safety, the right to quality education, the rights of children with special needs and of other children, teachers’ communication with parents and with pupils, etc; however, also present is the problem of inclusion of all children, especially of those from other linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Trnavevič, 2007).

In Latvia’s education system equity and quality issues have been on policy agenda for some time now. In 2010 amendments to the Education Law introduced a new section entitled Prohibition of Differential Treatment. It states that “every person has the right to acquire education regardless of the material and social status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, religious and political affiliation, state of health, occupation and place of residence”. The Education Law also states that “if the prohibition of differential treatment or the prohibition to cause unfavourable consequences is violated, a person has the right to request elimination of the violation, to receive legal assistance in accordance with the Ombudsman Law, as well as to bring an action to the court”. With the establishment of the Inclusive Education Reform Group by the Ministry of Education and Science in 2011 many important initiatives, including those from previous years, have been taken forward. It is expected that terms like ‘inclusive education’, ‘school support team’, ‘individual learning plans’, ‘assistant teacher’, etc., will not only be defined in the Education Law, but also appropriate financing for the implementation of inclusive education initiatives will be made available.

Furthermore, more special education needs pupils are now joining mainstream classrooms. In Latvia the number of pupils with special needs included in mainstream classrooms is increasing year by year: In the school year 2010/2011, 1.591 pupils were enrolled in regular classrooms; in 2011/2012 2.495; and in 2012/2013 3.219. Another example is the recent initiative by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia to demand the integration of Roma pupils into mainstream classes rather than in separate classes.

In Latvia issues of equity and achievement are often addressed with the wider framework of school quality. A vital role in assuring quality is played by on-going and systematic internal and external evaluation processes. The school quality evaluation system in Latvia is in place since 2004. The evaluation methodology is based on two closely interrelated evaluation dimensions – school self-evaluation and school external evaluation, focusing in seven key areas: Curriculum; Attainment; Teaching and learning; Support for Pupils; Ethos; Resources; Management, leadership and quality assurance. Equity issues are dealt with in most key areas, but directly they are addressed in the key area Support for Pupils. To evaluate this key area the five following evaluation domains are specified: Health care, safety, social assistance; Support in personality development; Career guidance; Support for the learning process; Support for pupils with special needs.

**THE CHANGING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOLS LEADERS**

The Education Council in the Netherlands places emphasis on the professionalisation of teachers and in this wider framework addresses issues of school leadership. According to a 2013 report by the Education Council (2013, p. 45), “pursuing values and thereby influencing the [school] environment presupposes a form of leadership in which teachers take initiatives and take on certain leadership tasks. This form of leadership, which is not delegated nor tied to a formal position, is sometimes called distributed leadership. Distributed leadership is primarily another way of looking at leadership – not only regarding leadership as a behavioural quality of the formal (school) leader, but chiefly as a role and a process coming about in cooperation between people. By whom this leadership is ‘assumed’ or ‘achieved’ is not predetermined, but may differ from situation to situation and from activity to activity”. What is however striking is that in this report issues of equity in pupils’ outcomes in relation to the professionalisation of teachers are not stressed, with the emphasis being on improving the quality of the everyday teaching practice and of the education system as a whole. Equity is only tacitly addressed under the wider umbrella concept of ‘quality’ and through the recognition of the need for teachers to respond to challenges stemming from the highly socio-culturally diversified pupil population.

In Portugal the roles and responsibilities of school leaders have changed as a consequence of reforms that granted schools greater autonomy, particularly those specified in the Decree-Law 115-A/1998, the Decree-Law
In Austria, the introduction and gradual expansion of the “Neue Mittelschule” (NMS), a new school form which suspends early tracking (by the age of 10) in compulsory lower secondary schools, has been accompanied by the establishment of a new type of school leaders, the Learndesigners who are expected to drive change and function as teacher leaders.

In France, teaching and guidance are more at the centre of school management and administration than learning per se. Principals do not much intervene on learning issues even if the law has devolved some extensive powers during the last years, such as the power to “pedagogic and education steering”. Loose-coupled activities, despite some innovations in some schools, are the common everyday practice of many schools. The strict division between administration, care, and teaching impedes the development of horizontal relationships focused on learning and on supporting pupils.

However, principals are trained to develop self-evaluation of schools; this could have impact in the future on professional practices and it could initiate the beginning of a sort of transformational leadership. The challenge is to change the organization of schools to make them more autonomous, flexible, and open to stakeholders, to networking and to partnerships. Such changes would effectively result also in changes in the roles and responsibilities of school leaders. It is important to promote assessment and accountability, to enhance professional development, to sustain school improvement and to train principals for undertaking and distributing responsibilities in the management of teaching and learning.

In recent years school leaders in Latvia have experienced numerous new developments, e.g., changing paradigms in education, a shift from centralization to decentralization, introduction of information and communication technologies in education, etc. In a rapidly changing context introduced by these reforms school leaders have to look for new solutions to lead and manage education institutions. This challenge demands fresh, innovative and creative approaches as well as new competences to manage change. Parents expect the schools to provide high quality education for their children. Therefore, they demand that if a school does not meet these expectations it must be able to change to the desirable direction. These changes depend to a great extent on school leaders. Their role in attaining key education goals and providing opportunities for all students to learn in an inclusive environment has therefore become even more critical.

In Lithuania, a breakthrough in school leadership is expected by the implementation of the project “Time for the Leaders”, which was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Science in 2009. This project is implemented by the Education Welfare Centre together with the partners School Development Centre, ISM University of Management and Economics, as well as academics from other Lithuanian universities. During the implementation of the project “Time for the Leaders”, the idea that primarily an education leader is a learning leader is introduced to the Lithuanian education community; this leader must be ready to guide through the learning process, guide and manage people as well as an organisation. The project is based on the idea of leadership for the sake of learning; it means that leadership for supporting learning is realised through the establishment of challenging and equal conditions for the students, specialists and the whole system, where leaders persistently and publicly concentrate their own and others’ attention on teaching and learning.

In the Netherlands, the quality of school leadership is considered an important factor that determines the policymaking capacity of a school, also in relation to equity and achievement. In general the policy discourse is converging to an approach to the improvement of the quality of leadership in schools on the basis of a coherent package of measures. Such measures could include the formulation of professional standards and coaching regarding the expertise on advancing equity for learning in schools. Teachers should be encouraged to work in self-managing teams, for example, or to work together to develop innovative educational/pedagogical practices. It would also be good to introduce measures that reduce large school conglomerates into smaller sub-schools and teams in order to better cater for the needs of individual pupils on a more personalised manner. It is important, in this context, that the board and management in all education sectors project an image of being at the service of the core education processes.
In Spain the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (MECD) is promoting the concept that schools need trained and motivated teachers, because they are the key to the transformation of the school into a student-centred-learning environment. For the proper development of the school, a trained leading figure is required, able to manage the school at all levels (pedagogical, educational, administrative and financial), making it a competitive and innovative environment and, at the same time, capable of fostering social skills and integration. Under this perspective, the leader is expected bring out the best of every member of the school community, and provide tomorrow’s citizens with the quality education they deserve. To this purpose MECD aims to implement leadership policies anticipated to reduce dropout rates, enhance the quality of teaching and improve educational achievement.

The draft of the new Organic Law of Educational Quality Improvement (LOMCE), which has been negotiated and agreed by all the education counsellors of all of Spain’s regions, in its article 122a states that: “the education authorities should facilitate the effective exercise of the management role in schools, providing the principals with the necessary management autonomy to promote and develop educational quality actions.” In Articles 133 to 136, the competencies of the principals are more thoroughly defined, along with the selection process, the training required and, if applicable, the appointment and renewal. This law opens up the way to further specify what are the requirements necessary to educate and select principals.

On this basis MECD plans to organize a congress on Educational Leadership for principals of all educational levels, in order to open up the dialogue on what are the characteristics and functions of a good leader. Furthermore, an “Autonomy and Cooperation among Schools” Workgroup where leadership plays an important role, has been launched with representatives from all autonomous communities. This group involves discussions and knowledge sharing to facilitate the further specification of the law and the implementation of school leadership and educational autonomy policies, through policy action that is based on the characteristics, traditions and needs of all of Spain’s communities. Finally, the possibility of creating an online platform that would foster contact between principals and help them to share experiences, concerns, expertise and to promote collaboration among schools, is being considered.

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL LEADERS AND TEACHERS IN PROMOTING EQUITY AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

In Slovenia, on the level of schools, school leaders are responsible for the implementation of children’s rights. In the area of protecting children’s rights they perform the following basic tasks: preventing violation of the rights of children and youth; taking care of the training of staff on children’s rights; taking care of the promotion of human rights; analyzing the situation in the area of children’s rights; cooperating with external partners, etc. More and more frequently schools decide to set up kind of ‘safe points’, where children and adolescents are offered safety and assistance in case of being exposed to violent treatment. An important part of teacher’s work consists of introducing learners to children’s rights, duties, responsibilities, and otherness, the themes that are included in the basic school syllabi, e.g. that of the school subject Society taught in the 4th and 5th grade of basic school or in the syllabus of the subject taught in grades 7 and 8 named Civic and patriotic education and ethics. This means acting rather on the level of prevention, while it is also a responsibility of all basic schools in Slovenia to have education plans ready. More often than not these are based on children’s and human rights.

In Greece school leaders, according to the formal description of their duties and responsibilities defined by Ministerial decrees, are expected to undertake both administrative and pedagogic duties and responsibilities. Among the articles of the 2002 decree defining the tasks and general duties of school principals some are directly referring to readership roles, such as “to guide the school community in setting high targets...”, “undertakes initiatives of educational and pedagogic character...”, “… encourages the initiatives of teachers, inspires and provides positive motivation”, “... to undertake initiatives that contribute to the nurturing of free, responsible, democratic and concerned citizens”, “undertakes initiatives … to help new teachers in their teaching duties”. On the other side, school principals are not allowed to introduce changes to the typical school curriculum (attainment targets, subject matters, content to be covered and teaching hours), cannot choose the teachers employed in the school (these matters are exclusively at the hands of the Ministry of Education) and do not have budgets to manage. Among their duties that directly refer to matters of equity is the distribution of pupils in classes “… according to the principles of pedagogy, with no social exclusion”. The 2002 Ministerial decree does not directly mentions that among the responsibilities of principals should also be to improve the academic performance of pupils or to ensure that every pupil in the school has equal chances to improve in
their learning irrespective of his/her family background. Finally, and more importantly, the 2002 Ministerial decree does not include among the duties of the school leaders the formulation of a whole school development plan. Overall, school principals are only partially expected to actually lead their school and there is no accountability on their behalf regarding their school’s overall academic achievement or equity in learning outcomes.

The United Kingdom (UK) constitutes four nations: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Consequently, as far as school leadership is contingent on political, economic social and cultural contexts, a generic perception on school leadership in relation to equity and learning is difficult to determine in the UK. This is largely because systems of governance and regulation (i.e. the arrangements for planning, funding, quality-assurance, regulating learning, and local administration) are differentiated. In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales there are policy-making institutions and administrative bodies with differing degrees of autonomy from the UK Parliament in the development and implementation or education policy and training. In terms of legislation related to equality there are, however, statutory imposed legal obligations to which educational providers have a duty comply, such as the Equality Act 2010, which applies to England, Wales and Scotland (Section 153 of the act enables the Welsh and Scottish ministers to impose specific duties on certain Welsh and Scottish public bodies through secondary legislation). The primary purpose of the Act is to consolidate the complicated and numerous Acts and Regulations, which form the basis of anti-discrimination law in Great Britain. This legislation has the same goals as the four major EU Equal Treatment Directives, whose provisions it mirrors and implements. The Equality Act 2010 includes a specific chapter on education and a subsection on schools. This sub-section places legal obligations on the responsible body of the school (for example the local authority, governing body, proprietor) not to discriminate on grounds of race, gender, disability, religion, belief and sexual orientation in terms of pupil admission and treatment, the way it provides education, the way it affords access to a benefit, facility or service, or excluding the pupil from the school. In Northern Ireland there exists a separate range of statutory anti-discrimination legislation these include: the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976; Disability Discrimination Act 1995; Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997.

Ostensibly, school leaders in the United Kingdom are bound by the above equality legislation, which is intended to inform and guide the professional decisions they make and the delivery of education in schools. Further, professional associations and trade unions in the UK (such as the National Association of Head teachers in England) may provide advice and guidance to schools on the drafting of their own equal opportunities policy to assist in their alignment with the national policy. The aim is that the adoption of a school-based policy will help the school identify, prevent, and redress unfair discrimination against disadvantaged groups. The school-based policy may include a statement of commitment to equality, detailed policy and procedures for implementation, and how the policy will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated. The drafting of such a policy is not mandatory and therefore without any nationally available data it is not possible to ascertain how many schools in the UK have such a policy or if they are acted upon once in place.

In the context of day-to-day practice, the current effectiveness and ability of school leaders in the UK to address equity and learning is arguably primarily shaped neither by statutory national policy nor school-based policy on equal opportunities, but by the values, vision, commitment and professional standards and skills of school heads. In instances where a more national and local authority controlled system of schooling operates, as in Scotland, prescribed national standards are available (implicitly/explicitly addressing notions of equity and learning), against which heads may benchmark their leadership qualities. Scotland has 32 Local Authorities that administer and run state education in a comprehensive system.

In England, with a stronger policy emphasis on institutional autonomy, the impetus to address equity and learning resides very much at the level of the individual school. Nevertheless, the national government is committed to a policy of raising standards, in part by improving the number of students who achieve the expected levels at the end of each key stage of learning. In order to help achieve this goal there is a drive, via school inspection, to ensure that school leaders are accountable for the progress of all pupils. Consequently, the school inspection body Ofsted focuses on the progress of those pupils identified as potentially belonging to vulnerable groups (i.e. those most likely to be at risk of not achieving the expected levels for various reasons) which include: pupils with special educational needs and disabilities; Looked After Children, or who are themselves young carers; pupils eligible for free school meals (and thus from low income families); minority ethnic pupils, including Gypsy, Roma or Traveller children, and all those for whom English is an additional language; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils; and those who belong to other groups who are vulnerable in particular schools or settings, either because they are in a minority or because their progress raises concerns.
In **France**, equity is largely integrated in the mission of educators to reduce inequalities by the transmission of knowledge and equality of treatment in school provision. Legalism and republican ethos is strongly embedded in the mindset of principals and inspectors who share a common post-bureaucratic culture and vision. The principals have to promote republican values, the ethos of public services and equality of opportunity, and to support individualized learning of each student, to facilitate teachers to change their practices, to implement tools to support student learning, to develop the assessment of students, to work in partnership with inspectors, to validate the student basic skills, and to mobilise the “pedagogical board” in the school in order to facilitate school improvement.

In **Germany** the roles and responsibilities of principals are defined at the level of Länder. Therefore, there is not a unified approach regarding a principals’ job, particularly on issues of equity and achievement. It should however be pointed out that only the legislation of the state of Saarland mentions equity in the context of duties allocated to the school head. The head is expected to intervene when there is no fairness in learning opportunities.

### Pre-service, Induction and In-service Programmes for School Leaders in EU

In the European Union there is great variation in the ways prospective, new and in-service principals and other education staff with school management roles can get formal education and training related to the wider field of school leadership and in particular to issues of equity and learning outcomes. To a considerable extent, the national landscape regarding the organization, the providers, the content and the duration of formal education/training programmes for school leaders is shaped by the legislative framework which describes the academic qualifications that are required for someone to become school principal.

In **Slovenia**, the National School for Leadership in Education is the governmental institution established for training leaders in education. It runs different programs for principals and other leaders in education in different fields. Leadership for learning is in direct focus or is implicitly addressed in most of the programs in offer. In Slovenia there are three phases in school leaders’ training: pre-service, induction phase and in-service. Leading for learning is part of pre-service and induction phase programmes. For in-service school leaders there are three one to two years programmes that are focused on leading for learning and equity. These programmes are described briefly below.

**Program: Headship Development**

The program is composed of four intertwined methods of work: three three-day modules, one one-day elective activities, mutual advisory work and project work. The goals of the program include:

- Deepen knowledge and develop individual skills for the educational leadership of school;
- Understand the role of the head teacher and modern trends, the needs of political, economic, social, legislative and culturally altered environment in which schools operate;
- Develop skills for self-evaluation and assessment of one’s own work, as well as for professional development planning with main focus on the efficiency of school leadership;
- Deepen the understanding and develop a critical view of innovations happening within the school and of participating in local and global trends, consequently ensuring flexibility and comparability of pupils;
- Train participants in order to be able to use, by means of modern analytical methods, the relevant data and research in their planning and decision-making;
- Confront one’s own practice with others in professionals;
- Focus leading in learning;

**Program: Leadership for Learning**

The program is intended for principals who want to improve their capacities to better promote the learning of their pupils. The program engages principals in workgroups of 8 to 12 participants and engages them in professional discussions on leadership for learning. The results of the programme are presented to other principals at professional conferences and in scientific papers.

**Program for Principal Certificate**
The aim of the program is to promote the professional development of principals in order to improve leadership in schools and kindergartens. The program participants gain knowledge and skills in the field of professional development and leadership:

- Know trends in the field of leadership and principals’ professional development;
- Understand the significance of the professional development of principals for leadership and leading learning;
- Understand various forms of professional development and participate in them;
- Ability to critically assess own leadership;
- Ability to plan and monitor own professional development;
- Ability to improve on own professional development and leadership practices;
- Understand the importance of being active in a professional community.

In **Greece** there is no undergraduate university programme of studies specifically dedicated to prepare future school leaders (at ISCED levels 5). Within the programmes of studies of university departments in the wider field of education (particularly those preparing primary education teachers) there are courses related to school management and administration. At ISCED level 6 there is one related MA programme offered by the University of the Aegean, Department of Sciences of Preschool Education and Educational Design, entitled “Educational Models and Development of School Units” (75 ECTS). The department of Home Economics and Ecology of Harokopio University, in the context of its postgraduate programme “Education and culture”, offers a specialty on “Administration and Management of Educational Units” (152 ECTS). In the academic year 2012-3 it enrolled 19 students. The department of elementary education of the University of Western Macedonia offers a specialty programme entitled “Pedagogics and New Technologies” which leads to the postgraduate specialty diploma entitled “Modern teaching methods-Education of Educators-Educational policy and administration of education”. In the academic year 2012-3 this programme enrolled 9 students. The department of elementary education of the University of Thessaly offers a postgraduate programme entitled “Organisation and Administration of Education” (since 2005-6) (90 ECTS). In academic year 2011-2 it enrolled 30 students. The Department of Philosophy, Education and Psychology of the University of Athens offers a postgraduate programme entitled “Theory, Praxis and Evaluation of Educational Work” (120 ECTS). Among the 7 specialties offered one is entitled “Educational Policy and Education Administration”. In the academic year 2012-3 it enrolled 14 students. The Hellenic Open University (HOU) also offers a short training programme on “School Units Management” (22 ECTS). Also non-formal training programmes are occasionally available. Overall, the opportunities and choices available for postgraduate studies in topics related to the education and training of school leaders in Greece are rather limited.

Overall, the public education administration posts in Greece from individual schools to local, regional and central administration units of the Ministry of Education are staffed by teachers, the vast majority of whom have never been properly trained on education administration/management, let alone leadership. In order to address this reality, Law No. 3848 (article 11) defined that prospective school leaders should have obtained Level 1 (basic) certificate on ICT and have a certificate on “administrative competence” that can be obtained after participating in a respective training programme to be offered by the National School of Public Administration and Local Government. From the academic year 2012-3 this National School started offering a “short” version of a training programme to local and regional education administration directors. A Ministerial Decree in June 2012 defined the thematic units of the complete “theoretical” training, lasting 96 hours, as follows:

- Human resources management in education
- Organisation and administration of education as modern organization
- Evaluation in education
- Legal rules in administrative action in education
- Legislative framework in primary and secondary education
- Educational policy – European dimension in education

It should be noted that prospective trainees to this programme should have been employed for at least 7 years in public education (and no more than 32) and have already obtained the Level 1 (basic) certificate on ICT. The practical training will last 80 hours and will involve practice in administrative posts.

In **Sweden** principal leadership has been a frequent topic of attention in the school development arena for at least 4 decades. It is now becoming more and more obvious how education is negotiated and conditioned in
and between three dimensions: politics – profession; national intentions – local conditions and public education – private education. The governing of schools has drifted from government towards governance, i.e. more interactive processes are being introduced with a new focus on performance measures. These radical changes of the educational scene call for another approach to train principals. Leadership training is often described as a key solution to educational shortcomings and is expected to provide a legitimate base for new leadership approaches and new forms for governing and regulating schools in a late modern society. In the following paragraphs we will concentrate on the new National School Leadership Training Programme for principals, that was launched in late 2009, in relation to equity and social justice.

The Swedish Parliament decided 1986 on a broader integrated programme of principal training, with the State and municipalities being given responsibility for different parts of the training. The municipalities would provide a recruitment training programme and an introduction training programme, the State would provide a National Principals training programme and finally, universities were to offer continuing school leader training and master programmes. The purpose was to give principals a thorough understanding of the goals of the school, equip them with leadership skills that would stimulate the development of school activities:

- **The recruitment training programme for persons that wanted to become principals.** The training should give a broad view of different school leadership functions but should have a focus on the national goals for education. The Swedish Parliament’s purpose of introducing this programme also had three other goals. They wanted more women to become school leaders, more recruitment from outside the own municipality and to attract people from other educational backgrounds.
- **The introductory training programme was introduced to help new principals during their first years in office.** The main part of the education should be focused on the practical and administrative tasks of the principal, but it was also made very clear that the principals should be introduced in pedagogical leadership.
- **The National Principals training programme was to be given to all principals after about two years in office.** The programme ran during two years and comprised of around 30 seminar days. The purpose of the training was to deepen the principals’ knowledge and increase their understanding of the national school system, the national goals for the school and the role of the school in society and the local community.
- **The continuation school leader programme can simply be described as university courses for school leaders.**

The third programme - the National principal training programme - did function very well and one reason for this is that the State through the National Agency for Schools got the responsibility to organise the principals training and was given sufficient resources to run the programme at different selected universities. The forth type of programmes, academic master courses, have also been offered at different universities. Unfortunately these courses have not been able to attract a large number of principals for continued school leader education (Johansson, 2001).

In 2007, the new programme was outlined in a committee report – *Clearer leadership in schools and pre-schools – a proposal for a new training programme for principals* (Ds 2007:34). The following issues were identified when looking back on the previous programme:

- Legal aspects of managing and leading schools have not been paid enough attention.
- Issues about how the National goals can be followed up and evaluated as a basis for school improvement have not been prioritized enough.
- The differences between the different universities giving the programme are too big.
- The capacity is too small – principals have to wait too long before entering the programme.

On behalf of the Ministry of Education the National Agency for Education commissioned six universities in 2009 to run the programme. The programme which is mainly residential runs over 3 years with 36 meeting days and is open to principals, pre-schools principals and deputy principals who already are in service. For principals appointed after March 2010 it is compulsory to complete the programme within four years. The participants are expected to use 20% of their time studying. The course itself is free of charge, but the participants’ organizations pay residential costs, travel, literature etc.

New cohorts enter the programme twice annually and in May 2013 about 5.700 principals and deputy principals were enrolled and of these about 1.900 had completed the program. This is approx. 60% of all 8.000 principals and deputy principals that exists in Sweden. The intentions of the New Programme are described as
follows (Skolverket, 2009): Principals need to understand both their own role and that of the school, share the fundamental values governing how the school works, and be able to transform these values into concrete actions. The National School Leadership Training Program aims to provide support for head teachers in carrying out their functions. The training program covers three areas of knowledge:

- Legislation on schools and the role of exercising the functions of an authority
- Management by goals and objectives
- School leadership

These areas of knowledge are crucial for the practical implementation of school leadership. They are closely linked to each other, and head teachers must be able to manage them simultaneously since they form parts of a complex interacting system.

The area Legislation on schools and the role of exercising the functions of an authority covers the provisions laid down in laws and ordinances. Emphasis is also put on how the school’s assignment is formulated in the national goals. The knowledge area Management by objectives and results covers measures for promoting quality which are required for the school to achieve the national goals of the education, and create the conditions for its development. The knowledge area School leadership covers how the work should be managed based on the national tasks of the head teacher and the principles set out in the steering system for bringing about development in line with greater goal attainment.

In relation to each of these areas described above, knowledge goals are formulated but in this context it is more important that there are also goals formulated in relation to:

**SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

On completion of the training, the head teacher shall:

- demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of applicable legislation in the school area, as well as making assessments, and
- demonstrate the ability to communicate and apply knowledge of existing legislation in the school area.
- demonstrate good ability to explain the goals of the school, make these clear, and transform them into concrete actions,
- demonstrate good ability to communicate the national goals,
- demonstrate good ability to use different tools and methods to follow up and evaluate results of their own school,
- demonstrate good ability to compile, analyze and interpret the school’s results,
- demonstrate good ability as the head and leader of school personnel in managing and delegating work in order to maximise the learning and development of pupils,
- demonstrate good ability as head and leader to motivate, initiate and manage the school’s development processes in a strategic way in order to encourage the interest of school personnel in learning and development,
- develop the ability to manage and resolve conflicts,
- demonstrate the ability to communicate future plans and visions;
- demonstrate good ability to communicate goals and results to pupils in the school, to personnel and parents,
- demonstrate the ability to apply the principle of the equal value of all people.

**ASSESSMENT ABILITY AND APPROACHES**

On completion of the training, the head teacher shall:

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the area of school legislation with respect to the legal security of pupils, and relevant scientific, societal and ethical aspects.
- demonstrate good leadership abilities to integrate the school’s daily work with pupils’ results and development of quality in the school,
- demonstrate the ability to evaluate and communicate the school’s results as a basis for further development,
- demonstrate good ability as a leader to provide explicit focus on the national assignment of the school,
- demonstrate good ability as a leader and provide a democratic model to pupils and personnel by creating an open communicative climate,
• demonstrate ability as a leader clearly emphasizing the importance of cooperation,
• demonstrate ability as a leader by involving the participation of pupils and parents in the work of the school,
• demonstrate good ability as a leader by giving appropriate prominence to the values laid down in the school’s steering documents.

In Estonia, Tartu and Tallinn Universities only offer special courses to prospective school leaders. These courses are usually attended by school principal candidates or those already serving as principals in a school. The tuition fees of courses are paid either by candidates or by the schools. These courses focus on leadership theories and practices, legal issues, school curriculum development, school finances, staff development, school improvement and utilize good practice examples.

In Denmark since 2003 some of the Institutions for Continuous Education offer a ‘Diploma in Leadership’ (DIL: 60 ECTS). In 2009 this diploma was supplemented/substituted by another diploma, the ‘Diploma of Public Leadership’ (DOL). The new ‘Diploma of Public Leadership’ (DOL) is subsidised by the Government through municipalities, so course fees are lower (approximately € 10.000 for the full diploma). Currently, 12 university colleges and academies are accredited to offer the full diploma. The following description takes as its point of departure the situation at the University College Copenhagen (UCC), but will also relate it to the general situation in the country. The ‘Diploma of Public Leadership’ is consisted of 6 compulsory (5 ECTS each), 3 optional (5 ECTS each) and one dissertation module. The compulsory modules are:

• Personal leadership: Leadership and communication
• Personal leadership: Professional leadership
• Leadership and staff: Leadership in dynamic relations
• Leadership and staff: Leadership in learning- and competences-relations
• Leadership and organisation: Organisation and processes
• Leadership and organisation: Organisation, governance and strategy

Each institution is certified to offer a number of modules. UCC can offer 20-30 modules. The dissertation (15 ECTS) usually involves empirical research and theoretical analyses.

The courses are described in curricula and study guides, following a competences format: Purpose, aims (knowledge and understanding, skills and competences) and content. Instruction in each module is given over 4 full days plus 2 study days, equalling to 33 lessons per module. Normally two modules are given per semester/half year, like 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6. A full diploma therefore requires approximately 60 full days over a period of 2½ - 3 years. Adding to this is the individual study of at least 500 pages of literature from the curriculum list. The approach to teaching the modules can vary from one provider to the other. In UCC it is described as ‘didactic’:

‘We are focusing on you investigating your practice and support you to gain experiences from your practice in order to qualify and develop your practice. This is the reason why we decided not to follow only one theoretical approach. We want you to be able to shed critical light on and analyse practice on the basis of diverse theories. We call our approach an ‘eclectic approach’ (From study guide for Personal leadership, UCC).

The above programme in public leadership is not targeting specifically to train school leaders. UCC has also a special diploma for school leadership. The compulsory modules are identical to the ‘standard’ diploma, - with standard curriculum and learning material - but the choice of modules is restricted to three modules within the specific institutional/professional area, such as the school. Those can be modules like: ‘Educational leadership’, ‘Quality assurance and development and evaluation of the school’, ‘Leading leadership teams in schools’.

In Austria school heads have to go in for a probation period of four years, during which they are required to attend a 2-year part-time school management course. The successful completion paves the way for permanent appointment. In the national course curriculum (12 ECTS), the following content is stipulated:

• Leadership and Communication,
• Conflict Management,
• School Development (Development of teaching, staff and organisation, Quality Management),
• School and Public Service Law,
• ICT Management and E-Learning.
The concrete needs of the school heads in their specific situation is dealt with in further, optional modules: Administration and school administration, staff meetings, discussion leading and presentation, time and personal management, PR, quality development, etc. In addition, there are practice-based elements including forms of collegial coaching, which have an essential contribution to make to mutual support of the role of head. The initial training course is concluded by a project and a public presentation of its results.

In **France** the education of principals in secondary education schools is undertaken by a single institution: the *Ecole Supérieure de l’Éducation Nationale* (ESEN) which is a national college for the training of principals and inspectors. The ESEN is supervised directly by the French ministry of education (its department of human resources) and it defines its content and training schemes according to the ministry’s regulations and priorities in education policy. Some Masters of management exist in universities (offered by department of education sciences) but they do not have the same legitimacy (and legacy) because the recruitment and selection of principals/inspectors in secondary education is made through a *concours* (exams leading to access to the position of civil servants) and the preparation for this concours is made by departments of further training within education local authorities. Only teachers (and pastoral carers) can take this exam provided that they have 5 years of teaching experience. In primary schools, the principal is a peer among the teachers selected directly by the body of inspection (there is no concours). In the primary schools the education of principals and of “pedagogical advisers”, inspectors in the support of schools, is made by local authorities, in partnership sometimes with universities (Graduate Schools of Education).

The training of principals/inspectors in secondary education is made just after the “concours” at the ESEN through a short period of in-class days when they are grouped by regions and the rest of the year they have to complete their service as deputy-principals in a school. They benefit from a local training by the local authority before the start of the new school year in their school and also from in-service training in another school. They have to make a training course in a company and abroad (or to realize a study on a foreign education system).

The training of secondary school principals is organized according to 4 principles:

- A common framework on school management, human resources, implementation of education policy, leadership in teaching and student guidance, professional communication, security of people and premises.
- An individualized professionalisation is based on a negotiation between the trainee and his/her trainers (peers) to define a sequential and personalized plan of learning.
- A continuous professional development linking the different levels (school, local authority, ESEN) and stages (preparation, exploitation, knowledge deepening).
- The micro-level is considered as the best place for professionalisation; the local authority prepares the professional situations, their analysis and formalization, the ESEN is providing higher levels of knowledge and skills.

In **Latvia**, the education law stipulates the responsible bodies for the provision to teacher and school heads of continuing professional development activities. The Cabinet of Ministers regulates the *Procedures for the Improvement of Teachers’ Professional Competences* and the Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for managing the implementation of continuing professional development (CPD) activities. Cabinet Regulations on Procedures for the Improvement of Teachers’ Professional Competences outline the main CPD areas. These have to do with innovations in:

- in bilingual education;
- in applying ICT;
- in educational management;
- in school management;
- in school quality evaluation.

According to the Cabinet Regulations all educators have to participate in CPD activities for not less than 36 hours during a three year period (funded by the State) in order to improve on their professional competences. Cabinet Regulations stipulate that CPD programs up to 36 hours (”A” type programs) can be delivered by different bodies – Ministry agencies, universities, LLL centres, NGOs, schools, etc. CPD programs lasting 72 hours or more (”B” type programs) could be implemented only by teacher training institutions. To ensure program quality all CPD programs should be coordinated by the Ministry.
CPD programs can consist of several modules and school heads can choose modules from different programs to design CPD activities to suit their own needs. Besides the traditional CPD program activities school heads can participate in seminars, conferences, projects, non-formal education programs and spend up to 12 hours in a so called ‘self-improvement and experience module’. During the last three years different CPD opportunities for school leaders are offered in the frame of several European Social Fund projects.

Program providers follow many different ways of CPD program implementation. The traditional way is a program consisting of theoretical (40% of the training time) and practical part (60%). Recently this traditional approach has been displaced by alternative professional development opportunities. For example, there are offered 1 to 3 days practice workshops for school leaders entitled “meeting the challenges of the 21st century education – how to make a tomorrow school today”. These workshops deal with innovations in quality management related to school self-evaluation and development planning as well as with the creation of an inclusive and supportive environment in school. During the CPD activity entitled “a school teaches a school” there are school team exchanges; teams learn from each other and seek for solutions to common problems. There is also another CPD activity entitled “school leaders learning group”. Besides the above mentioned CPD activities there is also available the “Directors Club” initiated by Swedbank Latvia for school heads. The aim of the club is to improve school leaders’ competences for strengthening school capacity and ensuring a better learning environment for students. This initiative promotes cooperation among school leaders and is promoting good practices from enterprises. This is an opportunity for school leaders to get support in managing change at school. The Education Centre of Riga City Council provides also tailored CPD activities for school leaders in Riga’s schools. The two most popular are: summer schools for the prospective and already servicing school leaders; and support from experienced school leaders.

In Lithuania universities currently offer the following courses designed to develop leadership competences:

- “Management and Leadership in Education”, course in the MA programme in Education by the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences.
- “Management and Administration of Educational Institutions”, course in the MA programme in Management and Business Administration by the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences.
- “Strategic Leadership”, course in the MA programme in Human Resource Management by the Kaunas University of Technology.
- “Leadership in Education”, course in the MBA programme by the ISM University of Management and Economics.
- “Information Management and Leadership”, course in the MA programme in Information Services by the Vilnius University.

School leaders and teachers who wish to improve their leadership competences in an informal way can choose in-service training courses offered by the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, or other educational centres. The informal learning programme “Leadership in Education” under the project “Time for the Leaders” is currently implemented by the ISM University of Management and Economics. This consists of four modules:

- Leader – an Autonomous Learning Pathfinder;
- Leader and Followers’ Relationship;
- Leader - a Learning Pathfinder;
- Leader in a Learning Organization.

In Poland, the Ministry of National Education in 1999 developed the framework programme of a Qualifying Course on Educational Management targeting to train school leaders. Among others, the Polish Association of Education Managers (Ogólnopolskie Stowarzyszenie Kadry Kierowniczej Oświaty, OSKKO) is an important stakeholder that promotes discussions on how matters of education and support for school leaders. Another important actor in the field of training of school leaders are the Teacher Development Centres, which are institutions, both public and private (there are about 400 such centres in Poland), that train teachers in various topics, such as pedagogies and core curricula, changes in the law, administration etc. Graduate or post-graduate (compulsory) programmes for school head teachers are also offered by public institutions, non-government organisations, higher education institutions and private institutes. It is also worth stressing that local authorities are obliged to finance CPD activities of teachers and principals (they have to spent at least 1% of their budget allocated to teacher salaries to finance such CPD activities). As a result, the training opportunities for head teachers are relatively rich; there are numerous seminars, conferences, training
programmes and courses in various forms. Such CPD offers are very different from one another in terms of the content, teaching methods, and duration. It is not however popular to organise internship initiatives, real world learning situations, and cooperation in groups. Also the quality of the training programmes and their usefulness tend to vary, and they do not seem to exhaust the needs of school head teachers.

In Poland a person who applies for the position of a school head teacher must have completed a graduate or post-graduate programme in the scope of management or a qualifying course on management in education. The contents of the training programme must cover a number of fixed issues (including educational law, ways of designing the programme of an institution, management theory, psychological aspects, and school administration). The whole programme should demand no less than 210 learning hours. On the other hand, there are no formal requirements concerning the training and professional development of already servicing school head teachers, although a school principal who is a teacher, by virtue of being a teacher, is required to improve his or her qualifications and develop on an ongoing basis (it is not however specified how).

In April 2013 a new project ‘Leadership and management in education – designing and implementing the system of training and head teacher development’ was initiated. This project is run by the Centre for Education Development (CED) and the Jagiellonian University. CED is a national teacher training institution. This project will finish in June 2015. The aims of the project are:

- to carry out a diagnosis of the competences of school head teachers, current forms and methods of training and development of school head teachers in Poland and in other countries, and
- to design 3 models (training, development and supporting models) for school head teachers.

In the framework of this project CED and the Jagiellonian University plan to:

- test the new model of school head teachers’ training (100 people)
- test the new model of school head teachers’ development (300 people)
- test the new model of school head teachers’ support (500 people).

Qualitative research carried out by the Educational Research Institute (Diagnosis of the needs of school head teachers) indicated that head teachers highly appreciate formal and informal exchanges of knowledge, information, and good practices with other head teachers. Such knowledge and information sharing concerns primarily the management of the school as organisation. Special areas of interest are legal issues, human resources management, financial and school infrastructure management. Those areas were also identified as the most problematic ones, on which head teachers lack knowledge and information. In general, head teachers indicated that they really lack support in the form of informal learning networks, and they are in need of meeting places where they could share experiences and discuss solutions to problems which they encounter in their everyday work.

Training programmes for school leaders and teachers targeting equity and learning outcomes

In 2006 in Slovenia, a project, funded partly by the European Social Fund, was carried out at the National School for Leadership in Education aiming at reducing occurrence of violation of human rights in school. A counsellor also participated in the project as representative of the Office of Human Rights Ombudsman. The purpose of the project was to train school heads and teachers in systematically monitoring and implementing children’s rights in order to reduce the number of instances of violation of these in schools. The following objectives were stated: better knowledge and awareness of children’s rights by the professional staff in education; training of a number of school heads, deputy school heads and teachers; development of case studies on which professional staff would be trained in preventing and recognizing violation and in acting appropriately; and publicity. Based on the project results the National School for Leadership in Education developed new teaching contents for school heads in the area of children’s rights and active citizenship. For headship license candidates the National School for Leadership in Education carries out the non-compulsory course Human rights in school environment since 2006.

In Greece, given the highly centralised system of governance and the organisation of provisions to schools, teachers and school leaders are responsible for implementing the laws and the directives of the Ministry of Education which are assumed to ensure equality of access and treatment. Equality in treatment from a systemic level of policy is, among others, promoted by ensuring that the school staff, teachers and principals,
have a minimum level of professional competencies. From this perspective, in the past decade there were introduced massive programmes for upgrading the competencies of teachers. For example, all primary school teachers who had graduated from teachers’ academies, which offered 2-year programmes of studies (in operation until 1988; they were replaced by 4-year university programmes), were effectively required to enrol to teacher training programmes offered by universities around Greece in order to obtain a university degree. Other massive teacher training programmes focused on basic ICT skills. Overall, the idea was that massive programmes of teacher training will in effect lead to improved quality of teaching and learning for all pupils, irrespective of their socio-cultural background. Given that school leaders are school teachers who, based on seniority and other criteria, serve for some period on this post, it was implicitly assumed that such training programmes will also help school leaders to improve on their capacities to manage schools, particularly in relation to pedagogy.

In **Sweden** three examples of special training for principals so that they become more capable to handle ethical matters better are described below. The first example dates about ten years back in time. The Principal Training Centres at the universities were asked by the National Agency for Schools to plan and do courses in relation to the basic democratic values in the curriculum. These courses were given over a period of four years and the purpose was that this subject focus should be integrated into the regular principal training programs. The next example of special training courses were training of principals on how different value systems, beliefs and perceptions can create different dilemmas for school leaders and educators in relation to how honour-related problems are interpreted and handled in school. The third example is related to old phenomena that have changed in character. Sweden during the last 50 years always had immigrant children in its schools. The number has lately increased a lot and the administration and the political leadership has also identified a new growing group immigrant children that are of school age and they are coming without their parents. Again, the Principal Training Centres were asked to provide training to principals on how to deal with this new situation. These three examples all build on the administrative and political belief that good and informed school leadership is part of the solution for different challenges to our democratic system.

In the **United Kingdom** (England) as a result of the emphasis by the school inspection body Ofsted on the progress of those pupils identified as potentially belonging to vulnerable groups, one of the training programmes offered by the trade union ‘National Association of Head Teachers’ NAHT (2013) is entitled *Leading on Learning for Vulnerable Groups - Changes, Challenges and a Chance to do Better*. The course identifies the main issues and assists participants, through presentations, question and answer sessions, and small group discussions, to consider how a school might become more effective in meeting the needs of all its pupils, and especially those from vulnerable groups. The availability of such training throughout the UK, whilst commendable, is voluntary and does rely upon individual senior leaders identifying a need and deciding to enrol. Moreover, it should be emphasised that the provision of senior leader training on equity related themes in comparison to other areas of school concern is relatively limited. In a highly devolved system such as England’s – with no nationally collated data or evidence-based research - it is very difficult to ascertain the degree to which school leaders are undertaking such training, or addressing issues of equity and learning in their day to day practice.

In **Austria**, when looking at the curricula of the school management programmes, references to equity and learning are not given directly. The topic is more indirectly dealt with in the national quality programme SQA (general education) and QIBB (vocational education), where school heads have to deal with learning and development of individual students from an inclusive perspective. School principals and teacher leaders attend training and orientation programmes for the implementation and development of quality processes on the school level. A new master degree programme in school management will start at three higher education institutions in Austria, which will deal with particular approaches to diversity. In addition, the Leadership Academy for school principals and system leaders integrates the issue of equity by its leadership for learning approach.

Furthermore, diversity competence is central in the teacher education reform (PädagogInnenbildung NEU), which will be mandated this year and which will result in new curricula at teacher education institutions.

In 2012/13 the National Center for Learning Schools (CLS) was established to coordinate efforts and continue development of the “**Neue Mittelschule**” (NMS), a new school form suspends tracking in compulsory lower secondary schools. Equity is a central topic of CLS’s national network meetings and qualification programmes.

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31 See more at: http://www.naht.org.uk/welcome/naht-events/courses-list/keeping-on-top-of-the-send-agenda/
new teacher leadership role introduced with the reform, the so-called Lerndesigners, was established in order to function as teacher leaders and change agents. Lerndesigners are offered a 2-year qualification programme (12 ECTS) focused on equity and achievement. It is organized in the context of a joint MA programme between CLS and Pädagogische Hochschulen (Teacher Education institutes at regional level).

Finally, all NMS school heads have to attend to at least one national learning atelier or symposium per year with their Lerndesigners. In the current school year, the influence of social background and academic language competence were the main focus of all national events for the NMS.

References


SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY AND LEARNING – A SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE SWEDISH MINISTRY PERSPECTIVE

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THE SCHOOL SYSTEM VOUCH FOR EQUALITY

The Swedish education system has for years been an integral component of the Swedish welfare state. Sweden has nine years of free compulsory education from seven years old (grades 1 to 9). It provides a comprehensive education, with, in the main, all children following the same curricula determined by the Government. Upper secondary school, which also is free of charge, is voluntary and offer different programs, vocational programs as well as programs preparing for university studies. The school system focuses on providing equality of opportunities and equivalence of student learning outcomes irrespectively of were in the country the education is provided. There is a strong emphasis creating learning opportunities for improved knowledge for all students and by doing so also strengthen each individual student’s social and civic skills and development.

Equality is a fundamental principle of the Education Act which is decided by the Swedish Parliament. According to the Education Act all children and youth shall have access to equivalent education, independently of gender, socio-economic factors, ethnic background and place of residence. Students in need of special support have also their right to adequate support.

It should be mentioned that equity and learning – linked to improved student outcomes is not an easy task to solve. The variation between high- and low-performing students as well as high and low performing schools and school districts has increased over time and studies tell us that there are concerns about equity and learning linked to the quality of student outcomes (Skolverket, 2012).

A DECENTRALISED SCHOOL SYSTEM

The Swedish school system is highly decentralised. The state (Parliament and Government) is responsible for national steering documents as the Education Act, ordinances and curricula. Sweden has a small Ministry but there are also agencies. The Swedish National Agency for Education prepare syllabi, work with school development on national level, follow up and evaluate schools in different areas and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate monitors for example that school organizers give their students equal opportunities to learn and achieve the national knowledge requirements in accordance with the national steering documents.

The school organizer has the responsibility for running schools and to see that school leaders and teachers are qualified for their profession and follow the national regulation. The organizers are responsible for allocating resources, organize and planning their school activities and follow up and evaluate on different levels. As mentioned above there should be equal possibilities for all students to learn and achieve the national knowledge requirements, which means students with different learning abilities but also school districts and schools with varying competencies and financial strength that will affect student learning outcomes.

SCHOOL LEADERS ARE CRUCIAL

From a national perspective school leaders are crucial for guarantee the equivalence in learning opportunities and the students’ chances to learn as much as possible and get better and better outcomes of their work in the school. Different studies have shown the importance of the principals’ role for school quality and development (Vetenskapsrådet, 2011; Skolinspektionen, 2012).
The principal’s role has been strengthening in the Education Act which came into force in 2011 and the principal is mentioned 111 times in different paragraphs. The principals’ responsibility for students’ right to education, students’ possibilities to reach social and civic skills and the academic knowledge requirements is highlighted. As well as the principal’s responsibility to help and arrange support for students with special needs. It is of course essential components when we are talking about equity and learning – and improved student outcomes. It is stipulated that the pedagogical work within one school unit should be lead and coordinated by one principal. It is partially possible to distribute the leadership with other people in the staff who have sufficient competence and experience to fulfil tasks that the principal want to distribute for improving the learning environment.

The Education Act also states that all newly appointed principals shall take part of the compulsory Swedish National School Leadership Training Program which is given by six universities on master level. School organizers are responsible for sending the principals to the program. The national program should guarantee that all principals in our country have enough knowledge and proficiency within some important fields: legislation on schools and the role of exercising the functions of an authority, management by goals and objectives and school leadership.

The emphasizing of social and civic skills and academic knowledge together with equity and learning for better outcomes, in the Education Act and curricula, makes it very important that a principal can relate to and claim the national goals, improve education and support teachers in their teaching so they can give all students the best possible conditions to learn and reach the knowledge requirements. Teachers are of course key figures for equity and learning in “classrooms” in their teaching work together with the students.

**To sum up**

School leaders are very important for the quality of equity and learning and it is essential that there are professional school leaders in all schools. The Swedish regulation in the Education Act, ordinances and curricula and the Swedish National School Leadership Training Program decided by the Government is intended to guarantee and contribute to accountable and responsible school leadership for equity and improved learning outcomes for all students. But, it is still a challenge to reach total equity linked to learning and excellent student outcomes for all students and in all schools and school districts. The policy documents are there but the variation in learning structure and culture on the local level must be adjusted on a higher level than today for improved student outcomes.

**References**

The goal of this chapter is to highlight the academic underpinning on school leadership in Finland and, on such a base, classify the current policy and trends in this country.

TRENDS AND TENDENCIES IN EXTERNAL EXPECTATIONS: POLICIES, CULTURE AND GOVERNANCE

TRENDS IN THE OVERARCHING ROLE OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WITH REGARD TO SCHOOL EDUCATION

One can claim, in line with Risku (2011), that even before the independence of Finland in 1917 welfare state governance was the prevailing trend in Finnish education policy. Central government considered education as a societal tool, and had a consistent aspiration to establish social equity in education. That can be considered as the primary goal in national educational policy at least till the 1980s, maybe even today.

Concepts of the welfare state governance like bureau-professional organisational regime, compliant and professionally autonomous mind-set, as well as distance in administration and professionalism can for the most part be connected with the trend. Social equity in education was created with the State’s extensive central administration, which managed society, education system and local authorities in an intensive manner (Isosomppi, 1996; Nikki, 2001; Sarjala, 1982).

Local administration and particularly local educational administration can be considered to have remained both thin and weak till the end of the 1970s. Furthermore, the State had to and did subsidize every educational reform with remarkable funding, and central government also gave local authorities plenty of time to meet the decreed requirements (Aho, Pitkänen and Sahlberg, 2006; Isosomppi, 1996; Kivinen, 1988; Sarjala, 1982; Sarjala, 2008; Varjo, 2007).

The State can be regarded to have been able reach its goal of social equity in education at the end of the 1970s. By then the State had established strong enough local administration, including that of local provisions of education, abolished the parallel education system, and established the comprehensive education system. As all that took place, the world began to change in fundamental ways, and the welfare state governance as it had been operated could no longer meet the new demands (Risku, 2011).

Already in the late 1970s there was a broad change in thinking towards distributing power from the State to local authorities and schools. Many of the international trends, like neo-liberalism, democratic individualism and New Public Management, had their impact on the public debate on how to develop the Finnish society (Rinne, Kivirauma and Simola, 2002; Varjo, 2007).

During the last 30 years the Finnish society has been fundamentally restructured. The relationship between the State and local authorities has been radically revised (Aho et al., 2006; Risku 2011; Sarjala, 2008; Varjo, 2007). Municipalities have received constitutional autonomy and are today the main providers of public services, particularly concerning education. The State still determines the core aims and guidelines, but local authorities have a lot of autonomy to enact the aims and guidelines, and they seem to make good use of the autonomy too.
Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) name the present Finnish society as the model example of the so-called fourth way, which according to them is a novel approach, and not the welfare state governance model or marketing meta-governance model, or even a synthesis of these two approaches. In the fourth way there is steering from the top, but the system is built from the bottom, and both sported and motivated from the sides. Perhaps, one could claim that the Finnish society today includes several characteristics of the organic meta-governance model, as will be presented in more detail in the following section.

THE POWERS THAT CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HAVE OVER LOCAL GOVERNMENT, AND THE POWERS THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT HAVE INDEPENDENTLY OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Central government determines the overall national goals and the allocation of time for the various subjects, as well as the goals and core contents of the subjects. Local authorities make and approve their local curricula and a yearly work plans according to the national guidelines. Central government subsidizes local authorities through the statutory government transfer system. It is based on a unit price for each student. Central government decides on the unit price, which is to cover 34% of the operating costs of basic education, and 42% of those of upper secondary education. The subsidy is paid to local authorities as a lump sum and is not earmarked for any specific purposes. Local authorities have to cover the remaining costs themselves (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2013; National Board of Education, 2013).

The evaluation of education is based on the general framework for evaluation on education as determined by central government. There is no inspection system or pre-inspection of text books. The evaluation system consists of the international, national, provincial and local level, and includes many-sided information, not merely focusing on learning outcomes. The salient findings of evaluation are published.

The National Board of Education is responsible for the national evaluation of learning outcomes. Furthermore, a separate Matriculation Examination Board assesses the learning outcomes of all general upper secondary schools twice a year. These agencies do not compile ranking lists, because they are considered unreliable. National evaluation is criticized for not paying attention to societal changes and to the actual situations of schools.

Concerning both basic (96% in 2012) and general upper secondary education (92% in 2009), municipalities are the main education providers. Municipalities have constitutional autonomy. According to the constitution, municipalities have to carry out the tasks decreed to them by law, but they may arrange their organisation with a lot of freedom and decide independently how to carry out the tasks mandated to them. According to Kanervio and Risku (2009), municipalities also use their autonomy. In their survey, superintendents informed that they consider strategic decisions by the municipal council more important than strategic decisions by central government. Legislation seems to form the national framework, but what is ultimately done is decided at the local level.

Local authorities are obliged by law to evaluate their education, and to get external evaluation as stated in legislation. Local evaluation is to develop education in the local level, and to connect local evaluation with the national one. Local authorities often seem to have problems to use both national and local evaluations to develop their provisions of education.

THE MAIN CENTRAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS REFLECTING MODELS OF GOVERNANCE

In 1998, the then disjointed 26 separate education acts were aggregated into 9 acts, one for each different education form from primary to higher education (Aho et al., 2006). Thus, today Basic Education Act (628/1998) and General Upper Secondary Education Act determine most issues in general education.

Concerning quality control, in the line of section 1.2, the Ministry of Education and Culture decides on the overall framework for evaluation on education in collaboration with the Finnish Education Evaluation Council, the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council and the National Board of Education. Local authorities, which also have the final responsibility for the quality of education, are mandated by law to evaluate their education, and to take part in external evaluation as decreed in legislation.
As to competitive markets, Finland has not dived so deep in the free market ideology, particularly in basic education. The Basic education Act (628/1998) mandates local authorities to provide pre-school and basic education, and assign every pupil a place in the local school. Pupils, on the other hand, are free to choose their school. Geographical distances and the small number of private schools (4%) support the ideology of pupils attending basic education in their local schools with their neighbourhood peers.

The General Upper Secondary Education Act gives education providers the right to obtain a license to provide upper secondary education from the Ministry of Education and Culture. As earlier stated, most general upper secondary (92% in 2009) schools are maintained by local authorities. Pupils who have graduated from basic education apply to secondary education through an electronic joint application system. Education providers decide on the admission criteria, which must treat all applicants equally and are most often based on the applicants’ basic education certificate. Applicants have the right to apply to whatever upper secondary education school they want to.

The foundation of local empowerment is in the Constitution of Finland (1999), which grants municipalities the autonomy to organise themselves and decide independently how to fulfil the tasks legislation mandates to them. The Municipal Act requires from municipalities to have a municipal council, an executive board, an inspection board and a municipal manager. Otherwise municipalities may decide freely on their organization.

School empowerment can be considered to have its foundation in the local empowerment, but also in additional legislation. It is noteworthy that both the Basic Education Act and the General Upper Secondary Education Act oblige education providers, which in most cases mean local authorities and particularly the municipal councils, and not schools or their staff as such. For example, concerning staff the acts mandate education providers to see to that every school has a principal who is responsible for the operations of the school, and a sufficient number of teachers and other personnel. In addition, the act obligates the education providers concerning the curriculum, education and evaluation, not the staff as such. Thus, nor the principals and teachers neither the superintendents serve the State but the education providers.

**TRANSLATION OF EXTERNAL EXPECTATIONS INTO INTERNAL MEANING AND DIRECTION**

**HOW DO SCHOOL LEADERS MEDIATE EXTERNAL REQUIREMENTS WITH INTERNAL MEANING?**

According to the meta-analyses by Alava, Halttunen, and Risku (2012) and Risku and Kanervio (2011), the role of Finnish school leaders has changed dramatically in the three last decades. Aho et al. (2006, p. 119) summarise the change as follows:

The role of school principals also has dramatically changed since 1990. Principals are not only the educational leaders of their schools but managers who are responsible for financing, personnel, and the results of their institutions. Previously, a school principal was an experienced, senior teacher who was promoted for good service to education. Today’s school principal must be a qualified leader who understands education development and has solid management skills to lead a school. Selection of new school principals is often based on procedures more typical of the private sector, with interviews and psychological tests to confirm the suitability of the candidate.

Principals in Finland today seem to be in the crossfire of many pressures. External requirements may initially come from central government, but as principals and teachers serve the education providers and not the State, the final external pressure comes from the education provider (municipal council, executive and school board), parents and more and more often from the media. This pressure meets the internal meanings, especially the need of teachers’ aspirations to develop teaching and learning according to the education acts and curricula. At the extreme, the principal’s position can be described as a ‘psychological minefield’.

As legislation does not determine principals’ duties in further detail and as local authorities’ contexts vary a lot, there is significant variation in principals’ job descriptions. In general one can say that the obscure legal status of principals appears to cause a lot of contradictions in their practical work. These contradictions involve
principals’ time management and well-being. Contradictions are caused by the pressures the different expectations create as principals try both to secure school operations according to the obligations set out in legislation, and to act as representatives of the education provider.

All this calls for principals who have many personal qualities. To begin with, they must have a strong personality, high self-esteem, and the skills to mediate the external and internal pressures.

Internally, one of the key elements is to understand leadership in a new way: its role is to give teachers and all school staff a meaning to their work. Giving meaning to the work is a task which combines the work in action and the managerial guidance of the school. In detail, some of the issues related the problems are as follows.

As for the decision making, each municipality has a constitutional autonomy, and its organisation is stipulated by the ordinance of the municipality. Decisions on financing schools as well as on curriculum issues are often made by the relevant boards. School principals are consulted as experts, but the final decision is made in conformity with the municipal ordinance. An upper-level body has the right to assume the power to make the decisions.

Schools have a strong autonomy in terms of enacting instruction. As a result of the 2004 curriculum reform, goal-based and centralised control has become somewhat stricter in the Finnish education system compared to that of the 1994 national core curriculum. Principals have a very large scope of responsibility, which varies from one municipality to the other depending on the education provider’s ordinance. No external instrument has been developed for measuring a good principal. In Finland, trust is laid upon high-standard teacher education, principal training and continuing professional education taking place in the world of work.

The principal has the responsibility for the school’s work. The documents governing this work consist of the laws specified by the Government, national goals of education and lesson distribution as well as the national core curricula and ordinances issued by the National Board of Education. School- and municipality-specific curricula are designed by schools and education providers. In this process, the school plays an important role. The principal has the responsibility for setting up an annual plan on the basis of the curriculum, that is, the work plan for the school. Practical school work is organised on the basis of the curriculum, the yearly work plan and the financial resources available. A lot of this work is done in collaboration with the teachers, and this fact is one of the driving forces of the internal pressures in question.

The principal has a large influence on the selection of personnel. The principal either selects his or her personnel him/herself, or his or her opinion is very important when the selection is made by another authority. Financial resources are tied up to a great extent, because at a minimum three-quarters of a school’s expenses consist of personnel salaries and other related costs. Even though legislation is fairly broad, collective bargaining agreements of personnel are on the other hand very specific. This is another important example of the pressures between external and internal forces. Today, the schools are operating with reduced funding, which challenges the demand for better learning outcomes. Overcoming this pressure calls for excellent skills in pedagogic leadership.

**How do school leaders negotiate and communicate meaning, vision and mission statements?**

In the meta-analysis on school leadership and management by Alava, Halttunen and Risku (2012), it was found that a major re-orientation to school leadership is taking place in Finland. This includes the importance of understanding four developmental processes to construct the core of principal’s pedagogical leadership. The four developmental processes comprise of **curriculum work, creating and leading a school culture which supports learning, defining the school vision in collaboration with the whole school community, and redefining the school mission.** The four developmental processes are intertwined and have to be led by the school principal.

At present, naturally, not all principals are doing all the previous, but research shows that there is the need for this new kind of school leadership, and that change is on the way.
HOW DO SCHOOL LEADERS SECURE FOSTERING ETHICAL PURPOSE LIKE ENSURING FAIRNESS, EQUITY, JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY?

In Finland, the basic right to education and culture is recorded in the Constitution of Finland (1999). Public authorities must secure equal opportunities for every resident in Finland to get education also after compulsory education and to develop themselves, irrespective of their financial standing. Legislation provides for compulsory education and the right to free pre-primary and basic education. Most other qualifying education is also free of charge for the students, including postgraduate education at universities.

The key words in Finnish education policy are *quality, efficiency, equity and internationalisation*. Education is a factor for competitiveness. The current priorities in educational development are to *raise the level of education* and upgrade competencies among the population and the work force, to improve the *efficiency of the education system*, to *prevent exclusion* among children and young people, and to *enlarge adult learning opportunities*. Special attention is also paid to *quality enhancement and impact* in education, training and research and to internationalisation.

The core values, quality, equity, justice, and democracy, are built in the Finnish society. The program of the present government also emphasizes equality, solidarity, and caring. These values can also be seen in the PISA results, which show the *between-school variance is one of the lowest in the world*, telling that most schools in Finland perform in the same level. This does not mean that school leaders have an easy job. On the contrary, these challenges are faced daily, for example in recruiting, in allocating work and recourses inside the school, in student counselling and in special education.

Despite the strong role of equality in Finland, two *risks* are emerging. First, more and more emphasis is give to measurable learning outcomes. The demand comes both from parents but also from administration. This is also closely linked to the Finnish media’s strong interest to rank the schools according to the matricular examination results. In general, educators in Finland do hate the ranking, because most often they do not measure what the media tries to emphasize, which school is ‘the best, the second’ etc. The pressure to emphasize on better learning outcomes as those are signalled by exams scores necessarily means lowering the emphasis to equity and equal learning outcomes. The school of standardized test is waiting just around the corner to land to Finland. And that would be disastrous to many of the dominant values of the Finish society. And, there is no guarantee for better learning outcomes, on the contrary.

The second risk in Finland can be seen in the latest PISA results. Although in Finland the variance of between the school results is one of the lowest, the gap started (slightly) to increase. This must be seen as a warning signal, and might anticipate changes in the PISA results in the future.

To clarify the importance of values and principles, some of the background factors to which Finland’s success in education builds on are the following:

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**
The Finnish education system offers everybody equal opportunities for education, irrespective of domicile, sex, economic situation or linguistic and cultural background. The school network is regionally extensive, and there are no sex-specific school services. Basic education is completely free of charge (including instruction, school materials, school meals, health care, dental care, commuting, special needs education and remedial teaching).

**COMPREHENSIVENESS OF EDUCATION**
Basic education encompasses nine years and caters for all those between 7 and 16 years. Schools do not select their students but every student can go to the school of his or her own school district. Students are neither channelled to different schools nor streamed.

**COMPETENT TEACHERS**
On all school levels, teachers are highly qualified and committed. A Master’s degree is a requirement, and teacher education includes teaching practice. Teaching profession is very popular in Finland, and hence universities can select the most motivated and talented applicants. Teachers work independently and enjoy full autonomy in the classroom.

**STUDENT COUNSELING AND SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION**
Individual support for the learning and welfare of pupils is well accommodated, and the national core curriculum contains guidelines for the purpose. Special needs education is integrated into regular education as
Encouraging Assessment and Evaluation
The student assessment and evaluation of education and learning outcomes are encouraging and supportive by nature. The aim is to produce information that supports both schools and students to develop. National testing, school ranking lists and inspection systems do not exist.

Significance of Education in Society
Finnish society strongly favours education and the population is highly educated by international standards. Education is appreciated and there is a broad political consensus on education policy.

A Flexible System Based on Empowerment
The education system is flexible and the administration based on the principal of “Centralised steering – local implementation”. Steering is conducted through legislation and norms, core curricula, government planning and information steering. Municipalities are responsible for the provision of education and the implementation. Schools and teachers enjoy large autonomy.

Co-operation
Interaction and partnerships are built at all levels of activity. There is co-operation for the development of education between various levels of administration, between schools and between other social actors and schools. Education authorities co-operate with teachers’ organisations, pedagogical subject matter associations and school leadership organisations. This provides strong support for development.

A Student-oriented, Active Conception of Learning
The organisation of schoolwork and education is based on a conception of learning that focuses on students’ activity and interaction with the teacher, other students and the learning environment.

How Are Policies Being Implemented in Schools?

The mechanisms and goals of educational administration have dramatically changed in Finland from the 1970’s. Back then the paradigm in educational administration was strictly top-down, bureaucratic, and it relied heavily on normative management. Due to the many changes in Europe and in Finland, also the paradigm in educational administration started to change. First gradually, but then more rapidly towards a new system, where powers were delegated to local education providers and schools, inspections were terminated and replaced by self-evaluation, and legislature was changed from ruling the operations of schools to the outcomes of schooling. The present paradigm in educational administration can be described as administration through information and knowledge (the earlier was administration through norms, rules and detailed instructions).

This all meant a dramatic change in the implementation of policies. Earlier, it was rather straightforward. The school leaders just obeyed the order and norms, managed, and passed the information requested. Today, the implementation of policies is very different. Naturally, there are the overall learning goals mentioned in the national core curriculum and the key strategies of the municipalities, but it is on the school leaders to position their schools in the changing world in the crossroads of various stakeholder demands.

The key element in implementing policies in this new situation is understanding the new role of information and knowledge, the importance of leading through knowledge, and leading competencies. And, this kind on policy implementation – actually future oriented visionary leadership - calls for totally new kind of leadership skills. Internally, the implementation is no more top down management, but strong participation and dialogue with the teachers and other school staff. It is no more inspections and evaluations of operations with no feedback to follow, but it is the work of making the future according to the guidelines of National Government Policies.
HOW DO SCHOOL LEADERS IMPROVE TEACHING AND SUPPORT TEACHERS’ COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT IN SUBJECT MATTERS, PEDAGOGY, CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT, ETC?

In Finland, to begin with, most teachers are highly qualified after having a five-year education towards a Master’s Degree. So, in general, the teachers do know their job when they enter the field. This means that the Finnish school leaders need not to be instructional leaders, which is the case in many other countries. But, although new and experienced teachers have earned their ‘driving license’ to teach in schools, they are constantly in need of improving on their competencies. They need to have the aspiration for continuous learning because the world is changing, students are changing and our understanding of learning is changing. And, added to that, the schools need to change. Therefore, in Finland, the school leaders’ support to teachers’ professional development arises from the premises mentioned above. There is the call for a new broad pedagogical leadership discussed earlier.

Principals do not have a responsibility to observe lessons, but the opportunity exists. Neither are there any external inspection systems or preliminary inspections of learning materials in the Finnish educational system.

It is the principal’s duty to evaluate teacher performance according to the criteria approved by the evaluation provider. Typical evaluation criteria consist of mastery of the profession, pupil performance, renewal capability and the ability to cooperate. All this is done in order not to control, but to develop the competencies of the teachers.

HOW DO SCHOOL LEADERS CREATE A CULTURE OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING?

In the meta-analysis on school leadership and management in Finland by Alava, Halttunen and Risku (2012), several items could be seen in relation to building and leading a professional learning culture. First, the overall importance of school culture has become evident. One key aspect in the Finnish school culture has always been the teachers’ strong professional identities and strive towards student learning. Teachers also have a strong internal aspiration to learn new things. The only problem is that sometimes this aspiration is rather distant from the need of the development of the school as a whole.

Second, related to the topic is networking. Recent studies show that work in external networks has become one of the most important – and also time consuming – tasks for Finnish school leaders. This, added to appropriate internal networks, offers both a new forum for dialogue and also a place for organizational and professional learning.

The importance of developing professional learning in education has also been recognized by the National Board of Education. Just two years ago NBA launched the first development project for teachers’ professional development through mentoring. This project is called VERME, and it has received a substantial financial support from the government.

Linked to that is another initiative called OSAAVA, which allocated funds also for school leaders’ development. Mentoring and dialogue are some of the key approaches used in these programs. Still, facilitated by the University of Jyväskylä, two major regional development programs have been launched (one in Central-Finland, and another in Western-Finland). These projects work under the notion of broad pedagogical leadership and they involve the superintendents, principals, management teams, and teachers in a 4-5 year long effort.

HOW DO THEY LEAD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

As a rule (traditionally), teachers make plans for their professional development themselves. The school mainly renders support to training that relates to actual development programmes (e.g. network-based teaching,
catering for special learning difficulties, etc.). Continuing professional education needs for each teacher are estimated in an annual performance review with the principal. In these reviews, training needs are assessed from the viewpoint of national development programmes, school level and the needs of each individual teacher.

In addition to that, the efforts mentioned in sub-chapter 9.2 bring new challenges to teachers’ professional development. The effort most likely will bring about new challenges and developmental needs to schools. Therefore, new developmental needs for teachers are apt to rise. In some cases there might be the risk of conflict when the aspirations of teachers collide to the needs of the school.

**HOW DO SCHOOL LEADERS ENSURE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION?**

When in Finland the paradigm of educational administration changed from inspection to self-evaluation, also the performance management, assessment and evaluation changed. The change in paradigm meant also a change from control and critique to support and development.

The process of self-evaluation is done every year, but each year it has a different emphasis. The evaluation covers the student learning outcomes, but it also covers all the key operations of the school. The evaluation process also involves widely the teachers.

In addition to performance management, securing overall quality has become a key focus in basic education. Therefore, the National Board of Education has published quality criteria for basic education. Noteworthy is that the concept of quality is also understood in a rather broad view on the basis of the following topics:

Four quality cards were devised for the quality of structures:

- governance
- personnel
- economic resources
- evaluation

and six quality cards relating to the pupil:

- implementation of the curriculum
- instruction and teaching arrangements
- support to learning, growth and well-being
- inclusion and influence,
- school-home cooperation
- safety of the learning environment.

The cards include a description, quality criteria and factors supporting operations. Each card contains criteria for both education providers and schools. The criteria serve regional and local operations (providers and schools).

**STRUCTURING AND CULTURING SCHOOLS**

**HOW DO SCHOOL LEADERS BUILD APPROPRIATE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES?**

The teaching staff’s municipal collective labour agreement lists tasks that must be delegated and that also are delegated in the same way in almost all schools. These tasks include among others: the role of form master/mistress, group counsellor tasks in upper secondary school, student union counselling, liaison teacher who acts as a liaison person in cooperation between the school and the municipality, maintenance of the school library, maintenance of school collections, arranging music performances, maintenance of audio-visual equipment, and being in charge of ICT, to mention just a few.

In every school there is a student welfare team; its ways of working and responsibilities vary slightly between schools and municipalities.
Responsibility issues are greatly dependent on the presence of a vice-principal or a deputy principal and what their tasks are. In any case, the principal takes ultimate responsibility.

Tasks can be delegated but not the final responsibility. When delegating tasks, their job descriptions must be clarified precisely. Responsibilities, duties and rights relating to any particular task must also be specified precisely. In Finland, the most significant degree of leadership delegation can be found in the vocational sector. The size of the school affects greatly the way in which tasks are delegated. In small schools, the significance of task delegation is different from that in larger schools because the structures differ from each other.

Every school must have a principal who is responsible for the school’s operation. Certain responsibility areas have in some schools been specifically delegated to the vice-principal. Additionally various responsibility tasks have been delegated to teachers and/or teacher groups, to student welfare staff and to the school secretary and janitors. The delegated tasks vary in different schools depending on the school size, schooling form and culture. Leadership is becoming more and more delegated so that more attention will be paid to the expertise of different people in a school and their opportunities for inclusion.

When the education provider is a vocational education and training consortium, leadership styles and the consortium organisation vary. In a big organisation, there are the so called ‘profit areas’ within the consortium; in other words there are units accountable in terms of finances. A profit area may consist of one to six different educational institutions. Depending on the operating culture of a particular joint municipal authority, the functions are either congruent or totally separate. In a clearly defined, systematic organisation, the majority of functions have been unified, and are coordinated by one person. Examples of responsibility areas are guidance counselling, special-needs instruction, free-choice studies, core subjects, timetable programmes, principles of annual planning and on-the-job learning.

**HOW DO SCHOOL LEADERS UNDERTAKE DECISION-MAKING?**

**FINANCING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION**

The provision of schooling is based on financing from the state and municipalities. The central government transfers for education and culture varies from municipality to municipality but the portion to be financed by the municipality is always equal in size per citizen. Ultimately the municipality, being the schooling provider, makes decisions on allocating financing to any individual school or district. Within the schools, decisions on funds allocation are made based on different guidelines in primary and upper primary schools; decision making within any given school is in their own hands.

A teacher’s workload is regulated by collective labour agreements in the form of hours per week (outlined below for basic and general upper secondary education):

- full-time teacher with tenure, depending on the subject 16–24 hours
- full-time teacher not less than 16 hours
- part-time teacher 1–15 hours

A teacher’s workload can vary from year to year; overtime is compensated separately. Principals are in an executive position and comply with general working hour regulations. Subject teachers’ weekly lessons vary between 16–23 hours. Class teachers’ weekly workload includes 24 lesson hours.

Unit prices of educational financing are paid directly to the schooling provider. In vocational schooling, unit prices depend on the particular vocational qualification. The number of student places is specified by the authority to provide education. Additional places are not paid for; a deduction is made for non-enrolled students. In multidisciplinary institutions, the schooling provider decides on funds allocation between different qualifications. Each schooling provider is paid a unit price in conformity with the number of students to cover all of the institution’s expenses. The principal is in charge of the institution’s total budget and monitors it. Within an institution, training managers can also be responsible for finances and can set up budgets for the areas he or she is in charge of, and can be responsible for monitoring them. Very strict bookkeeping is required from all schooling providers; it is checked by outside auditors.

In the private sector, the schooling provider is usually a foundation, limited company, organization or association. This sort of schooling provider receives the central government transfer for education for general
education, initial vocational education and training, vocational adult education, special-needs education and liberal adult education on the same grounds as the public sector. Private educational institutions should have a board that represents the schooling provider, the principal being in charge of financial and operational planning, implementation and evaluation in the institution.

The private-sector teachers are entitled to change over to a total working time system and there has been some experimentation on this in the municipal sector, too. In this case, working time is the amount of weekly work corresponding, when applicable, to the working time of office employees, but indicated as the amount of lessons given. The amount of lessons included in the total working time varies in different sectors. The average amount of weekly hours is equal to 16-23 lessons. In addition to lessons, other work is also included in the working time; it can consist of different kinds of planning and development tasks.

**Curriculum development and implementation**

Any possible compensation paid for actual curriculum development work is determined by the schooling provider. In addition to weekly instruction and other tasks assigned to a teacher, he or she should participate for three hours a week in the school’s joint instructional planning, in subject-group and issue-group meetings, in school-home cooperation and in tasks related to instructional planning and development of school work. The National Board of Education determines the national core curriculum and the implementation timetable. The municipalities determine their own specifications and applications, on the basis of which schools then design their own curricula.

In initial vocational education and training, uniform qualifications and national core curricula remain in effect, and they are followed everywhere in the country. The schooling providers design their own curricula based on these requirements. The practice varies from one provider to another. For example, in Central Finland all three vocational schooling providers have agreed common definitions of policy concerning vocational schooling curricula. Similarly, they have designed a congruent and common component for qualification-specific curricula (including policy lines on activities concerning the students). On this basis, each institution and schooling sector designs its own qualification-specific curriculum and the plans for its implementation. The institution principals are responsible for curriculum work that is organized through them in schools. Generally teachers are paid a separately agreed remuneration for curriculum work or this work is included in their teaching duties.

**Employment of school leaders**

The Teaching Qualifications Act 14.12.1998/986 regulates the selection of staff, and it is only possible to make an exception to the criteria, for the duration of one year, if there are no qualified applicants. There is no general evaluation system for school leadership; possible punitive measures are regulated by labour legislation and collective labour agreements. According to the regulations each school shall have a principal. Municipalities determine how they organise leadership and whom they appoint as principal. Each municipality makes its own decisions concerning professional development, evaluation and dismissal of their principals. Consultation with school staff when selecting a principal varies from one schooling provider to another.

Vocational principals are selected through a public application procedure in conformity with the qualification criteria. Training managers for schooling institutions are usually selected for a fixed period from among the teaching staff. The school budget also includes funds allocated for development work. In recent years, a lot of development money has been available through various development programmes. Most vocational institutions have a quality system and evaluation is performed based upon it. Regular audits are carried out in accordance with jointly agreed procedures, as well as annual leadership surveys. The students also participate in the audits, and they give feedback on their studies via various systems. The organisation and leadership systems of vocational institutions vary greatly. Each provider has been and is able to specify its own organisation. Similarly, the provider determines, among others, how the job satisfaction surveys are carried out.

**Selection of school leaders**

The selection process is regulated by the Teaching Qualifications Act. The condition of qualification is a university-level class teacher’s or subject teacher’s degree. An exception to these criteria can be made only in the absence of qualified applicants, and the exception can only take effect for one year. The municipalities are entitled to determine themselves how teacher selection is performed. These are the main ways: 1. the selection body, which is a politically nominated committee, 2. school boards, 3. the director of each educational department, and 4. principals. A reward system is being developed. Usually the dismissing body is the same as the selecting body, if any.
As a guideline, some sum of a school’s salary expenses are allocated for teachers’ professional development, which is used for continuing professional education. There is no national evaluation system for teacher work but the majority of schooling providers run their own self-developed evaluation systems. Punitive measures are regulated by labour legislation and collective labour agreements. In most cases, the school principal is responsible for teachers’ continuing professional education and evaluation. Some schoolteachers have a fixed-term contract either because they are substitute teachers or because they are unqualified.

In the field of vocational schooling, the teacher selection process conforms to the conditions of qualifications as stipulated by the Act. In most cases, the schooling provider advertises for new teachers annually in spring. The conditions for qualification are, depending on the qualification title, as follows: a university-level degree, three years work experience and the completion of teacher’s pedagogical studies (60 ECTS/35 credit points). The teaching duty for a vocational teacher with tenure is 24.5 hours per week (commercial colleges are an exception), for a general subject teacher it varies between 20.5 hours and 21.5 hours per week. The teaching duty limit for a full-time teacher is 16 hours per week. Most of the vocational institutions follow a so-called period system. The year is often divided into five or six periods. When working in this system, a teacher’s working hours can differ from period to period. The pay is calculated according to the mean value of hours in the annual plan.

A subject teacher’s working time includes participation in joint planning work so that, depending on the practice in any particular school, 2–5 hours per fortnight per teacher are allocated to staff meetings, subject group meetings and negotiations.

Funds for professional development come from the school’s budget or, as in recent years, from development projects. Evaluation is performed in accordance with the quality system. Feedback is collected according to a plan drawn up for the school year so that each teacher receives student feedback for at least one period; this feedback is then discussed in performance reviews together with the teacher’s own self-evaluation.

**STUDENT INTAKE (‘CHOICE’ AND NUMBER), RETENTION AND PROMOTION**

In the case of basic education, the municipality determines the child’s neighbourhood school but parents have the right to apply for an alternative schooling place in another school. At secondary level, the students are free to send applications to any school. The student (parents) chooses the school where he/she wishes to study.

Student intake to secondary level is carried out through a joint application system that is steered by the State Provincial Offices. After the completion of this joint application, an individual student or individual student groups can be admitted directly to the school. Student intake is effected from the whole territory of Finland.

**HOW DOES THE PRIVATE SCHOOL SECTOR DIFFER?**

Any private school that was established before 1999 on the basis of an authorisation issued by the Government is entitled to 100% (more recently established receive 90%) financing which includes also a municipal transfer to education. In the private education sector, the terms of employment are the same as in the municipal sector, also the labour legislation is the same. In particular in newer (denominational or ideological) schools, the number of unqualified staff is larger both among teachers and principals. This is due to the fact that eligible candidates should be both qualified and suitable, the schools are usually small and the scope of duties is larger. Municipalities cannot appoint a private school as a child’s neighbourhood school against his or her parents’ will if in this particular school education is based on a certain pedagogical system or religion. In most cases, private schools arrange at least an admission interview; admission tests (pupils’ suitability and parents’ commitment) are also used for selecting pupils.

**WORKING WITH PARTNERS AND THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP**

**WHO ARE THE MAIN STAKEHOLDERS THAT PARTICIPATE IN THIS ASPECT OF LEADERSHIP ACTIVITY?**

Stakeholders and partners are more and more important in Finnish schools. Earlier, their role has been smaller, but nowadays many of them have developed in almost strategic alliances. For example in some high schools emphasizing entrepreneurship, collaboration with local enterprises has increased significantly.
Also, the collaboration inside a community’s other sectors, like youth work, social work, and even police, have become more as partners to the school. This is linked to the holistic thinking of the student’s ‘learning and growth path’ lasting all the way from pre-school to universities. This path travels in a vast network of actors who all have a significant role in it. This schools’ external work in networks, naturally, is a new and demanding task both for the teachers and the principal. In a wider sense, it is also a good example of shared leadership towards the stakeholders, just like there is shared leadership with teachers, students and parents.

Parents are usually strongly committed to a school’s work. In Finland, there are many parents’ associations affiliated to schools. Teachers and especially principals are expected to participate actively in all activities connected with their school. In bigger localities, the situation is a bit different because there are also separate cultural centres and other similar institutions. Yet the role of schools is not limited to traditional school activities alone; the facilities are used also for other community activities.

In smaller localities, many schools are also in charge of adult education centre activities and teachers and principals are a major resource in this. In recent years, upper secondary education for adults has been launched also in smaller upper secondary schools and it has become an important part of adult education activities in these communities. The principal’s role in establishing this type of upper secondary adult education is definitely decisive.

**What are the main policy imperatives that frame the external relationship/interagency/inter-stakeholder work of school leaders?**

Teaching work also involves more and more co-operation with different stakeholders and partners and pedagogical management in multidisciplinary co-operation networks. In addition, teachers are expected to play an active role in development projects, produce reports and follow effects. Teachers are not capable of meeting these demands and expectations on their own. It is absolutely necessary to develop schools collaboratively. In Finland, collective competence is not very strong as yet – our operational culture rests more on doing things alone.

The success of development is mediated by the nature and level of co-operation between all relevant stakeholders and their commitment and motivation – a national partnership. It is about building collaboration and interaction among administration, schools, working life, organisations, enterprises and associations involved in teaching and educational work. This partnership aims to develop new nationally important learning solutions and procedures.

At the same time, this involves creating new competencies, new products, services and overall solutions. The partnership aims to support and promote learning and competence such that schooling becomes more meaningful for every student. The quality of interaction between the stakeholders involved manifests itself as the ability to match different objectives, exchange and refine information, as well as develop staff learning and competence.

**What structures are in place to enable this work?**

In 2003, the educational legislation was revised by complementing regulations on pupil and student welfare. This legislation revision aimed at emphasising more explicitly the meaning of comprehensive child and youth welfare and that of a safe learning environment. The aim was to introduce in the educational legislation principles of early intervention and preventive action against problems relating to child and youth development. The definition of pupil and student welfare has the same content in legislation governing each particular educational structure.

Because of this, new internal structures have been developed in schools. They are usually called student welfare groups and their members are teachers, counselors, psychologists, and medical experts.
WHAT ARE THE REGULATIONS AND REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS CONCERNING PROGRESSION TO BECOMING SCHOOL LEADERS?

The Qualification Decree states three options: certificate in educational administration, university training equal to no less than 15 credit points (25 ECTS credits) or adequate familiarity with educational administration. Against the background of all the major changes taking place in Finland and internationally, also mentioned in this chapter, and against the background of the totally new requirements they imply for leadership in educational institutions, it is clear that the qualification issue must remain on the agenda of educational policy discussions.

Because there are lots of training providers offering quite different types of training programmes, it is often difficult for a person wishing to enter training and for selection boards to interpret what is the level of the training in question. Now practically all trainers speak about credit units and ECTS credits as well as about basic studies and about advanced studies even if it is not at all a question of university studies. In the future, attention shall be paid to the unification of principal training standards.

The requirements to qualify for school leader positions are regulated by the Decree on teaching staff qualifications 14.12.1998/986. In addition to being a qualified teacher for the particular school form, this Decree states also that a master’s degree, adequate teaching experience and a certificate in educational administration, university training equal to no less than 25 ECTS units (15 credit points) or adequate familiarity with educational administration attained otherwise is necessary. If the educational institution provides education of more than one educational form or if the school leader has responsibility for a number of schools providing education of different educational forms, the school leader shall have a teacher’s qualification in any one of them.

A person with an appropriate polytechnic degree can also qualify for a leader position in an educational institution providing initial vocational education and training. A person with a master’s degree, adequate work experience from industry and a certificate in educational administration or university training in educational administration or adequate familiarity with educational administration attained otherwise can also qualify for a leader position in an educational institution providing education and training for further vocational qualifications and specialist vocational qualifications or other vocational further education and training. Because the leadership tasks in educational institutions have changed greatly and become broader in scope, the pressure also grows to consider both basic and continuing professional education of school leaders in a new light. The qualification requirements apply also to the private education sector but in particular in new small schools there are proportionately more unqualified principals.

HOW ARE SCHOOL LEADERS RECRUITED?

Because the Qualification Decree requires that any person to be nominated a principal should have a teacher’s qualification for the education form in question, practically the only pathway to become a principal is through graduation from the corresponding university programmes. The case is different for directors of educational departments because usually the municipal ordinance requires only a master’s degree and familiarity with educational administration. That’s why this position can also be held by persons without teacher education.

According to as study by Kanervio and Risku (2009), in most cases principals are recruited through an open search. Some 10% of the nominations are done as internal replacements. In most municipalities (ca. 77%) the selection is performed by the board of education, municipal board in 9%, the superintendent in 7%, city council in 5% of the cases.

The most important criterion in making the selection is the formal qualifications. Very important factors are also training, leadership experience, and work experience.
IS EQUITY OF GENDER AND ETHNICITY INTENDED AND HOW IS IT ADDRESSED?

According to the study by Kanervio and Risku (2009), gender plays no role in principal selection. There are no studies on the influence of the ethnicity.

HOW DO POTENTIAL LEADERS GAIN EXPERIENCE AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES BEFORE TAKING UP LEADERSHIP POSTS?

In principle, school leadership education can be divided into preparatory and continuing professional education. The qualification can be gained in two ways: either by attaining the certificate in educational administration (12 ECTS credits) or by completing university studies in educational administration (25 ECTS credits). It is possible to take the exam for the certificate in educational administration either directly or by first completing preparation studies for it.

The National Board of Education, who administers the test for the certificate in educational administration also facilitates training for it. Also, through the OSAAVA funding program several universities offer preliminary training for future principals, as well as to new principals. Some universities also offer the 25 credit university training program as mentioned in the statutes.

HOW ARE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES DEVELOPED AND MAINTAINED THROUGH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)?

Support and induction programmes for school leaders vary to a great extent depending on the municipality and school-maintaining organisation. Getting support and induction is mostly a matter of one’s own initiative or it is based on self-financed training. There are, on the other hand, Finnish educational institutions where the leaders are provided with, free of charge, the support they need, for example with aid for induction, mentoring, peer support and degree-targeted further and continuing professional education. Many education providers have already for years provided induction training for new school leaders.

STAFF TRAINING IN MUNICIPAL EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS

In Finland, many education providers also provide staff training for municipal educational administration. This continuing professional education is free of charge for the participants if it is state financed. The incurred substitute, travel, accommodation and salary expenses must be paid either by the participant’s organisation or by the participant him/herself. Staff training of municipal educational administrators can be divided into:

- Teachers’ self-motivated continuing professional education: The participant him/herself has the responsibility and power of decision, and he/she can get support for these studies from the state in the form of a study grant. The employer decides whether the person can participate in education during working hours.
- Staff training of educational institutions: The educational institution’s maintaining organisation is the responsible party for this continuing professional education.
- Staff training with educational policy components: The state has responsibility for steering and financing this continuing professional education. Continuing professional education with educational policy components contributes to the practical implementation of the decisions of the Parliament and the Government and the goals set by the Ministry of Education.

The aim of this staff training that is implemented partly with funds from the state budget is to support educational institution renewal in the focus areas with educational policy components that are listed in the state budget. The focus areas are determined annually, but a great deal of them are under development continuously for many years. State-supported continuing professional education is directed to support school-specific, regional and national development projects. Equal access to education in different parts of Finland is catered for as well as the fact that the education provision is targeted at principals, and other school leadership and teaching staff from all forms of educational institutions. Continuing professional education in school leadership is targeted at principals and other leadership and development teams in educational institutions.

The major part of government-funded continuing professional education provision for principals and teaching staff is concentrated on the focus areas that are annually specified in the state budget. This education is long-
term training, that is, as a rule the scope comprises at least five ECTS credits. This continuing professional education provision is financed from the state budget and the training provision procurement is determined by the National Board of Education.

**CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION FOR NEW PRINCIPALS**

In education programmes for new principals funded by the National Board of Education, the content is determined by it. The executive group of the National Board of Education has procured new principals’ education for 200 principals annually. A new program called OSAAVA was launched in 2009 and a significant amount of money has been allocated to the continuous education of teachers and principals. The funds are allocated both directly via the National Board of Education, and locally through state provincial offices.

The education provision is funded from the state budget and it is free of charge for the participants. The employer compensates possible substitute, travel and accommodation expenses. The school leaders’ basic continuing professional education programme is targeted at principals and educational institution heads with other titles from basic education, upper secondary schools, vocational institutions, vocational adult education institutions and from institutions of liberal education.

The education provision serves to support the new principal with the development of professional dispositions, the adoption of different tasks and working ability. Support from colleagues and from professional cooperation networks are considered important parts of this training provision. The new principal’s personal development and the development of the work organisation in his/her educational institution are studied in parallel within the framework of this training provision. The training provision draws on recent research and evaluation development knowledge. Close guidance and counselling is provided for setting up one’s own continuing professional education plan and for continuous development of professional competence. In addition, guidance is provided for planning, managing, implementing and valuating a long-term communal development process in a work community. The following larger thematic entities are emphasised in the training programme content:

- Organisation, administration and finances of an education institution
- Educational institution curriculum and learning outcomes
- Personnel administration and management
- Strategic planning

**OTHER CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

In addition to school leadership basic education, the National Board of Education has allocated funding to numerous training modules that were proposed by the working group. During the last few years there have been, e.g.:

- new learning environments
- school leadership and information technology: strategies for using IT in teaching
- practical IT skills
- evaluation and quality strategies
- strategic leadership
- improving interaction skills
- issues relating to student well-being, guidance and counselling and student welfare
- mentor training
- principals’ summer get-together

Funds allocated to school leadership education serve also to support extensive work community leadership, the introduction of formative evaluation methods and drawing on evaluation results in schools. Training programmes of this type are targeted at school development teams. The basic idea in continuing professional education is that it should be closely connected to other school work development projects. The education provisions draw on municipalities’, education providers’ and educational institutions’ own background, taking into account the challenges and opportunities created by regional development for educational institution development work. In addition, emphasis is placed on views of the future of education and visions of the evolution of society and the world of work. In school leadership education and training, it will also be important in the years to come to pay attention to networking between educational institutions, both nationally and transnationally. Also, cooperation with immediate surroundings must be taken into account in continuing professional education for all school forms.
Good personnel management is expected from any principal; extensive management of experts with a view to support the working ability of all staff. At the same time, it is important for the principal to take care of his/her own welfare and development. More and more development work, planning and responsibility for the pedagogical ideology of the work community are expected from the principal of tomorrow. Extensive knowledge of the development trends in schooling and society are a great help in this work. An exploratory approach to work and the utilisation of various evaluation results for school development help the principal to pilot his/her school in the sometimes unknown waters of the future. State-supported continuing professional education for principals aims to support and encourage principals in this demanding task.

The supply of continuing professional education in school leadership is very mixed and providers are numerous – from consulting companies to university continuing education centres. Courses are generally available for all those interested but, for example, big cities run their own in-house training programmes.

The Specialist Qualification in Management (JET) focusing on developing management competences has been very popular. It is provided both as training in an educational institution and as apprenticeship training. The programmes consist of preparatory training and a competence test. These programmes usually last for 2–2½ years and they are attended while at work. JET training programmes concentrate on leadership development in a very practice-oriented way. In 2004, about 700 students participated in training for the Specialist Qualification in Management in educational institutions and more than 7,000 students participated in management training in the form of apprenticeship training. However, it should be noted that we do not know exactly how many of them were principals and school leaders. Earlier, also, numerous 60 credit unit PD programmes were arranged but interest in them has been on the wane. This is partly due to the fact that the funding arrangements of the JET programmes have made them more affordable than the PD programmes.

Because the supply of training is very mixed and there are many training providers, practically no external evaluation of their effectiveness has been performed. In this respect, much depends on the self-evaluation performed by the training providers and the feedback system. The only institution providing actual university-level post-basic education in educational leadership is the Institute of Educational Leadership at the University of Jyväskylä. They started a 35 ECTS study programme in 2000. These studies are targeted at educational leaders already in a relevant post who aspire to develop their competences through practical leadership training based on university research. A Master’s degree programme in educational leadership is also offered by the University of Jyväskylä since 2007.

In Finland, about 30 doctoral degrees have been attained in educational leadership, which is quite a small number. A special doctoral program in educational leadership was launched in the Institute of Educational Leadership in the University of Jyväskylä in 2002. At the moment, there is a postgraduate doctoral student school also with the collaboration of the University of Åbo Akademi and the University of Helsinki.

HOW DO SCHOOL LEADERS ENGAGE WITH PEER NETWORKS AT LOCAL, NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL LEVEL?

The association of Finnish principals is a prominent, nationwide association also with strong local units. Most of the principals belong to the association and take part at least in local activities. Nationally, 2-3 annual meetings and training events are offered. Also, the association arranges trips both to ESHA and ICP meetings.

The Institute of Educational Leadership has an alumni of close to 1000 people. There are alumni meetings bi-annually with 200-300 attendants. The institute is also a forum to convene in various national and international events and seminars.

REFERENCES


In another level of analysis, correlations between the leadership index and other school-level learning environment composite indexes were performed (ibid, Table IV. 4.9, pp. 266-267). The analyses indicated that only in a few EU countries leadership was correlated in a statistically significant way with the indexes “teacher-student relations”, “disciplinary climate”, and “teachers’ stimulation of students’ reading engagement and reading skills” and in none of these countries this correlation was higher than ±0.1. These results show a negligible strength in the relationship between leadership and the indices named above. Furthermore, leadership was correlated with the index “student-related factors affecting school climate” weakly in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Spain, and Sweden (r≤0.21) and moderately in only Luxemburg (0.49) among all EU countries. Finally, the leadership index was found to be correlated weakly with the “teacher-related factors affecting school climate” index in many EU countries, and moderately only in Luxemburg (0.47).

In a third level of analysis, a two-level regression model was tested where reading performance was regressed on all PISA learning environment and school climate (student and school level) composite indices. The results showed that before the socio-economic background of students and schools is taken into account the performance of students is positively related to higher values on the index of leadership only in Spain among the EU countries. In contrast, it is negatively related in Slovakia, Finland and Italy (see ibid, Table IV.2.13b, p.

32 With statistically significant mean differences (in favour of upper secondary education students, meaning higher mean values on the leadership index) found only in the cases of Lithuania and Luxemburg among the EU countries.
33 With statistically significant mean differences in favour of vocational programme students in Austria, the Netherlands and Slovakia and in favour of general programme students in Belgium, Italy and Luxemburg.
34 With statistically significant mean differences in favour of private schools in Luxemburg, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden, and in favour of public schools in Slovenia and the UK.
186). After accounting for the socio-economic background of students and schools, reading performance is (negatively) related to leadership only in Italy.

The above findings regarding the relationship of leadership to other PISA learning environment and school climate variables as well as to student performance across EU countries are puzzling to say the least. From a wider perspective these findings challenge the rather common sense assumptions that “... leadership can contribute to improve student learning by shaping the conditions and climate in which teaching and learning occur” (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008, p. 16) or that “school leaders can make an enormous difference to the quality of learning that goes on in school”.35

In order to further explore how leadership might be related to student performance we decided to take a different perspective in analysing the data from the 25 EU countries36 that participated in the 2009 PISA round. In each country schools vary in many different ways which pose unique management challenges to principals and other school leaders. Apart from the school level (lower or upper secondary), the schools’ status in terms of administration and financing (public or private), and the programmes they offer (general or vocational), schools can also differ on the basis of various “demographic” characteristics such as their size (in terms of example the number of students enrolled or the teaching and other staff they employ), their location (for example schools in villages, in small cities, in metropolitan areas etc and in terms of their proximity to other schools), the gender composition of the students, their “human capital” characteristics (such as the qualifications of their teachers and supporting staff), as well as a number of other characteristics that are much more difficult to define, such as their history, academic status and reputation they enjoy, or their learning tradition.

Among the very different school characteristics that could be used to group PISA schools in order to base further analyses on the relationship between principal behaviour and activity and student performance, in this chapter we chose to focus on the schools’ student intake in terms of their socio-economic and cultural background. We hypothesized that students in schools with a high intake of students coming from a less privileged socio-economic and cultural backgrounds will perform lower than their peers in schools with a lower share of such students. The assumption that directed this research hypothesis is that the intake of schools is, or should be, an important criterion to base policy initiatives on equity and learning in relation to school leadership, which is the major issue that the EPNoSL project is aimed to address. On this basis we further explored other dimensions, apart from average student performance, in which possible differences can be observed between students in schools with a high intake of students from disadvantaged backgrounds as compared to their peers in schools with a more privileged intake. Finally, we specifically focus on students in schools with a high share of students with disadvantaged backgrounds to further analyze the relationship between school leadership and student performance. In particular, instead of using PISA’s leadership composite index we chose to use in separate analyses each one of the fourteen statements on school management included in the PISA 2009 school questionnaire in order to explore possible mean performance differences in reading between students in such schools where principals report different levels of engagement with different kinds of management activities and behaviours. In brief, the main research questions posed were:

a) Are there any differences in average performance in reading, mathematics and science between students in schools with a high share of students with a disadvantaged background as compared to their peers attending to schools with a more privileged intake? 
b) Are there differences in metacognitive strategies in reading between students in schools with a high share of students with a disadvantaged background as compared to their peers attending to schools with a more privileged intake? 
c) Are there differences in structuring and scaffolding strategies that teachers use in language instruction between students in schools with a high share of students with a disadvantaged background as compared to their peers attending to schools with a more privileged intake? 
d) Are there differences in terms of teacher shortages and the quality of school’s resources between students in schools with a high share of students with a disadvantaged background as compared to their peers attending to schools with a more privileged intake?

36 Cyprus did not participate in PISA 2009. France did participate but school principals did not complete the school questionnaire.
e) How student performance in reading varies according to the level of engagement in different kinds of management activities and behaviours of principals in schools with a high share of low socio-economic and cultural status students?

**Methodology**

The students’ score in the index of the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS) was used to group the students within the bottom, the middle and the upper tertile of the distribution within each EU country. We used the relative within-country approach to the definition of (dis)advantage because EU-wide cut-points for socio-economic (dis)advantage would identify the vast majority of students in some countries as disadvantaged and most students in other countries as advantaged. This approach, on the other side, implies that the subsequent analyses allow only for within country comparisons and discussion and cannot be used for cross-country comparisons.

Using the distributions of ESCS index scores within each country following a simple cut-point procedure would have resulted in unequal groups sizes across countries, potentially introducing a source of error in the results. As it is noted in OECD (2011, p. 176), from which we adopted and extended the identification strategy we employ in this study, the distribution of the ESCS index is not sufficiently continuous in order to achieve equal group sizes across countries. Therefore, we used a random sub-sampling process: first a “pseudo” random number with a normal distribution with mean 0 and standard deviation of 1 was generated and then this random number was multiplied by 0.01 and added to the score of each student in the index of socio-economic background. The resulting distribution was sufficiently continuous for the cut-point procedure to be used to create three equal groups across countries. This procedure added an error component to the standard error which, however, was addressed using the plausible values approach by computing a set of five plausible socio-economic background group assignments for each student. On a subsequent step we created five new plausible value variables containing as values the share of low socio-economic and cultural status students in each school and in each country in the sample. On a last step, we used the plausible value variables in order to group students in schools with a low, medium and high share of low socio-economic and cultural status students. As “low share” we grouped those schools where less than 25% of their students were coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. As “medium share” the schools with a share between 25 and less than 50% and as “high share” the schools with 50% or over share of students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. The cut points we used here were chosen having in mind that the student frequencies in each school group per level of principal’s engagement in school management in each country should be sufficiently high in order to allow for further analyses.

In the analyses that follow first we explore the mean differences in students’ performance in reading, mathematics and science between schools with “low”, “medium” and “high” share of disadvantaged students, as well as mean differences on the dimensions identified in the research questions b, c, d and e. Finally we focus exclusively on students and principals in schools with “high” share of disadvantaged students, exploring mean differences in reading performance according to the level of the principals’ engagement in the school management activities and behaviours described in the PISA 2009 school questionnaire.

**How students’ performance varies according to the socio-economic and cultural intake of schools in EU countries?**

As shown on the table below, in all 25 EU countries the higher the share of low socio-economic and cultural background students in schools the lower the mean performance of students in reading. In all national cases the mean differences are statistically significant at 0.05 level, except of the mean difference between students in schools with “medium” and “high” share of disadvantaged students in Finland. The most striking differences in performance within each country are observed between students enrolled in schools with “low” and “high” share of disadvantaged students. It is characteristic that in 19 EU countries the mean performance difference in reading between students in these two “types” of schools are over 85 performance units, up to over 152 units in the case of Bulgaria.

**Table 1: Students’ mean performance in reading in EU countries**

**Table 2: Students’ mean performance in mathematics in EU countries**
In 16 EU countries the mean difference in performance between students in schools with “low” and “high” share of disadvantaged students is above 85 units, with the highest being in Germany (132 score points).

In science it is only in Finland and between students in schools with “medium” and “high” share of disadvantaged students that their mean performance is not statistically significant.

Overall, in most EU countries, the largest differences in mean performance in science are observed between students in schools with “low” and “high” share of disadvantaged students. In total, in 16 EU countries these differences are 85 score points or over, with the highest being in Malta.

These findings suggest that the criterion of the share of the disadvantaged students in each school within EU countries can be used to inform policies targeting equity and learning performance in most EU countries, with the notable exception of Finland, where mean differences in performance in mathematics, science and reading between students in schools with “low”, “medium” and “high” share of disadvantaged students does not exceed the 21 score points. Relatively “homogeneous” in terms of performance in reading, mathematics and science by the three groups of schools also appear to be Poland (51 score points difference in reading between “low” and “high” and less in mathematics and science), Latvia (61 score points difference in mathematics between “low” and “high” and less in the rest),

### Table 3: Students’ mean performance in science in schools with “low”, “medium” and “high” share of low socio-economic and cultural background students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CNT</th>
<th>Schools’ share of students from low socio-economic and cultural status background</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CNT</td>
<td>LOW (&lt;25%)</td>
<td>MEDIUM (≥25%&lt;50%)</td>
<td>HIGH (≥50%)</td>
<td>LOW (&lt;25%)</td>
<td>MEDIUM (≥25%&lt;50%)</td>
<td>HIGH (≥50%)</td>
<td>LOW (&lt;25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUT</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEL</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGR</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZE</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEU</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNK</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBR</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRC</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUN</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>549</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not surprisingly, such differences in student performance by school student intake are also observed in mathematics and science. In all EU countries differences in student performance in mathematics are statistically significant at 0.05 level between all couples of school intake levels.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CNT</th>
<th>Mean score in PISA’s index of understanding and remembering between students in schools with a low share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of understanding and remembering between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a medium share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of understanding and remembering between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a high share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of understanding and remembering between students in schools with a medium share of low SES students and students with a high share of low SES students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRL</td>
<td>539 2 510 2 452 3</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITA</td>
<td>538 1 484 2 414 2</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUX</td>
<td>529 2 482 2 447 3</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVA</td>
<td>516 2 486 2 468 3</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLT</td>
<td>515 2 466 2 355 2</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLD</td>
<td>584 2 506 4 447 3</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL</td>
<td>528 2 505 2 485 2</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRT</td>
<td>529 2 487 2 448 2</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROU</td>
<td>463 3 416 2 382 3</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVK</td>
<td>542 3 472 2 432 3</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVN</td>
<td>571 1 493 1 443 2</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>532 2 488 2 458 3</td>
<td>Similarities, higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To explore such differences we used PISA’s index of understanding and remembering and the index of summarizing. The index of understanding and remembering was derived from students’ reports on the usefulness of the following strategies for understanding and memorising the text: A) I concentrate on the parts of the text that are easy to understand; B) I quickly read through the text twice; c) After reading the text, I discuss its content with other people; D) I underline important parts of the text; e) I summarise the text in my own words; and f) I read the text aloud to another person.

The index of summarizing was derived from students’ reports on the usefulness of the following strategies for writing a summary of a long and rather difficult two-page text about fluctuations in the water levels of a lake in Africa: A) I write a summary. then I check that each paragraph is covered in the summary, because the content of each paragraph should be included; B) I try to copy out accurately as many sentences as possible; c) before writing the summary, I read the text as many times as possible; D) I carefully check whether the most important facts in the text are represented in the summary; and e) I read through the text, underlining the most important sentences, then I write them in my own words as a summary.

The index of use of structuring and scaffolding strategies was derived from students reports on how often the following occurred in their lessons of the language of instruction: i) the teacher explains beforehand what is expected of the students; ii) the teacher checks that students are concentrating while working on the <reading assignment>; iii) the teacher discusses students’ work, after they have finished the <reading assignment>; iv) the teacher tells students in advance how their work is going to be judged; v) the teacher asks whether every student has understood how to complete the <reading assignment>; vi) the teacher marks students’ work; vii) the teacher gives students the chance to ask questions about the <reading assignment>; viii) the teacher poses questions that motivate students to participate actively; and ix) the teacher tells students how well they did on the <reading assignment> immediately after.

Higher values on the first two indices indicate greater students’ perception of usefulness of the two strategies. Similarly, higher values on the third index indicate a greater use of structured teaching.

**Table 4:** Students’ mean score differences in PISA’s index of understanding and remembering enrolled in schools with “low”, “medium” and “high” share of low socio-economic and cultural background students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CNT</th>
<th>Mean score in PISA’s index of understanding and remembering of students in schools with a low share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of understanding and remembering between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a medium share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of understanding and remembering between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a high share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of understanding and remembering between students in schools with a medium share of low SES students and students with a high share of low SES students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRL</td>
<td>539 2 510 2 452 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITA</td>
<td>538 1 484 2 414 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUX</td>
<td>529 2 482 2 447 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVA</td>
<td>516 2 486 2 468 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLT</td>
<td>515 2 466 2 355 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLD</td>
<td>584 2 506 4 447 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL</td>
<td>528 2 505 2 485 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRT</td>
<td>529 2 487 2 448 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROU</td>
<td>463 3 416 2 382 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVK</td>
<td>542 3 472 2 432 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVN</td>
<td>571 1 493 1 443 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>532 2 488 2 458 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown on the table above, in 12 EU countries, namely Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, France, Hungary, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Portugal and Slovenia, there are statistically significant differences in the mean score in the index of understanding and remembering in favour of students in low SES schools as compared to high SES schools. This finding indicates that on average students in low SES schools (that is more privileged schools in terms of the socio-economic background of their students) make more use of the metacognitive strategies of understanding and remembering when reading a text as compared to their peers in schools with a socio-economically disadvantaged intake.

**Table 5: Students’ mean score differences in PISA’s index of summarizing enrolled in schools with “low”, “medium” and “high” share of low socio-economic and cultural background students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CNT</th>
<th>Mean score in PISA’s index of summarising of students in schools with a low share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of summarising between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a medium share of low SES students</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of summarising between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a high share of low SES students</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of summarising between students in schools with a medium share of low SES students and students with a high share of low SES students</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUT</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.74*</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEL</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.49*</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.88*</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGR</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.62*</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZE</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.61*</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEU</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.46*</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.89*</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNK</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.62*</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBR</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.24</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUN</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.72*</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRL</td>
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<td>0.50*</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITA</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.62*</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.34*</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTU</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUX</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.44*</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.69*</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVA</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLT</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.57*</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLD</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.74*</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly, in several EU countries, namely Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia and Slovenia, on average students in low SES schools make more use of the metacognitive strategy of summarising when reading a text as compared to their peers in schools with a socio-economically disadvantaged intake.

Furthermore, as shown on the table below, in some countries students in low SES schools are less well supported by their teachers through structured and scaffolding language teaching strategies as compared to students in schools with a more privileged intake.

**Table 6: Students’ mean score differences in PISA’s index of use of structuring and scaffolding strategies enrolled in schools with “low”, “medium” and “high” share of low socio-economic and cultural background students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CNT</th>
<th>Mean score in PISA’s index of use of structuring and scaffolding strategies of students in schools with a low share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of use of structuring and scaffolding strategies between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a medium share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of use of structuring and scaffolding strategies between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a high share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of use of structuring and scaffolding strategies between students in schools with a medium share of low SES students and students with a high share of low SES students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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* Mean difference statistically significant at 0.05 level.

Overall, the above results indicate that in the majority of EU countries principals in schools with a high intake of low SES students are likely to face more intense challenges of pedagogic nature given that their students tend not to perceive as useful, as compared to students in more privileged schools, the metacognitive strategies presented above. In some countries there is also the challenge to make language teachers use more often structuring and scaffolding language teaching strategies.
Differences in schools’ human and other resources between schools according to their student intake

Although, as we have seen, there are differences regarding the metacognitive strategies in reading and the structuring of language teaching between schools with low SES intake as compared to high SES intake in many EU countries, the analysis on principals’ responses regarding teacher shortages and the quality of schools’ resources shows that in almost all EU countries schools are enjoying similar levels of resources in terms of their quality and availability.

The index of teacher shortage was derived from four items measuring school principals’ perceptions of potential factors hindering instruction at their school. These factors are a lack of: i) qualified science teachers; ii) a lack of qualified mathematics teachers; iii) qualified <test language> teachers; and iv) qualified teachers of other subjects. Higher values on this index indicate school principals’ reports of higher teacher shortage at a school.

Table 7: Students’ mean score differences in PISA’s index of teacher shortage enrolled in schools with “low”, “medium” and “high” share of low socio-economic and cultural background students

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Mean score in PISA’s index of teacher shortage of students in schools with a low share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of teacher shortage between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a medium share of low SES students</th>
<th>Mean difference in PISA’s index of teacher shortage between students in schools with a low share of low SES students and students with a high share of low SES students</th>
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<td>-0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mean difference statistically significant at 0.05 level.

As shown on the table above, it is only in Luxemburg that principals in low SES schools have less problems with teacher shortages as compared to high SES schools. Furthermore, it is only in Malta and Luxemburg that principals in high SES schools report better quality of educational resources as compared to less privileged schools.

Overall, the above findings indicate that in the vast majority of EU countries principals in low SES schools are not facing more challenges regarding the staffing and the quality of educational resources as compared to principals in more privileged schools in terms of their intake.
PRINCIPALS’ LEADERSHIP AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN READING

As already mentioned, the PISA school questionnaire included a set of 14 statements which described school management activities and behaviours (see table below). The principals were asked to report the degree to which they were engaged with them (in the scale “never”, “seldom”, “quite often” and “often”) during the last school year. These statements were adopted from the first round of OECD’s Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (2007-8) targeting lower secondary education teachers and their school principals (TALIS, 2009).

TABLE 8: STATEMENTS IN THE PISA 2009 SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE HAVING TO DO WITH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

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<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I make sure that the professional development activities of teachers are in accordance with the teaching goals of the school.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I ensure that teachers work according to the school’s educational goals.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I observe instruction in classrooms.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I use student performance results to develop the school’s educational goals.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I give teachers suggestions as to how they can improve their teaching.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>When a teacher has problems in his/her classroom, I take the initiative to discuss matters.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I check to see whether classroom activities are in keeping with our educational goals.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I take exam results into account in decisions regarding curriculum development.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I ensure that there is clarity concerning the responsibility for co-ordinating the curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>When a teacher brings up a classroom problem, we solve the problem together.</td>
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<td>I pay attention to disruptive behaviour in classrooms.</td>
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<td>I take over lessons from teachers who are unexpectedly absent.</td>
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In the table below, the percentage of students in schools whose principals reported that the activities and behaviours (as numbered above) occurred “very often” during the last school year per country is presented.

TABLE 9: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS WHOSE PRINCIPALS REPORTED THAT THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES AND BEHAVIORS OCCURRED “VERY OFTEN” DURING THE LAST SCHOOL YEAR

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<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITA</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LYT</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUX</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVA</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLT</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLD</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overview of the results show that in Finland only around 1% of the students attend to schools where principals agreed that they “very often” observe instruction in the classroom. Furthermore, in the same country only around 3% of the students attend to schools where principals agreed that they “very often” give teachers suggestions as to how they can improve their teaching and only around 7% to schools where principals “very often” use student performance results to develop the school’s educational goals. Finland appears to be a country where proportionally less students than in any other EU country attend to schools where principals report very frequent engagement in activities and behaviours described in 6 out of the 14 statements of the PISA school questionnaire. Overall, Finland has the lowest score in the composite leadership index, which was constructed in PISA 2009 by principals’ replies to this set of statements. This indicates that students in Finland attend to schools were principals have overall the lowest degree of engagement in school management compared to any other country in EU. In parallel, Finland has the top position in student performance in PISA 2009 assessments in reading, maths and science (see table below). Also the Netherlands which is ranked second in reading and mathematics and third in science has among the lowest leadership scores.

On the other side, proportionally more students in the United Kingdom (GBR) than in any other EU country attend to schools.
where principals report very frequent engagement in activities and behaviours described in 7 out of the 14 statements. In Romania the same applies for 3 of these statements. In the composite leadership index the United Kingdom, Romania and Bulgaria obtained the highest score among all EU countries. It should be noted that Romania and Bulgaria obtained the lowest mean scores among the EU countries in PISA 2009 reading, mathematics and science assessments.

On the basis of the results presented above it would be utterly misleading to conclude that strong school leadership may affect negatively student performance and therefore in order to achieve the results obtained by Finland or the Netherlands as well as by other top performing countries (such as Belgium or Estonia which also have a low leadership score), school leaders in other countries should try to engage less often with school management... After all, we have the example of Poland which has among the highest leadership scores and in parallel is among the top performing EU countries. What the above findings indicate is that the relationship between school leadership and student performance depends widely on the national context and is undoubtedly mediated and very complex.

In order to further explore this challenging issue we focused on the relationship between student performance and principals’ engagement in schools with a high share of socio-economically and culturally disadvantaged students (≥50%) (from now on we will call them “low socio-economic status schools”, and more briefly “low SES schools”). We did so by comparing the mean differences in the reading performance in such schools by the level of principals’ engagement in each of the activities and behaviours described in the 14 statements of PISA’s 2009 school questionnaire. We begin with the presentation of the results on the first school management statement.

In the second column in the table below it is reported for each EU country the mean score in reading of students in low SES schools where principals stated that during the last school year “never” or “seldom” “make sure that the professional development activities of teachers are in accordance with the teaching goals of the school” (from now on we will call these schools “low” principal engagement (L-PE) schools). In Latvia, for example, students in schools where principals tend rather not to check whether the professional development activities their teachers are engaged in accordance with the teaching goals of the school scored on average 520 in the reading scale. Latvia’s students in schools where principals “quite often” engage is such an activity on average score around 55 point less (see column 3) and in schools were principals “very often” do the same 79 points less (see column 5). Therefore, in “low” principal engagement (L-PE) schools regarding the orientation of teachers’ professional development activities Latvia’s students tend to perform on average much better than their peers in schools with “medium” (M-PE) or “high” principal engagement (H-PE). The same applies for

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The results in reading, mathematics and science assessments were obtained from the tables I.2.3, I.3.3 and I.3.6 available by OECD at: dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932343285. The results for Malta are not included in the OECD tables and were calculated by the author. The same applies for the leadership composite index scores. France’s school principals did not complete the school questionnaire.

---

### Table 10: PISA 2009 mean scores in student performance on the reading, mathematics and science scale and the leadership index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Reading Mean</th>
<th>Mathematics Mean</th>
<th>Science Mean</th>
<th>Leadership Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUT</td>
<td>470.0</td>
<td>496.0</td>
<td>494.0</td>
<td>-154.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEL</td>
<td>506.0</td>
<td>515.0</td>
<td>507.0</td>
<td>-340.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGR</td>
<td>429.0</td>
<td>428.0</td>
<td>439.0</td>
<td>653.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZE</td>
<td>478.0</td>
<td>493.0</td>
<td>500.0</td>
<td>187.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEU</td>
<td>497.0</td>
<td>513.0</td>
<td>520.0</td>
<td>-437.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNK</td>
<td>495.0</td>
<td>503.0</td>
<td>499.0</td>
<td>-450.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>481.0</td>
<td>483.0</td>
<td>488.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>501.0</td>
<td>512.0</td>
<td>528.0</td>
<td>-149.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>536.0</td>
<td>541.0</td>
<td>554.0</td>
<td>-607.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>496.0</td>
<td>497.0</td>
<td>498.0</td>
<td>-5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBR</td>
<td>494.0</td>
<td>492.0</td>
<td>514.0</td>
<td>1029.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRC</td>
<td>483.0</td>
<td>466.0</td>
<td>470.0</td>
<td>-479.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUN</td>
<td>494.0</td>
<td>490.0</td>
<td>503.0</td>
<td>-950.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRL</td>
<td>496.0</td>
<td>487.0</td>
<td>508.0</td>
<td>-202.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITA</td>
<td>486.0</td>
<td>483.0</td>
<td>489.0</td>
<td>406.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIT</td>
<td>496.0</td>
<td>477.0</td>
<td>491.0</td>
<td>-404.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUX</td>
<td>472.0</td>
<td>489.0</td>
<td>484.0</td>
<td>-274.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVA</td>
<td>484.0</td>
<td>482.0</td>
<td>494.0</td>
<td>333.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLT</td>
<td>442.0</td>
<td>463.0</td>
<td>461.0</td>
<td>303.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLD</td>
<td>508.0</td>
<td>526.0</td>
<td>522.0</td>
<td>-435.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL</td>
<td>500.0</td>
<td>495.0</td>
<td>508.0</td>
<td>576.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRT</td>
<td>489.0</td>
<td>487.0</td>
<td>493.0</td>
<td>-146.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROU</td>
<td>424.0</td>
<td>427.0</td>
<td>428.0</td>
<td>-998.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVN</td>
<td>477.0</td>
<td>497.0</td>
<td>490.0</td>
<td>-367.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>483.0</td>
<td>501.0</td>
<td>512.0</td>
<td>-314.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- The results in reading, mathematics and science assessments were obtained from the tables I.2.3, I.3.3 and I.3.6 available by OECD at: dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932343285. The results for Malta are not included in the OECD tables and were calculated by the author. The same applies for the leadership composite index scores.
- France’s school principals did not complete the school questionnaire.
students in “medium” as compared to “high” principal engagement schools. The asterisk denotes that these differences are statistically significant at 0.05. In several other EU countries a similar trend appears to be true. This is the case for the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Luxemburg, Portugal and Sweden.

**Table 11: Mean performance differences in reading of students in low SES schools by frequency level of principals’ efforts in ensuring that the professional development activities of teachers are in accordance with the teaching goals of their school**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CNT</th>
<th>Mean performance in reading of students in schools where principals “never or seldom” make sure that the professional development activities of teachers are in accordance with the teaching goals of the school</th>
<th>Students’ mean difference in reading performance between “never or seldom” and “quite often” SE</th>
<th>Mean difference in reading performance between “never or seldom” and “very often” SE</th>
<th>Mean difference in reading performance between “quite often” and “very often” SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUT</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>32* 5</td>
<td>21* 5</td>
<td>-11* 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEL</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>-16* 6</td>
<td>8 6</td>
<td>24* 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGR</td>
<td>332¹</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>-11* 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZE</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>22* 3</td>
<td>15* 4</td>
<td>-7 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEU</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>47* 4</td>
<td>50* 4</td>
<td>2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNK</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>8* 3</td>
<td>17* 5</td>
<td>9 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>7* 3</td>
<td>9* 3</td>
<td>2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>23* 5</td>
<td>48* 6</td>
<td>25* 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>-6 3</td>
<td>12* 3</td>
<td>17* 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBR</td>
<td>442¹</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>-6 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRC</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>3 5</td>
<td>-51* 5</td>
<td>-54* 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUN</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>-65* 5</td>
<td>-80* 5</td>
<td>-15* 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRL</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>-35* 8</td>
<td>-36* 7</td>
<td>0 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITA</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>36* 7</td>
<td>52* 6</td>
<td>15* 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTU</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>-5 4</td>
<td>-11* 4</td>
<td>-6 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUX</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>8* 3</td>
<td>-40* 3</td>
<td>-48* 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVA</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>55* 3</td>
<td>79* 3</td>
<td>24* 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLT</td>
<td>307¹</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>-46* 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLD</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>5 5</td>
<td>12* 5</td>
<td>7 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>-5 6</td>
<td>-7 6</td>
<td>-2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRT</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>11* 5</td>
<td>11* 5</td>
<td>0 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROU</td>
<td>362¹</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>2 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVK</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>6 4</td>
<td>7* 4</td>
<td>1 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVN</td>
<td>397¹</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>-25* 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>35* 4</td>
<td>50* 8</td>
<td>15 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mean difference statistically significant at 0.05 level.
¹ This is the mean score of students in schools where principals reported that they were “quite often” engaged in the activity/behaviour. No principal in this country reported that (s)he “never” or “seldom” did so.

On the other hand, in Hungary we observe the opposite trend. Students in “low” principal engagement (L-PE) schools tend to perform less well in reading as compared to students in “medium” (M-PE) and “high” principal engagement (H-PE) schools. It is characteristic that students in H-PE schools scored on average 80 score points higher than their peers in L-PE schools. In Greece and Ireland a somewhat similar pattern is recorded. Students in H-PE schools regarding the professional development of teachers do much better than their peers in L-PE schools in Greece (51 points higher) and in Ireland (36 points higher). Furthermore, in Slovenia, Malta and Bulgaria students in H-PE schools tend to perform better than their peers in M-PE schools.

These two rather opposing trends are identified in all school management activities/behaviours across 19 EU countries.⁴⁰ The dominant trend in 13 of these countries, namely in Sweden, Poland, Netherlands, Latvia, Italy, Greece, United Kingdom, Finland, Estonia, Denmark, Germany, the Czech Republic and Austria, in the majority of the school management statements⁴¹ there are statistically significant mean differences in reading in favour of students in low SES L-PE schools as compared to low SES M-PE and/or H-PE schools or in favour of M-PE as compared to H-PE schools (signified by red squares in the table below).

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⁴⁰ The results are presented in separate tables in Annex II for each school management statement and country in Kollias (2013).
⁴¹ Provided that there are data available to compare.
At least one statistically significant mean difference (<0.05) in reading performance in favour of students in low SES schools were principals reported more frequent engagement as compared to less frequent engagement, for example in favour of students in L-PE schools as compared to low SES M-PE and/or H-PE schools or in favour of M-PE as compared to H-PE schools. Therefore red colour signifies a) three statistically significant relationships, or b) two or one statistically significant relationship(s) with the other being not significant or non applicable because of lack of observations.

No statistically significant mean difference in student performance in reading between low SES L-PE vs M-LE schools and/or L-PE vs H-PE schools.

At least one statistically significant mean difference (<0.05) in reading performance in favour of students in low SES schools were principals reported more frequent engagement as compared to less frequent engagement, for example in favour of students in H-PE schools as compared to low SES L-PE and/or M-PE schools or in favour of M-PE as compared to L-PE schools. Therefore blue colour signifies a) three statistically significant relationships, or b) two or one statistically significant relationship(s) with the other being not significant or non applicable because of lack of observations.

No comparisons between mean differences possible because of lack of observations.

Students in M-PE schools perform better than students in L-PE schools and students in H-PE schools (at 0.05 level).

Students in M-PE schools perform worse than L-ME and H-ME schools (at 0.05 level).

School principals in low SES schools, being quite experienced educators, we hypothesise that they know how “well” their students are doing as compared to other schools with a comparable and a more privileged student intake. In the countries included in the list on the table above principals seem to, in a predominant way, react with more frequent interventions in school life when they believe that their school is not doing as well in terms of student performance as other schools of similarly low SES student intake. In most of these countries principals who feel that their students are not doing so well they choose to increase monitoring of students’ work (except from Italy and Poland), they check more often to see whether classroom activities are in keeping with the schools’ educational goals (except from principals in Poland, Greece and the Czech Republic) and they pay more attention to the orientation of their teachers’ professional development so as to make sure that it is in accordance with the school goals (except from Greece, Poland and the United Kingdom). This is how we
interpret why more frequent principal engagement in low SES schools is associated with lower student performance. This interpretation is further based on the hypothesis that the field of comparison that principals in low SES schools use in these countries tends not include schools that have more socio-economically and culturally privileged student intake (in which, as we have already shown, students on average perform much better than their peers in low SES schools). The “exclusion” from the tertium comparationis principals employ in low SES schools of more privileged intake schools, possibly further explains why better student performance is associated less frequent school management behaviours in low SES schools.

On other side, in low SES schools in six other EU countries, namely Spain, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Slovenia and Slovakia, the dominant trend is the opposite. That is, in the majority of the school management statements, provided that there are data available to compare, there are observed mean differences in reading in favour of students in low SES H-PE schools as compared to low SES M-PE and/or L-PE schools or in favour of M-PE as compared to L-PE schools.

**Table 13: EU countries where there is dominant the trend of higher mean student performance in reading in schools with more frequent principal’s engagement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Management Statements</th>
<th>ESP</th>
<th>HUN</th>
<th>LUX</th>
<th>MLT</th>
<th>SVN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I make sure that the professional development activities of teachers are in accordance with the teaching goals of the school.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ensure that teachers work according to the school’s educational goals.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I observe instruction in classrooms.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use student performance results to develop the school’s educational goals.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I give teachers suggestions as to how they can improve their teaching.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I monitor students’ work.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a teacher has problems in his/her classroom, I take the initiative to discuss matters.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I inform teachers about possibilities for updating their knowledge and skills.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I check to see whether classroom activities are in keeping with our educational goals.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take exam results into account in decisions regarding curriculum development.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ensure that there is clarity concerning the responsibility for co-ordinating the curriculum.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a teacher brings up a classroom problem, we solve the problem together.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For the statistical meaning of the colours see notes below table 12.

It can be hypothesised that principals in low SES schools in these countries tend to manage their schools somewhat proactively in relation to student performance. Having an understanding that their students are doing better (or having the ambition that they could do even better) than students in other low SES schools, they engage more frequently in school management behaviours and activities in the belief that these will contribute to further improvements in their students’ performance or that they will keep it at the already better level as compared to other low SES schools. Possibly also in the countries showing a “proactive school management” pattern, principals use a much wider field of comparison which includes also more privileged intake schools where, as we have seen, students tend to perform better. Within this widened field of comparison principals in low SES schools where students do better than other low SES schools are engaged in more frequent school management behaviour because they understand that they do not do as good as students in schools with a more privileged student intake.

Finally, we have 6 more EU countries where no dominant pattern appears to exist between student performance and level of engagement of principals in school management (see table below).

**Table 14: EU countries where there no dominant trend between mean student performance in reading by frequency of principal’s engagement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Management Statements</th>
<th>BEL</th>
<th>BGR</th>
<th>IRL</th>
<th>MLT</th>
<th>PRT</th>
<th>ROU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I make sure that the professional development activities of teachers are in accordance with the teaching goals of the school.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ensure that teachers work according to the school’s educational goals.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
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<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I observe instruction in classrooms.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
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<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use student performance results to develop the school’s educational goals.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
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<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I give teachers suggestions as to how they can improve their teaching.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
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<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I monitor students’ work.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
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<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a teacher has problems in his/her classroom, I take the initiative to discuss matters.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I inform teachers about possibilities for updating their knowledge and skills.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
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<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I check to see whether classroom activities are in keeping with our educational goals.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take exam results into account in decisions regarding curriculum development.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ensure that there is clarity concerning the responsibility for co-ordinating the curriculum.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a teacher brings up a classroom problem, we solve the problem together.</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the countries on the table above we see many cases of statements where students in M-PE schools perform worse than their peers L-ME and H-ME schools (at 0.05 level) (green squares) or cases where students in M-PE schools perform better than students in L-PE and H-PE schools (yellow squares), as well as many cases with no statistically significant results. In the case of Belgium this result may reflect the fact that the French and the Flemish communities manage school affairs on their own therefore there may be also differences in the dominant school management traditions in the country as well as in the time principals are required to devote to clearly administrative activities. Bulgaria, Romania and Malta are the three least well performing countries in EU in the PISA 2009 assessments and maybe principals in these countries, particularly in low SES schools were students tend to perform considerably lower than these countries’ average PISA scores, are trying different things, on different levels of intensity, on how to manage their schools in order to improve the situation on the ground.

**DISCUSSION**

In this study the hypothesis that the intake of schools related to the socio-economic and cultural background of their students is a critical factor for basing policy on equity and learning was supported by evidence from PISA 2009 showing that students in schools with a high share of students coming from low socio-economic and cultural backgrounds perform on average much lower than their peers in medium or high SES schools. Low SES schools pose therefore much more pressing challenges to school leaders as compared to other schools. This reality in almost all EU countries has or should have implications regarding the training, professional development, retention and replacement of school leaders in low SES schools. Yet the current discussion on school leadership seldom addresses this issue.

Our analysis of the relationship between principals’ leadership behaviour and student performance showed that this should not be discussed in terms of causality. More frequent leadership behaviours and activities in low SES schools are not associated with better performance in many EU countries and this does not imply that the principals in these countries are not doing their job well. Similarly in those countries were “stronger” leadership is positively associated with student performance in low SES schools it would be rather naive to believe that principals are doing their job well. According to our interpretation of the findings, in the many EU countries there is a dominant “reactive school management” pattern among principals in low SES schools which uses as field of comparison other low SES schools in order to specify the level of engagement in various school management activities. In schools where principals believe that their students are doing less well than students in other low SES schools they also tend to exhibit more active engagement in school matters. Maybe, to go a bit further in our syllogism, this pattern reflects an underlying culture of school management, a kind of leadership tradition. The same could be true for the countries where, in the opposite direction, principals follow predominantly a “proactive school management” pattern, using perhaps a wider field of comparison which includes not only low SES schools but also more privileged schools and where more principals’ engagement is associated with better student results. All the above of course need further research to become able to confirm or reject.

**REFERENCES**


