THE ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF LEARNING

Country Reports and Case Studies of a Central-European Project

2009

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DEAR READER,

In 2008-2009 the Tempus Public Foundation implemented a project with the title: *The Role of School Leadership in Creating a Learning Environment that is Conducive to Effective Learning with Special Regard to the Improvement of the Quality of Teacher Activity* supported by the Hungarian Ministry of Education and the European Commission. The initiative was implemented within the framework of a ministerial collaboration the *Central European Cooperation for Education* (CECE) with the participation of Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia and was based on the results of the OECD report on the effect of school leadership on the efficiency of learning (*Leadership for Learning*).

Each country nominated 2 experts, who have a thorough knowledge of their country’s education policy and the most important development and innovation programmes undertaken in the given field. They met at 3 international workshops in the framework of the project in order to finalize country reports and case studies on the given subject. Finally, a synthesis report was elaborated in order to identify regional outcomes, conclusions and policy recommendations for relevant stakeholders.

This publication includes all 5 country reports, 2 case studies from each country and the final synthesis. Its most important aim is promoting educational reforms in the region that seek to enhance the quality and efficiency of learning, presenting best practices, moreover supporting development programmes undertaken in the participating countries.

*The Editor*
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1. THE CONTEXT AND KEY ISSUES OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

1.1. Roles of leadership development in the improvement of national education

In German-speaking countries, the organizational structure of schools is marked by a very flat hierarchy, which has resulted in the emergence of a `myth of equality´ among the teaching staff. The existing inner hierarchy is thus concealed and the distribution of organizational tasks is too complicated. Moreover, heads of school are often regarded as being primus inter pares – a fact generating additional problems in the safeguarding of organizational tasks. As a result not only of a flat hierarchy in schools but also of uniform teacher training, little or no formal distinction exists among members of the teaching staff, this phenomenon being in marked contrast with the situation characteristic of the world of economy today. Heads of school are looked upon as elite members of the teaching profession rather than teachers with a specific vocation.

As a consequence of this ‘primus inter pares´ myth, heads of school view their ‘managerial functions´ mostly through the prism of assumed expectations, where the rules and laws laid down need to be both observed and applied strictly since the hierarchical structure of the school system offers them no other alternative of safeguarding their professional positions. Therefore, newly-appointed heads of school are often awed at the administrative problems with which they are faced, confident as they are in dealing with educational problems, being experienced teachers themselves. However, quite often, when faced with unfamiliar challenges for the first time in their new managerial functions, they are bound to change their views. This can be seen quite clearly in the following interview with a newly-appointed headmistress:

“I thought, at first, that the administrative tasks would present the greatest difficulty since I had no experience in this field. However, administration proved to be no problem at all. The main difficulty was that of having to deal with people – 30 people, would you believe. The situation was in sharp contrast to what I had expected. At the beginning, I thought that dealing with people would be easy – all you needed to do was to make an effort to be punctual, make sure you did not to forget your appointments, and not to be too proud to seek advice from other heads of school or the local authorities. However, this was not a problem. The main problem, to my mind, is actually that of dealing with people.”

This statement, made by a newly-appointed headmistress, leads us to assume that the organizational functions of the job are marked to a considerable extent by one’s manner of leadership and not so much by one’s familiarity with certain facts (although, obviously, familiarity with guidelines in formal issues is always a precondition for tackling specific issues.) At the same time, a change of awareness becomes apparent, an awareness which extends from a rather limited attitude towards tasks of leadership which are aligned to formal aspects of the job profile (or quite often only to the structure of an organizational unit) towards an open-minded plan of action which is aligned to the situation and the requirements of communication. In this way, it is more likely that the problems, difficulties, worries and needs of colleagues become apparent.

The distinction between leadership, management and administration has only become a topic with a stronger focus on school autonomy, where heads of school have to take on more of a leadership role in schools. The distinction between the meaning of these functions is quite blurred, while a school head’s day is mostly driven by management and administration. The Austrian name Schulleiter or Schulleiterin, does, however, signal leadership (direct translation: school leader) as a key competence. Leadership is becoming more of a challenge, especially among younger school leaders, as they have been involved in school development processes and now tend to see their role as that of visionary leaders. In the last century headships have been occupied by lower age groups. In Austria retirement age is 65 years for men and 60 years for women. For each year of early retirement monthly payment is reduced by 4,2%. Many school leaders work until their retirement age, the average age of school leaders eventually retiring is 63 years.

There is no statistical data currently available on the age distribution of principals, but there is a noticeable difference in various school types. Primary school leaders, generally speaking, younger than heads in charge of lower secondary schools; the latter are younger than heads in academic secondary schools and upper secondary vocational schools.

1.2. National context of educational leadership and management development

Heads of schools play a key role in supporting each individual school in school development schemes. Quality development and quality assurance, personal development, public relations work and resource management thus play an ever-
increasingly significant role in the field of school management responsibilities, management having to cope with a new set of values comprising the schools and education development agenda. In order to gain additional insight into the potentialities and constraints regarding the behaviour of heads of school in the light of the background to educational development, Schratz, Pisek & Wopfner completed a study (2002) to obtain answers to the following questions:

1. What changes have taken place in the last few years within the framework of laws/ decrees/enactments?
2. What was the basic intention underlying these changes?
3. What theoretical/empirical assumptions relating to school development are the reasons behind such intentions?
4. What is the relationship between established changes and the development of schools and education?

Some of the findings from this study are:
Since the 1993/94 Academic Year, Austrian schools have had the possibility of exercising more independence in their school life. Schools can thus administer a wider scope of development in determining professional and pedagogical priorities, particularly in consideration of the interests and capabilities not only of the pupils, but also of the teaching staff; they can take into account the necessities, needs and offers of the regional milieu; they can also administer part of their financial means in a more independent manner etc. The aim is to achieve a more varied school landscape along with a more distinct profile for each individual school. More specifically, this means that within a framework determined upfront (a maximum of 16 one-week periods in secondary modern schools and 8 one-week periods in the lower grades of the general schools of academic secondary education), cost neutrality and set regulations being the necessary pre-conditions for the scheme, each individual school could, for example, change the number of hours devoted to compulsory subjects, introduce new content, vary the size of groups, convert optional subjects into compulsory ones or include independent experts in their projects etc.

Not only are heads of school to be actively involved in these changes. They should also provide impulses for these areas. However, it is a procedure limited in its scope, given the fact that the democratic process of decision-making is a methodology with legal foundations; the school curriculum has to be agreed upon by a two-third majority of those voting in each of the groups involved by the committee in question, which consists of the head of school (a non-voting chairperson), teaching staff (i.e. all the form teachers in secondary modern schools and three representatives of general schools in academic secondary education) and parents (i.e. all the parents’ representatives in secondary modern schools and three representatives of general schools in academic secondary education), and pupils’ representatives of general schools in academic secondary education. Internal school measures are then to be evaluated regularly.

Thus the role of heads of school is undergoing a change, towards becoming a source of inspiration, a moderator of decision-making processes and the person responsible for the implementation of decisions. Further development towards school autonomy in line with the principle of “New Public Management” will add to the new tasks of heads of school. The Ministry of Education is now considering further changes in areas such as the expansion of financial autonomy, the simplification and improvement of administration, organisational procedures within schools and the autonomy within schools of the teaching staff.

Large-scale assessments, particularly those of PISA, have contributed to concerns about how to establish quality awareness in schools. As early as 1999, QIS (Quality in Schools), a national framework for quality assurance, was introduced in order to assure good teaching and learning quality (cf. www.qis.at). The QIS is an instrument by which the Austrian Ministry of Education is determined to both encourage and support schools, thereby reviewing, monitoring, and developing the quality of their performance. Teachers, students, and parents who work alongside each other in systematically addressing quality issues are an indispensable part of school culture.

Autonomous quality assurance as well as quality development within schools are a precondition besides being a starting point for a future-oriented school system based on high quality performance.

The core element of QIS and of quality-related activity in each school is the school development plan (Schulprogramm). It contains the school’s guiding principles, an account of the status quo and of specific objectives of that school, while assessing quality in different areas. This plan is a temporary agreement aimed to have an effect both internally and externally: it serves as a guideline both for educational action and as public information as well as a planning tool and a yardstick to be applied to the development of schools.

A similar programme called QIBB (Qualitätsinitiative Berufsbildung: VET Quality Initiative, www.qibb.at) was introduced in 2004 for vocational upper secondary education. Both quality development programme alternatives have contributed substantially to the development of quality awareness in schools, especially among school heads. They will need to be further developed into a comprehensive framework for national quality control, which will serve as a steering matrix for all other levels.
within the system. Equally included in this framework will be the development and implementation of national standards (Bildungsstandards) in year 4 (primary school) and year 8 (general secondary school and academic secondary school), a new mechanism currently in its trial phase. The results will furnish further evidence for school heads in monitoring the degree of success in their schools and will intensify efforts aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning.

In most Austrian national development strategies leadership/management development plays an important part, e.g. it is part of QIS and QIBB quality strategies and also of standards development as well as of the introduction of the new middle school. At the same time, most strategic initiatives do not have a clear concept for leadership development. The Leadership Academy was, therefore, founded in 2004 by the Minister of Education with the aim of supporting school leaders in their strategic competences in the implementation of ongoing reforms

1.3. Development of learning as a strategic goal

“Leadership for Learning” is a curricular core element of the Leadership Academy and participants’ portfolios are expected to contain learning-related strategic elements.

Other national strategies where the development of learning plays a dominant role are:

- The introduction of educational standards, where a bank of test items has been developed to help teachers and schools adjust their teaching to a competency-based model by putting the student, rather than teaching itself, into the focus of attention.
- The 25 plus Initiative, reducing the number of students to a maximum of 25 in Austrian schools, which is connected via a paradigm shift from teaching to learning. A support programme (consisting of booklets, a homepage, DVDs, in-service activities etc.) has been developed to support schools in this transformation process.
- The introduction of the New Middle School, which puts the focus on learning in heterogeneous classrooms without the streaming of students. In each Austrian province, a set of schools is expected to pilot new forms of teaching and, in particular, learning with the aim of putting the student first with support from the regional school boards, the Pädagogische Hochschulen (PHs: University Colleges of Teacher Education) and a nationwide initiative undertaken in Austria by the Leadership Academy scientific leaders.

1.4. Leadership/management development as an important factor in improving the development of learning

Several initiatives have been introduced by the Ministry of Education to support leadership focusing on learning, albeit in a manner not only restricted to the school head but also including teachers. An example of this is the introduction of the so-called “early warning system” (Frühwarnsystem), a regulation according to which teachers are required to contact parents immediately if and when they notice a decline in the learning achievement or behaviour of a pupil or a student, and to arrange a meeting to jointly find a solution to (an) actual problem(s) with a view to improvement on the matter in hand. The impact of this policy measure is noticeable in the decline of the number of retentions.

In 2005 a policy initiative was introduced which concerns the school head in particular, the so-called school-specific remediation policy (standortbezogenes Förderkonzept). Each school has to develop a school-specific programme as to how individual pupils or students are to receive the support they need to be best supported in their learning. Since teachers had previously been only used to administer and teach remedial classes, this implied a shift in their practices towards a more systemic way of looking at remediation. Most school leaders find it particularly demanding having to introduce an effective programme that deals with all students individually. It is too early today to substantiate the effectiveness of this policy based on evidence obtained so far.

There are some evaluation studies as part of international projects in which Austria took part (such as Carpe Vitam Leadership for Learning, see also Schratz, forthcoming), which cannot be seen as nationally representative ones. However, a research project funded by the Ministry of Education was launched in 2006, with the aim of examining, with a particular view on learning, leadership practices in schools that are participants of the Leadership Academy. Findings will not be available before early 2009.

In the context of the Leadership Academy, Wilfried Schley and Michael Schratz (2004) developed a diagram illustrating a chain of effects in their leadership work, serving as a mental web of reasonable relationships highlighting the process ranging from leading to learning and back again (see table 1). This chain of effects demonstrates the theory of how leadership impacts people, planning, culture and structure and also how, through interaction it generates action and results related to the goals of a particular school. It is used as a professional development tool to sensitize school heads towards the need to bind together leading and learning.
1.5. Research on educational leadership/management development

Several research projects and master theses/dissertations have been commissioned in connection with the Leadership Academy, all of which focus on leadership development. The Ministry of Education has commissioned the University of Innsbruck to conduct a pilot study on the effectiveness of the LEA, to be published in early 2009. These publications are all in German (see, for example, Leadership auf dem Prüfstand by Silvia Pool under http://www.leadershipacademy.at/publikationen.php).

1.6. Professional organizations/associations for school leaders

They do exist, but only in a loosely organized form. They do not play a major role in educational development. However, school heads themselves appear to be stronger if organized in unions. In Austria, several teachers’ unions exist, which are part of the national Trade Union Network. (Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund [ÖGB]). Within the unions there is a differentiation between various types of school (compulsory schools, academic secondary schools, secondary vocational schools and colleges etc.) and differentiation along partisanship, which is also an existing form of categorization (e.g. Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs [SPÖ], Österreichische Volkspartei [ÖVP] etc.). More recently, alternative groups of teachers and school leaders have started their own union representation with the purpose of functioning outside the ÖGB. School leaders do not have an extra representation among the unions but they are members of the teachers’ unions.

2. THE CHANGING ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERS IN CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

2.1. Legal framework

The duties and responsibilities of a school leader are regulated through laws established by the Austrian Parliament. „Bundesgesetz über die Ordnung von Unterricht und Erziehung in den im Schulorganisationsgesetz geregelten Schulen“ (Schulunterrichtsgesetz 1986 – SchUG) § 56:

(1) The school head has to arrange all matters regarding federal law, except issues under the jurisdiction of other elements of the schooling system or of supervisory authorities of education.

(2) The school head is the immediate superior of all teachers working at the school, and of all other attendants. He or she is responsible for running the school and for maintaining a regular relationship between the school, the pupils, legal guardians and (at secondary vocational schools) other staff entrusted with teaching duties.

(3) The school head is responsible for advising teachers on their teaching and their contribution to the education of the children; periodically, he or she also has to monitor both the quality of teaching and pupils’ learning performance.

(4) Apart from his or her educational and administrative duties, the school head has to see to it that all statutory provisions and instructions of supervisory school authorities are observed. Another responsibility assigned to the school head is to care for the guiding of official documents and the order in school. The school head has to arrange for a staff roster to be compiled for the supervision of students. He or she has to report perceived deficiencies to the the school supervisory authority.

(5) Other duties, incumbent upon the school head from other, particularly relevant instructions pertaining to public service law, remain unaffected.

(6) In schools where a permanent deputy leader is appointed within the school, he or she has to assist the school head in fulfilling his or her duties. Individual duties...
incumbent upon this deputy head have to be determined by service instructions given by the Federal Ministry of Education.

(7) In schools in which a teacher is appointed for the assistance of the school head, that assistant has to fulfil all administrative duties linked to pedagogy-related work in the school. Duties which are incumbent on this teacher have to be specified by the Federal Ministry of Education.

(8) In schools offering day care, where a teacher or educator is appointed for the assistance of the school head in supervisory duties, he or she has to fulfil all administrative duties closely linked with the supervisory part of the school. Duties incumbent on this teacher can be assigned either by the Federal Ministry of Education or by the school head.

§32: Responsibilities of office of school heads

(1) The school head has to fulfil all duties incumbent on his or her function conscientiously.

(2) The school head has to see to it that all teachers working at the school fulfil their duties in a regular, appropriate, financially conscious and economical manner. He or she has to guide them, give them appropriate instructions, eliminate mistakes and grievances if and when they occur or are raised respectively, and ensure adherence to obligations relating to office hours.

(3) Professional advancement of teachers by the school head needs to be done by promoting them with a view to their actual work performance.

(4) As a general rule, the school head has to turn up at his workplace and stay in the school building during teaching hours. In case of a temporary absence during teaching hours he or she has to provide a substitute. At schools with teaching hours in the mornings and afternoons, the school board can shorten the compulsory attendance of the school leader, in which case a substitute has to be provided.

(5) The school leader has to establish a strategic plan for staff requirements and personal development.

The tasks defined legally in the laws referred to above date back to 1984 and 1986 respectively. The corresponding duties have changed with an increased autonomy having been given to schools, which has also changed the role of school heads vis-a-vis the functions specified above. As a whole, legislation aimed at school reform has been directed at schools, which means that school heads as the direct superiors of teachers have to take on a leadership role in putting reforms into practice in a proper manner. In a sense, therefore, the school head is responsible for implementing laws and other legal regulations as well as instructions issued by the educational authorities. Since it is his or her duty to evaluate the work of the teaching staff, a school head has a strong influence on monitoring both teaching and learning at the school in question.

The strength in current policy on school leadership lies in the situation that school leaders have – within the narrow autonomous decision-making options available – great freedom in leading their schools according to their own leadership expectations. Since there is little external control of individual schools, school leaders have the opportunity of running their school according to their leadership skills. Consequently, there are schools which are held in high esteem by parents, teachers and students, while school heads also have a high reputation. Newspapers and journals regularly review schools, which creates a lot of publicity. A new Austrian school award, introduced by the Ministry of Education and to be offered for the first time in 2009, is another policy measure to stimulate the competence of school heads in how they can motivate schools to apply for the award.

2.2. Key competencies of school leaders

There are no national competency standards although the idea is paramount in debates nationwide. Competency-related expectations specified nationally for the training programs which are compulsory for newly appointed school heads and are offered by the University Colleges of Teacher Education.

2.3. Appointment of school leaders

The legal basis for the appointment of school leaders was regulated in 1996 in the LDG (Landeslehrer-Dienstrechtsgesetz [Provincial Service Code]) at the provincial level and the BDG (Beamten-Dienstrechtsgesetz [Civil Service Code]) at the national level. Initially, school heads are appointed provisionally for four years, but the conditions for an extension of that appointment depend on the completion of a course in management training, to be finished within four years of taking up the position. Moreover, the capabilities of school leaders also need to be proven.
2.4. Qualification of school leaders

The main “qualification” which is required in order to apply successfully for the position of school leader, is to have enough teaching experience, and a school leader is also expected to have had very good results in previous evaluations. Generally speaking, teachers only apply for school leadership positions for the type of school they have a teaching licence for, which means that they need to have a valid qualification (certificate) for teaching in secondary or compulsory schools. These pedagogical guidelines have been set by the Ministry of Education and are applied all over Austria for all types of schools. In private schools the criteria may vary, particularly in church schools where head positions are decided by the respective church authority, but if they are publicly recognized, applicants have to comply with the regulations of the teaching qualification of the respective school type. An informal requirement for a leadership position can be associated with numerous school heads who as former teachers were members of the teachers’ union or they either belong to or are close to a political party.

If a vacancy for the position of a school head is advertised, anybody with the necessary qualifications (no certificate or diploma is necessary) is invited to apply – very often teachers from the same school apply. First, a committee from the school screens the applicants through presentations, interviews etc. and selects three candidates ranking them in an order of priority and gives reasons for their selection. At this point, the shortlist is handed to the regional school board, which might change the rank order, but cannot opt for candidates who are not on the shortlist. In 70-80 percent of cases, candidates high on the shortlist are accepted, while in 20-30 percent of cases this is not what happens. Finally, the regional education authority, supported by the teachers’ union, the local community and the school inspector(s), chooses a candidate from this list. The shortlist containing federal school candidates is sent to the Ministry of Education for approval. The newly appointed school leader is then installed provisionally for a period of four years, during which he or she has to attend an obligatory management training course.

2.5. Sharing leadership functions

According to current policy, school leaders in Austria are still “lonely fighters” at their workplaces. Therefore, leadership is rarely distributed among others, with the exception of large, professionally oriented upper secondary schools. For people affected at all levels of the system – ministry, regional and local education school authority, school heads, teachers – this entails a high responsibility and an agency of individuals who feel that they have to do “everything”. As a consequence, those individuals are known to have acquired a high capacity of problem-solving at the operative level. The upside to this is the high competence of individual leaders at all levels, resulting in administrative excellence and motivation of individuals. The downside is the necessity of strong reliance on individuals within the system, something that does on the one hand more than occasionally lead to burn-out problems of engaged leaders, and, on the other hand, hinders the introduction of systemic thinking and acting through the distribution of leadership both at vertical and horizontal levels. Apart from the distribution of leadership regulated by law (deputy heads, bodies), different tasks are shared among teachers to distribute leadership responsibilities at various levels (class, year group, subject areas, library and laboratories, whole school etc.) in a loose system.

2.6. School-level strategy making

School level strategic planning and management has become important because of the greater autonomy schools have been granted. The core element of this is the school development plan (Schulprogramm), which contains the school’s guiding principles, an account of the status quo and of specific objectives and which measures quality in different areas. This plan is a temporary agreement with internal and external effect upon areas involved: It serves as a guideline for educational action, information to the public, a planning tool and a yardstick to be applied to the development of schools. Evaluation is an integral feature of the school development plan. It is needed to keep track of developments and to ascertain both the implementation and impact of measures. It needs to be performed at appropriate intervals, individually and jointly, by means of appropriate methods (see www.qis. for details). The school head has the responsibility of quality development within the school, an aim that requires particular leadership skills.
3. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

3.1. Responsibility for leadership development and educational management training

The compulsory educational management training programmes for newly appointed school heads are offered by the PHs (University Colleges of Teacher Education). The Ministry of Education set the prerequisites (see 11 above) in order to standardise the programmes across different school types and throughout Austria. A coordination group, consisting of representatives of the Federal Ministry, the providers of the training programmes from the provinces and two members of the consortium of school management trainers and mentors, concentrates on the quality control of diverse management programmes all over Austria and the professional development of trainers. In 2004 they commissioned an evaluation scheme for management programmes in the Austrian provinces to find out about their effectiveness and to identify new needs, if any, by participants.

The second cycle of professional development, the Leadership Academy, is a project model functioning as a joint venture by the Ministry of Education, the University of Innsbruck and a private consultancy firm.

3.2. Distribution of content

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3.3. Types of leadership/management training programmes

The conventional training programmes offered by the PHs (University Colleges of Teacher Education) consist of a six week training course, organized in a part-time schedule so that newly appointed heads can start working in their new position as school leaders. The programme envisages a course consisting of a “social phase” and an “individual phase”, i.e. a phase of self-study. The “social phase” consists of a compulsory “core module” and a compulsory choice, the so-called “extended modules”. These seminary-type modules are to be adjusted to the professional experience of the participants and are not only to arouse reflection, but also, by using concrete examples, are to create significant pedagogical tasks and topics of school leadership. Since the programme is concerned with a comprehensive mixture of various types of schools, participation is regarded as a chance to extend perspectives. Twenty-four working days are allotted for the school management course (240 study units (UE), each unit to last 45 minutes). Each year, training normally starts in summer and is to continue for three or four terms. Part of the course is held during non-teaching periods.

The “basic modules” with the following topics are compulsory:

1. Communication and leadership (with 38 UE = 4 1/2 days): Basic psychology of leadership; a new comprehension of leadership/guidance; an analysis of approach to dialogue; consultation and discussion of problems.
2. Conflict management (with 38 UE = 4 1/2 days): work on case examples; personal attitude towards conflict - situations and solutions; nature of conflicts; diagnosis of conflicts; specific strategies of conflict management; dealing with conflict as a managerial task.
3. Lesson supervision: analysis – consultation – assessment (with 22 UE = 3 days): analysis of pedagogical (didactic-methodical) drafts; categories and methods of lesson observation; cycle of consultation on lesson observation; re-registration and feedback procedures; educational supervision.
4. School development (with 22 UE = 3 days): an analysis of personal concepts; systemic attitudes and strategies; cooperation and team development alternatives; simulation of a development process; supportive measures for planning, implementation and evaluation of quality control.
5. Educational rights, vocational rights, household rights (with 22 UE = 3 days): an additional module offered for participants listed under the BDG (from general schools of academic secondary education and vocational schools of academic secondary education) – practice-orientated introduction to the basic issue of
educational rights, vocational rights and household rights; search strategies, decision-making techniques, phrasing decisions, issue of notifications; elaboration of case examples related to educational and vocational rights taken from practical examples affecting respective participants.

Additionally, heads of school of the category LDG are obliged to participate in 2 modules of the voluntary-compulsory “extended module” course. Heads of school in category BDG are obliged to participate in one such course.

Choice can be made from the following modules (with a duration of 3 days respectively):

- Educational, vocational and household rights (for heads of school in category LDG – see list above for contents)
- Administration and school administration

1. Personal development and collegial discussions
   - Meeting techniques – effective discussions
   - Time management and self-management
   - Project management
   - New curriculum – role of the head of school
   - Topics of current interest (Suggestions are orientated according to the priority of the respective educational policy, current necessities and needs of the target group.)

The “Individual Phase”, or self-study, is compulsory for approx. 80 study periods, 15 of which are intended for a study of literature, 25 for project work and 40 for further offers of training relevant for heads of schools. The individual phase can also be covered by professional learning communities or collegial team coaching. In the course of the study of literature, texts which have been chosen by the trainers are not only expected to inspire an in-depth and extended analysis of course material, but also preparation for new topics. The project work is designed to combine theory and practice, and should subsequently be finalized in the form of a written account of a project (about 20 pages), to be produced in agreement with the supervisor (trainer). Sometimes a portfolio has to be developed. Examples of suitable topics are listed in the study plan: “An account of a school development process or a project in the field of school autonomy, description of the practical implementation of the contents of a seminar and/or the application of literature in the daily task of teachers, a daily, written account of the seminar (“innovation diary”).” The project is to be completed within the basic module and is to be properly presented to other participants (via use of media tools – photos, wall newspapers, videos as well as home pages on the Internet). The attendance of training courses for further education, geared to the needs of heads of schools, along with the topics selected for training purposes, depend on specific needs of individual trainees and also on the information-related requirements of respective schools. Naturally, a trainee can take advantage of offers other than those of the regional in-service training institution, if a particular trainee wishes so. The study plan identifies topics from which to choose (e.g. school entrance, school autonomy, certain aspects of management as well as training for special skills required for leadership etc.).

3.4. Forms of leadership/management support beyond (initial) training

For a long time there have been short-term options at regional level rather than systematic professional development programmes. These options were created in support of the introduction of new reform initiatives with a character that was to be more informative than a systematic professional development scheme. Their significance lies in their aim to keep school leaders abreast with innovation both at regional and national levels. However, their impact was only limited, focused only on a particular type of thematic orientation.

In 2004, the Austrian Ministry of Education created the Leadership Academy, with the aim of addressing heads of Austrian schools as well as executives in the ministry and regional education authorities, members of the school inspectorate and in-service training institutions. It is offered to school leaders who have proven qualifications in the area of school management, school law or school administration (for school heads a certificate of the school management training courses is a prerequisite in their first years of practice).

The Leadership Academy was set up as a one-year upskilling project by the Federal Ministry for Education and the Arts and Culture with a view to instilling leaders in the educational system with a new notion of leadership geared to the specific requirements and conditions prevailing in the field of education. Participation is voluntary and open to principals at all types of school, as well as to leaders in the school administration, inspection and teacher education. "LEA", short for Leadership Academy, was launched in 2004. So far five cohorts (generations with their own profile and focus), who translate themselves into 1 300 participants, have received guidance in developing their own innovative projects at this institute.
The LEA concept is based on the assumption that
• school climate and school quality are largely influenced by school leadership; that
• school heads are among the principal change agents at schools and that
• against the background of a changed socio-political environment, school leaders
  would need to be able to deal competently with new challenges facing the educational
  system.

LEA aims at generating a new, clear-cut and transparent notion of leadership, and
at testing a leadership style based on appreciation, dialogue and shared leadership.
Assigning all learning tasks to teachers and students and all management tasks to
school heads will fall short of reaching the aim to be achieved. School heads should
be aware of their strategic role and they should assume responsibility for the effect of
leadership on the learning process affecting students. In line with the guiding principle
of “leadership for learning”, LEA is seeking to build awareness of the fact that any
type of leadership action must ultimately strive to create the best possible learning
conditions for young people within a specific regulatory environment. Leaders who
inspire, those who clearly delineate tasks and are able to motivate while de-emphasizing
detailed instructions, will be able to effectively guide and shape developments by way
of outcome feedback and evaluation.

Moreover, the diversity of participants and the involvement in a systemic learning
process automatically opens up a new vista of the system which facilitates a new
awareness of the personal field of work as well as the building of effective networks
within this field, and also the establishing of links beyond system boundaries. The best-
case scenario will be for LEA alumni to utilise new cross links within a traditionally
segmented educational system and to arrive at a new concept of the system, which will
considerably broaden the context of their day-to-day work.

The key elements of the Leadership Academy’s programme are, therefore, individual
learning and individual development of leadership skills, project management and
networking. Every year, a cohort of 250-270 participants progresses through four
“Forums”, i.e. three-day learning sessions consisting of keynote presentations and
subsequent group processing, work in learning partnerships between two participants
and collegial team coaching (CTC) groups, each comprising three sets of partnerships.
Supported and assessed by their learning partners and CTC groups, each participant
develops and implements a project in his or her own institution. Learning partners
and CTCs meet regionally in the interim between Forums and also come together
with other participants in regional networks.

If approximately 240 out of a total of 6000 Austrian school heads subscribe to the
new values and attitudes propagated by LEA every year, they will account for a not
inconsiderable percentage of 4%. If the programme is to be continued consistently, the
expected outcome will be a lasting increase in leadership quality as well as a systemic
change in both the culture and concept of professional work practice at schools.
Further information on the Leadership Academy is to be found at
www.leadershipacademy.at.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the Austrian school system various responsibilities concerning financial, personal
and other policy decisions are shared within the ministry by federal and the provincial
school authorities, different layers of the school system and school leaders. Due to
the manifold negotiation processes, school leaders are only left with little autonomy
in decisive decision-making for school improvement. Because of the ramified nature
of the way in which the task of decision-making is shared throughout the system,
there is too much loss of influence, which makes it difficult to perform results-based
management for both policy makers in the ministry and school heads at the far end of
the line. Both are perceived to be toothless when it comes to having a lasting impact on
the development of both the at-large system and, in particular, individual schools.

Hence recommendation 1: Strengthening of the position of school leaders in their
function both as individuals responsible for the improvement of the school and for
the ongoing teaching and learning process at the school.

Many qualified school leaders make considerable effort by putting into practice
their visions and ideas on school improvement and on how to establish better learning
for their pupils. However, many of those visions never become reality, partly due
to a lack of opportunities and resources, partly as a result of a shortage of capacities
required to achieve their objective. Many of them feel overloaded with administrative
tasks, especially school leaders at primary and general secondary school levels, leaders
who have little or no administrative support. Several provinces are either planning
or introducing new regional structures to reorganize school administration. It
is recommended that all administrative work for a certain number of schools be
organized centrally and be managed by people who have the right skills to do the same
work in less time.
Hence recommendation 2: School heads need some sort of administrative support to be able to perform the best possible leadership in their schools. Introducing a middle management could take the burden of administrative work off school leaders and would help distribute leadership within the school.

A study on the micro-political situation of school leaders in decision-making positions in schools has revealed that a recent tendency at ministerial level to introduce several reform acts concerning the performance of individual schools has placed a huge burden on school leaders. This has caused the work of school leaders to focus more on problem-solving than on solution-finding. Therefore, deficits arising from engagement with capacity-related issues of their work supersede thinking about next practice, which creates a tendency of vicious circles in problem-solving at the level of school management.

Hence recommendation 3: New reforms should leave enough room for school leaders to act as “system thinkers in action” (Fullan) in order to find their own solutions that will fit into the context of their own school rather than turn them into problem solvers fixing errors in the overall system.

Successful schools need school leaders who are able to see problems with a vision that extends beyond their own school buildings. Leaders at respective system levels need to engage other levels as well in order for policies and strategies to be shaped and reshaped, and the bigger picture that will emerge is to be communicated among individuals involved. To achieve this discursive development, networks and collaboratives – part of which already exist with the missing elements yet to be initiated – have to be nurtured and supported. Through such collaboration, the dilemma between top-down versus bottom-up, local and central accountability, informed prescription and informed professional judgement, could be dealt with constructively with a view towards system-wide change.

Hence recommendation 4: Leadership development needs to take place at all levels of the system by bringing together all schools types and levels by building networks, thereby creating a mindset for sustainable change.

There has been little research on matters of school leadership, which means that the foundations of research for evidence-based decision making are weak.

Hence recommendation 5: More research on school leadership is necessary for discussion in order to better understand a school leader’s role and to establish a sound basis for political decision-making.

5. CASE STUDY 1: THE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

5.1. Background

In 2004 the Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture launched an initiative to enhance innovative capacities of educational management at all levels of the school system. It was initiated as an innovative concept for the professionalisation of 600 school leaders and other executives in leadership positions in the Austrian school system in a very short period of time on the basis of the latest scientific findings on innovation and change.

The Leadership Academy thus addresses heads of Austrian schools as well as executives in the ministry, school inspectorate and in-service training. It is geared towards managers in leading positions and requires proven qualifications in the area of school management, school law or school administration as application permit.

The Leadership Academy comes alive through generations. Each generation is composed of 250 to 300 participants from the educational system, coming from all provinces and school types as well as the ministry and regional education authorities (e.g. inspectorate). This ensures right from the outset that a systemic impact on change and transformation is possible and that the “whole system” is involved in a joint learning process. The Leadership Academy is created in compliance with the principles of a learning organisation and cooperates closely with responsible decision-makers in the ministry.

5.2. Philosophy

The Leadership Academy (LEA) creates an intellectual as well as practical focus within a new paradigm of both personal and institutional improvement in leadership capacities at all levels within the school system. The programme for professionalism in leadership is embarked upon a new understanding of theory and practice, which transforms the educational system by assuming that the quality of leadership is the starting point for systemic innovation. The Leadership Academy creates a learning context aiming to influence the patterns and habits of professionals in leading positions with regard to their capacity of developing and transforming their organisations.

The Leadership Academy functions as a project organisation and is constituted through generations which form a nationwide network of change agents after graduation.
Participants have to complete a leadership programme which consists of four forums with individual, school-based project work and learning group meetings in between before they graduate from the Leadership Academy. It is carried out through a project management team, a scientific research team, an organisational support team linked with the Universities of Innsbruck and Zurich, and the Ministry of Education. Network co-ordinators in all Austrian provinces function as a regional support system assuring regional networking. The website [www.leadershipacademy.at](http://www.leadershipacademy.at) is a central communication platform, which offers participants of the Leadership Academy immediate and project-focussed support in the members’ sections.

5.3. Goals

The *Leadership Academy* provides assistance in the capacity building, qualification and empowerment of leaders in the Austrian educational system. Leaders are motivated to strategically target complex development tasks through priority setting, focussing on actual solutions, individual development projects and by creating organisation profiles. Participants learn to translate challenges into innovative development processes and entice and empower staff in their work environment to achieve top performance. The *Leadership Academy* aims to create a new mentality of leadership which draws on trust and authenticity rather than on power through position. The ultimate goal of the *Leadership Academy* lies in sustainably improving the preconditions and the learning process that affect young people in all educational institutions.

5.4. Principles

The *Leadership Academy* is committed to the following principles:

- Offering self-organised learning opportunities in a strong learning environment.
- Enforcing individual and collective learning through co-operation and collaboration in work-based learning projects.
- Combining personal initiative and responsibility with ownership and pro-active participation.
- Motivation through active participation in a demanding and sophisticated qualification process, which yields immediate profit for the whole system through action-based thinking at system level.
- Diversity through the pluralism of leaders from diverse school types, regions and levels of the hierarchy, which enhances system-based learning both horizontally and vertically.

5.5. Social Architecture

The *Leadership Academy* is composed as a network, its foundation resting on the smallest organisational entity, the *learning partnership*. This learning partnership is the home base for two participants, each of whom are aligned in a trustful, reciprocal coaching partnership. They support each other through explorative questions, help to define project milestones and guide each other through their individual learning processes. Three learning partnerships respectively merge in *collegial team coaching (CTC)* forming learning groups of six meant to consult and coach each other collegially.

Collegial team coaching is organized along the lines of a solution-oriented approach, through which working in a “problem space” is transferred towards a “solution space”. This goal-oriented, creative and inventive work is the foundation and philosophy of the CTC. Heterogeneous coaching groups of six are combined together at a regional level. These regional groups are co-ordinated by their respective network co-ordinators who co-ordinate all LEA Generations in the Bundesländer. One LEA Generation consists of 250 to 300 participants forming *learning partnerships*, CTCs and *regional groups*.

5.6. Processes

Interested leaders can register online at the LEA homepage [www.leadershipacademy.at](http://www.leadershipacademy.at). According to the regional contingents, they are nominated by the regional school authority to the ministry, which is to process registration and participation.

Kick-off takes place in the *First Forum*, which gives participants orientation on the philosophy, organisation and structure of the *Leadership Academy* and the underlying processes. They are introduced to the approach of setting their own goals and choosing their personal professional projects which constitute the heart of their individual development. Centre stage takes the creation of trust into the network, the forming of *learning partnerships* and CTCs and the elaboration of possible innovation themes. All participants of the same *generation* meet at three *Forums*, each lasting for three days, and a final two-day *Certification Forum*, which is dedicated to the presentation and
appraisal of the results. The certification process signifies that participants become members of the Leadership Academy. Between Forums the learning partnerships and the CTCs meet regionally or locally. When considering their individual development projects, they reflect on the reactions of their stakeholder groups in their schools, education authorities and inspector systems or of those in in-service training institutions. These processes are developed through cycles of anticipation, action and reflection. The principle of ownership and responsibility is combined with goal and result, which demands respect, openness and flexibility from everybody involved.

In the Second Forum the individual development projects of participants are defined, developed and outlined, using project management methods and tools. In this phase the CTCs are responsible for collaborative reflection on individual development processes with a view to innovative ideas for changing the patterns of thinking along old solutions. In the Third Forum participants reflect on their mutual experience in the context of the implementation of their development projects. This is the creative space where scepticism, resistance, conflicts and tensions come to the fore in the same way as agreement, motivation and enthusiasm do. Different workshops on communication, motivation, conflict resolution and decision making are offered as a support for individual learning and capacity building. Art workshops, dance or survival camp techniques support the holistic learning approach.

In the Certification Forum participants present their professional learning processes and their results – first in the intimacy of their collegial team coaching groups. They then decide collaboratively on one project of their CTC to be presented to other participants in a final phase of parallel sessions. For successful certification each participant of the Leadership Academy has to hand in a thesis on their individual and professional development process in a written form.

5.7. Conclusions

The Leadership Academy as a network organisation:

Following the concept of network organisations as loosely coupled systems kept together through communication and identification, the Leadership Academy can be regarded as a successful example. Participants have adopted the network culture without difficulty and have also integrated it into their (inter)actions.

They practice “sharing and caring” in a successful manner, they communicate openly with a high level of trust and develop mutual respect and understanding in heterogeneous entities. The notion of innovation and “next practice” is well anchored, even though not all participants have arrived at a change of pattern with the same intensity. A qualitative change within their mindset has taken place and is becoming visible in new ways of thinking and action taking shape. Leadership has become an attitude reflected in their behaviour, and participants do not see leadership as a status entitlement but a willingness of servant leadership and that of taking on responsibility. In this way a strong culture of acceptance and mutual support has developed.

Network structure can be seen in a variety of relationships. The most intimate one is learning partnership which manifests itself as a chance of genuine dialoguing, mutual coaching and counselling, and each participant is part of this learning partnership. The next, bigger network entity is the collegial team coaching group (CTC), which supports the reflection and development aspects of individual innovation projects. The regional networks constitute an even bigger entity and connect regional projects, forming strategic alliances while creating regional publicity.

The processes in the Leadership Academy network are methodologically defined and give clear orientation. As a LEA member, each participant is familiar with the workings of a CTC and is able to conduct collegial team coaching. Each participant is able to distinguish between different phases of an innovative development project and can equally design such phases. The processes of “next practice” and pattern change are standard procedures for them. Also, they can systematically plan communication processes and are capable of applying them strategically.

An identity can thus grow from the culture, structure and processes of the network, which defines the strategy of the Leadership Academy. This can be a springboard for vision building towards future perspectives. The following LEA Generations have shown how much potential, energy and attraction the Leadership Academy enforces.

6. CASE STUDY 2: THE LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL OF H.

6.1. School Context

The case (lower secondary) school is not far from the capital city of Vienna, therefore several large companies are located in the area. The village of H. and therefore the catchment area for the school’s students can be called an industrial community. Since communities are responsible for parts of the school budget, this is an important aspect.
The student population comes from both blue and white-collar families, some have more of an agrarian background as villages around H. are inhabited mostly by farmers. Many people daily commute either to large industrial firms or to Vienna. That is why students, who are often alone at home and are, therefore, called “key kids”, a phenomenon that gives rise to social problems that the school has to deal with, while many children also come from single parent households.

Mention should be made of the fact that after some decline in student population the number of students attending H. Secondary School has for the past few years been increasing. This is remarkable since a) the number of young people in Austria is generally decreasing, b) many parents try to send their children to the Gymnasium (academic secondary school) for prestige purposes, where student numbers still grow. One third of the students leaving HSH attend five-year upper secondary professional schools (some also take part in general academic upper secondary education) leading to both professional education and university entrance qualification, one third attend other types of school and one third finish compulsory school education after an extra year at the polytechnic school to take up employment without delay. HSH is ambitious to keep in contact with the schools which take on their students in order to obtain feedback on their further educational careers.

6.2. Buildings and Surprising

The school building was erected in the seventies of the last century and was refurbished about 15 years ago. HSH is situated at the center of the community and is part of a school centre including a primary school and a polytechnic school. It is the aim of the staff to turn both the interior and part of the school surroundings into an attractive place in order to put project-oriented learning into practice. With its attractive social architecture HSH has become a place for students to live and gain experience in. Because of the attractive schooling opportunities that are available in the neighbouring city, HSH is in competition with the academic secondary school in the vicinity. This has led HSH to offer a differentiated educational profile.

6.3 Focuses and Projects

Parents, the school inspectorate, community representatives and others regard the school as a place preparing students efficiently for further school education (upper secondary) through teacher engagement and a new subject called “socially creative learning” (SCL), which aims at preparing young people to be able to deal with conflicts and problems in a productive way in their everyday life.

For 12 years SCL has been the highlight of teaching and learning. In this “subject area” teachers focus their teaching on the personality development of their students by strengthening their individual strengths. Creating a reliable learning environment is an important aspect of the school’s approach to teaching and learning. Another focus is informatics and English as a working language in six subject areas. HSH is also a pilot school for educational standards in mathematics, English and German. It offers so-called “master courses” for students aiming for further school education.

The school has a strong project orientation and it also organizes cross-curricular activities across individual classes. They not only offer internal projects but also various projects with the local community and clubs. In order to attract students from more remote areas the school leader aims at offering meaningful afternoon activities.

6.4. Teaching Staff

There are 6 male and 14 female teachers at the school, whose average age is comparatively low. Some teachers live at places as far as a 2-hour drive away and still hold down this job because they like the attractive teaching and learning environment. In 2007/08 the school had 182 students in 9 classes.

6.5. Analysis

We have chosen this school because we have visited it in our Leadership Academy research project as a case study for leadership for learning.

As regards the future direction of the school and its vision, several members of staff report that the vision and ideas do not only come from the school leaders but that the whole school is involved in finding a common direction. Interviewees have mentioned that the school puts various projects into practice, which they see as an indication of putting visionary ideas into practice, which is not a typical way of organizing teaching and learning in Austrian schools.

It is also remarkable that the school has a strong orientation towards the school partners: The close relationship between school, community, clubs, for example, becomes visible in projects aimed at recycling and health education.
Almost all interviewees from outside the school have mentioned that teachers at the school show a high level of commitment in their work, which gives the place a high reputation.

The school leader is characterized by her strong personal commitment and her individual drive. They also mention her intense ambition for high performance via contacts, the excellent communicative climate and the amicable relationship among teachers.

According to data emerging from questionnaires, which do not reflect such a high rating in actual results and information based on the head’s self assessment, she does not seem to have fully achieved her goals of putting those ambitious aims into practice, objectives such as mobilizing her teaching force to the extent she was hoping to. This also becomes apparent in the issue of “building up an organizational infrastructure”, where questionnaire answers do not give her the sort of high credits that she is given in other areas. Questionnaire data seems to highlight that the school leader aims at installing team work more intensively and that she is determined to give the structural aspect of her work higher priority.

The head herself uses her competence to accept individuality and appreciate heterogeneity a relative high rating, which can be put down to the fact that she sees individual learning and individual support as a central educational challenge.

Working conditions are characterized by a relatively strong awareness of achievement and by a particularly good atmosphere, e.g. the staff room with its living room ambience.

Parents and community representatives also mention and document the fact that the school head is seen working on the intensification of project-oriented learning. It is primarily her merit that SCL puts an unquestionable emphasis on teaching and learning. This attitude has a high standing in the eyes of the school environment including the school partners.

The interview results by the parents show that the school leader shows character strength by walking the walk, by always being available for her staff and students and by her personal commitment. Teachers and students do not seem to assess this personality traits in the same way, which is attributable to the fact that her personal care is now seen as standard practice by many at the school.

6.6. Conclusions

The interviews and observations at the school give the impression of a school which has successfully put “leadership for learning” into practice. The school leader has a strong vision shared by most staff members. The parents and the community stand behind the school and its staff. They feel that their children undergo the experience of encountering personalised learning, that they are taken seriously by their teachers and that they also get the necessary support for learning.

The school leader is not a charismatic leader in a traditional sense, she is more of an orchestrator of activities working behind the scenes, opening up opportunities, using relationships as a driving force for enhancing commitment and thus creating an atmosphere of warmth and excellent communication. Although she realizes her leadership ideas mostly via dialogue with individuals, she successfully engenders organizational capability, due mostly to the demonstration of her personality features.

The strengths of the school community lies in its strong working relationships, which can be summarised by the following characteristics:
• most members of staff feel connected to each other,
• openness, trust and confidence characterize the interaction inside and outside the school,
• continuity of leadership and staff,
• formal and informal leaders have a strong working relationship.
7. REFERENCES


1. Carpe Vitam is an international research and development project funded for three years until December 2005 by the Wallenberg Foundation in Sweden, with further financial support from participating countries. The project is directed from the University of Cambridge by John MacBeath, and co-directed by David Frost and Sue Swaffield. Team leaders in other countries are: George Bagakis (University of Patras, Greece), Neil Dempster (Griffith University, Brisbane), David Green (Centre for Evidence Based Education, Trenton, New Jersey), Leif Moos (Danish University of Education), Jorunn Möller (University of Oslo, Norway), Bradley Portin (University of Washington) and Michael Schratz (University of Innsbruck, Austria).
2. The “Educational and Teaching Tasks”, i.e. the learning/teaching aims as well the contents of the individual modules are classified respectively.
1. THE CONTEXT AND KEY ISSUES OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Today the Czech school system is facing many challenges and changes which require new attitudes and new competencies from headmasters and teachers alike.

The Czech school system has undergone gradual reforms since 2001. Powers have been shifted to lower levels of administration. The powers and responsibilities of school heads have increased with the introduction of the concept of legal entity. The School Act sets out the rights and responsibilities of individual partners in the new decentralised and participative system, defining, at the same time, their roles.

The role of the state is to specify rules of the game, strategic goals and the general direction of development, to create conditions in the economic area as well as support systems, to establish the main principles of indirect management (curricular policy, evaluation, financing, support for school and teacher activities) and to exert permanent pressure for these common goals to be achieved. The role of regional government and local municipalities is to assert authentic local interests and to assume responsibility for the establishment, efficiency and functioning of the school network. The role of schools is to exercise their professional responsibility in putting into practise education-related goals that they set for themselves within the framework of government decrees. Cooperation between public administration and self-governing bodies as well as participation by the society as a whole is needed at all levels.

A number of fundamental changes in the creation of the curriculum are also brought into effect by the School Act. It introduces a system of multi-level educational programmes. The highest level within the system is represented by the State Educational Programme, which is issued by the Ministry of School, Youth and Sports. This document outlines the core principles of the curricular policy of the state along with its generally binding requirements. The lower level of curricular documents, the framework of educational programmes (produced for all school levels), are also issued centrally, and they specify general requirements while also defining a framework for the design of learning-related planning.

School Educational Programmes constitute the lowest level within the system. The schools are to produce this curricular document independently. Every school needs to assert its own curricular priorities, areas which are thought to be of crucial importance to them. Teachers are to opt for their own approaches and methods on how to teach the students. Teachers offer students not only factual knowledge, their responsibility is also to provide them with a systematic and balanced structure of basic...
concepts and relations that make possible the use of information in a meaningful context of knowledge and life experience. A balance between knowledge, skills and the acquisition of attitudes and values is very important. The emphasis is put on the acquisition of key competencies; education has a new orientation, i.e. children are to learn how to acquire knowledge, how to act and live together, how to solve problems, how to exist in society, while a system of values based on quality is also a key issue here.

Teachers need to cooperate more closely with each other; they need to discuss and examine the curriculum of the subjects they teach. The stress is put on the development of integrated and linked curricular content, where new forms of tuition (e.g. project teaching) need to be applied. In all school subjects, a number of new topics such as 'European integration', 'multicultural education', 'environmental education' and 'education for a healthy life style' emerge across the curriculum.

School principals need to take on board all these changes as they have, by now, become managers whose job it is to address issues on their economic and personnel agenda (staff recruitment, supervision, performance evaluation and development), strategic planning, organizational development, data management and public relations. Headmasters are seen as representatives liaising with parents, school council, various establishments and diverse bodies of state control.

School headmasters are also leaders who motivate people and are in charge of teaching staff, individuals who form new strategies and visions. Principals, therefore, have to solve a variety of problems, many of which are new to them. In order to obtain good results for all the reforms currently underway in Czech schools, it will be necessary to have competent headmasters in the schools – individuals who are not only good managers but also good leaders.

1.1. The role of leadership management development in national education development strategies

The necessity of the development of leadership management is mentioned in all important national educational strategies:

a) The National Programme for the Development of Education (“The White Paper”) was adopted by the Czech Government on February 7th, 2001 (Government Decree No. 113). This document embraces training for managerial staff as the way forward. "Managerial staff at schools must have a clear idea of what they wish to achieve and how they are planning to do it, given the particular circumstances of a particular school. They should be aware of the fact that no fundamental change can be effected unless they include committed teachers in the decision-making process. They must be prepared for situations where their colleagues will not necessarily understand their intentions, or, worse still, will oppose them, and they must know how to handle them. Therefore, the training of managerial staff in the education sector must become a priority within the system of teacher training, organized by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.”

b) 2004 – School Act, Act of Educational Staff – criteria for the system of headteacher career.

c) 2006 – MEYS – standards, modules, obligatory content, system of accreditation.

1.2. National educational programmes aiming at leadership/management development

a) Compulsory management development training, Positional Training I (“PTI”), for managerial staff at schools and school-type facilities is designed for headteachers who have been appointed to their position quite recently or are to assume this position now; for deputy headteachers or candidates who want to submit their bids to a selection procedure for a managerial position at a school or school-type facility. This training course should make the participants sufficiently familiar with basic education and labour law and with school finance and funding issues in order to be capable of running an educational institution.

The training course encompasses 60 hours of instruction, 60 hours of participants’ self-study, and a four-day study visit to another school. The training course is to be completed via a practically-oriented first examination taken before an examining board, appointed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. After passing this exam, successful course participants will be awarded a certificate. The scope of the management development training, Positional Training I, is conceived in such a manner that it should prevent a school manager who has successfully completed the training from making blunders in the areas covered. The training course also offers managerial staff at schools and school-type facilities a chance to network, which is an important factor in mutual support and assistance. The scope of PT I is based on the key professional competences of managerial staff at schools and school-type facilities as well as on the specification of responsibilities following on from the provisions of the School Act.
The training programme is structured into 4 modules:

1. Legal fundamentals
2. Labour law
3. School financing
4. Organization of school-related and educational processes

b) Positional Training II ("PT II") for managerial staff at schools and school-type facilities is designed for managerial staff who have held this position for 5 years or more, headteachers who wish to strengthen their professional competence and other staff determined to gain a better insight into school management issues. This training course should provide participants with a more in-depth type of theoretical background and related practical skills needed for the efficient management and development of schools – in line with the needs of the local community and the region – based on cutting-edge trends in education science and psychology, as well as the school management segments of science, law and economy. After finishing this training course, the school manager will be assumed to have the competence needed to create a school strategy, to be capable of guaranteeing the high educational standards expected and also of contributing to the continuous improvement of the educational process.

He/she should also be able to secure equal opportunities for everybody and be responsible for an effective and efficient use of all resources so that the school will be able to meet its targets. Day-to-day school management, organization and administration, favourable public relations aimed at the parents, municipality, region and social partners etc. should also be within his/her grasp.

PT II prepares trainees for managerial performance at schools and school-type facilities while offering them training in the field of state and public administration at a level considerably higher than PT I. The training course creates the preconditions for gaining knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for professional school management capable of keeping up with changes in the system of management, state administration and self-government. The training should give the participants not only an in-depth understanding of school management issues, but also good leadership, managerial and personal skills and competencies to cover all areas of their professional responsibilities. The training course uses a number of different practical training methods while reinforcing the Leadership and Education Process Management modules in order to create stimuli for self-assessment, development of emotional intelligence areas and social skills. Structured into 6 modules, the training course is scheduled for a 2-year period and is composed of a total of 364 hours of combined training. This form of training allows for a number of special needs to be taken into account, and to be determined mainly by the position and employment relationships of trainees. Not only do training patterns allow the professional and personal experience of trainees to be exploited, but they also create preconditions for a complex interlinking of theory and practice to a higher extent than is possible in a course based on classroom teaching. The training course will be wrapped up by the so-called '2nd management development exam' before an examining board. Once again, a trainee who has successfully completed the training course will be awarded a certificate.

The training programme is structured into 6 basic modules. These 6 components are compulsory and course participants are strongly advised to attend the practical workshops.

Core modules:
Module 1: School management – theoretical and practical
Module 2: Law
Module 3: Economy and financial management
Module 4: Educational process control and management
Module 5: Leadership
Module 6: Managerial practice

c) Further in-service training of managerial staff in the educational sector encompasses all types of managerial staff training except positional training and advanced study. It serves to extend and/or deepen a manager’s knowledge and skills in various areas, and, as a rule, takes into account his or her current needs. This type of training provides trainees with the kind of knowledge and skills they need within the context of a school and its agenda for future plans, something that trainees have had no opportunity of obtaining within the framework of positional training or advanced study.

The content of training courses is not directly reviewed by the Ministry of Education, and it can cover a variety of problems. Additional advanced training options offered for managerial staff in the highly diversified educational sector is provided by various institutions: advanced study facilities, universities, secondary schools of education, foundations and companies. Positional Training I is organized by centrally supervised educational centres functioning under the administrative control of the Ministry of Education. Specialists at the Ministry have trained instructors for individual modules, and evaluation tools have been developed for the assessment of both trainers and study-scope contents through a pilot project. Positional Training II has been tested
by the Educational Management Centre and the Faculty of Education at the Charles University in Prague through a pilot project composed of ‘combined learning’ as well as ‘distance learning’, and the project is now ready for implementation at university level.

We conclude from our experience with the proposed Positional Training I and II that this is the most comprehensive form of school management training in the Czech Republic. Thanks to their top-level trainers, students gain access to up-to-date information and are able to make contact with leading lecturers in their local regions. From an organizational point of view, the training course is easily accessible since the majority (90 percent) of courses are launched regionally.

1.3. The role of improving learning as a strategic goal in national education strategy documents

The development of learning appears in the following documents, aimed at a national education strategy, as a goal of strategic importance:

- Strategy of Lifelong Learning Education (Ministry of Education)
- School National Standards for Kindergartens, Basic and Secondary Schools – Framework Educational Programme – School Educational Programme

According to the National Programme for the Development of Education, the so-called White Paper – a crucial curricular document – the changes which Czech schools are currently facing “... are putting new requirements on schools and teachers, not only in terms of new professional and personal qualities such as creativity, initiative, personal responsibility and professionalism but also with a view to the strengthening of teamwork throughout the school, the development and implementation of a long-term vision, a common vision of their development, a capacity for mutual self-reflection, a realistic assessment of their own strengths and the assertion of their personal goals. The most demanding aspect of all is the role and personality of school heads who are required to act in a non-authoritarian way but with the authority of a democratic leader.”

It is possible to find similar proclamations in other strategic school-related documents as well. This illustrates the necessity of improving the social status of Czech teachers, but leadership development as an important factor in improving the development of learning is not explicitly mentioned in any of these documents.

1.4. Professional association for school leaders

The Association of Headmasters at Basic Schools in the Czech Republic was founded in 2005. Individuals as well as corporate bodies from the area of basic education can become members. Membership is optional and the objectives of this association are to serve the interests of its members, to function as a negotiating partner for the Ministry of School, Education and Sports and for other government institutions in the issues of educational policy and of basic education, to be a partner for universities training future teachers and to create conditions for the further training of headmasters and teachers.

2. THE CHANGING ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERS IN CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

2.1. Legal framework

The school principle decides in all matters concerning education and other school-related services, he/she is in charge of the issue of the School Educational Programme, the annual report, he/she is responsible for the self-evaluation of the school and has the responsibility of issuing regulations that apply to a particular school. The headmaster is responsible for the pedagogical and professional quality of education and other school services.

The principal is a subordinate to the founder of the school (Czech schools are founded by local municipalities, regional governments or the Ministry of School, Youth and Sports) and the School Council. The School Council is founded by the founder. One third of the School Council members are representatives of the school founder, one third of members are delegates of parents and one third of members are elected by the school staff. Elections at the School Council are held every three years. Headmasters are excluded from School Council membership and have a limited, advisory role when attending School Council meetings.

The School Council has consultations over the content of the School Educational Programme; its responsibility is to approve both annual reports and the School Rules. The Council also decides upon the manner in which pupils are to be assessed and is involved in the processing of school development plans. Budget proposals are to be
accepted following a debate by the School Council, which also monitors the economy of the school and holds debates on the issue of the Czech School Inspectorate visitatorial reports.

School teachers are members of the “Pedagogical Council”, which works as an advisory body for the headmaster. The Pedagogical Council holds debates on the issue of all fundamental curricular documents and on that of the assessment of the educational activities of the school.

2.2. The competences of school leaders

In the Czech Republic the professional and qualification-related requirements of a managerial position are stipulated by law. As a rule, the position of head teacher encompasses that of a manager, a leader, an economist, a lawyer, a team builder and also an evaluator, but also that of an individual equally subject to evaluation. Legally stipulated key competences are covered by a system of task-related professional preparation:

A. Positional Training I – competences in the field of labour law, basics of school legislation, financing, financing of schools and their management. The priority is to achieve familiarity with the procedures used in schools and educational establishments.

B. Positional Training II – the professional, conceptual and social competencies of managerial staff, which have created the conditions for effective management and school development in the context of a longer timeframe and in co-operation with the partners of the school. Interlink to the training of teachers and to Positional Training I allows for more in-depth knowledge and skills to be acquired, and for the assuming of innovative attitudes in the field of pedagogy and psychology. Additional core competences are used to create a school strategy while they guarantee the high educational standards expected and they contribute to the continuous improvement of the educational process. The demands of a managerial position placed on any individual entail the ability to seek equal opportunities for everybody and also the need to be responsible for an effective and efficient use of all resources in order for the school to meet its targets. The day-to-day school management, organization and administration, good public relations targeting parents, municipality, region, social partners, etc. should also be within his/her grasp.

2.3. Appointment of school leaders

The nomination of a headmaster is based on the results of the recruitment process. The headmaster is usually nominated for an unlimited term and can be dismissed by the school founder if he/she acts in breach of his/her duties or if that individual fails to accomplish the obligations placed upon him/her by the job. It is either the Czech School Inspectorate, the school founder or some other control body that will review the situation to confirm that a breach of rules has in fact occurred.

The founder of the school is responsible for the process of headmaster recruitment. This founder is to appoint a commission composed of its representatives, the regional government, the Czech School Inspectorate, an expert from the school management sector (usually a headmaster from another school), a representative of the pedagogical staff of the school where the future headmaster is to be employed, and one member of the School Council.

Candidates for the position of headmaster should meet the requirements stipulated by law (a Master’s Degree which allows them to work in the teaching profession, appropriate experience in teaching – a 4-year work record as a school teacher is necessary for basic schools, a 5-year work record is needed for secondary schools). As a rule, an integral part of the application process for the position of a headmaster is the elaboration of the candidate’s vision regarding management and strategic development in respect of the school that the candidate wishes to work at. The commission examines having both the knowledge on school management and on legislation and the capability of a candidate to be a good manager and school leader. Candidates applying for the job can either be tested via a written test or can be interviewed by the commission, the interview lasting up to 60 minutes. The most eligible candidate will then be appointed headmaster of the school.

2.4. Qualification of school leaders

According to the Act of Educational Staff of 2004 headmasters have to acquire a specific qualification which makes them eligible to perform the obligations and tasks of a headmaster. This qualification is to be obtained at universities, via completion of special courses offered within the system of further education for teachers or at other in-service training institutions.

Qualification for the position of headmaster is not a necessary condition for applicants to be accepted for that job. But the successful candidate who is selected
during the recruitment process and who eventually becomes a headteacher needs to obtain this qualification within two years of being offered that position.

2.5. Sharing of leadership functions

The extent to which leadership functions are shared depends on the size of the school. Headmasters at big schools have two deputy functionaries who focus on specific areas such as business/operation management, curriculum, human resources, strategic planning and data management. In schools where the principal has only one deputy, the extent to which leadership functions are to be shared is not particularly wide.

Schoolteachers also play an important role in the principle of sharing leadership. Teachers should advise the headmaster on the subject of curriculum and strategic development as members of the Pedagogical Council.

With the introduction of the so-called School Educational Programme, the function of coordinator who works as an advisor for the creation of that curricular initiative has also been introduced at each school since the School Educational Programme is perceived as a flexible set of ideas that reflect de facto progress, making possible an adjustment in the actual needs of students.

To address curricular issues and student support services, there are specialists and teachers who work as school psychologists, teachers for special education, study advisors, coordinators of environmental education and coordinators of preventive activities.

The School Council functions as another important supervisory and advisory body as part of the implementaion of the principle of shared leadership.

2.6. School-level strategy making

Schools are required to prepare their own School Educational Programmes. This programme is the main school strategy scheme in line with the structure of the national curricular document – the Framework Educational Programme.

Additional mandatory documents to be produced at each school are:

- the Annual School Report – focus on statistical data
- the Self-Evaluation School Report – focus on assessment, process analysis, strengths and weaknesses based on national documents and those aimed at strategic issues at school level

Schools also integrate elements of learning improvement into their institutional strategies as it is one of the existing evaluation criteria for the Czech School Inspectorate.

School leaders need to acquire competences associated with those of leaders rather than those of managers. The headteacher is the guarantee for the quality of educational process and – in the broadest sense of the word – for the educational activities pursued at a school.

3. APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Responsibility for leadership development and educational management, training and leadership management training programmes

There are several grades of educational management training. The basic and compulsory grade is called Study for School Headmasters. This training is provided by the National Institute for Further Education and other in-service training centres. The minimum number of instruction hours, set via the Ministerial Regulation, is at 100 contact hours. The content of this grade includes legal fundamentals, labor law, school financing, school and educational process organization. As recent practice has highlighted the insufficiency of this content, the introduction of other subjects into the Study for School Headmasters – such as personnel management, health and safety issues into the mandatory selection of course material – is now under discussion.

Another stage in educational management training, the Study for Leading Pedagogical Workers, comprises 350 instructional hours and is offered by universities. Those attending this course are to be trained in subjects such as theory and practice of school management, application of law at school, economic and financial mangement, educational process management and personnel management. Graduates of this training obtain a bachelor’s degree, a guarantee for higher salaries.
Furthermore, a number of workshops and seminars are offered to school principals, as part of the ‘lifelong learning’ initiative. These seminars focus on specific topics and current issues and are provided by the National Institute for Further Education, universities and various in-service training centres.

Although there is no special support system for school leaders at the moment, it might be very useful to develop such a system as the role of principals is becoming an activity where expectations and obligations vis-a-vis the job continue to grow and intensify.

4. CASE STUDY 1: BASIC SCHOOL TEREZÍN

4.1. School characteristics and relationship with the local community

Characteristics of the school

Basic school Terezín was founded as an allowance organisation of the town of Terezín. Terezín is located 60 kms northwest from Prague and has approximately 3000 inhabitants.

This basic school is the only one in the town and has the capacity of 600 pupils. Today it is attended by 350 students in 18 classes. Most of them (approximately 70 percent) are commuters, either from the neighbouring settlements (České Kopisty, Počaply, Nové Kopisty), or from municipalities located at a distance of up to 15 kilometres away.

The school also has an after-school centre with the capacity of 125 students and a school canteen with the capacity of 500 day-boarders.

The headmistress of the school has one deputy; the teaching staff comprises of 28 teachers, one teacher’s assistant and 4 schoolmistresses. There are 14 service staff employed by the school. All employees (teachers and other staff) have the required qualifications, 4 teachers have reached retirement age.

Relationship with the local Community

The relationship between the school and the local community is very good. The municipality is involved in matters related to school life and it takes part in major academic events as well. The school is involved in a co-operation project with the Terezín Memorial (that institution was founded in commemoration of the victims of Nazi atrocities during the occupation of the Czech lands during World War II), with the Home for the Physically Handicapped and the Home for the Elderly in Terezín. The school is a participant of various charity events and is also involved in activities such as concerts at Christmas, cooperation with the local library etc.

The Agencies of the School and their Functions

There is a School Council, a Parents’ Council and a School Parliament involved in various activities at Terezín school.

The School Council has been in operation since 1996 and the headmistress is of the view that the school has benefited from its activity. The School Council meets at least twice annually; it consists of three representatives of the municipality, three representatives of the school and three representatives of parents.

The Council of Parents consists of representatives of parents from individual classes and it is an important consulting body for the headmistress. Almost every meeting is attended by the mayor of Terezín as a guest. The meeting of parents takes place once every month with the headmistress or her assistant also attending. The Council of Parents cooperates closely with the principalship and is mainly involved in extracurricular activities.

The Council of Parents co-finances various school events (skiing course, competitions etc.). Some parents assist the school in the organisation of school trips, performances at the school etc.

The School Parliament has become an important part of school governance. Its foundation was met with huge interest from students, who were offered the opportunity to participate in the affairs of the school. They meet approximately five times a year and mostly discuss extracurricular activities, performances, concerts and other school events but they can also comment on every modification or updating of school regulations.

4.2. School leadership

The headmistress is focussing her efforts on improving the quality of education; teachers are expected to change their teaching methods, use innovative methods rather than ex-cathedra teaching. Quality teaching, viewed from the vantage point of the headmistress, is the equivalent of creative teaching. At the same time she is seen grappling with problems due to the lack of instruments that can be used to motivate teachers.
4.3. Teachers and their participation in management, leadership and change enforcement

Teachers have regular meetings with the headmistress. There are subject commissions at the school which tackle specific problems of individual subjects, interconnection among subjects etc.

4.4. Obstacles to management and leadership

Legislative obstacles are frequent changes in legislation, shortage of time and money, stereotypes, politics, problematic issues of competence related to the performance of head teachers, obstacles to motivation for innovation etc.

4.5. School educational programme analysis – priorities

School priorities

In its school educational programme, the basic school asserts the following priorities very clearly:

1. **Foreign languages** – English is taught from year one as part of non-linguistic lessons, e.g. English songs are taught during music lessons; during lessons focussing on art the colours are taught in English etc.). One local teacher has designed a special methodology for teachers who are not teachers of English. Training is also offered here for teachers from other schools. English is taught from the third year and pupils are to start learning another foreign language when they are in the sixth year (German, French or Russian).

2. **ICT** – not only the teaching of students but also teacher training is of the essence here – the facility of a PC with access to the Internet is available to each teacher. The school provides, whenever it can, assistance in the supply of classrooms with the most up-to-date teaching aids such as data projectors.

3. **Sports** – the school makes every effort to motivate pupils, to little avail, to be involved in the activity of sports interest groups. Only one such line of activity has materialised so far.

4. **Charity** – cooperation with various foundations, (Home for the Physically Handicapped, Home for the Elderly etc.)

5. CASE STUDY 2 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

“Study for School Headmasters”

5.1. Background

‘Study for School Headmasters’ is a program run nationwide by the National Institute for Further Education. It is necessary for everyone who wishes to work as a headmaster at any school in the Czech Republic to complete this programme. This obligation is stipulated in the Act of Educational Staff. Until now it has been supported partly by the Ministry of Education, and Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic as a so-called national development programme and partly by its participants. Finances from the budget can be offered by the Ministry to any school for purposes of further education, although financing is subject to approval by the school headmaster.

5.2. Target group

The programme is intended for newly appointed headmasters, deputies, teachers preparing themselves for principalship and those whose responsibility is to be extended to managerial procedures.

5.3. Content

The programme is based on the definition of competences which are necessary for school headmasters, and consists of four basic modules:

A. Legal fundamentals
B. Labour law
C. School financing
D. School and educational process organization
As a part of the programme there is a three-day traineeship to be organized in a particular school or an educational institution, consisting of self-study, elaboration and defence of a thesis.

It is not unusual for an ordinary teacher appointed for the position of headmaster to have no previous training or knowledge of principalship. The reason for that is the absence in the Czech Republic of training courses in this field of studies at university level.

*The timeframe for course schedule is as follows:*

- September-May – modules A, B, C, D (100 hours) April-May – traineeship (24 hours)
- May-June – self-study, consultancy, work on the thesis (20 hours) June – final exams

**5.4. Aim**

Participants are to acquire skills and knowledge in the subject of school management. They also need basic managerial competence required of headmasters and in connection with human resource management. The aim here is to improve their orientation in labour law, school legislation, school funding, economic issues and also in the organization of the pedagogical process. The course will enable participants to analyze their work and use information-related resources. The traineeship will allow them to obtain practical skills both in school management and in the supervision of the pedagogical process.
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1. CONTEXT AND KEY ISSUES OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

1.1. The national context of educational leadership and management development

Similarly to other Central and Eastern European states, fundamental changes occurred in the social and economic climate in Hungary following the political transition in 1990. In the economic sector, the transition to market economy required radical decisions to be made, and as a result many jobs were lost and the employment structure changed dramatically. The economic crisis had an adverse effect on public services. Public expenditure was largely reduced, demand for new jobs on the labour market showed significant change as well.

Concurrently with major changes affecting the economy, Hungary was also a place where significant social changes occurred: the gap between various groups of the Hungarian society widened and the number of underprivileged people was perceived to be on the up. The population is to be categorized according to their geographical place of residence, given the substantial difference in economic development parameters as well as living standards affecting various regions of the country. The Hungarian school system is a highly selective one, which reveals a social disparity characteristic of the country.

With unemployment becoming a fact of life during the 1990’s when better qualified and educated people were seen being paid higher salaries, the demand among the population for better education grew. Diversification in the field of education during the 1990’s has contributed to a growing demand for education by younger generations; consequently, the rate of people with a background of higher education was reflected in statistics which showed figures looking much better in an international context (Education at a Glance, 2005).

Today, Hungary is one of the countries with the worst demographic conditions in Europe, due to a low birth rate and a high rate of mortality. In the 1990’s the number of primary school students plummeted due to the demographical conditions prevailing in the country. The transformation of educational institutions, coupled with a changing number of teachers employed, is beginning to reflect the current decrease in total student headcount. Whilst financing has been based spectacularly on the actual number of students (normative funds per student capita, provided primarily by the central budget), a decrease in student headcount has lead to keen competition among primary schools, intensifying the selective processes now visible in primary education.

In secondary education, the effect of regulations influencing demographic trends has been compensated by the expansion of secondary education and as a consequence, between 1990 and 2004, the number of the secondary school students grew by 9.2%. Education at this level has been seen expanding vertically, while important changes in the horizontal structure of secondary education have also taken place.

Certain trends aimed at decentralisation during the 90’s in Hungary were to be seen gradually in the context of public education, too, while authorities in Hungary, both at national and local level, initiated a shift towards the share of responsibilities. The administration of public education is now highly decentralised and responsibilities in that sector are shared between several players. Horizontally, responsibility at national level is shared between the Ministry of Education and Culture - which assumes direct responsibility for educational matters - and other ministries (Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour), while the scope of responsibilities seen vertically is shared between national, regional, local and institutional levels, i.e. there are four levels of control. At levels both local and regional, the administration of education is integrated into the general system of public administration, which at this level is structurally based on local government. The influence of the regional level is rather weak, but the scope of local and institutional responsibilities is fairly broad.

In today’s decentralised educational system of administration, the autonomy of schools is considerable: individual schools define their educational programmes, their curricula, school heads make decisions on the employment of their teaching staff (appointment or replacement of teachers, salary issues, although in most cases a tight budget will prevent those ideas from being put into practice), and to some extend schools do have some financial leeway. The room for manoeuvre available to maintainers (in case of most schools it is the local authority) is somewhat narrower: in this case influence is exerted mainly through financing, through adding resources that are crucial for the running of schools, to supplement normative government subsidy. The extent of contributions coming from school maintainers largely depends on the size and the financial situation of a particular community. The professional leading role of local governments manifests itself in the way documents required for institutional functions are approved. Although the maintainer is in a position to evaluate the performance of the school through systems of quality management stipulated by the law, practice indicates that this seldom happens. As there are no compulsory inspectors in Hungary, maintainers are to perform these tasks with support from accredited experts.
1.2. The main challenges facing school leadership

The main challenges facing school leadership can be summarized in the following:

- **Efficiency-related challenge**: The main reason for efficiency issues is the existing surplus in material and human capacities in schools as a result of a decreasing birth rate; moreover, regulations fail to stimulate the reduction of those capacities. Maintainers have been grappling with difficulties arising from the consequences they have to face given the constraints imposed upon them by the logic of institutional rationalization. Because of the features currently characterizing the manner in which financing is provided and of the prevailing demographical conditions, the aim of schools today is to draw as many students to their institute as possible.

- **Challenges to increase sensitivity in terms of performance**: The PISA survey led to a situation in which Hungarian education was to face the results of an overall performance that was less favourable than what the public initially believed to be the case. The repercussion from that survey was that the system of education began to focus on the development of key competences beside the notion of cognition in the teaching process. The fact that competence-based education has vital consequences both for organizational techniques and for teaching methods to be used in Hungarian schools still goes largely unnoticed by the teaching staff. The assessment of competence - a method in use since 2001, and a new type of secondary school-leaving examination, introduced in 2005 - provide feedback for schools on as well as via students about performance at institutional level. For now, the manner in which that information is to be used is a matter for individual schools to decide on.

- **Challenges to handle inequalities and heterogeneity**: Due to a set of strong selection mechanisms, the PISA 2000 survey identified more significant differences between the performance of students learning in different schools than in situations when the assessment mechanism was applied for students attending the same school. By the late nineties, the Hungarian system of education was riddled with inequalities of a magnitude attributable to existing mechanisms of selection and segregation within the education, system which have further widened the social gap. The answer to this phenomenon is inclusion and integration, equally representing a new challenge for school management.

- **Challenges vis-a-vis teacher supply and motivation of teachers**: In Hungary, the social prestige of a teaching career is low. Moreover, the career of an educator in the past ten years become even more limited in its scope of professional outlook, and young teachers are seen as having a hard time trying to get themselves teaching jobs at schools. Financial motivation has limited possibilities as additional resources for extra workload put on middle management such as vice-principals, work community leaders and head teachers are not available. Leaders are faced with the problem of lack of motivation.

- **Technological and pedagogical challenges**: Currently, a challenge for innovation appears to manifest itself in three areas: competence based education, learning of foreign languages and the use of info-communication technology (ICT). It is a key priority for schools to introduce these areas into their daily educational routine.

- **The effects of accession to the EU**: The effects of Hungary’s accession to the EU occur mainly in priorities regarding the policies of development projects. Uncertainties surrounding the purposeful and efficient use of resources made available have not yet been eliminated; a lot appears to hinge on the performance of school leadership. Another important effect of Hungary’s accession to the EU is the strengthening of the role of regions and micro-regions (e.g. multi-functional associations of local governments).

- **Fast changes in the legal environment**: Since changes in the political system have occurred, individuals involved in public education have been affected adversely by regular and quick changes. In many cases, survival techniques and purely formal adaptation rather than real changes are the answers to problems.

- **The effects of the situation following the merging of institutions**: the decline in the number of children and application of the per capita method in the current financing system have created difficulties for local governments struggling to maintain schools, especially in small settlements. In the last couple of years there has been a tendency for schools to be merged in order to solve this problem, which might well be a solution alternative from a financial point of view, while also creating various additional challenges of a professional kind for school management working in these institutions.

1.3. The role of leadership/management development in national education development strategies

There have been several initiatives since the 90’s, designed to bring about improvement in the level of management in Hungarian public education. Several surveys have been conducted to provide an overview of conditions regarding school leadership. The Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development published a range of research-based books ‘Education in Hungary’ in the years 1996, 1997, 2000, 2003 and 2006. (www.oki.hu/english). Each volume contains a chapter on the administration
of education, which includes an actual description of school management. A national initiative was launched for a programme to train educational managers in Hungary between 1994 and 1997 in collaboration with the Netherlands. The Comenius 2000 Quality Improvement Programme for Public Education, based on voluntary attendance – which is to benefit from the significant decentralization of the Hungarian educational system – is meant to develop a local, internal self assessing process at institutional level. Hungary participated in various OECD research programmes focusing on school management such as New School Management Approaches (2001) and Improving School Leadership (2006-2008). There is no concept or strategy behind these (and some other) initiatives.

1.4. National educational development programmes with components of leadership/management development

On the education policy side, leadership/management development – and the whole system development implemented via leaders – is an underrated line of specialization as the leader development scheme comprised in the public education development strategy of the Ministry of Education and in the first National Development Plan (2004-2006), appears as a separate issue. In the last few years quality development, which specifies both the internal functioning and the leadership of schools participating, has been the backbone of a national innovative programme.

Commitment to quality assurance in the government’s policy on education since the late 90’s (the Quality Improvement Programme entitled Comenius 2000), and the expansion of quality development subsequent to that period (Local Quality Management Programme ["ÖMIP"] and the Institutional Quality Management Programme ["IMIP"])) had a positive effect on both the organizational and procedural aspects of innovation for schools participating. However, in other respects it was still confined to the framework of bureaucracy.

In 1999, the Ministry of Education formed a development programme for the fulfilment of quality development goals, known as the Comenius 2000 Quality Improvement Programme for Public Education. The aim of quality development was to guarantee that institutions offering educational training will provide a service corresponding to expectations of the local community. Comenius 2000 contains, both at institutional and maintainer levels, 3 models: the first one is a „partner-centred activity”, the second is TQM (total quality management), i. e. an institutional development of an entire assurance system with the permanent monitoring of quality, and the third is the activity of experience to be shared with others. The local (institutional) development of a quality assurance system was stimulated by the Ministry of Education through a significant fund based on a system for the invitation of tenders. During the first round (spring 2000) 1400 institutes submitted their bid to realize the first and second models within Comenius 2000. As for one group of the institutes participating, the introduction of the model resulted in spectacular institutional development, although in many cases complex procedural regulation either remained only formal or strengthened the bureaucratic character of organizations. The Local Quality Management Programme and the Institutional Quality Management Programme can be considered as the expansion of ambitions regarding quality development on the part of the central government, the finalization of which is mandatory and in line with the 2003 amendment of regulations regarding public education.

No survey has been made so far in connection with the findings regarding quality management. According to examinations conducted by experts; however, a number of institutions have retained quality considerations aimed at partners, while the need for follow-up on the fulfillment of the requirements of partners, along with numerous innovative solutions, has emerged. Certain forms, procedures and techniques (e.g. team work, SWOT) have by now become common practice. In some cases quality issue techniques “filter through” into the organization of learning.

Hungary joined the European Union on 1 May 2004 and became eligible for support from the EU Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund. In order to be able to use support from the funds, Member States need to finalize and submit to the European Commission their development objectives and priorities in the framework of a National Development Plan (NDP). The first Hungarian NDP 2004-2006 and the second Hungarian NDP (the so-called “New Hungary Development Programme 2007-2013”) each has educational components.

The first Hungarian NDP defined 5 Operational Programmes (OP), one of them being the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development (“OPHRD”). Its objective is to reduce unemployment and to improve the competitiveness of the workforce by providing qualifications in line with the demand of the labour market and by stimulating social integration. The priorities of the OP include the support of active labour market policies, the development of training and education in the framework of the policy of lifelong learning, improvement in the field of adjusting capabilities and entrepreneurial skills as well as improvement of the health of population, education and social-related infrastructure in the context of the development of human resources. Priority 3 of the OPHRD is to promote lifelong learning and adaptability. This covers
several different levels and forms of education and training, including preliminary and secondary education, vocational training, post-secondary education and higher education as well as adult training. 3.1 (Promoting the development of skills and competencies necessary for lifelong learning) has promoted the process of teaching and learning of skills, competencies and abilities required for lifelong learning by developing the tools necessary for competency-based education and, on the other hand, by supporting schools in meeting pedagogical and methodological requirements in the successful implementation of these programmes.

The first component of OPHRD (3.1.1.) focused on the in-service training of teachers and educationists with a view to ensuring that the methods of competence-based education will be successfully applied and implemented. It also included the development and introduction of new curricula, teaching programme packages, pedagogical and teaching methods and the curricula for teacher training. The second component (3.1.2) supported the implementation of the competence-based educational concept at the level of individual educational institutions. It comprised the adaptation of teaching programmes and methods developed under component 1 to be adjusted to the specificities of particular institutions and to local needs. To enhance the adaptation and implementation of new approaches, the institutional development of schools and the introduction of assessment and quality assurance methods specific to competence-based education was also approved. The target group in the second component was the managerial staff of schools and maintenance staff beside teachers. In the framework of this component, 12 Regional Development Centres for School and Kindergarten (TIOK) were established for the implementation of competence-based educational programmes.

The main objective of measure 3.2 was to develop the vocational training system in order to make it more flexible and responsive to labour market needs and to prepare young people for lifelong learning. Components 3.2.2 and 4.1.1 were aimed to establish Integrated Regional Vocational Training Centres (TISZK) and to improve their infrastructural conditions.

A total of 12 TIOKs and 16 TISZKs were established nationally, a function based on educational institutions, pedagogical institutions and infrastructure developed by maintainers. The principal aims of both programmes are to develop and run a network of institutions that would make possible a more rational organization of the distribution of tasks in these fields, the improvement of performance (competence-based education) and the development of new techniques of governance. Network development could help the spread of modern educational methods and the rational reduction of parallel capacities. During the realization of these aims, participants obtain new knowledge and the functioning of network offers players the opportunity of learning from each other. An important part of these programs was a compulsory training for leaders.

The Social Renewal Operational Programme (SORP; “TÁMOP” in Hungarian) of 2007-2013 has more components such as use of national competency standards to enhance learning.

The 3.1 subprogram of the third priority axe of TÁMOP is to support the dissemination of competence-based education. More than HUF 40 thousand million is allocated for the development of new educational and learning content, the support of the improvement of innovative schools, the development of educational infrastructure and for the renewal of existing pedagogical mindset and attitudes in the framework of this sub-program.

Some elements of this programme, which are connected to our topics, are:

- The “TIOK” and “TISZK” consortia, established as part of the “OPHRD” framework, have been operating continuously. Their activities need to be widened.
- Support of the operation of different types of learning networks for the purpose of identifying elements characterizing them.
- Specification of various professions and roles which promote authentic school development, training of experts via use of the findings of pilot programs.
- School-leaders, maintainers and the members of central education administration to be trained on the basis of comprehensive assessment and quality assurance systems support, e.g. the realization of evidence-based school improvement.

A large-scale school improvement programme (“Dobbtántó” (springboard) to reintegrate students who have dropped out of the public education system) is financed from national sources, where the support of school leaders is an important element.

In the context of innovations it needs to be mentioned that events in Hungary in the past 20 years have required significant institutional compliance from schools in the field of economy and professional leadership as well. As for educational policy, school leaders have had very little support in carrying through the compliance process, having encountered many problems and mistakes. However, there are various examples of successful innovation as well. Large-scale decentralization ensures more freedom in regulatory terms for school leadership, and at the same time limited sources, due to the lack of performance-oriented stimuli, diverts the energies of many leaders from innovations to the smooth running of day-to-day business and administration.
1.5. The role of the development of learning as a strategic goal in documents of national education strategy

The goal of education policy has recently been represented most extensively by the Medium-term Public Education Development Strategy of the Ministry of Education, which was established in 2003. Based on an analysis completed as part of the Hungarian education policy, there are a total of seven key areas which need to be addressed, their improvement being a matter of utmost urgency. The first among them is the improvement in the effectiveness of educational and of basic skills, the significance of which has been highlighted by international surveys in recent years. The second area of some importance is the existence of inequalities and the availability of equal opportunities. The PISA findings have highlighted the fact that the difference in performance levels among Hungarian schools is in fact high, and is directly linked with the social status of students, the type of the settlements they live in and with the region, city or village at which the school is located. The third goal of educational policy is to ensure the quality of education and to evaluate it. The next principal aim is to improve the conditions of the teaching profession and to increase the prestige of the teaching career. The demand for a more widespread use of information and communication technologies is becoming increasingly felt at different levels of Hungarian society. Educational policy has identified the availability of material needs as a crucial element of development. Most infrastructural facilities within the system of Hungarian public education need restoration, while the condition of buildings and equipment fails to be of a standard considered acceptable by European norms. In most schools, particularly those to be found in small settlements, teaching aids used in learning foreign languages are insufficient. Finally, both the efficiency and improvement of public education-related administration are significant priorities, while the Hungarian educational system, when compared with the effectiveness of education itself, uses the material resources available with characteristically low efficiency. Improvement of the leadership/management quality at institutional level occurs as a tool of crucial importance in the achievement of the latter objective. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2004.)

The Hungarian Lifelong Learning (LLL) Strategy refers to the next strategic planning period between 2007 and 2013. The strategy of lifelong learning is a very complex development programme, closely related to diverse sectors, fields or parts of policy-making (e.g., public education, professional training, higher education, adult training, informatics, social policy etc.), and it aims at the development and the improvement of the devices of knowledge-based society. The priorities established in the strategy are: 1. The reinforcement of the role of education and training in creating equal opportunities; 2. The strengthening of the relationship between education, training and economics; 3. The implementation of new government measures and public policy procedures; 4. The improvement of performance, increase in public spending affecting education and training, and finally, 5. The improvement of quality-based education and training. Significant areas of intervention that help to achieve these goals are the following: the development of basic abilities and competencies in public education, i.e. realization of competence-based education, a wide selection of professional training alternatives in adult training and in studies to be pursued by adults; ever-widening learning opportunities, career orientation, guidance, career observation, acknowledgement of informal and non-formal learning, assistance of underprivileged groups and those insecure in labour market terms; introduction and establishment of a new kind of teaching/learning culture. (The Hungarian Lifelong Learning (LLL) Strategy)

The development of learning also appears in national development projects and their operational programmes (OPHRD - Human Resource Development Operational Programme of 2004-2006 and TÁMOP - Social Renewal Operational Programme of 2007-2013). OPHRD is aimed to provide equal opportunities for disadvantaged pupils, particularly Roma children and children with special educational needs, within the education system, to promote lifelong learning and adaptability through development of skills and competencies. Priority 3 of TÁMOP aims at providing quality education through dissemination of competence-based education and by supporting the education of groups with different educational needs, as well as the integration of pupils with special educational needs through intercultural education. For more details see Chapter 3.

1.6. The role of leadership/management development in improving the development of learning

The decentralized system has the advantage of school principals playing a key role in improving teaching quality. The wide autonomy of school leaders in defining educational content and form goes hand in hand with the absence of responsibilities for results; therefore, a lot hinges on the ability of school leaders to convince the institute on matters of development and changes conducive to the improvement of learning. As a result of various reasons (financing, public employee status of teachers, inner operational rules, problems related to motivation) even genuinely innovative
and motivated leaders have a hard job in carrying out their tasks. Given these circumstances, central education policy offers the opportunity to develop stimuli that help school leadership and schools in enhancing professional accountability and performance. Although policies meant to develop educational quality do not directly aim to improve school leadership, school principals, as central players contributing to the quality of teaching, are inevitable in implementing political initiatives meant to improve educational quality.

The most recent and promising tool of the policy aimed at improving quality is the introduction of the assessment of competence at national level. It offers an opportunity for school principals and maintainers to get feedback from assessment, which is always followed by evaluation carried out centrally, analyzing the results of a particular school. This assessment can be regarded – along with the PISA international survey and the new, two-level secondary school-leaving examination – as a form of output stimulus/regulation. On the one hand, as of 2007, the results of annual national competence assessments have been public and are thus accessible not only to schools and maintainers, but to anyone interested, which may result in keener competition between schools and a higher degree of accountability, and mainly because legal sanctions are to be imposed against schools that fail to comply with the minimum requirements stipulated in the legislation. (Act on Public Education, paragraph 99 § (7)) A serious shortcoming stemming from this situation is the lack of professional support needed to implement policies.

Training programmes, designed for leaders, aim to improve the quality of education by improving the skills of school principals. For leader preparation and training, higher education institutions offer 2-year post-graduate programmes wrapped up by the awarding of a diploma; course content is detailed in the pertinent legislation.

A series of conferences on “Improvement of school leadership and the training of school leaders” have been held since 1995 with the participation of the approximately 100-150 experts in Hungary who are intensely involved in this field of specialisation. Subjects, which the 7th conference in 2003 was to focus on, were ‘educational leadership’ and ‘the modern learning environment’. One of the lessons to be learned from the conference was that school leaders are significant elements in the realization of new ideas concerning learning during classroom activities. Participants highlighted that the subject of learning and of instructional management should be regarded as important elements of effective school management; therefore, they should be part of the training of school leaders.

In the last couple of years, the problem of educational development as a factor in the improvement of students’ learning skills has surfaced at numerous conferences held on education.
maintainer authority in the process of the improvement of learning. This involvement is based on the mutual interests and the recognition of various roles of teachers, school leaders and maintainers in the application of the principle of personalized learning. This underscores the special importance of learning for children in the field of professional development and education management.

The so-called eco school network, which has been in existence since 2002, is composed of approximately 250 institutions, and was supported for a few years through government funding made available via competition through bids. The network is characterized by strong local relationships and bounds with the life of local communities that extend beyond links confined by physical boundaries. Their web page (www.okoiskola.hu), regional conferences, a system of further development and the eco-school award together represent the dimensions of the quality of their activity. The title ‘eco-school’ does not translate itself into any kind of financial advantage for these schools; they do, at the same time, have to fulfill strict requirements, compliance with which is the responsibility of school leaders. One of these requirements is participation in an accredited training programme (30 hours) for eco-school leaders, where participants are trained to reach a level of awareness that helps them understand that the key objective characteristic of eco-schools is not the successful application of the principles of environmental education but it is more of an aim to become an institution of learning, one that is capable of working in harmony with its environment and for the satisfaction of its clients.

1.7. Research on educational leadership/management or management development

Following the political transition at the beginning of the 1990s, the time when schools became professionally autonomous organisations, both the role of school leaders and the professional requirements imposed upon them changed dramatically. Several surveys have examined the work of principals in that new situation. Four empirical studies – one of them was a study comparing findings in an international context – were realized in the field of educational management research (Balázs, 1994a; 1994b; Balázs 1998a; 1998b; Balázs-Szabó, 1998; Balázs, 2000) in the space of 10 years. Management was often an accentuated dimension of empirical studies on the conditions characteristic of public education or on its vertical levels (see e.g. Liskó, 1994; Vágó 1998). The managerial aspects of specific problems such as efficiency, linked to public education, was analyzed in a Dutch-Hungarian comparative study in 1997 (on Hungarian results see Baráth, 2000). A summary of these surveys is to be found in an article by Balázs (Balázs, 2004.) (http://www.oki.hu/oldal.php?tipus=cikk&kod=english-art-Balazs-quo).

In Hungary research literature on school leadership focuses on the characteristics of both school leadership and school principals (Balázs, 2003). The number of works which put forth the idea that efficient school management facilitates learning for students is very low. Researchers do not seem to have focused on this topic so far, possibly because there is no reliable statistical data on school performance.

As a result of research highlighting the relationship between school management and actual performance at school level, an important realisation confirming the findings of international literature has emerged. There is nothing unusual about the fact that there is a shortage of measurable, numerical and formal parameters – such as qualification, language proficiency, gender etc. – regarding school management and to be associated with performance, especially when analyzing national data. This stems from the recognition that school principals can influence pupils only indirectly, through their teachers. On the other hand, the educational system is segregated to a very considerable extent so that conclusions to be drawn from the situation apply only to homogeneous group of schools, not the entire system. Qualities which cannot be affected by schools – type, maintainer, settlement highlight the significance of performance standards that schools are to reach.

Above all, the extent of interdependence can be reduced by a non-methodical assumption made by school principals as teachers (Baráth, 2004). School principals themselves are of the view that events in the classrooms influence student performance more significantly than anything else, therefore less importance is to be attached to teacher stimulus and to the role of work discipline. Despite all these problems, inceptive empirical results pertaining to secondary schools appear to highlight the fact that school principals who have consistent goals, those who invest energy in their school work and are capable of forging a kind of inner coherence within the staff, can in fact function as school managers more effectively than the rest (Horn, 2006). The characteristics of school management might account for a low level of performance assessed by a student indicator, and the statistical effect is significant.

Along with the two works which examine the question of school management and performance in a direct manner, other research papers produced in Hungary also examine the impact upon performance of contextual characteristic associated with school leadership. The most important finding is the impact of school selection upon school quality, mentioned earlier on (e.g. Kertesi–Kézdi, 2005). Analyses, however, occasionally try to link assessment techniques within a school with the quality aspects
of a specific institution (Sinka, 2006).

Participation in the OECD ISL project was a good learning process for a better understanding by researchers of the significance of improvement in educational leadership. Dissemination of this knowledge for a wider scope of experts is a task with implications of urgency for the present and a crucial responsibility.

There are, broadly speaking, only a low number of works focusing on the analysis of coherence between Hungarian school leadership and school quality. In the past few years – concurrently with a focus on education policy becoming visible – there has been a shift in this direction as to the awareness of researchers.

1.8. Professional organizations and associations for school leaders

Both primary and secondary school leaders have their respective organisations (e.g. National Union of the Elementary School Leaders, National Union of Grammar Schools). These organisations, along with other professional organisations, compete for a seat in one of the two bodies of national policy on education.

The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the improvement of regulations. Among professional establishments which make decision-making possible in issues of educational policy, there are two national educational bodies where the participants are representatives of leading professional organizations. The National Council for Public Education (OKNT) is a professional body with a mandate of decision-making, voicing an opinion and making proposals in the field of public education. Out of its 23 regular members and 8 alternate members, 10 + 3 are representatives of national mainstream organizations, delegated for a period of 5 years upon recommendation by specific organizations (the representation of professional organizations in the OKNT is to be renewed every five years). The National Council for Public Education Policy (KT) helps the minister via approving decisions, counselling and making proposals in policy-related issues. All major national players with a professional, government or civil background, and with an interest in public education, are represented in the KT: teachers’ associations, teachers’ trade unions, parent and student organizations, local governments, minority governments and non-governmental school maintainers. There is competition between these organizations to take part in the work of the two main bodies.

2. THE ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERS

2.1. Legal framework

The model for public school governance in Hungary, used in the 1990s was, to a large extent, decentralized. Schools have autonomy, a school will specify its educational programme and its curriculum (based on the National Core Curriculum and on the so-called framework curricula). School heads make decisions about the appointment or replacement of teachers, on the issue of salaries that are higher than those in public employment and they make decisions together on issues related to the professional development of teachers. They freely decide on issues of student enrolment (the only restriction is compulsory enrolment at primary schools of students living in the school area).

The Act on Public Education specifies the responsibilities of a head of a public educational institution. The leader of this type of institution is responsible for the efficient and legal functioning of the institution and its economical administration; (s)he will exercise the rights of employer, and (s)he will make decisions regarding matters related to the institution that are not stipulated by the law or via what is known as a collective contract (regulations pertaining to public employees). The school head will tackle issues regarding employment and working conditions in accordance with legal provisions. Moreover, the leader of an educational institution is also responsible for the work of teachers, the proper functioning of the control mechanism, the assessment, evaluation and quality management programme of an institution, for proper measures to be taken in issues of child and youth protection, for activities to be organized, for health and safety conditions suitable for education to be provided, for children to be prevented from becoming victims of accidents and for regular health check to be provided for students.

The Act on Public Education provides for the main tasks of the school principal to be specified. His or her duties include leading the teaching staff, managing and supervising educational work, making decisions as to what are the responsibilities of the teaching staff, ensuring that those responsibilities are observed and the corresponding tasks are properly supervised. Additionally, the tasks of a leader include cooperation with the school board, the labour unions, student unions, parents’ associations (communities), handling of issues related to child and youth protection measures, action for pupil or student exposure to accidents to be taken to prevent such incidents, ensuring that human and material resources are available via funds at his/her disposal for the proper functioning of the educational institution.
2.2. Key competences and national standards of school leaders

Although a government decree – providing for the training of public education leaders by outlining detailed specifications in that respect – describes the qualification-related requirements of the job, no standards have been set up to define the leadership competencies required. Although there are no standards, in several bigger cities that emphasize institute assessment, it became obvious that “local policy” is (also) oriented toward leaders, that it aims to assess competencies and results but we cannot talk about overall steps regarding this issue. There are no official plans to define national standards.

2.3. Appointment of principals

The Act on Public Education of 1993 stipulates the necessary conditions for leaders of institutions. Local authorities have to decide on appointments but in some cases they do that on a political rather than a professional basis. The appointment of principals is for a specific period, a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 years. The term of actual employment does not differ in different types of school, while job requirements do.

Generally speaking, the law stipulates three conditions for the appointment of a principle:

- **Proper qualification**: degree or diploma obtained in higher education (in case of high schools, university degree), professional training and examination passed in pedagogy. The law can state that in case of special institutions (e.g. educational institutions for children with special needs) a candidate should have special qualifications. For the prolongation of the leadership period, it is necessary for a leader to have proper training in leadership (the significance of this is reduced by the fact – given the recent amendment of pertinent regulations – that this provision will not come into force before 2015).

- **Proper practice**: a period of at least five years spent teaching in a higher education institution is regarded as work practice and can therefore be included, along with experience in public education management and time spent in an educational-technical institution. Depending on the type of institution, other forms of experience can also be considered relevant: time spent working in artistic schools, an artistic career, time spent as working as head of practical teaching in special/vocational schools.

- **Employed as a teacher in certain educational institutions**: in schools teachers can be employed for a specific period of time and for an indeterminate time. A precondition for the nomination of school leadership is the availability of a work contract for an indeterminate period of time. If an individual does not have it at the moment of appointment, it will be valid for a specific period of time or the existing work contract will need to be modified to be valid for an indeterminate period of time.

2.4. Qualification of school leaders

Neither experience as a leader in a job prior to the one applied for (e.g. as head of professional team of teachers teaching the same subject), nor a qualification in leadership is the precondition for appointment as head. The significance of **qualification in public education management**, i.e. training in this direction is given higher priority today by the education policy; the legislation referred to was implemented gradually from the mid 1990s onwards.

The main steps in this process are:

- In 1996, the in-service training system of teachers underwent significant changes. In that year, the Act on Public Education introduced the institution of post-graduate examination of teachers in specific lines of specialization, thereby giving the go-ahead to professional training programmes for public education leaders.

- In 1997 and 1999, a separate decree regulated in-service trainings and the method of accomplishment vis-a-vis the post-graduate examination of teachers in a specific area of studies. School leaders were offered the alternative of accomplishing their obligations regarding the completion of their in-service training course either by participating in a training programme for educational managers or by attending any other programme focusing on specific areas of specialization.

- Since 2002, a candidate with a certificate of a post-graduate examination, passed in a specific area of his/her line of specialization, has been given priority. Starting in 2010, only those will receive new appointment for school leadership or for the position of head teacher who have passed a post-graduate examination in a particular line of specialization. From 2015 a precondition of a second or third term of school leadership will be a qualification to be obtained in institutional leadership.
2.5. Sharing of leadership functions in schools

Certain senior positions are properly specified within the school; individuals in leadership functions are entitled to bonuses, therefore the law provides a considerable space for manoeuvre in assigning leadership functions. A lot depends on the principal, the relationship between the principal and other colleagues in the school, the organizational culture of the school, the mechanism – within the alternatives stipulated by the law – of the existing structure in which specific responsibilities are shared i.e. the size of the group of individuals performing leadership tasks. However, in the absence of a responsibility distribution model for the share of leadership functions, to be approved and agreed on by all participants, those involved might be faced with a situation where a strong organizational mechanism, based on groups with strong commitment of professional improvement, is headed by a weak principal with only formal leadership rights. This is a possible scenario as the teaching staff, given the institutional autonomy, has decision-making rights in a wide scope of duties to be performed.

As for shared leadership, deputy school heads have an important role to play. Regardless of the size and type of school, the number of students and internal regulations, duties that are diverse in size and scope might be assigned to deputy school heads. School heads can decide on the manner in which to delegate the functions of deputy principals. By looking at the number and duties of deputy principals currently in leadership positions, we can conclude that in institutes bigger in size and with a multiple functions, such as integrated grammar schools, secondary vocational schools, multi professional training schools or institutions from ISCED 1 to 3 a, b level, deputy school heads are responsible for the functioning of a particular level or profile and in these schools a director of finance is also employed as one of the deputies of the principal. As for schools that function alongside member institutions, the heads of these member institutions are assigned a deputy school head position. In schools that run their own college, the individual in charge of that facility is, in most cases, the deputy principal. Where all or part of the students attending an educational institution are students of an independent college, the law stipulates the relationship between leaders of the school and college.

For the internal governance of an institution, principals seem to rely increasingly on their deputies, in many schools strategic functions are delegated to deputies. According to a survey on this matter, school principals deal with curricula issues in only half of the schools (and let deputies and teaching staff deal with this problem). In matters of enrolment, it is the deputies rather than the principals who decide. There is only one area under strict control by principals: disciplinary issues affecting students. (Balázs, 2004) The interpretation of this phenomenon is not simple: it can either be seen as a demonstration of power or as a sign that the teaching staff gains relief from responsibility.

When examining the organizational structure, flat structure can be regarded as being a feature characteristic of these institutions. The manner in which functions belonging to middle-level management are assigned represents a problem in many schools. One of the reasons why the teaching staff is not motivated to take on these assignments is the lack of incentives. Another reason is that, although principals are considered employers of teachers, their possibilities to sanction improper conduct are very limited. Because of all this, one of the most important tasks of school leaders is to convince the middle management about the importance of development targets, where leadership charisma is a must in obtaining access to resources. The findings of a minor research have provided confirmation that school heads are aware of this challenge. The majority (65 percent) of school principals has regarded middle management, heads of classes and heads of professional teams of teachers in charge of the same subjects, as a group that needs to be improved” (Farkas–Marosváry, 2002).

The quality management system, introduced in line with the stipulations of the law in most institutions, has improved the situation considerably. As a result, “in most institutions a professional group has been developed with new competencies; as supporting group; it is situated between leadership, teaching staff and the traditional professional teams of teachers and supervises specific activities in a direct manner within the institutions. New internal guidelines have in fact been set up. This has affected the functions of leadership as well: a leader can assign the task of activities to this new organizational level – to which a deputy principal will mostly be related – prior to decision-making. This new organizational unit, developed to be capable of supervising the quality control system, will elevate the quality of the professional standards of leadership and will to some extent offer new in-house career options to teachers.” (Halász-Palotás, 2003) Quality management groups function as project teams, this being a new and innovative way of organising tasks and solving problems in schools.

The professional teams of teachers teaching the same subjects, whose number, professional area and form of function are specified by the institution, have a role in supervising professional work in educational institutions. These professional teams, whose leaders are nominated by the principal, will have an impact on key activity areas of the teaching profession. Their recommendations, following discussions with the teaching staff, are approved by the principal. The spectrum of their activity may include...
proposals on issues – such as that of choosing the school equipment – delegated to them by the teaching staff or even the selection of in-service training programmes in their line of specialization and of specific areas of study competitions.

The class head, who has a key role in the guidance of students and in the administrative tasks being part of middle management, is subject to scrutiny. From 1999, ‘class head lessons’ have again been compulsory but no exact definition of the class head’s scope of activity has been offered. Another problem is that a bonus to be paid to class heads as extra payment is too small a sum and thus extra work is not adequately paid. The significance of the activities of class heads has decreased over the years. According to a survey from 2002, out of what used to be 100 per cent a mere 84 per cent of schools have a professional team of class heads, while only 83 per cent participate in the preparation of school-level educational programmes and in only 73 per cent of the programmes do the functions of this professional team take shape. Only 27 per cent of class heads have some form of regular professional relationship with their colleagues teaching students in the same class, (in general schools and in the province this ratio is higher than in secondary schools or in the capital) (Szekszárdi, 2002). Should this trend continue, it may arguably place a question mark against the reasons for the existence of the function of class heads.

Because of the institutional autonomy, the teaching staff have decision-making rights with regard to a wide scope of duties (approval of the school educational programme, organizational and operational statutes, school regulations and the quality management programme). The situation is characterized by a teaching staff with a significant scope of alternatives for jurisdiction and a leader with a wide range of tasks but a narrower scope of action alternatives for jurisdiction, which causes leaders to bear in mind the need for compliance, whenever they produce strategic documents or make decisions regarding operational issues.

There are innovative schools (approx. 15–20 percent of the total number of schools), where different mechanisms for the share of leadership (for working on projects, active participation in decision making or in communication with different clients, and quality management) are in existence. As for this type of leadership, there is no information to date on the influence of the merging of schools.

### 2.6. Strategy-making in schools

As a consequence of a wide autonomy of schools, schools tend to generate their own strategic documents in the field of pedagogy and organization. The most comprehensive, institutional type of document is the Programme on Pedagogy, which is used as a tool for strategic planning. A relatively new strategic document is the Institutional Quality Assurance Program (“IMIP”), which has had to be produced in all educational institutions since 2004, along with a special school improvement programme for schools where results, according to the National Competence Assessment, have for some time had the lowest ratings, putting them in the lowest 10 per cent of schools. The Public Education Act provides specification of the content of the Programme on Pedagogy, which schools had to prepare initially in 1998. The programme consists of two parts: the ‘programme on education’ and the curriculum.

#### a) The ‘programme on education’ should include:

- The educational principles, goals, tasks, means, and procedures used at the school
- Pedagogical tasks related to personal development
- Tasks related to community development
- Pedagogical tasks related to behavioural and integration-type disorders
- Pedagogical tasks supporting the capacity building of teaching staff
- Pedagogical tasks supporting the competence-based development of students
- Programs that help failing students catch up
- Activities designed to reduce social disadvantage
- Systems that oversee, measure, evaluate and provide quality control over educational-instructional work taking place in schools
- Forums for the cooperation of parents, students, school teachers and dormitory attendants

#### b) The school curriculum must contain the following:

- Subjects taught in the different grades, mandatory and optional classes and their required lesson hours
- Compulsory material and requirements
- The principles of textbook selection, learning aids and teaching materials applicable in the school
- Stipulations for moving on to the next grade
- Requirements and formats of school reports and of testing, as well as the forms of assessment and evaluation regarding students’ accomplishment, behaviour and attitude to learning assignments
Material used in the teaching of minority languages, history, geography, culture, and ethnography in the education of national and ethnic minorities at school level

- Materials used for the learning of the Hungarian language, supplied to students who participate in the school education as national and ethnic minorities, and education materials aimed to impart information on local, national and ethnic minorities to students who do not belong to one

- Vocational programs in vocational schools

Although the leaders of institutions are responsible for the preparation of the educational programme and the local curricula, they, as a rule, strongly rely on the teaching staff when putting theory into practice. The programme should be accepted by the teaching staff, and these documents come in force after the maintainer’s agreement prior to approval by the maintainer a specialist included in the National Expert Register needs to be consulted. The final version of documents should either be made public on the homepage of the institution or in a traditional manner, should the institution have no homepage of its own. Based on these documents, the annual operative work plan is prepared and it sets forth the tasks for a period of one year. This document is compiled by the head-teacher in consultation with the broader school leadership (while, in some cases, part of the duties is shared) and it is subject to approval by the teaching staff.

3. VARIOUS APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

3.1. Responsibility for leadership development and educational management training

In Hungary, the training and professional improvement of school leaders is realized within the in-service teacher training system. Higher education institutions offer various 2-year post-graduate programmes for leader courses and training, wrapped up by the award of a diploma. Details of course content are specified in the law. The requirements of the job of leaders in public education are regulated via a ministerial decree, which establishes the aims, conditions of performance, content of the course, also outlining the direction of the development of methodology and of performance assessment. There is keen competition in the market for the preparation and training of school leaders: many universities and colleges offer this type of programme for the post-graduate training of leaders. The Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME) has a public education programme for the training of leaders with the widest selection of programmes offered to date and the highest number of students attending. The second such programme is that of the Hungarian-Dutch School of Educational Management (HUNSEM).

The professional development of leaders, short-term programmes and courses offering a more profound familiarization with specific management and leadership issues can also be found within the framework of the in-service teacher training system, but the offer of course alternatives for this type of training is limited. Short-term courses are offered by higher education institutions, private course organizers and also as part of a national development programme.

3.2. The content of leadership/management training programmes

Qualification in public education leadership can be obtained in training courses offered within the framework of higher education, in the form of 2-year postgraduate programmes. The requirements of leadership positions in public education are regulated by a ministerial decree, which establishes the aims, conditions of performance, content, of the course, also outlining the direction of the development of methodology and of performance assessment.

The principles outlined in this decree, pertaining to a qualification in public leadership are:

- **Aim:** for present and future leaders in public education to develop capabilities in theories pertaining to the educational system and organizational methodology, law, leadership psychology, planning, economy, which are all based on theory but are practice-oriented, and to prepare school principals and other public education leaders as well as leading experts in the field of education to fulfil the requirements posed by their position professionally.

- **Preconditions of participation in the training:** degree or diploma certifying teacher training at university or college level qualification or a qualification suitable for a position in education to be taken, given the shortage of teacher training alternatives.

- **Period of training:** at least 4 semesters, minimum number of lessons: 360.

- **Main fields of study and their proportion within the training:** see table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME GROUPS</th>
<th>SPECIFIC FIELDS OF STUDIES</th>
<th>RATIO WITHIN TRAINING PERIOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>strategic planning, pr and marketing, innovation, quality and education, theory of educational systems, information systems</td>
<td>25-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>basics of pedagogy and psychology, curriculum development and management, organization of purpose-oriented education, efficiency of education</td>
<td>20-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>basics of organizational theory, schools as organizations, culture and organization, organizational diagnostics</td>
<td>15-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human factor</td>
<td>human resources, social psychology, development of leadership skills and capabilities, leadership theory</td>
<td>15-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy and law</td>
<td>knowledge based on education, law and economy, educational administration in public education</td>
<td>10-15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Main fields of study in leader training, regulated by ministerial decree

Based on the fields specified above, these are the typical priority grades on a five-point scale for the content areas listed below:

- Law - 3
- Administration - 2
- Strategic leadership - 5
- Human resource management - 3
- Organizational development - 3
- Instructional leadership - 4
- Management of changes - 1
- Aspects of lifelong learning - 1

3.3. Types of leadership/management training programmes

Period of post-graduate master program (regulated by a ministerial decree): at least 4 semesters, minimum number of lessons: 360. Number of contact hours in areas taken up mostly by theoretical and practical lines of study is 40-60. Compulsory practice-based contact hours as part of the practical line of studies is 4 x 3 days.

Areas of study prescribed in the decree only provide a loose framework for the content of training programmes. It is worthwhile to look into how two universities, the most significant in this respect, have formed their programmes. The Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME) has a programme for leadership training in public education with 2000 students attending training courses at the moment. From the outset, the programme has followed the principle of distance learning, based on students learning individually. Consultations, special training and practical seminar work are all geared to the study needs of individual students. Five times every semester students have to attend a series of consultations consisting of a total of 7 lessons and to prepare 3 written papers (tackling a problem to be solved individually). Consultation groups contain 16-26 students with one tutor in charge and assigned to each group, who helps students in every subject during 2 years of training. Apart from compulsory consultations, students take part in an obligatory training session once a year. The key subjects are: quality management, performance assessment and expertise-expert counselling. The teaching staff participating in the training session include public education experts as well as specialists in economics and psychology. Groups consisting of 20 trainees participate in the training sessions. Another tool of capacity building is that during the first semester, students participate in a 2-3 day compulsory school practice session on two occasions, with the aim of studying leadership work in practice. In the second semester, practical work will be performed in educational institutions supervised by the maintainer or others operating at regional level. Students are assigned to groups consisting of 8-12 individuals.

HUNSEM is the second largest player. It was established within the framework of a Dutch-Hungarian cooperation initiative and has been functioning since 1998. It offers correspondence courses based on personal meetings. One programme consists of 360 lessons based on personal meetings during a period of four semesters. During that time students participate in practice-oriented theoretical training, (i.e. training sessions designed for the improvement of personal skills), and in sessions of professional practice in school work and that of a maintainer. These take place 3-5 times every semester and are broken down to 2-3 day sessions of intensive training. Focus on personal meetings is strong as HUNSEM considers the successful development of the competencies (skills and capacities) a key factor.
3.4. Forms of leadership/management support beyond training

In the market there are several profit-oriented advisory agencies which offer different kinds of supporting leadership. Conflict-management and team building trainings, advisory and coaching are found in their offers. These, however, are suggested typically for firms and their leaders rather than for educational institutions and leaders in educational positions. The offers of these agencies can be exploited in the educational sector, but solvent demand is very low.

The number of agencies with offers for the educational sector in particular is spectacularly low. They offer only advisory services in various areas such as preparation of different document types and of regulations, the launching of local assessment systems, organisational diagnosis and organisational development, project planning and project management, writing of successful application documents, teacher assessment, realization of quality assessment programmes etc.

The growing influence of a profit oriented approach within the system of education is becoming tangible. More specifically, there are plans for the use the of profit oriented professional experience in the framework of SROP/”TÁMOP”.

3.5. The role of maintainers

In Hungary most public educational institutions are maintained by local governments. Local municipalities are heterogeneous in terms of their size, financial situation and the number of institutions they supervise. There are numerous small-size local communities with a small local authority and only one school. These local authorities do not seem to play a professional leading role in education, they act more like the financial supervisors of their institutions. As for larger communities, ones with more than one school, there are examples of local municipalities in a professional leadership role.

The situation is completely different for institutions maintained by private organizations (foundations, churches): private maintainers have more influence in defining, supporting and controlling the professional aspects of their schools. Private schools are regarded as innovative, high quality institutions, although hardly any research findings on the issue are available to date, except for a few case studies.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Distinction between leadership, management and administration in Hungary

Hungarian language has no separate terms of ‘leadership’ and ‘management’, this important distinction is; therefore, not reflected in the colloquial use of the language. However, researchers, trainers and school leadership development programmes are aware of the conceptual distinction between these terms; therefore, the English terms are used more frequently today.

4.2. Recommendations

- Emphasis on school leadership and development. The issue appears in the major national strategic documents (e.g. Hungarian Lifelong Learning Strategy or the Medium-term Public Education Development Strategy of the Ministry of Education), but there are difficulties associated with during the implementation phase. The national and local programmes aiming at school development should focus more on school leadership rather than teachers alone. The professional training and development of school maintainers (especially the local authorities) is also an important objective.
- Creation of national standards of expected school leadership and management competencies is recommended (see the Austrian example). The list of competencies might increase the efficiency of the appointment of school leaders, the evaluation of leadership performance and the development of leader training programmes.
- The widening of the scope in the methodology used in leader training programmes might be a practicable option. Besides training courses run at various locations at classroom level, project work, individual and team alike, is typical. Enhancing the role of in-door type leadership development (e.g. mentoring and coaching) is a recommended alternative.
- Possible review of the current system of incentives in leader training programs (e.g. financing, regulation).
- New research is recommended in the following areas: assessment of leader training programme efficiency and management practice at private schools.
5. REFERENCES


Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators 2005. OECD

Farkas, Aranka – Marosváry, Péter (2002): A továbbképzés és más HR-folyamatok helyzete az általános iskolákban. (The Situation of the In-service Teacher Training and other HR Processes in Primary Schools) Background material commissioned by the Centre of Pedagogues in-service teacher training, methodology and information, using the results of a research from spring 2002. Manuscript. Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development, Budapest


6. CASE STUDY 1: MAG PROGRAMME: PREVENTING – ADAPTING – CARING

6.1. Case study of a national development programme

One of the most important development programmes in the last couple of years in Hungary has been MAG (Preventing – Adapting – Caring), a Dutch-Hungarian cooperation programme implemented between 2003 and 2007. The overall objective of MAG was “to develop elementary schools as effective places for all children to learn at, especially socially handicapped students at-risk.” The MAG programme was launched, given that prior to 2003 there had been no major development programmes to prevent student dropouts in the educational system by focusing on prevention in the early phase of studies.

The MAG programme was accomplished through professional cooperation between the Hungarian National Institute for Public Education (OKI - Országos Közoktatási Intézet)2 and the Dutch National Centre for School Improvement (APS) with financial support from the Matra-programme of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education in Hungary for a period of three years. In the fourth year, Hungarian participants continued to advocate the programme in schools through financial aid from the Hungarian National Development Plan – HEFOP 3.1. (Human Resource Development Operational Programme).

The programme was meant to reach its overall objective by the introduction of adaptive education in a school context, based on the need to satisfy students’ fundamental needs (relationships – competence – autonomy). Adaptability is to indicate that education should be tailored to the students’ needs and the schools’ expectations. The model offers prevention: rather than focusing on the recognition of the inability of a particular student at a particular point to meet institutional requirements; it aims at identifying positive features on the basis of which a more supportive environment can be established to motivate learning.

A special feature of the programme was a three-level school development scheme. This means that the programme was meant to reach its objective by having teachers, head teachers and local education officers participate in it, each in synch with their professional and formal obligations. Moreover, special attention was paid to the process of development itself. To establish a system of adaptive education, it is necessary to alter the daily routine and behaviour of participants involved at various levels of development (teachers, head teachers and local education officers), and also the attitudes and ways of thinking that affect them. To change attitude and behaviour is a time-consuming task and can be achieved mostly by experience-based training, when external influence is exploited. The most important elements of MAG were, therefore, continuous training and consultation organised for the participants.

Another specificity of the development programme was the principle of step-by-step development, which acknowledged each small step towards the predefined goals and, rather than prompting immediate change, “only” urged awareness.

The MAG programme aimed for three intervention levels of development: teachers, head teachers and local education officers.

The threefold objective of the project, associated with the various levels, is as follows:

- Teachers in grades 1-4 of elementary schools should be capable of adjusting their teaching and classroom management in order to create more effective learning opportunities for all students, using adaptive education as a model.
- The school head and the deputies responsible for teaching in grades 1-4 should become capable of fostering and sustaining adaptive education by assisting teachers, integrating adaptive education into the school programmes and disseminating good practice experience to upper forms.
- Local education officers responsible for elementary schools (grades 1-4) should be capable of using indicators of effective and adaptive education to assess the pedagogical programme of the school, using the outcome of this assessment in a consultative and constructive way in dialogue with teachers and head teachers.

The process of development was supported by different actors listed in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional management</td>
<td>• 2 project managers – 1 Dutch individual, 1 Hungarian individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In strategic issues: managers from the two cooperating institutions (OKI, APS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee of Overseers</td>
<td>Professional advisory council (members changing 7-12 individuals, international)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. MAG is an acronym in Hungarian: M stands for Megelőzés, A for Alkalmazkodás and G for Gondoskodás
2. Present name: Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development (OFI-Oktatáskutató és Fejlesztő Intézet)
### Trainers

Total of 15 individuals:

- Maintainers’ level: 1 Dutch individual, 1 Hungarian individual
- School heads’ level: 1 Dutch individual, 1 Hungarian individual
- Teachers’ level: 1 Dutch individual, 2 Hungarian individual and 7 educational trainers who worked directly with teachers

### Evaluators

1 Dutch individual, 1 Hungarian individual

### Maintainers (local education officers)

12 individuals

### School heads and deputies

13 schools

### Teachers

Nearly 90 teachers in forms 1-4 from year 4 plus other teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Participants of the MAG project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 6.2. The development process – the role of three levels of development

All three levels of development ran on different development paths. While for the two managerial levels (school heads and local education officers) the main goal was to develop leadership competencies needed for the professional support of adaptive education, teacher training focused on the content and methodology of adaptive education. The latter provided the core of development.

Preparation of the development phase, i.e. the selection of institutions and colleagues participating, ran simultaneously with the elaboration of the project concept. The schools participating were invited to join the programme (See Annex 1 for the list of participating schools and local authorities).

By choosing the institutions invited, the following criteria were established:

- an institution should be located in a socially disadvantaged region,
- there should be more institutions from the same region (networking opportunities),
- various school types should be picked,
- school heads should be open to the introduction of new development schemes,
- existing personal contact with the Hungarian project manager, or positive references regarding the school head.

According to the development concept, form teachers from schools participating may decide whether to join the project. Selection was the responsibility of school heads but the principle of voluntary selection wasn’t always put into practice.

### Start of project:

Dutch and Hungarian trainers initially worked together in January 2004. There were joint and separate preparations for the launch of project at each level. Dutch trainers represented different levels (that of local education officers, institutions and teachers), and introduced their Hungarian partners to the content and methodology of targeted change.

### Implementation:

Development took place in several stages. One of the principles of MAG was that change can only be achieved through small steps; therefore, the process of development was set up accordingly.

### Teachers:

In compliance with the goals of the programme, the focus of development was implementation at classroom level. Classroom practice, offered by the programme, entailed in many cases fundamentally new ways of the interpretation of a pedagogical role and a new task system that form teachers had formerly practiced.

### Following the principle of step-by-step change, development was based on the outline of logic presented below:

- First year: teachers were introduced to the concept of adaptive education. The aim of the concept is to offer a meaningful interpretation for what is known as ‘child-focused’ education, in respect of the fundamental needs of students – relationships, competence, autonomy – as the foundations of study organisation. In order for the programme to be a success, trainers set high standards for individual trainees to comply with in order to fully comprehend why this type of education is important and what exactly learning and educational process based on fundamental needs mean; the first year was thus organised with the aim of achieving this goal.

- Second year: in-depth survey of the characteristics and methodology of effective adaptive education (using subject matter-related instructional material that fits in with the concept of adaptive education, planning of education etc).

- Third year: modified learning process also necessitated a change in traditional assessment methods, so the third part of the process focused on the theory and practice of the assessment of learning.

- Fourth year: the main goal of this segment was to institutionalise and spread ongoing development and progress. Each school participating in the MAG programme individually defined the tenor of the stabilisation process; in the fourth year trainers were expected to facilitate these processes.
The details referred to above are illustrated in the figure below:

**Figure 1: Content outline of the MAG programme**

**School management:** School management was represented by the head and deputy of each school in the development process. The project had an important role for school leadership; therefore, a special training programme was organised for a period of three years. All members of the management attended two-day residential training sessions in Budapest twice a year. These trainings focused on the improvement of leadership competencies; emphasis was, therefore, placed on professional management rather than on the in-depth knowledge of adaptive education. First the concept of adaptive education and its main consequences for the daily routines in classroom management had to be understood. Trainees – together with their teachers – had to translate the concept into their special school situation. Later they had to change their managerial attitudes: they had to find time and energy to continue the programme in their schools, to give personal, professional support to their teachers who participated in MAG programme, and they needed to ensure appropriate conditions for the programme to be expanded. Step by step, trainees were expected to become leaders of the school development process.

School heads attended in-house trainings and consultative sessions with the participating teachers three times a year to discuss experience and achievements so far.

*In the development process regarding school management, the following results were expected to be achieved by the end of each year:*

- **First year:** head teachers and deputies conduct a series of in-house consultative sessions with teachers who apply adaptive education.

- **Second year:** head teachers and deputies apply SMART action planning methodologies to plan for classroom experiments in grades 1-4. School heads and deputies provided conditions required in classrooms by the end of the second year; for example classroom rearrangement had been made possible, resources needed for special tools to be used were made available. The classes of the teachers participating were sat in and observations were discussed with teachers.

- **Third year:** head teachers and deputies involve both teachers and local education officers in the development of the schools’ pedagogical programmes, including adaptive education.

- **Fourth year:** head teachers and deputies disseminate good practice experience to upper forms.

**Local education officers:** a special characteristic of the programme – based on an idea coming from the Hungarian project manager – was to permanently involve local education officers concerned in the development process. Training sessions provided maintainers with an overall picture of effective adaptive education and its indicators, which led to a constructive dialogue with school heads and teachers. The goals identified for each year were as follows.

- **End of the first year:** local education officers demonstrate their ability to conduct professional and supportive dialogues with pilot schools regarding their efforts to implement adaptive education in grades 1-4, based upon data they have gathered themselves

- **End of the second year:** local education officers demonstrate their capability of giving assistance to head teachers and deputies while trying to integrate adaptive education into pedagogical programmes, especially by looking for solutions for the dissemination of good practices used in grades 1-4 to upper grades.

- **End of the third year:** local education officers demonstrate willingness to maintain project results by linking the results in pilot schools with district education policies.
6.3. Key achievements and follow-up of the MAG programme

During the first period, that of 2003-2006, and the following year, extensive output was generated. Most of it comprised activities predefined in the project application.

A summary of these is presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>REALISATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team of trainers</td>
<td>During three years of development, trainers themselves underwent training to be able to support the development process at different levels. Consequently, by the fourth year this team became a professional group that had the ability to plan and coordinate development supporting the introduction of adaptive education based on the fundamental needs of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainings</td>
<td>Each level (local education officers, school heads, teachers) participated in several trainings each year. Trainers of teachers held two regional trainings every year in their micro region, and were in charge of a three-day in-house training session and consultative sessions a year to discuss experience, results and additional development alternatives in each participating school for the teachers involved. Leadership trainings were held twice a year, training for local education officers was held once a year in Budapest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching activities</td>
<td>During training and consultation sessions, teachers and trainers together worked out what method and step-by-step change teachers should implement in the next period. Teachers had the task of presenting short summaries, pictures or some kind of output on those issues for the next training. Each teacher had his/her own portfolio to collect activities and to document professional progress for the third year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource books</td>
<td>During four years of the project, 7 paper-based MAG-depositories were set up – 4 resource books for teachers, 2 for school heads and 1 for local education officers. These included, along with professional development support material, the participants’ own ideas and paperwork substantiating their achievements in development so far. As for teachers’ resource books, the theoretical part was always linked to development focus during the current year (concept of fundamental needs, methods of adaptive education, assessment of learning, programme sustainability).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webpage</td>
<td>The programme has an individual homepage run as an OKI homepage submenu. On this site all materials concerning the development process and other support materials are available for download (<a href="http://www.oki.hu/mag">http://www.oki.hu/mag</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletters</td>
<td>A quarterly newsletter has been published, outlining the process of development, actual events and results (a total of 6 x 2 double volumes). Their goal was to inform participants at all levels and regions, and to create a possibility for knowledge to be shared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual conferences</td>
<td>Each academic year ended with a conference comprised of presentations, workshop sessions, methodology exchange sessions on the agenda and idea-sharing forums presenting results. With emphasis shifting increasingly towards the activity of participants and the share of knowledge, the conference was eventually renamed MAG meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study tour to the Netherlands</td>
<td>At the end of the third year the first stage of the programme was concluded by a study tour in the Netherlands. It was organised at the end of the programme for participants to be professionally prepared. Hungarian teachers were assigned to more than twenty schools, which provided an opportunity for a constructive exchange of experience, partner consultation and new ideas to be had for teachers. Experience from Dutch practice helped many Hungarian participants at all levels of school development to become less hesitant to implement adaptability in education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Key areas of output in the MAG project

After the closure of the programme, schools participating embarked on an initiative for the foundation of the Hungarian Adaptive Education Association (Magyar Adaptív Tanulásszervezés Egyesülete) capable of support to be offered for the professional diffusion of adaptive education.

The programme gained professional support from the central educational policy, being involved at two levels in the Social Renewal Operational Programme of the New Hungary Development Plan (Hungarian acronym: ÚMFT TÁMOP); firstly, by supporting the introduction of adaptive education in schools, secondly, by adapting a new system of regular teacher training.

The professional content of the MAG project is put forth in the Dobbantó programme (‘Springboard programme’) which is to run from 2008 to 2010, and the professional manager of which is the Hungarian project manager of MAG. The Dobbantó programme aims to help students with learning disabilities catch up, and also to support vocational secondary schools that start preparatory courses for these students.

6.4. Lessons learned

During the four years of the MAG programme, besides the intended outcome, there were numerous examples unforeseen/unplanned outcome and experience. Below is a broad outline of these:
Teachers:
• Intended outcome:
  • Use by teachers of the model of adaptive education to ensure an effective learning environment for all students;
  • Change of attitude of teachers, alternative teaching roles.
• Unplanned positive outcome:
  • having become more self-sufficient and open-minded, form teachers have achieved an important change at the level of methodology and professional approach;
  • professional cooperation has sprung up and is seen strengthening among teachers in schools participating;
  • teacher-parent connections have improved.

Institutional level:
• Intended outcome:
  • Support of teachers in the MAG project, integration of adaptive education into the school programmes and dissemination of good-practice experience towards upper forms.
• Unplanned positive outcome:
  • Teachers sit in on their colleagues’ classes, they have demonstration lessons organised; a new organisational culture based on intensive cooperation has emerged to replace the traditional work culture of the "solitary, isolated" teacher type.
  • Schools have started to become organisations of learning: methods not applied so far such as team work, project methods, exchange of experiences, are seen being used more widely in schools.
  • School leaders know from their professional experience the difference between leadership and management. One characteristic feature of this process was the realization of a need for tasks and responsibilities to be shared in schools. By the third year of the project, which was related to the organisational management side of the training course, most school heads grew aware of the need for a professional leader and most of them did in fact create a new job in their organisation: that of the professional head of MAG. Some of the schools even created a professional profile for this job.
  • Schools eventually grasped the significance of the fact that the effectiveness of leadership style largely depends on the size of the organisation.
  • There were instances during a few training sessions of a professional dialogue being started with the maintainers, a practice that seems to have continued, especially in small settlements.
  • A professional community began to take shape: schools with similar profile made contact with each other, organising conferences and disseminating their experiences at different forums with a focus on professional issues.

Maintainers:
• Intended outcome:
  • Use of indicators denoting adaptive education during the evaluation of school programmes.
  • Professional discussion with school management and teachers about results.
• Unplanned positive outcome:
  • An increase in prestige and a higher esteem of both schools and teachers in the manner in which schools are looked upon by their maintainers.
  • Communication has focused on professional issues between schools and the maintainers.
  • School heads and teachers have a more detailed picture regarding the tasks of local education officers, which helped both parties realise that they work for the same goals.

Besides examples of positive (intended and unintended) outcome, lessons can be drawn from the cooperation with the school management and maintainers.
• Schools were able to join the development programme through personal invitation from the project manager. This implied strong personal commitment to the programme, which in turn had a strong emotional boost. A problem during the development phase, especially in respect of the representatives of school management, was that their participation fell short of clearly articulating their goals.
• Head teachers, grappling with the problem of being burdened with an excessive workload on operational matters, cannot concentrate on long-term and professional goals affecting the school. They do, therefore, also need to apply changes in their professional conduct and attitude. In the Döbbantó programme trainers offer coaching intended for school heads as well as in-door, personalised support schemes.
• The support of school heads is a necessary condition for the institutionalisation of MAG project results, but it is 'professional' rather than 'managerial'. The appointment of a professional head of the MAG programme was a possible solution alternative to respond to this challenge, his or her role was, in year four of the programme, to
perform professional supervision within the school.

- The majority of schools participating operate in small communities (villages), where local government offices were also faced with an excessive workload and lacked time, energy and professionalism needed for active participation in the programme.

6.5. References


MATRA Project Proposal (2003): MAG programme, APS, National Centre for School Improvement

6.6. Annexes

Annex 1: Schools and maintainers participating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MICRO-REGION/AREA</th>
<th>MAINTAINERS</th>
<th>SCHOOLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miskolc</td>
<td>Miskolc (city), 1 individual: Education Committee</td>
<td>Móra Ferenc Általános Iskola (elementary school), Miskolc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Önod, notary</td>
<td>Lorántffy Zsuzsanna Általános és Művészeti Iskola (elementary school), Önod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Szajólád, notary</td>
<td>Fráter György Általános és Művészeti Iskola (elementary school), Szajólád</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagyatád</td>
<td>Nagyatád (city), 3 independents: deputy notary, head of Education Committee, member of Education Committee</td>
<td>Aspád Fejedelem Általános Iskola (elementary school), Nagyatád Babay József Általános Iskola (elementary school), Nagyatád Móricz Zsigmond Általános Iskola (elementary school), Háromfa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Özd | Özd és Kistérsége Közoktatási Ellátási Társulás (Özd and Micro-region Public Education Provider Association), 1 indiv. | Közéret Általános Iskola (elementary school), Borsodbóta |
| Bánréve | Tompa Mihály Közéret Általános Iskola (elementary school), Bánréve |
| Farkaslyuk, notary | Farkaslyuki Általános Iskola (elementary school), Farkaslyuk |
| Hangony, mayor | Hangonyi Gyorgy Általános Iskola (elementary school), Hangony |

Szekszárd

Szekszárd (city), Education Committee, 2 individuals. 2. Sz. Általános Iskola és Diákokortoon (elementary school)

3. Sz. Általános Iskola (elementary school)

Dienes Valéria Általános Iskola Grundschule (elementary school)

Annex 2: The content of accredited teacher and school leader training programme based on the MAG project

Phase 1: 30-lesson training programme for school heads – One semester

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<th>MAIN THEMATIC BLOCKS</th>
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<td>Main characteristics of administration in the Hungarian public education system</td>
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<td>Role of the main actors</td>
<td>Analysis of the situation in the participants’ micro-region and schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adaptive education (5 lessons)</td>
<td>Theory of adaptive education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role of teachers and classroom-lessons in the realisation of adaptive education</td>
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<td>The adaptive leader (6,5 lessons)</td>
<td>Pedagogical practice of adaptive education</td>
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<td>The adaptive leader: the tools of school leaders (power, communication, relationships)</td>
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<td>The efficient leader (8 lessons)</td>
<td>Role and tasks of the manager and leader</td>
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<td>SMART plan</td>
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<td>Innovation management (5 lessons)</td>
<td>The nature of changes</td>
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<td>Change management</td>
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Phase 2: 60 lessons training program for school heads who participated in Phase 1 and decided to introduce MAG program in their schools – 3 years programme

<table>
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<tr>
<th>MICRO-REGION/AREA</th>
<th>MAINTAINERS</th>
<th>SCHOOLS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Miskolc</td>
<td>Miskolc (city), 1 individual: Education Committee</td>
<td>Móra Ferenc Általános Iskola (elementary school), Miskolc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Önod, notary</td>
<td>Lorántffy Zsuzsanna Általános és Művészeti Iskola (elementary school), Önod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Szajólád, notary</td>
<td>Fráter György Általános és Művészeti Iskola (elementary school), Szajólád</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagyatád</td>
<td>Nagyatád (city), 3 independents: deputy notary, head of Education Committee, member of Education Committee</td>
<td>Aspád Fejedelem Általános Iskola (elementary school), Nagyatád Babay József Általános Iskola (elementary school), Nagyatád Móricz Zsigmond Általános Iskola (elementary school), Háromfa</td>
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3. Sz. Általános Iskola (elementary school)

Dienes Valéria Általános Iskola Grundschule (elementary school)
7. CASE STUDY 2: CASE STUDY OF A REAL SCHOOL

7.1. A Real School

"... the most remarkable change of all was in how so many members of the colony had grown less afraid of change, were learning the specific steps needed to make any large adjustment to new circumstances, and worked well together to keep leaping into a better and better future."

This case study describes a Hungarian general school, which - as the result of a professional and conscious organisational development leadership - is run as a real learning organization. The most important indicator of the success of this school is the satisfaction of its clients. Although the former principal was replaced by a new one two and a half years ago, the school, which is capable of satisfying its clients in a changing environment, is still an organisation „where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the things in their entirety”.

The school consists of three organisational units reflected in its name: „Szandaszőlős General School, Community Centre, and School of Art-teaching at a Basic Level“ (Szandaszőlősi Általános Iskola, Művelődési Ház és Alapfokú Művészetetkutatói Intézmény). The maintainer of the institution is the city of Szolnok (with county competencies in administrative terms). The school is the only educational, cultural and sports centre in the neighbourhood, which is a rather remote settlement, 7 km away from the city centre.

Although the three units of this institution strengthen each other’s work, the general school section, we might say, is an average Hungarian general school, which can be characterized by a heterogeneous but healthy socio-cultural composition of students, where all levels of society are represented. The school is operated by 66 teachers and 21 other staff, to assist in the educational activities of 744 students learning in the general school, and 398 students in the art (folk dance) school.

This excellent school, which is operated for the satisfaction of its clients, can be characterized by the harmony of stability and continuous change. It is recognizable in the strategic documents as well as daily work. The basis of work here is the Pedagogical Programme, which was created in 1996 and has been reviewed and modified by the staff several times. This document contains the basic values which provide the foundations for work having been performed in this school during a period of 12 years. Below is a list of these values:

1. Openness of the institution to every citizen
2. Preparation for other types of studies inside the school
3. Democracy at all levels of the institution
4. Principle of equal opportunities
5. Forming of a community by respecting and shaping personalities
6. Transmission and respect of values
7. Education in matters related to health

While these principles are not particularly special, one of the reasons identifiable as being behind the success of the school is the intention to apply them in daily life. From time to time these values are adjusted to the level of daily work to help the whole staff comply. A good example of this is to be found on the homepage of the school, where we can find their mission statement (written in 2001).

- “The main task of the eight-grade school is to enable all students to continue their studies in a way that suits their personal skills best. Various kinds of learning activities are used to fulfil this task."

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4. www.szandaiskola.hu
• An important aim of the school is to provide experience for students to drive home the point that they have to live as members of different communities. They need to learn how to preserve their personal values in creating and observing the norms of communities, and they also have to live according to those norms.

• An important task for the school is to form a community while respecting personality.

• The school performs continuous monitoring of both the expectations and satisfaction of its clients, providing a balance between education and teaching by the conscious use of educational methodology.

• The most important intellectual resources of our school are our Pedagogical Programme and the competencies of our staff. Retaining and developing this capital is a preferential task.”

These principles can be felt in different areas of the daily work of the school, demonstrating pedagogical consciousness, which is this school’s forte, along with its ability to build clients’ trust in the school.

The school staff are highly committed to quality, therefore partner oriented working is the main principle of school work. The most important indicator of the quality of their work is client satisfaction. The school regularly and systematically seeks feedback from clients, analyzing their satisfaction. The parental view of children being committed to the school as their “dearest treasure” is taken seriously and note is taken of the fact that this implies great responsibility. ‘Working well’ means that school stakeholders (and students, in particular, along with parents and teachers) are satisfied. This sounds pretty simple, but to deliver on performance is another story.

School staff are proud of their results, which they communicate regularly. Awards of the highest order honouring school performance were the silver level of Quality Prize of Public Education in 2003 and the EFQM European Prize for Excellence – the five-star commitment to quality from 2006. The school continuously collects, communicates and analyzes data as confirmation of effective work such as the students’ accomplishment in learning, results achieved at different competitions, national competence assessment findings, the number of students attending the school and the study results of school-leaving students who continue to carry on with their studies.

The vision of the school is to prepare each student for studies that best fits his/her skills. Day in day out, the staff as a whole is committed to the realization of this vision. They have created an educational system of their own, along with a wide range of free time programmes. There has been a steady improvement of teaching and learning technologies and of organisational procedures. This regime has a traditional component, where teachers work in subject departments; teachers, however, also work in the so-called theatrical workshops. These workshops have been developed as the results of various development projects.

**Development workshop:** The aim of this workshop is to ensure high support for students in need of special personal development in any grade of the school. By working together and imparting up-to-date knowledge of a particular subject area, the workshop gives professional and methodological support to teachers involved.

**Cooperative workshop:** This workshop assists teachers in organising cooperative learning in any subject or grade.

**Workshop for using the complex Lőrincz wood toy development system:** The inventor of the wood toy system uses this tool to develop different personal skills, community, mathematical and logical skills. This is the only school in Hungary which has integrated this tool into classroom practice. There is an accredited in-service teacher training programme to make this method available to teachers in other schools.

**TIOK workshop:** TIOK is a consortium consisting of various schools and kindergartens in a region for implementing and promoting nationally developed competence-based education programmes. In this workshop teachers work on the programme together.

**Socrates group:** The school has a 10-year old partnership with four schools, one British, two German and one Spanish, in the framework of the European Socrates Programme. In the first years of this cooperation teachers and students from the four schools developed learning materials in different subjects and then worked together in diverse projects in biology. The most important outcome of this international partnership is the use at the Szanda School of projects as learning methods.

**Development of motion by music:** This kind of activity is provided for students in grades one and two, twice a week. The aim of this programme is to provide assistance in the development of motion coordination and to facilitate the acquisition of the skills used in the process of learning to write. It helps to address difficulties encountered in the transition from kindergarten to school and helps smooth over skills-related differences in the performance of students, which are the consequences of a diversity in personal development factors.

The school has well defined, assessable aims of efficiency, which are the basis of their
A good illustration of the latter is this:
“The form master was in charge of preparing the class for a competition of tales for 4th grade students. This is a competition of teams covering a broad timeframe, which starts at school level and ends at national level. The whole class participated in the planning of preparatory activities. Walking in the corridor, the principal overheard some key-words of planning, ‘aim’, ‘success’ ‘criteria’, ‘method of evaluation’, ‘tasks’, ‘steps’ (milestones), ‘methods’, ‘information’, ‘communication’, ‘individuals in charge’, ‘time schedule’ – all of these factors were taken into account at the beginning of the preparatory procedure. Although this may not have been the reason why the team notched up a first place in the national competition, it needs to be underlined that in the process these students acquired the skills of setting identifiable, concrete aims along with the rudiments of planning. The plan was visible at all times at classroom level; students carried through with it and were able to monitor progress. They had a positive experience of the result of collective, plan-oriented activities.”

There is a firm belief on the part of school staff that using PDCA-thinking in pedagogical development processes results in steady improvement of quality, adding to the success of the whole school. There are visible signs of this firm belief in different kinds of documentation (plans, analytical papers, reports, etc.) or at different forums of professional talking inside and outside the school.

This school is a de facto organisation of learning. Several members of the staff are agents of change. They are characterized by personal vision building, inquiry, competence and collaboration. Judging from these characteristics, they have a habit of continuous learning and they can learn the norms and techniques thereof. An important professional aim is the mastery of professional competence. Collaboration is necessary not only for successful learning, but it is also essential in presenting a personal vision and also in articulating a common vision. It is hard to decide whether the school has been able to become a learning organisation as a result of numerous change agents, or if these personal characteristics have developed in the wake of the creation of a common vision, of organizational structures, norms and methods of self-evaluation, of an organisation-based development or a collaborative work climate. These elements do strengthen each other and the principal has been spearheading all these procedural changes systematically for several years. (She mentioned that it took 15 years to construct this organisational culture, but it has by now become a typical element of organisation.)

7.2. The role and the responsibility of the principal

The principal, who was a successful leader of effective school improvement, has been working for two years as a medium-level leader at a larger and more administrative organisation. From this perspective - contrary to her experience at school level - she is of the view that the top leader in an organisation has a dominant role in the process of organisational development. “There are stages in the life of an organisation when awareness, professionalism, responsibility, task-sharing practice, motivation and consciousness, associated with the activity of a top leader, together determine the future of that organisation”.

The efficient operation of this school today is a result of diverse factors that have a cumulative effect. The timeline of events takes us back to the period of political transition when Hungary had a new law on education (1993) stipulating the autonomy of schools in professional matters. The key figure, as it were (K. M.), in this story became principal in 1992, having previously worked as a deputy for 5 years. She received her degree in pedagogy at ELTE University, then the school took part in the so-called Programme of Self-improvement, sponsored by the Soros Foundation. Following that she first studied at HUNSEM (Hungarian-Netherlands School for Educational Management), then at a PhD school.

It was a time of active professional life in the field of education and there was a relatively large amount of money available for school development purposes. She was interested in organisational development, especially quality improvement. As she was aware of the need to reach the required level of expertise she never stopped improving her skills through her studies. Sometimes it was really hard and lonely work. Moreover, the need to share her knowledge was important for her as being aware of the fact that she herself could not help each student. She was convinced that the school might become a better place for students if theory is put into practice. “Students are in the focus of each process at the school. The whole staff should work for the success of each

and self-evaluation became a backbone of their organisational culture. Taking part as a positive outcome of the programme, feedback, analysis of data results have been given various kinds (national, county, or town) of awards in this school, an indicator of professional standards being high at this school. These awards are considered the highest of their kind obtained for excellent work. The school management has been using this tool consciously. Although the school didn’t have a member of a Regional Development Centre for School and Kindergarten in the Human Resource Development Operative Programme of the National Development Plan accelerated the realization of competence-based staff development in the school (20 teachers participated 900 hours of INSETs), while supporting horizontal learning via cooperation between different organisations.

It has been found that in some cases training can be more effective when a “critical mass” of the staff can participate in it. Consequently, these trainings were tailored to the needs of a group of staff members and the school was used as a training location. To subsidize these training programmes has never been a task without difficulties, but when the economic climate and the educational policy became unfavourable in the period following the year 2000, it demanded even greater effort and commitment from school management.

Experience has been obtained through “learning by teaching.” It was started inside the school and was subsequently continued in the so-called Comenius clubs, where experience was initially shared with other schools and newcomer applicants were then given assistance in building their own TQM-system. This method is used by the school staff at conferences and in INSETs accredited by them. As a sign of the professional excellence of school management, only subjects areas that are part of their common vision have been prioritized and eventually carried through, by giving assistance to those involved.

Although participating in INSETs has taken up a considerable amount of teachers’ free time, most teachers have been happy to participate. The benefit of these courses was not only the joy of becoming a better qualified individual and that of a higher level of competence. These occasions have increased self-confidence, professionalism, awareness, and the determination of participants, which has lead to higher standards inside the school. “A teacher is an intellectual, a person with a creative mind, one who needs to be familiar with the system which he/she is part of. This, of course, does not imply familiarity with every detail. But imparting some of that knowledge is the responsibility of a leader.”

A relatively high number of teachers (almost 25 per cent of the teaching staff) have been given various kinds (national, county, or town) of awards in this school, which is an indicator of professional standards being high at this school. These awards are considered the highest of their kind obtained for excellent work. The school management has been using this tool consciously. Although the school didn’t have any additional resources available to reward teachers who perform good work, these rewards are a benchmark of success for the teaching staff. The principal is sure that the reason for success is quite simple. Facts and data have always been a must in generating ideas upon which to base thoughts for recommended alternatives.
Both the principal, who was behind a successful organisational development, and her successor agree on the importance of the role of the top leader in an organisation. The previous principal was highly committed to management and was an assiduous, democratic leader who had a clear sense of mission and a moral commitment to education. 15 years ago the school staff became a professional organisation under her leadership. Today, the staff believe in their vision of professionalism, they have a clear mission statement – to support the effective development of each student – and are aware of a professional responsibility needed to realize this mission.

To follow in the former principal’s footsteps was not an easy task to achieve. She became the first leader of an organisation of this type, known for its operational efficiency, in the emergence of which she had participated as deputy principal, - the general assistant of the principal, who was responsible for the department of grades 1 to 4.

She was confident of having no intention to change the operational system of the school organisation, but she was not sure about several areas. She had the task of school leadership to carry on with as someone’s successor who is at once recognized as an exceptional individual and as an individual with distinguished professional standing in the whole country. She had to cope with a problematic first year in office. Although it was business as usual, staff members "sized up" the new school head. “How will she react to different events? What is it she might overlook? Where does a priority begin and where does it end when viewed through her prism of leadership?” I was aware of difficulties in the new situation. Previously I had to solve operational tasks. I had to change my daily routine, which was not easy. I had to make plans, I had to create more silence for sitting and thinking about the future, to form my personal vision and ideas regarding the mission of the school. I was dissatisfied with myself all the time; I could not believe that I would be able to continue my predecessor’s work and that I would be capable of keeping up with the high standards of operation at the school. There was a lot of discussion on issues to be addressed, both among members of the teacher staff and in the management. These discussions made us realize that we had to think the situation over and we learnt a lot from them.” Satisfaction ratings were indicative of the significance of what happened during the academic year: the level of satisfaction regarding the performance of management was lower than previously. The staff reacted in a usual manner: a workshop was organised, where participants working in small groups voiced their reasons for disaffection and made suggestions for change. In that situation it was important to clarify changeable and solid elements of their work.

The real turning point was the analysis of the data coming from national competence assessment figures. The whole staff agreed that the decline of effectiveness indicators is a serious sign of falling standards regarding their work. A crisis management team was formed, whose members were to assess data, analyse the situation and prepare an action plan upon which they provided information to the whole teacher staff. It was accepted by the staff; one crucial objective regarding our plans for the new academic year is to implement the principles of this action plan. (It should be noted that there are several assessment experts in the teaching staff.) The principal believes that this situation has opened the eyes of the teachers and they understand that despite a new leadership in the school the most important element of their work should be professionalism. There were numerous signs of this at the opening meeting of the academic year of 2008/2009 and in the plan documentation, too. The new management changed some elements in the management system of the school. The scope of the tasks and responsibilities of professional leaders inside the school have been widened, new tasks have been assigned to deputy heads. Earlier they were responsible for the two departments in the school. In the new system one of them is responsible for education, one for assessment and evaluation, and one member of management works as an expert on quality management and school improvement. Formally, she is not a deputy but she has tasks, responsibilities and rights which deputies normally have.

While traditional operation is continued, there are several new components in the organisation. Detailed task profiles have been made for each teacher, the realization of the assessment system of teachers has started. New middle managers had to be trained, an application is to be submitted to the Social Renewal Operative Programme for the launching of a professional network building scheme.

These activities show that despite a change in top leadership and in the composition of school management, school has preserved its crucial characteristics: determination to work in order to prepare each student for the continuation of studies which best fits his/her skills and interests.

The management is determined to realize the principle of shared leadership, conducive to a situation where all members of the staff have a clear task and responsibility in organisational matters. People are trusted and supported in the process of performing their tasks. This does not mean that mistakes might not be made but the point is that the staff should learn from them.

The new academic year started with the usual professionalism, enthusiasm and confidence. The new principal has realized that her task is not to continue operational management, which she performed competently as deputy head, neither does it encompass the same set of tasks performed by her predecessor. She has to use her own
style, a goal which she thinks she has managed to achieve. “Today I am sure that I will not inadvertently ruin the school. I like being the principal of this organisation.”

7.4. Summary

In the early 1990s, Szandaszőlős General School began a development process, due to the favourable interaction of circumstances, in order to become an organisation of learning. As a result of a 15-year period of leadership characterized by organisational development performed via commitment and a high level of awareness, the school became an organisation of learning, now operating at high standards of professionalism and also for the satisfaction of its clients. It is now possible to identify specific elements of the process which have made this organisation and its culture strong enough to function independently from whoever is the school leader. (It should be borne in mind that the new principal has participated in the whole process of development as a leader second in rank and, by the time she became principal, she grew aware of the importance of steady organisational development). Among these elements is the national education policy, embarked upon 15 years ago, the school staff, the individual features of the principal, awareness of the significance of leadership and instruction, professional commitment, steadiness and endurance. The new principal has been able to manage a crisis which emerged in the wake of a change in top management.

At present it is to be hoped that the process of development at this school will continue. It seems that not only the management, but also the whole staff are well aware of the significance of the answer given by M. Fisher, when asked about the length of quality improvement process: “If you wish to do it well, it will take forever.”

From the vantage point of researchers engaged in the improvement of school management it is a requirement of crucial importance to pass on the lessons learned from this good practice.
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A. CONTEXT

1. KEY ISSUES

The distinction between leadership, management and administration

For a precise and full understanding of this country report it is essential to distinguish between terms of school leadership, management and administration. These terms are sometimes used interchangeably in documents and also in literature that might lead to misunderstanding caused by various interpretations, spirit and implications attributable to them.

In a broader sense the term school leader is usually used to name those pedagogical employees – usually teachers – who are able to influence others to follow them to reach some common goals in the school, whether or not they are established in the formal position of a school director, head teacher or deputy. In this meaning leadership function at school is seen as a crucial initiative to provide innovations and improvement at school level, with special regard to heads of subjects and teachers, in spite of the fact that they are not in a formal managerial position. But for the purpose of this country report we use the term school leader in a closer sense to name a head teacher/principal position at a school.

School management is formally established by the school owner or establisher (local authority body) that has a clearly defined position and roles to provide for each player. It usually concerns the school leader (head teacher), deputies, the subject head teacher or others. School management is expected to manage school affairs in compliance with the law and to provide various specific formal activities.

Administration is a managerial function to be performed at school in order to maintain order and to carry through all processes, procedures and rules in line of expectations to that effect. This function is mostly supported by official documents as well as the report system in a formal manner.

Age distribution of principals

We do not have at our disposal any relevant statistics regarding the age distribution of school leaders (head teachers), but based on some limited information obtained through research findings in the period between 2005 and 2007 we can use rough estimates (see chapter 6 for details). As part of this research 2,370 leaders from various school types (primary schools, specialized primary schools, secondary grammar schools, secondary technical schools, vocational schools, secondary integrated schools and specialized secondary schools) were asked to fulfil a questionnaire, which also included a question regarding the timeframe of their managerial practice. Out of 1204 school leaders who answered the questions and returned the questionnaire, 463 school leaders had a practice shorter than 5 years, 310 had 5 – 10 years of managerial practice, 281 had 11 – 15 years of practice, 89 had a practice of 16 – 20 years and 50 school leaders had more than 20 years of managerial practice.

National context of educational leadership and management development

After the political and economic changes started in 1989 the Slovak Government began a process of transformation in the system of education, too. The most important achievement in this respect is that schools have become legal entities and it became possible for non-state schools (private and church) to be established. The first changes were made in compliance with Act No 416/2001 (Act on the Transfer of certain Functions from the Executive Administration to Regional Bodies), which changed Act No 542/1990 on Public Administration in the Education System and School Self-administration. Following The Manifesto of the Government of the Slovak Republic and Government Decree No 370/2003 and No 371/2003 and the relevant sections tackling the issue of decentralisation and modernisation of public administration, the National Council of the Slovak Republic adopted Public Administration Act No 596/2003 (Act on Public Administration in the Education System and School Self-administration). On the basis of this Act most competences were shifted from the public administration of central and local bodies to local bodies of self-government. Self-government bodies in cities and villages took over approximately 60 per cent of the competences that previously were those of the district authority of a particular administrative region of education. For transferred competences to be covered is ensured by the fact that only cities and villages (or clusters of villages) obtaining the post of the Board of Education can dispose of them. Activities related to a particular administrative region of education are to be performed only by employees who fulfill relevant professional requirements such as professional and pedagogical eligibility for the school types concerned and a minimum of five years having been spent in the teaching profession. To reach the required standards of quality in public administration, expertise parameters
regarding employees in such jobs should be screened by the competent Regional Board of Education. The Regional Boards of Education (8) were established within each of the eight regions of the Slovak Republic on January 1, 2004. Competences resulting from the above-mentioned Act were transferred to city and village territorial self-administration bodies on July 1, 2004. If a village did not cover the post of the Board of Education or the competent Regional Board of Education did not approve it due to failure to fulfil the required professional and qualification criteria, the task of public administration will be carried out by the Regional Board of Education.

In order for the legal establishment and disestablishment of schools and school facilities by cities and villages, self-governing regions, churches and parishes, natural and legal persons, as well as the specialized local public administration in education (Regional Boards of Education), to be made legally possible - should exceptional circumstances make it necessary (special schools and special school facilities) - Act No 596/2003 was adopted.

The following facts can be mentioned as positive features in school administration changes:

- ratification and subsequent implementation of the European Charter of the Local Self-Government (1989) leading to the adoption of the Act No 416/2001 (Act on the Transfer of certain Functions from Executive Administration to Regional Units),
- exercising of Act No 302/2001 (Act on Self-administration of Regional Units, known as Act on Regional Self-administration)
- adoption of Act No 596/2003 (Act on Public Administration in the Education System and Self-administration)

The implementation of the principle of self-administration has become a key feature of school administration in these new conditions. The significance of self-administration is that schools having to act in accordance with goals and tasks transferred to them by the law and with the respect to their own specific conditions they have a right and feasible alternatives to autonomously design or modify the content, form and organisation of the teaching process. As opposed to the previous period, when external factors dominated school administration, the need to reinforce inter-regulative school factors is stressed today.

1.1. Current challenges facing school leaders

In October 2005 the Government adopted the National Programme on Reforms in the Slovak Republic for the period 2006 – 2008. In the field of education, adoption of a new education act, preparation of a lifelong education strategy and development of a national project for the further education of teaching staff were outlined as priorities.

During the years 2007 – 2008 nine concepts were adopted, which provided foundations for a new Education Act to be prepared. The new Education Act No 245/2008 was adopted on May 22, 2008 and it came into force on September 1, 2008, when it replaced the former one from the year 1984. In August 2008, 13 regulations were adopted in accordance with the new Act.

Two new documents have become compulsory for schools on the basis of the new Education Act. These are the State Educational Programme and the School Educational Programme. Following the Act in June 2008 the Ministry of Education approved the State Educational Programmes for particular levels of education and examples of School Educational Programmes, along with a methodology of their introduction. Consequently, one of the most important challenges that school leaders (head teachers) in the Slovak Republic are facing today is the creation of the School Educational Programmes in agreement with the State Educational Programmes. There have already been some initiatives to prepare school leaders for fulfilment of their task (for more details see Chapter3).

State Educational Programmes have to involve:

- name of the study programme,
- aims of the study programme,
- level of education achieved through the study programme graduation,
- profile of the study programme graduate,
- study areas,
- characteristics of the study branch, its duration, teaching forms and requirements for the study acceptation,
- educational standards,
- forms of practical training,
- curricula,
- teaching language,
- organisational conditions for partial forms of education,
- conditions and forms of the completion of studies and delivery of the relevant certificate,
• personnel assurance,
• facility, technical and room conditions,
• safety conditions and health protection,
• specifics and conditions for education of pupils and students with special needs,
• principles and conditions for creation of school educational programmes.

School Educational Programme is issued by the school leader after its discussion in the school Pedagogical Leadership Team and School Governance Board. The establisher can ask the leader to submit a School Educational Programme to approve it. According to the law the School Educational Programme has to be in agreement with the relevant State Educational Programme. To check agreement of School Educational Programmes with relevant State Educational Programmes is in responsibility of the State School Inspection.

Each School Educational Programme has to involve following parts:
• name of the study programme,
• aims of the study programme,
• level of education achieved through the study programme graduation,
• school orientation,
• duration of the study and teaching forms,
• curricula,
• teaching plans,
• teaching language,
• conditions and forms of the study completion and relevant certificate delivery,
• personnel assurance,
• facility, technical and room conditions,
• conditions for safety and health protection,
• inner system of inspection and school employee assessment,
• requirements for continual education of pedagogical and professional workers.

In April 2007 the Government adopted the Framework of teachers’ professional development in a career system of lifelong education and lifelong guidance. In accordance with this document a new act (Teaching Staff Act) has been under preparation. A draft version of the Act has been submitted for public discussion; its finalisation and adoption is expected shortly (2009). The act will define the scope and forms of realisation of the professional development of teachers and other members of the teaching staff (continual education, creative activities related to teaching practice, self-study etc.). The draft version of the Teaching Staff Act introduces a new phenomenon, i.e. definition of professional standards of specific categories of the teaching staff (beginning teacher, independent teacher, teacher with the first attestation, teacher with the second attestation, school leader). In connection with the Act it has to be mentioned that no systems of professional standards have existed until now, although there are some proposals (for more details of a leader’s professional standards see in chapter 9.1). A problem is the implementation and use of those standards. A positive feature of the Act is the introduction into practice of a system of teacher career development. A link of this system to the financial promotion of teachers has been still a matter of discussion. Leaders do not have sufficient financial resources allocated for teachers’ salaries to enable them to repay teachers differentially according to the quality and the amount of their work. Socially underestimated salaries of teachers and bureaucracy as a side-effect are the main reasons behind a huge number of teachers leaving the profession. The shortage of financial resources should be solved with the help of ESF projects. But here again, bureaucracy is seen emerging as a significant factor leading to the weakening of motivation. Even very modest projects require huge and complex administration. Another problem is caused by high requirements towards initial financial sources needed to refund the operational costs of the ESF project (the costs are reimbursed in very complicated ways that entail long delays).

An additional challenge for both leaders and teachers is PISA 2006/2007 findings, which fall short of expectations in terms of actual results. On the other hand, results should not be interpreted as a consequence of pupils’ poor knowledge; they are probably influenced a great deal by the type of the exam tasks in use: students at Slovak schools are used to solving convergent, mechanical types of tasks, rather than creative ones. What needs to be changed in the teaching process is; therefore, more focus on the practical use of the knowledge obtained. If, however, something is to be changed, teachers need to be aware of existing problems. And often they are not, which is what happened in connection with the PISA results – teachers have not been properly informed about them.

1.2. Challenges in the context of legislative aims regarding the status of teachers

The government’s intentions regarding the issues of the status of teachers are expressed in The National Programme of Training and Education in the Slovak Republic for the Next 15 – 20 Years (so-called Programme Millenium, adopted by the Government...
of the Slovak Republic in December 2001) which asserts, among other things, the following objectives for the development of education:

• to implement the stipulations of the Act on the Public Service of the Teacher and Pedagogic Workers (the proposed Teaching Staff Act),
• to develop the system for the protection of teachers and tutors against excessive psychical burden and to implement programmes used to cope with stress and endurance. To supervise medical and psychological check-ups aimed at testing the health and psychical condition of teachers and other staff with the aim of prevention, assistance and treatment,
• to regulate, by means of legislation, the protection against an increased aggression and violence on the part of students and parents of teaching staff as individuals in an official capacity,
• to intensify the financial evaluation of teachers and other teaching staff, to develop a system of differentiated assessment according to the educational stage and the quality as well as quantity of work evaluation; to work out a system for the moral appreciation of teachers, specialists in vocational training and of tutors,
• to develop and implement the principle of the control of the ethical code,
• to work out teacher and tutor profiles, a diagram of the professional availability and competence of teachers at various types of schools and in the tuition of subjects,
• to ensure the lifelong education of teachers, vocational training specialists and tutors; to modernise and implement the training of management staff at school level, also through branch educational institutions and other accredited fields of education,
• to implement the research of the personality of a teacher, pedagogic employee and his/her work,
• to diversify pre-graduate, postgraduate and lifelong education,
• to introduce the system of the attestation exams (qualifying exams) in the context of financial evaluation and the professional career of teaching staff.

The National Programme also underscores an expectation of mutual co-operation of employers, state administration bodies and self-government bodies with trade unions in order to enhance the status of teaching staff and to create better conditions for their work.

The National Programme has been implemented step-by-step with a view to the adoption of the above-mentioned Acts and the content of relevant documents. Except for legislation focusing on the status of teachers, issues regarding the influence of legislation on the status of leaders need also to be mentioned here. Current legislation pertaining to schools in the Slovak Republic, including the draft version of the Teaching Staff Act, does not refer to a school leader (known as a legal entity, given the current conditions of schools) as a new profession, it still defines a leader as a teacher with additional, specific tasks to perform. This is behind the interpretation of leader training only as a positional training of teachers as individuals rather than preparation for a new line of specialization (see also chapter 2).

2. THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP/MANAGERIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SLOVAKIA’S EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

A demonstration of the awareness of the Government vis-a-vis the importance of the development of school leadership/management is the existence of methodological and pedagogical centres in the Slovak Republic. They are referred to in Regulation No 42/1996 on Teaching Staff Further Education (from January 26, 1996) particularly as an instrument offering further education to the teaching staff (together with the National Institute for Education). Regulation No 42/1996 distinguishes the following types of option in further education: introduction into practical work of beginner teachers, training of leading teaching staff, continual education, specialist innovation training, specialist qualification training and scope-widening education. The issues of further education pertaining to the teaching staff have now been solved in the draft version of the Teaching Staff Act (for more detail see chapter 9).

On the basis of a transformation process to replace the previous regional centres one centralised institution - Methodological and Pedagogical Centre - has been established on January 1, 2008. The MPC has six allocated workplaces (2 in the capital Bratislava and the others in Trenčín, Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Nitra) and is under direct supervision of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic. The mission of the MPC is to offer further education for teachers, leaders and other staff whose job is performed in connection with school facilities, which includes the following tasks:

• to offer an efficient, functionally appropriate and available system for the further education of school staff and those whose jobs are performed at school facilities on the territory of the Slovak Republic,
• to offer professional and methodological consultancy to school staff and those whose jobs are performed at school facilities,
Managerial development is considered to be crucial for a successful transformation of the Slovak school system. In practice, however, despite the proclamations referred to we are facing various negative phenomena such as:

- Conditions are not suitable to elaborate theoretical and practical questions of school leadership and school management conceptually.
- School management issues have been excluded from the cluster of education-related studies.
- Time allotment for school administration and school leadership issues (to study disciplines dealing with these topics) at university-level undergraduate teacher training is underestimated and is minimal (for more details see chapter 11).
- School leader competence is perceived mainly as competence focusing on school management prerequisite functions (i.e. legal/juridical and economical) and not on school pedagogical guiding (i.e. people/staff leadership and applying social and psychological dimension in his/her competences).
- No centre is established at the faculties offering teacher training, the task of which would be to explore, develop and theoretically elaborate on school management and leadership issues and in this way create conditions for decision-making authorities and schools to improve the school system and school administration on an exact platform.

What role does leadership/managerial development play in your country's education development strategy?

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<th>COUNTRY</th>
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<th>COMMENT, EXAMPLE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>important</td>
<td>National development programmes underscore leadership/managerial development (see quotations in chapter 1.2), although there is no clear systematic concept for it. A draft bill of the Teaching Staff Act aims to solve this partially by providing a legislative framework for the education of school leaders. Although universities, Methodological and Pedagogical Centre and other educational institutions can, according to the law, serve as providers of further training offered to school leaders, in practice this is carried out mostly through the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre. MPC obtains financial funds allocated for the education initiative directly from the Ministry of Education as it has the responsibility to perform the training of education-related leadership, already incorporated in its mission. A further problem associated with the offer to school leaders of study programmes, also to be performed by universities, is that universities cannot obtain accreditation to offer bachelor or master study programmes assigned specifically to students who are already university graduates (Accreditation Commission of the Ministry of Education finds this to be in contradiction with Higher Education Act, due to the fact that the Act itself stipulates a right to apply for university studies for anybody with a secondary school-leaving exam).</td>
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3. MAJOR NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WITH COMPONENTS OF LEADERSHIP/ MANAGERIAL DEVELOPMENT

In accordance with the education development strategy of the Slovak Republic, the training and development of school leaders concentrates on one training programme which is predominantly delivered and managed by the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre (MPC). The MPC and its branches have developed and carried out various programmes for the training of school leaders.

The support of the MPC programme Training of leading pedagogic workers - School Management (MPC Bratislava) was realized through ESF funding in a period of two years. The programme was assigned for school leaders as a possible form of their compulsory education. The training consisted of 200 study hours divided into two academic years and its aim was to improve the quality of managerial performance of school leaders at schools and school facilities and to familiarize trainees with the basic principles of school management. There have been 1,107 senior teaching staff participating in the training, 454 of whom having already finished the course in 2007 and the rest still continuing the training in the 2008/2009 Academic Year. Huge interest in the training is evidence of participant satisfaction with the training offered, but it does in a way demonstrate a high level of fluctuation in leadership positions.

The most important national programme now realised by the MPC, focusing on school leadership/management development, is the Training of school leaders. Compulsory training available through this training programme is comprised of 240 study hours. This compulsory training programme requires a defence in a written form of the assignment accomplished. The subject of the final written assignment usually covers areas of pedagogical, personal or general (main) strategy in the school, including recommendations for its realisation.

The number of trainees in this programme is highly dependent on demand for school leaders to be appointed to their positions, and the MPC has to include them in the new programme during the year.

We estimate that approximately 500 – 1000 leaders have been trained and certificated annually in the last 5 years. The budget for covering the above-mentioned programme, offered on a regular basis, is unknown as it is realised together with many other teacher training programmes. This programme is realised by a full-time and a part-time staff, mainly recruited from among MPC employees. The number of trainers is in excess of 20.

The importance of financial support from the European Union, allocated to various educational programme projects, has increased. A project called Distance education – School Management (Communication Skills, Basics of Personnel Management, School Management and Marketing), has already been realised through this support initiative (Communication Skills, Basics of Personnel Management, School Management and Marketing) carried out within the National project of further education of pedagogic workers in the area of communication skills, school management and marketing. The number of study hours within this education was at 80 for distance education and was carried out between 2007 and 2008. Professional partners of MPC within this project were the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies of the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava and the Faculty of Education of Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. The initial aim of the project was to re-train approximately 10,000 school employees (not only leaders in in-service training), the final number of the project graduates was 5,000 (allocated funds were at approximately EUR 300,000).

Other development activities were realised through ESF projects that were carried out by many NGO organisations. The extent of these projects was only regional or local and their impact was also limited. Otherwise its contribution to development of school leaders and managerial staff is important. The allocation of budget and the size of target groups is not yet known, so more in-depth inquiry is needed as these projects were realised between 1991 and 2007. No central database at national or ministry level exists to store this information.

Within the present 2007 – 2013 EU programme period the Slovak Republic will be capable of obtaining more than EUR 726,8 million from the Operational Programmes of the EU, allocated for education purposes. The Operational Programmes prepared by the Ministry of Education defined the main priorities for activities and by using structural funds-related European Union financial tools. They are based on priority areas where the Slovak Republic wishes to allocate these financial resources for the period between 2007 and 2013. Two Operational Programmes have been prepared and approved so far, now also being run by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic.

The allocated fund known as Operation Programme Education is at approximately EUR 618 million and the allocated fund known as Operation Programme Research and Development is approximately EUR 1,21 billion. The body responsible for access to these financial funds is the Agency of the Ministry of Education of the SR for EU Structural Funds. Calls for projects and huge national projects are aimed mainly at the reform of the education system started in Slovakia.

National projects funded by ESF and managed by the Ministry of Education are
important schemes of support designed for the reform and transformation of the school system. National projects are broader systematic projects, usually covering the whole area of the Slovak Republic, the purpose of which is to support mainly activities at a national level relevant to the priorities and Manifesto (Programme Declaration) of the Slovak Government and nation-wide changes in the system. From the point of view of the improvement of school management the following National programme projects, announced in 2008, can be considered as important:

- a National project called Modernisation of the educational process at primary schools (EUR 33 million allocated for the purpose)
- a National project called Modernisation of the educational process at secondary schools (EUR13 million allocated for the purpose)

The projects should lead to a change in teaching alternatives used at primary and secondary schools and to the creation of a modern teaching environment, including the use of ICT aids in the teaching process.

- Teacher training in creating educational programmes at school level (EUR 10.6 million allocated for the purpose).

The aim of the project is to re-train members of the primary and secondary school teaching staff for the implementation of content reform in the system of education and for the creation of School Educational Programmes.

Are there major overall national educational development programmes in your country, which have components of leadership/managerial development?

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<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>• National project for senior teaching staff, realised through MPC.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Several ESF projects realised during previous period.</td>
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<td>• New ESF project prepared to support school system reform and transformation affecting all categories of pedagogical workers, school managers and school specialists.</td>
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4. THE APPEARANCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Key conceptual documents dealing with the strategic development of the Slovak educational system are the National Programme of Training and Education in the Slovak Republic for the Next 15 – 20 Years (the Programme Millenium, see in chapter 1.2), the new Education Act No 245/2008 (see in chapter 1.1), while new challenges are proposed in draft bills of the Teaching Staff Act and Act on Lifelong Learning. The two latter draft bills are to provide a legislative framework for teacher career development and the training of leaders.

Basic strategic documents including the strategic goals of individual institutions at school level are the School Educational Programmes (see chapter 1.1 for more detail). The duty of preparing its own School Educational Programme is stipulated by the law and pertains to each school. Except for the fact that schools are recommended to process their Conceptual school development plans (action plans) for each academic year and as well Strategic school development plans – school strategies –, unfortunately schools very often do not prepare them and that is why operativism rather than conceptual operation prevails in the way schools are run. Schools also prepare annual plans for leader and deputy headmaster inspection, as well as a plan for the further education of teaching staff and of other school employees.

The curriculum constitutes the backbone of the School Educational Programme while currently there are new requirements regarding the actual framework of the curriculum (structure of the compulsory subject areas, the ratio of compulsory and optional subjects), these programmes can be interpreted as documents aimed at curriculum transformation.

At the intermediate level, local government bodies generate an educational strategy. They prepare regional development strategies, and these should also include the key strategies of development affecting the school system in a particular region.

School management issues are discussed and solved at various national and international scientific conferences organised by universities, mainly by their faculties of education. A conference already with a tradition going back several years is a forum organised by the Faculty of Education at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. Conferences were organised under the title School administration following the process of transformation. The first year of the conference was held in 2002, its topic was Administration of pre-school education following the process of transformation, and its fifth year (after year 2 in 2004, year 3 in 2005 and year 4 in 2008) was held in March 2009 under the title Current issues affecting both school organisation and administration.
Another example of such events was an international scientific conference held in Bratislava in December 2008, organised by the Faculty of Education of the Comenius University. The title of this conference meant for school leaders was *School management in new social conditions*. Among the contributions presented were topics such as the training of school leaders, school management issues, working style of leaders, personal characteristics and interpersonal competences of school leaders, current problems and conditions currently characteristic of school leadership in the Slovak Republic, selected problems of quality in the Slovak public school system, internal systems of inspection and assessment, decision-making as a managerial function, selected aspects of time and work management at educational institutions, interventions influencing the psycho-social school climate etc.

Does a school-level strategic document exist in your country including the strategic goals of the given institution? Is leadership/management development seen as an important factor in improving the development of learning? Does organisational development and/or leadership/management development appear in concrete curriculum development programmes or in programmes aiming at improving the quality of learning?

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Comments and examples</th>
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| Slovakia | Yes    | Main national strategic documents are:  
- National Programme of Training and Education in the Slovak Republic for the Next 15 – 20 Years  
- Education Act No 245/2008  
- Teaching Staff Act (legislative progress)  
- Act on Lifelong Learning (legislative progress) etc.  

Key strategic documents at school level are:  
- Regional (town) school development strategies  
- State Educational Programmes  
- School Educational Programmes  
- Strategic development plans of school  

Leadership/management development is seen as an important factor in improving the learning process. All the above mentioned strategic documents both set their aims and create specific measures to improve leadership and management development for all school types. |

5. THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT IN IMPROVING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING

Surveys, studies, observations and researches provided in recent years demonstrate that school leaders regard the function of leadership as an important factor in school development and also in the development of learning. In reality, efforts by school leaders are focused on short term objectives and at specific steps or decisions that affect day-to-day activities and school management operations. The focus of school leaders is mainly oriented towards organisational issues, looking for financial resources and material to keep the school operational without any obstacles having to be sorted out. Also, economic issues are important, including the backbone of school budget, salaries, maintenance etc.

Today excellent schools implement specific development programmes of their own, the timing of which was implicitly and explicitly expressed, but the main effort has been to increase the quality of learning through involvement of school staff, discussions affecting cultural issues at school such as values, beliefs, teacher conduct, reinforcement of the power of subject leaders or committees, identifying of relations between required student knowledge, skills and attitudes regarding individual subjects etc.

As has been mentioned in chapter 1, chapter 2 and chapter 4 above, *The National Programme of Training and Education in the Slovak Republic* school leadership/management is as a key element of further development in the Slovak educational system. Priority is given to:

- strengthening of the power of regional bodies and also of schools to increase quality and improve learning,  
- restructuring and optimising of the net of schools in specific regions, including their integration,  
- simplifying of school administration,  
- increasing of the standard of professionalism regarding inspection authorities,  
- compulsory training of school leaders/managers in order to increase the efficiency of school management and the quality of learning through educational procedures, control and evaluation activities,  
- specific conditions and needs in various regions of the country to be reflected and improving of the financial situation, facilities and equipment and of personal conditions at schools.
The development of various new training programmes to increase the quality and curriculum improvement at schools will be initiated in the period between 2009 and 2013 by using EU financial resources, allocated by the ESF and the Ministry of Education. The Ministry will allocate these projects through its organisations under direct supervision such as the State Pedagogical Institute, the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre, the State Institute of Vocational Training and others.

Various activities related to the development and building of a management quality system at school level were performed by schools via EU funding and based mainly on generic ISO 9000 standards applied for school conditions. Today, the Ministry of Education applies an international CAF quality model for all ministerial bodies and organisations under direct ministerial supervision.

Quality management issues closely linked to pedagogical and managerial procedures are also being considered for involvement in a new compulsory training programme development for school leaders/managers. Key elements of the school quality system are based on procedural improvements of an administrative and managerial kind as well as evaluation of schools, including auto-evaluation procedures.

6. PREVIOUS RESEARCH DONE IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

One of the strategic tasks declared in *The National Programme of Training and Education in the Slovak Republic for the Next 15 – 20 Years* - the Programme Millennium – under the title *The teacher – a decisive factor in training and education* is to implement research observing the personality of teachers, other teaching staff and their work. Under the title *International co-operation in training and education* the task of cooperating in research and in the realisation of as many as possible international grants designed to resolve the issues of training, education and school management, is also set forth. In practice, however, research activities aimed at school leadership in Slovakia are affected by two factors. The first one is the perception of school leadership as being an integral part of school management (school management covers all managerial functions including leadership). Managerial competence in leading people/employees is considered a key precondition for success in one’s supervisory activity. The second fact influencing orientation of the relevant research activities is that, due to a shift affecting Slovak schools vis-a-vis the position of a legal entity, the main focus has been on the solution of problems arising from this reality. These changes have placed new requirements on school management, this having become an education-related quality element in the system as a whole.

Although the Ministry of Education incorporates school management issues into priorities that need to be taken into account and addressed (see above) there have been only a few institutions to date focusing their research on school management problems as well. In the area of research and development, the main grant agencies at the Ministry of Education are the Cultural and Educational Grant Agency (KEGA) and Scientific and Educational Grant Agency (VEGA). Projects also covering school leadership issues, granted by these agencies during the last two years, include projects such as *Increasing positive image of educational institutions*, *Development of professional career-related competence of secondary school counsellors*, *Development of social, psychological and intercultural skills of teachers teaching students from different social and cultural background*, *Methods supporting the decision making-process in management*, *Study program „School management“*, *Innovations pertaining to the professional competence of teachers and adult educationists*. A significant part of these research projects is aimed at observing teacher trainees, improving their performance and at professional preparation of tutors who train beginner teachers (e.g. projects *Development of intervention competences of tutors of teacher trainees*, *Further teacher training in the context of the improvement of the competence of tutors training beginner teachers*, *Experimental examination of the quality of preparation and the qualitative modification of tutors supervising teacher trainees*).

One research carried out on the widest possible range, related to school management, and in this context also to school leadership, was carried out in the period between 2005 and 2007. The key questions of the research were on the competence of school leaders and of school management staff. International trends show a significant shift in leadership activities from managing of a school in accordance with current legal stipulations towards management of school development, coordination of school life and the co-operation of those involved etc. Under the circumstances leading personalities at schools should be able to offer a strategic long-term vision of further school development, ideas of a high standard in school culture, ways to optimize current school climate. Following these trends, the research was based on the exploration and analysis of feedback regarding the managerial competence of practising leaders, and research findings are to serve as a platform for the development of a rational, well-founded preparation and training of school leaders and school management staff.

In order to get feedback from practising leaders, a questionnaire was used in which
they expressed on a 9-point scale their views on particular features of professional competence necessary for the leader to perform duties of leadership (9 – very important competence, ranges 6 – 9 are rates standing for important competence, 2 – 5 stands for less important competence, 1 – insignificant competence). The questionnaire was distributed to 2,370 leaders at primary and secondary schools in Slovakia, selected on the basis of a stratified random selection. Questionnaire backflow was at 51 per cent, i.e. the research results have been derived from research data obtained from 1,204 completed questionnaires returned. The final research sample of the respondents was a representative one as it consisted from leaders of primary schools as well as secondary schools (771 primary schools, 49 specialized primary schools, 107 secondary grammar schools, 119 secondary technical schools, 84 vocational schools, 59 secondary integrated schools, 15 specialized secondary schools), leaders with different duration of their managerial practice (463 respondents with a managerial practice shorter than 5 years, 310 with a practice range of 5 – 10 years, 281 with a practice range of 11 – 15 years, 89 with a practice range of 16 – 20 years, 50 in excess of 20 years), different background (507 graduates from humanities faculties, 344 graduates from sciences faculties, 133 graduates from technical faculties, 37 graduates from economic faculties, 102 graduates from other universities, 81 unspecified), both women and men (542 men, 654 women, 8 unspecified).

Key competences associated with school leaders were classified in the following 10 areas creating preconditions for the job/position of a school head, for leadership performed among school teachers and for the development of pedagogical, administrative, juridical, economical and social dimensions of the school:

- management of a school as an institution,
- economy and financing of a school,
- juridical management of a school,
- staff management/leadership,
- management of the teaching process,
- self-evaluation,
- communication,
- school climate,
- demand for further education,
- other areas important for competence to manage a school.

From the point of view of school leadership, competence considerations of crucial importance are those related to staff management and the management of the teaching process. In the field of staff management (leadership) 10 key competences have been identified. In terms of assessments by leaders of their importance for school leaders, the following list of priorities is indicative of these performance-related considerations:

- a) communication with staff (8,4),
- b) decision-making skills (8,4),
- c) staff motivation (8,2),
- d) staff assessment (7,8),
- e) delegation of powers (7,7),
- f) solving of conflicts (7,7),
- g) application and utilization of legal competences (7,6),
- h) use of a stimulation system (7,5),
- i) change management (7,5),
- j) negotiation with the representatives of employees (6,7).

Respondents evaluated the majority of competence items on a scale of 1 – 9. Leader competence with the highest assessment rating – his/her ability to communicate with the staff – was at or above 4 (i.e. the range of assessment ratings was 4 – 9). A leader's ability to motivate others was at or above 3 (scale assessment 3 – 9) and application and utilization of legal competence was at 2 or more (scale assessment 2 – 9). According to results obtained the specific competence items can be divided into three groups distinguished at various levels of their importance (first group: competence items a – c, second group: d – i, and the third group competence item j). Survey findings show that there is a tendency at schools for participative managerial style or participative leadership style to be applied.

As a very positive result, the high value of the importance coefficient which the change management item obtained, is clearly visible. Most respondents marked it with a 9 or 8 and only 8,5 per cent of respondents gave lower ratings of importance for school leadership. It is, therefore, really important to pay attention to both innovations at schools and to school manager training in the field of change management. Utilization of incentive systems through financial assessment, positive reference etc had diverse evaluation ratings by respondents, although still ending up mostly in the scale range of important competence items (average ratings were at 7,5). These diverse evaluation ratings given by respondents may result from the fact, that it is impossible to assess better work results adequately because of a shortage of finances from the national budget.

As a negative result, it is clear that the ability to negotiate with employee representatives (average value 6,7) is underestimated. This gives us an idea about a
certain underrating of a possible co-operation of leadership figures with representatives of the school employees. And on the other hand the ability to co-operate with these representatives belongs to the principal factors of the use of democratic leadership style in practice.

Another group of competences, which are very important for school leadership, are competence items regarding the management of the teaching process at school. For these competence items the following list of priorities has been compiled, based on feedback from leaders:

a) academic staff evaluation and rewarding (8,1),
b) creation of a school strategy development scheme (7,8),
c) school evaluation (7,8),
d) formulation and specification of goals (7,4),
e) innovation at the level of curricula (7,3),
f) motivation of employees for self-evaluation (7,2),
g) creation of equal opportunities (7,0),
h) team building, group control (6,8),
i) subject commission guiding (6,6),
j) utilization of observation/monitoring activities (6,4).

Leadership competences considered globally were; however, assessed by using higher ratings than ratings given for teaching process management abilities and also higher than 8 additional areas of competence.

A general conclusion of the research was that although the leadership is verbally defined by leaders as an important factor for the development of learning and teaching techniques, at the level of realization it is not given proper appreciation (focus of leadership activity consists in economic and material aspects of school operation and in the operative line of the administration of the manner in which schools are run). Partial results of the research were published in various studies in professional journals and proceedings, and the final results were published in a monograph (Obdržálek, Z. – Polák, J. a kol.: Príprava školských manažérov ako klúčový predpoklad efektívnosti školy. School manager training as a key preconditions of school efficiency. PF UKF Nitra, 2008. 304 p. ISBN 978-80-8094-296-0).

Another aspect of the above mentioned survey was aimed at a research into the current state of the personalities of school leaders. This was based on normative requirements of the activities of school leader and on current trends in school management in Slovakia and abroad.

Within the research carried out, the following areas were identified as being in line with the required profile of a school leader:
- abstract thinking, potential to create and formulate long-term goals and visions, ability to understand problems in a broader context,
- ability to control personal emotions, to stay calm in hectic work conditions and social situations,
- open and tolerant relationship based on a demonstration of interest in other people’s thoughts and emotions,
- ability to work in a competitive environment, to utilize competitiveness as a motivation element advocating further development and achieving new, more ambitious goals,
- ability to achieve goals independently and energetically,
- ability to influence events surrounding mainstream action and to express one’s views with a stress on their implementation.

The following areas were identified as not being in accordance with a required profile of a school leader:
- higher need to introduce structures and to deal with detailed tasks and in this context reduced readiness to delegate them to others (less efficient utilization of working time),
- weak psychological resistance to criticism and potential mistakes (demonstrated in a great carefulness in decision making processes),
- weaker self-confidence complete with confidence in the abilities and actions of others,
- high expectations and need for encouragement from others.

On the basis of survey results it is clear that in the training of school leaders more attention should be paid to:
- creation of priorities, efficient utilization of time (time management), delegation of tasks,
- independent decision-making process carried out in stressful situations, organisational skills,
- the manner in which difficult discussions are taken care of, coping with objections,
- emotion management – acceptance of criticism, mistakes and assessment depending on a concrete situation and the staff personality characteristics,
- co-operation and communication in teams, creation of an atmosphere based on confidence and consistence,
- constructive problem-solving.
7. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/ASSOCIATIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

There are two main professional organisations/associations for school leaders in Slovakia – Association of head teachers of state high schools (Asociácia riaditeľov štátnych gymnázií) and Association of Vocational Schools in Slovak Republic (Združenie škôl vyššieho odborného štúdia v Slovenskej republike). Both associations have departments of school leaders/managers. Regular meetings are realised in both associations to solve current problems of school management at a conceptual level such as discussion about and comments on newly prepared Acts (process of legislation), participation in discussion during the preparatory phase of new laws and Acts; moreover, discussion and feedback towards ministerial bodies. At operational level discussion and exchange of experience is performed regularly. Both associations solve current problems relating to the situation at schools in respect of state school bodies and offices. The associations also offer feedback on teacher training institutions in the school sector to improve training programmes and to provide initiatives for the development of new training programmes for school leaders/managers and teachers.

Both associations are believed to be capable of initiating and supporting the development of new teachers and trainings programmes for school leaders to increase work efficiency and quality. Schools are expected to take responsibility for the quality of educational procedures and children/students’ results by creating educational programmes for schools. School leaders/managers should be able to choose the best training programmes for their teachers.

There are many other professional organisations/associations associated mainly with teachers of specific subjects such as the Slovak language, foreign languages, physics, mathematics, history, etc. The role of these associations lies mainly in the exchanging of experience, both domestic and international, development of teaching material, finding of the best practices, communication, self-learning, improvement of the performance of teachers etc. These associations, however, do not solve any problems relating to leadership and managerial practices at schools.

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**Are there any professional organizations/associations for school leaders?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>THEY HAVE A ROLE</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
<th>ROLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Slovakia    | Yes              | • Association of head teachers of state high schools (Asociácia riaditeľov štátnych gymnázií)  
• Association of Vocational Schools in Slovak Republic (Združenie škôl vyššieho odborného štúdia v Slovenskej republike)  
• Associations set up by subject teachers at schools | Role of Association of High Schools and Association of Vocational Schools are as follows:  
• Regular meetings,  
• New law and the amendment of former Acts and discussion,  
• Involvement in new concepts and a procedure of law (Act) development,  
• Participation in public discussion on Acts,  
• Providing feedback on the Ministry and its institutions  
• Defining expectations vis-a-vis training programmes |
• elaboration on and compliance with the annual plan pertaining to the further education of teachers (teaching staff),
• compliance with all legal regulations pertaining to the field of school or school facility activities,
• annual assessment of the teaching staff and other staff,
• quality of education,
• matters of budget and finance,
• efficient utilization of resources allocated to the school or for the operation school facilities,
• management of property in school or ownership/administration of school facilities.

9. KEY COMPETENCES SCHOOL LEADERS ARE EXPECTED TO POSSESS

Qualification requirements to be assigned to the leadership position are stipulated by Act on Public Administration in the Education System and School Self-administration No 596/2003 (adopted on November 6, 2003). The law stipulates that a candidate for the post of a leader has to fulfil the following requirements:

• to be an irreproachable person,
• to have a professional qualification relevant to the type and kind of the school, adapted via a special regulation,
• to have a teaching practice (not shorter than 5 years),
• to have completed the first qualification exam (first attestation) or a relevant alternative specified by a pertinent regulation.

The same act imposes an obligation on leaders to sign up for positional training within a year after their appointment and to finish this education not later than the end of the third year of their operation in the leadership position. Positional training is valid for a maximum of 7 years after its completion. Then it has to be renewed following participation in a positional innovation training. A positional innovation training has a validity of 5 years following its completion.

Positional training is a kind of continual education, which in turn is an integral part of lifelong education. The issues pertaining to lifelong education of teachers and other staff members are addressed in a draft version of the Teaching Staff Act. The goal of continual education is to acquire knowledge and skills to keep, renew, improve and reassert the professional competence of teachers and other staff members, which is necessary for their teaching practice and professional performance. Institutions which are entitled to offer this type of education are schools and school institutions operational in line with special regulations, universities, institutions established by the Ministry of Education in order to fulfil tasks related to the provision of continual education (Methodological and Pedagogical Centre) as well as corporations that include education in their field of activity. Graduation from continual education is mandatory for teachers and other staff members in order for them to be integrated into a particular career level or position or to update and renew their professional competence.

The draft version of the Teaching Staff Act mentions the following types of continual education:

• adaptation training (for beginner teachers),
• updating training (to keep professional competence necessary for the teaching process and in order to maintain required standards in training performance),
• innovation training (to renew and improve professional competence necessary for the teaching process and in order to maintain required standards in training performance),
• specialist training (to acquire professional competence necessary special activities),
• positional training (to acquire professional competence necessary for managerial activities),
• qualification training (to acquire professional competence necessary for the teaching of other subjects or additional teacher training).

Institutions entitled to offer positional training are institutions of lifelong education established by the Ministry of Education (Methodological and Pedagogical Centre), educational institutions run in compliance with special regulations and universities. Positional training is to be concluded with a defence of a written final work and by taking a final exam in front of an examining board comprised of three members. Members of the commission are appointed by a statutory body of the provider of continual education.
9.1 National standards concerning the competences of school leaders

Slovakia has developed national standards pertaining to the competence and skills of school leaders. Two standards for school leaders/managers have been set, reflecting a career position in a new career system provided for in the new Teaching Staff Act. Standards were established for all formal positions of school managers stipulated by law – head teacher, deputy, head of governesses and head master for vocational subjects. These standards should help to create, develop and realise training activities and also to set a framework to appraise the managerial work of school managers. Standards should contribute to a higher/superior level assessment of school managers.

These standards have been published in the teacher’s magazine Pedagogické rozhľady (Pedagogical review magazine) to contribute to a public discussion of school leaders/managers and the community of teachers. Today standards are publicly discussed but no results have emerged to date from this process. National standards should have an important role in the development of tools making possible the assessment of school management results and also development of new training programmes for school leader/managers in the future, especially in the above mentioned programmes of further education financed by ESF.

There is only one system of professional standards in Slovakia initiated by the Ministry. Professional standards of school leaders are only a subsystem of a higher-level complex system of standards covering all categories of teaching staff and school specialists. The Ministry of Education made a recommendation for a key competence structure in 2007. The structure of the document establishing a national standard for school leaders includes 11 key competences associated with school leaders; 42 specific capabilities divided into expected knowledge, skills and attitudes; and indicators to measure and accomplish standards required.

Areas covered by a standard of school leader (head teacher) abilities are as follows:
- to take decisions in accordance with regulations (school law, Acts, ministry directions, etc.) – (1.1),
- to manage the development/implementation of the School strategic plan - (1.2)
- to develop various projects of/for school – (1.3)
- to develop a School Educational Programme – (2.1)
- to establish and evaluate a School Educational Programme – (2.2, 2.3)
- to create a teacher’s job specification and define expectations from a specific teacher position (3.1)
- to develop a school teachers appraisal system (3.2)
- to develop a system of HR in school (3.3)
- to demonstrate one’s managerial improvement (4.1)
- to identify oneself with a leader position and to represent the school (4.2)

The system of teacher’s development in the Career system of further education has been approved by the Ministry of Education and this document lays the foundations for development of the National projects of future teacher education financed by the European Social Fund (ESF).

Both the establishment of professional standards for each category of pedagogical employees in Slovakia and the subsequent development of training programmes and modules is on the agenda. However this process is still under discussion and will be included in the above-mentioned ESF National project activities. Application of national standards for school leaders/managers will combine requirements of school establishers or establisher, simplifying the assessment and selection process and also creating a base for the development of training programmes.

Are there any national standards concerning the competences of school leaders?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>No national standards</td>
<td>National standards have been discussed and prepared for nearly all</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accepted yet</td>
<td>pedagogical employees including school leaders/managers. A total of 5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>standards will be used for managerial positions, including that of a</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>school leader and his/her deputies.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A shift in this direction is illustrated by:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Public discussion of standards,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Adaptation of standards in alignment with the outcomes of the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>discussion,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Development of tools for appraisal, assessment or evaluation of the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>quality of a school leader’s work and activities by applying national</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>standards,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Development of a training programme for school leaders/managers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE APPOINTMENT/ NOMINATION OF PRINCIPALS

The key principles regarding the nomination and appointment procedure are prescribed by the new Education Act No 245/2008 of May 22, 2008, and by Act on Public Administration in the Education System and School Self-administration No 596/2003.

A school leader is appointed by the school establisher for a period of 5 years. This means that either a city mayor, or a chairman of the self-administrating region, or a chairman of the Regional Board of Education will sign the appointment on behalf of the city or village, or self-governing region, or Regional Board of Education.

To advertise the announcement about the election of a school leader is the responsibility of the school establisher. The announcement also includes a requirement to submit a proposal for the conceptual school (or school facility) development plan. A body nominating a candidate for the leadership position among the applicants is the School Governance Board. The School Governance Board invites the establisher’s representative, a representative of the Regional Board of Education and a School State Inspection representative to participate in the nomination process. The School Governance Board submits a proposal for a candidate selected for the leadership position to the school establisher not later than 2 months following the advertisement. The school establisher is obliged to appoint the new leader within 30 days after the submission of the proposal. In the absence of other legislative measures and directives the proposal by the School Governance Board is binding on the establisher.

The School Governance Board is a body of the school self-administration. Its task is to express and enforce public interest as well as that of pupils/students, parents and school staff, and to perform the function of public control. It appraises activities of the school and school facilities and from the point of view of educational issues it reflects on the activities of government and local administration bodies. The School Governance Board carries through the process of a candidate being nominated for a leadership position and it will propose, on the basis of this process, an appropriate candidate to be appointed; moreover, it will submit a proposal for the withdrawal of a leader or will appraise a proposal to withdraw a leader and will appraise conceptual intentions of school (school facilities) development.

The establishment of the School Governance Board is the responsibility of the school establisher. It consists of 5 to 11 members. If the number of the school employees is lower than 25, the number of the School Governance Board is allowed to be lower than 11. A School Governance Board with 5 members can be created only in schools (school facilities) where the total number of employees is not in excess of 10. It is the school establisher’s task to set the number and composition of the School Governance Board accurately, but the establisher is obliged to comply with a regulation stipulating that members from outside the school have to have a majority on the board.

If the establisher of the school is a city or a village, members of the School Governance Board are: 2 elected representatives of the teaching staff, 1 elected representative of other school staff, 4 elected representatives of parents, 3 delegated representatives of the establisher, 1 delegated representative of another corporate body or a person participating in education.

If the school establisher is either a self-administrating region or the Regional Board of Education, members of the School Governance Board are: 2 elected representatives of the teaching staff, 1 elected representative of other school staff, 3 elected representatives of parents, 2 delegated representatives of the establisher, 1 delegated representative of the city (village) which the school (school facility) is located in, 1 delegated representative of another corporate body or a person participating in education. In case of a School Governance Board belonging to a secondary school a representative of students is also elected into the School Governance Board.

A question at issue is which area is prioritized during the assessment of the applicants for a leader position. The School Governance Board usually puts greater emphasis on the managerial skills of applicants and their abilities to cope with the task of budget planning and with duties pertaining to school buildings, facilities and area maintenance. Less attention is paid to the skills of applicants in coping with the improvement of the teaching process. To eliminate this phenomenon, a new Act has brought in a new element to be part of the leader nomination process – representation of the School State Inspection during these procedures.
Describe the main characteristics of the appointment/nomination of principals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>WHO APPOINTS, WHO PARTICIPATES</th>
<th>DURATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Appointment to be performed:</td>
<td>5 years,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At both municipality and regional levels a school leader is appointed by the school</td>
<td>re-appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>establisher (city mayor or burgomaster, or a chairman of the self-administering region or a chairman of the Regional Board of Education appointment of a school leader on behalf of the city, village, self-governing region or Regional Board of Education)</td>
<td>possible several times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope of candidates:</td>
<td>depending on re-application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applicants for school leadership position are assessed by the School Governance Board at the municipality level of the school establisher and the Regional Board of Education at the regional level of the school establisher. The board will nominate the most appropriate candidate and will submit a recommendation to the school establisher. A proposal by the Board is binding on the establisher. For the purpose of a nomination process a representative of the Regional Board of Education and a representative of the School State Inspection, as well as a representative of the self-governing region are also members of the School Governance Board but only with an advisory mandate/right. More details regarding the composition of boards are to be found in the text above.</td>
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11. SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS FOR NOMINATION OR TO CONTINUE THE POSITION

As it has already been mentioned in chapter 9, an applicant for a leadership position has to have a professional qualification stipulated by special regulations for particular types and kinds of schools, a minimum of 5-year experience in teaching, and the first qualification (attestation) exam. There is no requirement on any specific education/training prior to taking the position of a leader. Only following his/her appointment is a leader obliged to start a so-called positional training; the obligation here is to start it before the end of the first year of his/her working period in that leadership position and to finish it before the end of the three-year period spent in that leadership position (for more details on positional training see chapter 9.)

Do school leaders have to require a specific qualification in order to be nominated or to continue in their position? Is the attendance of leadership-training programmes compulsory?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>TO START, TO BE APPOINTED</th>
<th>TO CONTINUE IN POSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>• No specific qualification required</td>
<td>• There is an obligation to start a positional training within the first year in that position and to complete it before the end of the third year in that position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Obligation to have completed the first qualification (attestation) exam (as part of the further training of the teaching staff)</td>
<td>• Positional training is valid for a maximum of 7 years following its completion, therefore in case of re-appointment for a second period of leadership, a leader will be obligated to renew it by attending a positional innovation training course, the validity of which is for a 5-year period.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a candidate – appointed to a school leadership position by an establisher – does not fulfil requirements in accordance with legal stipulations, the principal school inspector has a right to award the establisher a fine up to 670 EUR.

As applicants/nominees for a leadership position are, generally speaking, teachers (this stems also from legally stipulated specifications regarding a five-year teaching practice) some basic training in school management should be included in teacher training at each university/faculty training teachers. Currently, there are 20 public universities in Slovakia and 12 of them (at 31 faculties) offer teacher training lines of study. We have analysed teacher training study programmes at specific faculties of these universities with the aim of pinpointing both the introduction and the position of particular subjects that focus on school management. We have managed to identify 17 different subjects related to school management in the study programmes under analysis. Their dissimilarity, however, is not always visible in the course content. Very often it is expressed only in the titles of the subjects. Based on the relationship between similar subjects, the identified subjects can be divided into four topic categories:

- topic category Organisation of education,
- topic category Organisation and administration within the school system,
- topic category Organisation and legislation within the school system,
- topic category School legislation,
- topic category School management.

Analysis results illustrate clearly that all teacher training study programmes analysed include a subject focusing on school management. With one exception, where
this subject has an attribute of an optional discipline, subjects are defined either as compulsory or as compulsory with optional selection alternatives. Great heterogeneity is illustrated by the form of teaching vis-a-vis individual subjects and the availability of time. Subjects are included in the study programmes either as lectures without seminars, or lectures with seminars, or only as seminars without lectures with a time availability norm ranging from one lesson to four lessons. In general, one can say that the time available for school administration and school leadership issues in university level pre-graduate teacher training courses is minimal and underestimated. Moreover, there is no clear systematic concept of any obligatory key content, which all faculties offering teacher training courses should comply with in their study programmes.

12. THE SHARING OF LEADERSHIP FUNCTIONS AT SCHOOLS

School leadership functions are present at each school, established and approved primarily as a typical, hierarchical structure of formal school management enabling compliance with the requirements of a typical school role and power in hierarchy. Secondly as a function of formal or informal leadership, regardless of whether he or she is a member of the school's formal management structure. In many instances, Slovak school leaders started to form their leadership skills and abilities through active participation in school life as members of informal teams, initiating small projects of improvements and increasing the quality of teaching, or participating in larger projects covering many school activities. This kind of informal leadership asserts oneself by influencing others positively and by presenting a leader's results achieved at the school. Informal leaders are also able to realise a full or partial fund-raising for their activities at schools and therefore they are highly approved by the staff. This is a base for the selection of future formal leaders to be established in managerial positions by appointment procedures for position such as head teacher, deputies etc.

The framework of school leadership is determined by various factors, especially by legal regulations strongly related to the size of school, which in turn depends on the number of pupils or students.

In a typical medium sized school the structure of power and shared leadership is as follows:

- head teacher (headmaster, principal, school leader),
- 2 deputies (each with a different, concrete agenda),
- School Educational Programme coordinator, ESF project coordinator,
- chief of governess,
- heads of methodological groups and/or subject committees,
- coordinators of traffic programmes, environment initiatives, drug prevention, Global Educational Programme etc.

There is no legal framework to prescribe the manner in which formal positions are to be established and their number in school management. It is the decision-making element of the school leader’s job through which to create and establish a formal and informal distribution of power between management positions and bodies. The main advisory and control body of the school is the School Board, typically comprised of 10 people, which consists of various members; mostly teachers, administrative or technical staff, parents and members delegated by a founder. Based on previous experience, a relatively strong relationship can be established between the application of shared leadership model and school climate, culture and pupils/students results. A crucial factor in this seems to be the determination of a school leader to delegate power to his/her subordinates which inevitably entails trust in their acts and the completion of tasks. Otherwise, according to feedback from staff, many schools in Slovakia still use a relatively strong autocratic leadership model, based on the power of a school leader with a high concentration of operational, decision-making activities. Some research findings indicate that the weakness of the shared school leadership model lies in the involvement and participation of teachers in school governance and management. Project management initiatives at school level might be conducive to an appropriate way of teachers being involved in management initiatives and a formal system of power being shared.

How frequent is the sharing of leadership functions in schools? What proportion of schools could be described as following a shared leadership model?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Yes, mainly in larger schools</td>
<td>• In Slovakia there is a legal sharing of leadership functions laid out by law to set up formal managerial structures at school level. • In many schools shared leadership is provided through task oriented assignments for formal/informal leaders in/without a managerial position. Strong and successful schools share the power between informal leaders who lead projects, improvement activities, supportive learning, curricula development etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. SCHOOL LEVEL STRATEGY MAKING

According to Education Act No 245/2008, which illustrates the transformation and reform of the school system in Slovakia, schools have been required to prepare their own School Educational Programmes reflecting regional conditions of schools, expectations of pupils/students, parents, the establisher and also staff capabilities and capacities.

Each school should develop a document at school level in compliance with Act No. 245/2008 establishing principles of education and its goals that need to be included in the strategic plans of schools. Unfortunately, strategic plans at school level are not prepared for each school. Here, the key role is given to the establisher of a school to arrange for a document of school strategy to be devised and written with meticulous care. Given the absence of strategic documents, the focus of the activity of school leaders is on short term and day-to-day activities related to operational management, rather than on conceptual, long-term planning for periods longer than one or two academic years.

Recent changes in school-related legislation and in the management system (e.g. methodology for school budgeting) have caused school leaders not to prepare strategic documents of intent and school plans. We suppose that all strategic documents of intent and plans are characterized by the constraints of the timeframe which in turn is determined by the duration of the actual term in office of a school leader.

A strategic document of intent and a strategic plan of a school is, obviously, also expected to be submitted during a formal procedure of application for the position of school leader in the process of school leader appointment. Application criteria and documents required for submission are defined by the local school authorities responsible for the appointment process.

In our experience, the school strategy is in many cases set forth only implicitly, without a formal preparation in terms of a statement of mission and a vision of the school, without providing any appropriate analyses of the external and internal environment, creating an appropriate system of strategic aims and goals relating to material available and staff-related resources. Seldom is such a strategy elaborated into programmes and plans that are executable by schools and are also covered by the necessary financial resources.

Do schools have to prepare their own strategy?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The School Educational Programme is a key document developed by each school with the aim of defining educational concepts to provide for the next operational periods. An essential part in this document is the description of a school strategy even if it is not explicitly defined as having a recommended structure. It was decision by each school management to make every effort to discuss and choose an appropriate strategy and to transform it into School Educational Programme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

14. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING ON EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Leadership development and the training of educational management is an essential part of state school policy and is seen as an important and crucial factor for a successful transformation of school system in the country. Many of the above-mentioned conceptual documents (chapter 1, chapter 2 and chapter 4) stress the importance of the improvement of school leadership/management.

Key competences are indicated through standards of competence associated with school leaders/managers supported via the new Teaching Staff Act and subsequent decrees. Leadership development and managerial training is dominantly realised by the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre and its regional branches. Pedagogical faculties of universities also offer various programmes on the free market for school leaders. Training programmes for school leaders/managers have to be accredited by the ministerial bodies. Each institution has its own evaluation mechanism to maintain the quality of a training programme. In 2009 a new programme will be developed by the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre and accredited by the Ministry bodies.

A typical training programme in Slovakia is made up of a total of 240 hours, delivered mainly at seminars and workshops. The programme is based on three main modules – pedagogical strategy, staff strategy and the basic strategy of schools. Each module is divided into smaller training units to offer specific knowledge and skills for school leaders/managers. In the pedagogical strategy module the focus is on analyses of pedagogical processes at school and on tools to realise it. Participants are asked to apply them at the school and to provide an analytical framework to
describe a pedagogical situation through weaknesses and strengths of the State and School Educational Programme. Thematically, this module also integrates didactical and methodological issues in the context of school quality improvement. In the staff strategy module the focus is on legal issues relating to labour law, developing and offering staff policy at schools and also on issues of development of the appraisal system and methods of teacher assessment. An important element in this module is the strategy for improvement of the pedagogical staff at schools, including the analysis of training needs. The basic strategy module interprets a school strategy in terms of vision, mission, strategic aims, strategy, culture of the school, strategy development process, implementation of strategies, change management, programme and project management etc.

As it has been mentioned in answers to questions earlier on, this programme is compulsory for school leaders and deputys at schools and is finished following a successful defence of a final, written assignment that is 25 – 35 pages long, not including appendices.

Who is responsible for leadership development and the training of educational management? Any typical training programmes in the country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>WHO PROVIDES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>The Ministry of Education is a key player in charge</td>
<td>- The responsibility of the Ministry of Education is delegated to the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre – MPC (and its regional branch offices). - MPC provides compulsory training for school leaders/managers covering three main areas – pedagogical strategy, staff strategy and basic strategy of schools. - Other supportive modules are also integrated, covering organisational theory, administration, legal issues, financial and economic issues and self-development. - Universities are also important players in delivering accredited programmes such as these.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.1 Organisational and managerial competences in primary development programmes

Each training programme offers many various supportive modules to increase organisational and managerial competences of school leaders/managers. Organisational issues are either directly delivered as a module underscoring organisational theory issues and its implication for practically provided school management or for integration into various modules when appropriate. Managerial competences are usually included in one the first seminars covering the psychological diagnosis of the personality of leaders, communication training, assertiveness etc. An important part in this training is aimed at the development of leadership skills, team work building and conflict-solving.

Relatively little effort is given to administration and legal issues entertaining to school management duties as these tasks are performed by Regional School Offices, the Ministry of Education bodies or State Pedagogical Institute.

15. DIFFERENT ASPECTS IN THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The training programme for school leaders/managers realised by Methodological and Pedagogical Centre in Slovakia has many elements oriented to various aspects of learning arising from the conceptual, strategic and actual learning needs of school leaders/managers. The proportion of each aspect mentioned here is illustrated in the table below. Figures were obtained from programme guarantors in each regional branch of the MPC centre, where the range of grades is between 1 and 5 denoting the effort aspect of learning (1-max, 5-min).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING ASPECTS OF SCHOOL LEADERS</th>
<th>SLOVAKIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic leadership</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resources management</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional leadership</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects of lifelong learning</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportion of the above mentioned aspects of the training programme of school leaders/managers will be changed in the new programme, to be prepared this year. There have been three main elements defined for the training of school leaders in three modules – pedagogical, staff and strategic. Legal and administrative questions are covered by all three modules emphasising practical issues relating to the responsibilities of school leaders in line with new legislation now in force. Themes relating to strategic leadership, human resources management and lifelong learning are provided in the staff module with the aim of helping school leaders to develop appropriate and executable
staff strategy as a tool for the improvement of teachers. The strategic management module covers specific aspects of a basic strategy to be implemented at the school, school goals, organisational development and change management issues reflecting current development in the country and at schools.

16. THE MOST IMPORTANT TYPES OF LEADERSHIP/ MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMMES

As it is indicated in chapter 14 the most important programme is delivered by the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre and its branches. The duration of the programme is 240 hours including training via contact hours and distance learning activities. Time assigned for self-study and supportive activities such as observation by colleagues and experience exchange is exclusive of the full length of the programme.

In-service training is the most common way of participation in the school leaders programme as current regulations and the new Teaching Staff Act both define the duty of school leaders/managers who need to take part in the compulsory programme to prevent dismissal from the leading position, a consequence of non-compliance with the position requirements. There is also a possibility for those who are not in a leading position to take part in such a programme (as pre-service training), but the school leader has to give formal approval and also to sign an application form for a teacher who was not promoted to a managerial position. The current training programme referred to and described above is also a form of induction training for newly appointed school managers with an experience in teaching.

Which are the most important types of leadership/management training programmes in your country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>PRE-SERVICE</th>
<th>INDUCTION</th>
<th>IN-SERVICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Yes, it is possible for talented young school leaders to take part in the leadership/ managerial training programme. The only precondition is signing of an application form by the head teacher of the school.</td>
<td>No, it is not typical and permissible to include a beginner teacher in a managerial prep course. A minimum of at least 7 years of teaching practice is a precondition.</td>
<td>Yes, it is compulsory to attend a training course and finish it. After finishing the programme and following the defence of a final, written thesis, the teacher will obtain a certificate suitable for the managerial position of a school leader, deputy etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. MANAGERIAL IMPROVEMENT APPROACHES IN PRACTICE

The situation in respect of current approaches to managerial improvement is not clear and a sufficient examination is needed to provide an unambiguous description and statement of the situation today. Schools and their managerial staff provide various activities to increase managerial competence with the help of training programmes delivered by the ministerial institutions and non-profit organisations. Generally, managerial training is realised in the form of pre-service, induction and in-service education.

Analyses and surveys today show that school leaders are short of the required qualities in managerial competence believed to be essential for the realisation of School Educational Programmes, especially skills related to team work or the appropriate use of project management approaches at school. That weakness is also associated with organisational issues and resource management for effective managing of teachers and projects. School leaders also voice a need to improve their skill in leadership and managing people.

Unfortunately, professional advisory and consultancy institutions for schools have not yet been established in Slovakia. School leaders usually ask universities, ministry institutions – MPCs, NGO or others for support to help them sort out various problems in connection with the preparation of a school strategy, School Educational Programme or other documents; to respond to requests from schools to provide assistance in the improvement of teacher competence, reflecting the need, illustrated in the PISA results, to improve specific skills and literacy of pupils/students. Moreover, various experts from universities and institutions specialised in lifelong learning are expected to help improve, if requested, school management practices.

A typical form of support is for consultancy and advisory assignments to have more short-term contracts. An advanced form of managerial improvement such as coaching and mentoring is, typically, not realised at Slovak schools. We are of the view that teachers at middle management level (heads of subject committees) provide various forms of development activities, that include coaching, mentoring etc., focusing on the development of skills of teachers and on innovation via-a-vis class activities. However, it is not typical to hear someone say at a school “I have provided coaching of my colleague...”.

Quite often school leaders use advisors for specific purposes, (being in a situation when there is a shortage of knowledge or experience), especially when preparing EU – European Social Fund projects and filling up application forms, or in connection
with development School Educational Programmes and their implementation. Also, in situations when the recruitment and appraisal of teachers or the development of an appraisal system needs to be performed, support is expected to be provided and is offered in the form mentioned above.

**What managerial improvement approaches exist in practice?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Yes, but not officially offered and limited in use</td>
<td>Typically, school leaders in Slovakia attend conferences, workshops, training and development programmes. In many cases school leaders discuss their problems together at regional meetings. Consultancy and advisory activities are performed when preparing specific projects such as ESF funding or when solving complicated problems, changing the school system etc. There is no evidence of systematic coaching and mentoring.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**18. CASE STUDY 1: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ANALYSIS COUNT Pribina Primary School in NITRA**

In Slovakia primary education is compulsory for all children from 6 to 14 and is provided by so-called primary (basic) schools. This type of education is divided into two levels. The first level of the school (~ primary education) takes four years (grades 1 – 4, age 6 to 9) and the second level of the school (~ lower secondary education) takes five years (grades 5 – 9, age 10 to 14).

Count Pribina Primary School is located in the centre of the town of Nitra, which, with a population of 88 thousand inhabitants, belongs to ten biggest towns in Slovakia. Despite the fact that the school is situated in the centre of town, it is not only attended by children who live in central part of the town. Pupils/students attending the school are from all parts of the city and also from the city neighbourhood (75 per cent from the city, 25 per cent from the city neighbourhood). The total number of the pupils/students reaches almost 500 (21 classes). The school staff consists of 31 teachers, 8 governesses and 12 administrative and technical employees.

The school has a long tradition. It has its origin in the 19th century. Currently, its attractiveness is underscored by a special study programme offering foreign language teaching from the first grade of school attendance (normally compulsory foreign language learning starts at the third grade).

The main advisory and control body of the school is the School Board, which consists of 11 members: 2 teachers, 1 administrative or technical staff, 4 parents and 4 members delegated by a founder.

The diagrammatic structure of the school organisation is presented in the following structure:

The school has set up 7 bodies doing advisory work for the school leader (headmaster):
- methodical group for the grades 1 – 4. (11 members),
- methodical group for school clubs (8 members),
- subject committee for teaching of the Slovak language (6 members),
- subject committee for the foreign language teaching (7 members),
- subject committee for the teaching of sciences (mathematics, physics, chemistry, natural history, geography, informatics – 7 members),
- subject committee for the teaching of social science (history, civics, ethics, religion – 5 members),
- subject committee for art and physical education (music, art, technical training education, physical education – 11 members).

Conceptual plans regarding the development of the school leadership constitutes an integral part of the Conceptual school development plan for each academic year (usually prepared for the period of 2 successive academic years).
The priorities of school leadership for the current academic year can be summarized in the following points:

- to achieve full qualification of the academic staff (in the current situation 97 per cent of the teaching process is guaranteed via qualified teachers and governesses);
- to ensure higher-level qualification of teachers and governesses;
- to create conditions for the further education of staff (both request and support their further training);
- to use co-operation with universities in Nitra to improve the quality of the teaching process at the school and to increase the initiative of teachers, governesses and technical employees to improve school environment and the school climate;
- to admit young prospective teachers in successive steps;
- to create conditions for further education within the partial methodical groups and subject committees;
- to arrange in-service training for teachers and governesses in the field of selected topics from pedagogy and psychology, offering stress resistance, effective pedagogical communication and pupil/student assessment;
- to include the implementation of new (ICT) means for educational purposes (teaching particular subjects) and in this context to implement new ways of teaching, and also to ensure further teacher training in this area;
- to be aware of staff-related issues and individual employees well-being;
- to improve the work-bench of staff;
- to improve the quality of the co-operation with the town authority (as founder of the school);
- to support and broaden co-operation between the school and pupils’/students’ parents;
- to enable access to internet for pupils’/students’ parents and for both current pupils/students and graduates;
- to monitor the way in which the main tasks and strategic goals of the school are pursued;
- to ensure a rational, consistent and systematic control and assessment of individual school members as well as the school as a whole;
- to ensure involvement of the school and staff in projects related to environmental education, parenthood education and drug abuse prevention;
- to revaluate internal rules of salary and benefits (rules of remuneration to motivate the staff)

The duty of school leadership is formally stated mainly in powers and tasks of the methodical groups and subject committees, and the form of an internal system for the control and assessment of school employees.

The main and most frequently used methods to control and assess teachers and governesses are the following:

- observation of teaching in classrooms (class visit),
- interview and discussion,
- assessment of results achieved in the process of teaching,
- assessment of results achieved in the field of further education and higher qualifications
- assessment of teaching aids available and of teaching materials produced,
- assessment of out-of-school activities,
- assessment of the staff by the school management,
- mutual assessment of staff members (which also requires mutual class visits and so-called “open lessons”),
- questionnaires for parents and pupils/students to evaluate the performance and work carried out by teachers and governesses,
- SWOT analyses.

The methodical groups and subject committees are responsible for coordinating the relevant subject curriculum and ensuring the quality of its teaching.

The following belong to powers and duties regarding the area of school leadership:

- to take care about teachers further professional and methodological education,
- to follow, propagate and bring into practise new progressive phenomena and teaching methods,
- to carry out mutual observations (class visits),
- to monitor with teaching plans and curricula,
- to ensure the use of teaching aids in the teaching process,
- to produce didactic tests and to standardize criteria for pupil/student assessment,
- to assess the knowledge level reached by pupils/students in particular grades and subjects,
- to analyse achievements and failures of the teaching process carried out,
- to systematically evaluate and identify the contribution of each staff member to school results.
On the basis of interviews carried out with selected school staff members some strengths and weaknesses were identified in school leadership in terms of work performed at Count Pribina Primary School.

**The main strengths are:**
- Acceptance of initiatives coming from the bottom,
- Strong support of staff by top management at school level, promotion of further training and study for additional qualification,
- Involvement of school leaders in special further education targeted at members of school management,
- Opportunity of being trained as a coordinator of drug abuse prevention,
- Plans of class visits being made public,
- Preparation of plans for class visits in line with innovations to be introduced now into the teaching process.

**The main weaknesses are:**
- Lack of systematic information about alternatives regarding further education and new teaching aids,
- Exclusion of teachers and governesses affected by the final decision-making process in connection with their participation in specific options they wish to follow in further education,
- Lack of possibilities of being trained to deal with conflict situations and disruptive behaviour occurring in classrooms,
- Absence of resources to finance participation of employees in various educational courses organised and offered by other institutions beside those offered by school authorities,
- Shift of focus from quality education, teaching issues and professional promotion of the staff towards the work of the School Board regarding financial, administrative and operational aspects of school life,
- Weak participation by the School Parliament in school management activities.

**19. Case Study 2: National Project for the Further Education of the Teaching Staff in the Field of Communication Skills, School Management and School Marketing**

One of the most crucial activities aimed at the further education of school staff, having in recent years been supported by the Government, has been closely related to school leadership issues. More specifically, it was a National project for the further education of teaching staff in the field of communication skills, school management and school marketing. It was a very significant project related to its vast and complex content, the planned size of the target group involved as well as financial resources.

**Goal of the project**
The main goal of the project was to contribute to the further education of teaching staff (at primary and secondary schools) in order to improve their communication skills and to develop their competence in school management and school marketing. Initially, a partial goal of the project was to develop a modular concept of education based on the utilisation of distance learning features.

**Target group**
An outstanding feature of the project was that it was not only intended for school leaders or school management members but for a wider spectrum of teaching staff playing a key role at a school. The phrase 'teaching staff playing a key role at a school' does not only cover school leaders and deputy headmasters but methodical groups and subject committee heads as well (for more on methodical groups and subject committees, see case study No. 1), along with heads of school-leaving examination boards and class masters. An estimated projection figure for the total number of the participants in this further education project was 10,000.

**Duration**
Duration of the project was from September 1, 2006 to December 31, 2008. Within this timeframe a further education course for teaching staff was developed and several cycles for particular study groups were carried out.
Realisation subject
Methodological and Pedagogical Centre

Financial budget
The fund set aside for the project was the equivalent of EUR 1.26 million, 95 per cent of which was in the form of financial contribution by the EU and 5 per cent was set aside from the Slovak state budget.

Content structure of the further education course offered within the project
In accordance with the initial goal of the project originally a modular educational course was developed for the further education of teaching staff in the field of communication skills, school management and school marketing. The course was structured into two blocks. The first one contained two modules, both being compulsory for participants. The second block consisted of six optional modules.

Compulsory modules:
• Communication (25 hours)
• Staff management (25 hours)

Optional modules:
• Quality management (20 hours)
• School management and marketing (20 hours)
• Staff management focusing on work motivation and assessment (20 hours)
• Teaching process management aimed at didactic innovations and the work of methodical committees/groups (20 hours)
• Teaching process management focusing on the assessment and revision of results of the teaching process (20 hours)
• Legal awareness of leaders acting in the system of education and teaching process management focusing on didactic innovations (20 hours)

Completion of the course in further education
Successful graduates from each module have obtained a certificate upon graduation. Moreover, successful graduates from the course (2 compulsory + 2 optional modules) had the option to apply for the second qualification exam (a form of further positional training required of school leaders) in compliance with legislation currently in force (i.e. to write a qualification thesis, to defend it versus two evaluations and to pass the second qualification exam).

19.1. Administration of the course in further education

Global administration of the course
A guarantee for project administration was the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre in Bratislava. This was a nation-wide project, a target group which was made up of participants from all around Slovakia. However, as it was a kind of so-called “mirror project”, it was defined inside the region of the capital city of Bratislava and outside other regions within Slovakia (out of a total sum of EUR 26 million, EUR 120,000 was allocated for Bratislava, while the rest was set aside for other regions).

In each region there was a coordinator responsible for the recruitment of individuals interested in the finalised further education initiative as well as for the realisation/administration of the further education modules available. Seminars in the first module were held at a relevant school or town, distance learning in the second module was organised in accordance with instructions by coordinators from the executive institutions involved. The location of venues of the seminars in other modules depended on where the majority of participants were from as well as on coordinator-related facilities.

Recruitment of the course participants
Recruitment of relevant staff who might be potentially interested in the further education alternative offered was the responsibility of coordinators nominated in each region by the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre. Coordinators used personal contacts with people participating at various events, organised by the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre in its regions, previously established contacts with schools and school leaders and sending information materials and application forms to recruit potential participants for the further education course to be launched.

Administration of the first block
In the first block the module, Communication was taught in a form of face-to-face teaching carried out during a three-day seminar (a total of 25 teaching hours). Its realisation began in October 2006 and was finished in December 2007. In the Bratislava region 50 study groups were formed gradually, with a total of 1,148 participants. In the other 7 regions of Slovakia 506 study groups were set up with a total of 10,972 participants.

The Staff Management module was realised as a distance learning alternative, based on a virtual learning course. This module was finished on August 31, 2008. The execution body of the e-learning course was the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information
Technologies of the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava in co-operation with the Institute of Technology of Education at the Faculty of Education, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra.

The Communication module was realised mainly as a practical alternative and upon completion of that module graduates received official confirmation in connection with the completion of the course. During their period of distance learning graduates did regular tests related to particular topics in the relevant module and they had to pass a final test related to the subject matter encompassing the whole module.

Administration of the second block

After successful graduation from the first block (two compulsory modules) participants had been given the option to continue the course in the second block. They had the option of choosing 2 from the 6 above-mentioned modules. In the second block each module was taught in the form of face-to-face teaching within the framework of a three – day seminar (each module consisted of a total of 20 teaching hours). Each module in the second block was wrapped up via an assessment of graduation results.

In the Bratislava region 2 study groups were set up with a total of 78 participants for whom 4 seminars were organised. In the other 7 regions of Slovakia 10 study groups were formed with a total of 361 participants for whom 20 seminars were organised.

Graduates from the second block had the option to apply for the second qualification exam, an integral part of which is the defence of a qualification thesis to be submitted (written final work). For those who applied for the exam, several individual and grouped consultations were organized to help them with their qualification thesis. Defence of the qualification theses and exams, administered by examination boards that consisted of 5 members, were realised in the period between September and November 2008.

In the Bratislava region, out of 78 participants in the second block 60 (77 per cent) individuals passed this qualification exam, while in other regions of Slovakia, out of 361 participants in the second block 285 (79 per cent) passed it.

Published study materials

As part of the project, the following 5 textbooks and 4 study materials designed for particular study modules were published:

- Zdenka Farkašová: Pedagogická dokumentácia a dokumentácia vo vzťahu k odbornému a pedagogickému riadeniu základnej školy (Pedagogical documentation and documentation in relation to professional and pedagogical primary school management)
- Marián Zajko et al.: Základy personálneho manažmentu (Basics of staff management)
- Marta Žáčková: Právne vedomie riadiaceho zamestnancu v rezorte školstva (Legal conscience of a leading employee at the area of the system of education)
- Ivan Turek: O kvalite školy (On the school quality)
- Anna Drábiková: Základné nástroje a súčasné trendy personálneho manažmentu (Basic tools and current trends in staff management)
- Ľuboš Tužinský: Vybavovanie stážností v školách a školských zariadeniach (Execution of complaint at school and school facilities)
- Oľga Krížová: Komunikácia (Communication)
- Ivona Heráková: Učivo a učebnica (Subject matter and a textbook)
- Oľga Krížová: Druhá kvalifikačná skúška (The second qualification exam)

19.2. Evaluation of the project

The project was originally designed for 10,000 participants. The final number of participants was 12,120. This high number (20 per cent higher than planned) is an illustration of both the high quality of implementable study modules and the interest not only of school leaders but also of other members of the school staff in the development of their communication and managerial skills and abilities. Positive response coming from participants involved, (those who participated in first cycles) caused many of their colleagues to apply for this form of further education.

In addition to discussions on topics presented, participants in the course had a positive response to an opportunity to discuss good and bad practices regarding their school practice, especially when related to the composition of the staff, school leadership and the creation of an adequate school climate and subsequent influence on it.

A negative side to the manner in which the project has been realised is visible when looking at a significantly lower number of applicants for modules in the second block. In the Bratislava region this number was 78 participants out of 1,148, which is 7 per cent, and in other regions it was even lower, at 361 out of 10,972, a mere 3 per cent. It was a total of 439 participants out of 12,120, i.e. 4 per cent. These figures are an illustration of higher ambitions as well as a broader interest in the profession-related knowledge of school leaders and teachers working in the capital region.

Although it has been said that the significantly lower number of those who applied for the modules in the second block can be interpreted as a negative phenomenon, we have to be realistic and fair-minded in this respect by looking at relevant figures, taking
into account the workload affecting participants beside their normal daily workload at schools, which comes from their assignments in further education/study modules.

Course participants had no work-related relief mechanism available at schools in relation to their involvement in further education. If this implied, many of them had to postpone a number of their less urgent duties for a later time and this might be a reason why many participants did not apply for modules in the second block as they were under pressure caused by accumulated job duties.

On the positive side, though, a significant percentage of participants, also involved in the second block of the course, did finish the course by passing the second qualification exam (a total of 79 per cent); a precondition to take this exam is to write a qualification thesis which, of course, takes up a participant’s extra time and requires considerable effort to complete.
The term “school leader” in Slovenia denotes a Head teacher who exercises the function of a pedagogical (instructional) leader and has, in accordance with the Organisation and Financing of Education Act (hereinafter ZOFVI,) certain authority and responsibilities for the implementation of the curriculum and for spearheading the learning process.

In 1995 the National School for Leadership in Education (hereinafter NSLE) was established by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in order to provide training for head teachers and would-be head teachers that is conducive to a licence for the position of head teacher. NSLE is also responsible for providing opportunities (i.e. courses, conferences and other programmes) for the continuous professional development of head teachers related to improvement in the practical aspects of leadership. There are other institutions working with head teachers, mainly on curriculum issues, such as the National Institute of Education and the Centre for Vocational Education and Training.

The main current challenges for school leadership are described in the OECD country report at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/25/40/38561414.pdf. They can be summarised as follows:

- Major policy concerns referring to a decline in birth rate and the number of redundant teachers and, consequently, the possibility of the number of schools being reduced;
- New school policies – schools are expected to function more autonomously;
- A changing composition of student population – more and more students attending general upper secondary schools;
- Growing accountability in the field of results and social equity;
- Changing and growing societal and community expectations;
- Innovations.

The new payment system intended for teachers is now high on the agenda of head teachers.
As it has been mentioned earlier, head teachers in Slovenia must obtain a so-called headship licence within a year after their appointment (ZOFVI, Article 53). However, this is the only compulsory training for them. In this context only pre-service training appears in national documents, while lifelong leadership/management development is not a strategic goal in our national educational strategies.

1.2. National educational programmes aiming at leadership and management development

The overwhelming majority of leadership/management development programmes fall within the competence of NSLE. They are as follows:

- Pre-service training (a programme lasting for one or two years, 144 hours, 6 modules);
- Induction programme (Mentoring for newly appointed head teachers – 1-year programme, not compulsory);
- In-service programmes (conferences, Action Research for head teachers, Leadership for Learning, short courses, participation in national and international projects, individual support).

There are certain programmes provided by the National Institute of Education and the Centre for Vocational Education and Training, which are related to the role head teachers play in curricular issues. Some private institutions also provide programmes with components of leadership/management development. They mainly respond to current legislative issues and/or initiatives; moreover, we do not have access to their content.

1.3. The role of the development of learning as a strategic goal in a national education strategy

It is difficult to provide a competent answer to this question. As in most countries, the development of learning is seen as a key educational goal. It is emphasised in the so-called White Paper (Krek ed. 1996) as well as in the previous ministerial strategy known by the name of Towards education for creativity and quality of life where he points to the following principles: openness of the education system, long duration of knowledge, respecting diversity, element of justice, and preserving and upgrading what is good.

In his vision of educational development he stresses autonomy as a precondition for carrying out meaningful education for teachers and students. Development of learning is also the rhetoric of educational reforms, while in practice one is led to believe that students’ results are much more emphasised than learning itself. For example, the new minister (from October 2008 on) has declared Slovene education system very good purely on the basis of TIMSS and other test results.

Leadership is seen as an important factor in improving the development of learning. It is stated in the vision of NSLE while the role of the head teacher is defined as that of a manager and of a pedagogical leader (ZOFVI, Article 49). Although the development of learning is not mentioned specifically, various head teacher’s tasks such as the leading of teachers, supporting of staff development, cooperation with students defined in Article 49, are related to it.

In the context of school leadership development programmes the relationship between leadership and learning is constantly emphasised and is given special emphasis in two programmes. Within the initial training programme the module Head teacher as a pedagogical leader focuses on learning-centred leadership as well as on his/her role in developing teachers’ professionalism. Leadership for learning is another programme where head teachers meet 9 times during the year in small groups of 8 – 10 and improve their learning-related practice.

The National Institute of Education and Centre for Vocational Education and Training organise training in curriculum-related issues.

The role of leadership in improving the quality of learning has recently become a more frequent subject of discussion. It has been provoked mainly by the NSLE although I am of the view that it should not be limited to conferences and seminars and should, instead, be extended to journals and professional literature to become more “visible”.

1.4. Research on leadership/management development

This issue can be referred to as the weakest link in the area of leadership development in Slovenia. Research has been limited to individual, unpublished doctoral theses.

1.5. Professional association for school leaders

There are 3 professional Associations of School Leaders: the Association of Kindergarten Head Teachers, the Association of School Leaders in Basic Education...
and the Association of Upper Secondary Education School Leaders. These organizations declare themselves to be supra-factional associations established for the aim of discussing professional issues that go beyond the question of financing and that of head teachers’ salaries. They also strive to be an equal partner in planning and introducing reforms and changes in education at the level of the system. However, their involvement depends on the political will of governing bodies. They meet regularly and these meetings are usually linked to the conferences they organize themselves.

2. THE CHANGING ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERS IN CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

2.1. Legal framework

The roles and responsibilities of school leaders are defined in the Organization and Financing of Education Act, Article 49. There are 21 items that could be categorized under the following headings:
- Planning,
- Human resource management,
- Responsibilities related to pupils/students,
- Co-operation with other stakeholders such as parents and institutions responsible for the welfare of children,
- Administrative tasks.

2.2 The competencies of school leaders

There are currently no national standards concerning the competencies of school leaders. Some competencies are defined in the compulsory pre-service programme. A list of competencies is being developed within a project co-ordinated by the Educational Institute but there is no guarantee for it to become recognised at a national level. It is still unclear what type of approach will be used in the national strategy for the self-evaluation of schools.

2.3. Appointment of school leaders

Head teachers are nominated for 5 years and can be re-nominated for an unlimited number of terms. A head teacher is nominated by the school board (governors). When he/she is reappointed there is no formal appraisal because he/she has to go through the same procedure as during the first appointment. Procedural requirements are: feedback from the teaching staff, the school founder and the Minister. The school board takes an autonomous decision but the views expressed can help them select the right person.

2.4. Qualification of school leaders

They have to obtain the so-called “headship licence” one year after their nomination. Following the obtaining of a licence, school leaders are not obliged to take any further training. Attendance of leadership training in order to be awarded that licence is not compulsory – it is possible for candidates to take an exam without training. However, more than 90 % of candidates participate in the training.

2.5. Sharing of leadership functions

In most educational institutions in Slovenia only two functions are defined as leadership functions: that of head teacher and of deputy head teacher. Article 50 of ZOFVI defines the role of deputies as “assisting the head teacher in managerial and pedagogical tasks”. The number of deputies depends on the size of the school. Vocational centres are headed by directors and head teachers who lead individual programmes. Teachers can equally assume the role of subject leaders and project leaders.

2.6. School-level strategy-making

Every school is obliged to have an annual plan where vision and strategic goals are also defined. It is strongly recommended that schools also have a development plan – the current practice varies from school to school. Schools include elements of learning improvement but most of them at a general level – unfortunately no research can support my statements. According to Article 49 of ZOFVI, school leaders are
responsible for the development and implementation of a school-level strategy. They usually do it together with their staff.

3. LEADERSHIP/DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

3.1. Responsibility for leadership development and educational management, training and leadership management training programmes

In-service programmes are widespread in several countries and there is a great variety in the type of programmes offered, programme support and delivery. In Australia, Austria, Chile, Britain, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Slovenia and Sweden there are systematic in-service training programmes for school leaders. Governments have recognised the need to help their head teachers to adapt to expanded and intensified leadership responsibilities.

In Slovenia we have one programme in the field of effective learning with special regard to the improvement of the quality of teacher activity focusing on leadership/management development, which is the programme of NSLE – National School for Leadership in Education (Šola za ravnatelje). Slovenia was an early developer of leadership training and now offers initial, induction and in-service training through the National School for Leadership in Education.

The National School for Leadership in Education was established in 1955 by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the training and professional development of head teachers and candidates for the position of head teacher. NSLE activities include professional development, training and other education programmes, publishing of books, journals, research-related work as well as experimental development in education. The NSLE is a public service the implementation of which is in the interest of the public. In short, the NSLE is responsible for leadership development and management training. There are also other, private organisations in Slovenia, which contribute to the subject but have not been established for that purpose and play a marginal albeit not unimportant role in the matter referred to above. The NSLE is the only one with a licence.

Based on the areas specified, typical grades in respect of the following content items on a five points scale are:

- Legal - 4
- Administrative - 2
- Strategic leadership - 3
- Human resource management - 5
- Organizational development - 5
- Instructional leadership - 2
- Change management - 1
- Aspects of lifelong learning - 4

The core programme of NSLE is the implementation of the Headship licence programme. The purpose of the NSLE programme of the initial head teacher training called School for Leadership in Education is to implement the Headship licence. Slovenian legislation stipulates that all school directors/head teachers/principals should participate in the programme within one year of their appointment. The programme consists of 6 compulsory modules that cover leadership and organisational theory, teambuilding, learning styles, professional development, planning and decision making, head teacher skills, human resources and legislation.

In a total of 144 hours the programme consists of 6 modules spread over one or two academic years. As of this year we will also be able to offer the number of hours needed for self study and other activities.

Programme objectives are meant to provide participants with knowledge and instruments to help them implement the objectives of their headship role, both as pedagogical leaders and as school managers. The main objectives of the programme are, therefore, the optimal implementation of the curriculum, the pedagogical leadership of teachers, cooperation with parents and the environment, implementation of the main goals set by schools, identification of the advantages and disadvantages of schools and finding ways to become successful schools.

Several years of experience in the training of school leaders and an in-depth needs analysis conducted in 2002 have indicated that newly appointed head teachers in Slovenia need mentoring. The system of mentoring was subsequently developed in 2003. The purpose of the programme is to establish systematic support and assistance for new school leaders during their first year of headship.

The programme combines the theoretical principles of leadership in education that have not been so broadly covered in the Headship licence programme. Evaluation shows that participants appreciate the programme, its content and the method used, emphasizing at the same time its value in terms of personal and professional development. It enables the creation of the networks of expert groups of head teachers that contribute to more effective and successful school work.
Slovenia views school leadership as a professional endeavour and provides opportunities at all stages in a consistent way as there are initial pre-service training requirements and a one-year induction programme.

Various in-service training opportunities are available, such as:
- in-service training and conference for school leaders,
- networks of learning schools (programme based on the concept of school effectiveness and school improvement),
- development of new approaches to education for leadership in schools: leading for learning, action research for head teachers,
- journal by the name of “Leadership in Education”,
- research in the field of education, educational policy and leadership,
- development of co-operation and implementation of professional development programmes with entire staffs in schools and pre-schools institutions,
- development of approaches to education for leadership in schools,
- international activities (projects, conferences, institutional co-operation, training, consultancy,
- organization of international conferences.

The National Educational Institute provides services such as consulting and mentoring albeit on a much smaller scale.

The programme of the network of learning schools is very important in serving the purpose of activities related to the title mentioned above. Education and training of teachers and other school workers is of great importance for the quality of school performance. In the framework of specialized programmes teachers improve their knowledge of specific fields, which often falls short of achieving professionalism in the broadest sense of the word. It has been recognised that beside the knowledge of their subject area it is also very important for teachers to become competent in the field of general content such as communication, introduction of changes, work with parents, evaluation.

Research shows that education in general content area is far more effective if the teachers’ assembly as a whole participates in the education programme. Education along these lines also includes professional debates, the sharing of knowledge and problem-solving in teams. This programme is oriented towards reflection upon the fundamental mission of schools. By recognising their advantages and disadvantages schools realize that all their important and real problems are related to learning and teaching. Education is intertwined with learning and via improvements being introduced to schools. By means of mutual cooperation between teachers, stimulated extraneously, schools build a culture of cooperation.

This programme offers new opportunities for learning, cooperation and development at an individual and school level to include the entire school staff. It stimulates a systematic exchange of good practice between school teachers and institutions.

There are approximately 400 schools and pre-school organisations in Slovenia that are already engaged in the so-called cooperation network. This programme is also established as an equal form of in-service training. These networks are also tools for helping schools to plan improvement and raise the quality in the important fields of their operation as the NSLE offers them help and consulting through guided, process-oriented education for the period of one school year and they can also continue that programme for several more years.

4. CASE STUDY 1: A SLOVENIAN SCHOOL

4.1. A short introduction of the school context

The case study school (School, hereinafter) is located in a small town in the North-Western part of Slovenia. 802 pupils attend the school, which means that it can be classified among the bigger schools in Slovenia. The classes are organised in two buildings: 31 classes operate in the main building and 4 in a separate unit. The school offers 25 optional subjects for 39 groups of pupils. Beside regular classes the school organises morning and afternoon care, extracurricular activities, outdoor activities, additional classes for pupils with learning difficulties and for talented pupils.

The school employs 97 staff, among them 75 teaching staff. It is led by a head teacher who has performed this job for 11 years. Based on the size of the school, he has two deputies and two counsellors – a psychologist and a social worker.

Priorities during this academic year are:
- Development of a school behaviour plan and school rules;
- Encouraging of innovation and creativity;
- Participation in international projects;
- Activities for talented pupils;
• Further development of pupils’ community;
• Participation in the Healthy Schools network.

4.2. Methodological background

Interviews were conducted on Monday morning on September 29th. We asked the head teacher for consent and for selection of teachers – respondents. He selected three female teachers: two subject teachers and one class teacher (teaching all subjects in lower grades). We used the questions previously agreed upon and sent by co-ordinators of the project. Group interviews with teachers lasted 45 minutes, individual interviews with the head teacher lasted for 60 minutes. The interviewer was in charge of taking notes during the interviews. It should be mentioned that themes overlap, therefore analysis was based on themes rather than individual questions.

4.3. Supporting learning and a head teacher’s impact on learning

Teachers were unanimous in the claim that their head teacher supports their learning to a great extent and, consequently, the study effort of students. They mentioned some strategies for supporting learning: observation of lessons with a clear focus (taxonomy of learning goals in the previous year, for example), individual interviews with teachers after observation, peer observations, seminars for all teachers to support cooperation among teaching staff, »vertical co-operation« (among teachers teaching the same subject in different grades), supporting team work, participation in national and international projects, promotion of the use of ICT. They were particularly enthusiastic about the practice that by reading research literature he is up to date in terms of recent developments in education, which he imparts to his staff by informing them about topical issues. They also appreciate his efforts to support collaboration between younger and elder colleagues.

The head teacher holds a very similar view to what teachers say. He talked about different levels of support:
• Professional development of teachers (individual and all-inclusive seminars)
• Participation in projects (he mentioned one-on-one assessment having a significant impact on teaching methods);
• Annual two-day workshop for all teaching staff at the beginning of the school year;
• Observing lessons with a clear focus defined at the beginning of the school year;
• Promoting ICT;
• »Vertical co-operation«;
• Opening the school into wider national and international environment.

He also mentioned how important co-operation between younger and more experienced teachers was.

4.4. Main obstacles to leading learning

Both teachers and head teachers referred to a shortage of time and a lot of routine work. Another common obstacle was resistance towards changes among individual teachers. Head teachers perceive this as a more serious problem than teachers because new generations of pupils require a different approach to teaching. The head teacher also mentioned the absence of autonomy – schools have to comply with a growing number of requirements.

4.5. Solving problems related to learning

Teachers explained the benefit of weekly meetings of subject groups. They find them to be the most effective way of solving problems and they meet regularly, although these meetings are not obligatory. One other option is enhanced by the Ministry and is called »individual learning support«. Teachers already see a positive impact on pupils with learning difficulties.

The head teacher feels that the individual support of teachers is the most effective way. When parents complain, he tries to protect teachers within the confines of law. He often emphasised that teachers and head teachers would need to improve communication skills.

4.6. Who has an impact on the quality of learning (beside the head teacher)?

Teachers do not feel a very strong impact by parents. They consider certain initiatives, suggestions coming form parents, but they think parents act as partners. Again, teachers mentioned projects as having a strong impact on learning.
The head teacher perceives parents and parents’ council as an instrument affecting learning. The school is open to initiatives, something that led to some resistance at the beginning. They organise events such as charity bazaar and concert. However, the school has defined the limits of parents’ influence. Here the head teacher mentioned co-operation between younger and older teachers.

4.7. The impact of evaluation on the work of teachers and head teachers

As there is no external evaluation in Slovenia (apart from a simplified evaluation of head teacher’s work once a year by the school council), all respondents have voiced concern about this issue. We, therefore, suggested some forms of evaluation.

For teachers it was the observation of lessons. They found that the impact depended on teachers themselves – how open they are to changes and, particularly, on the relationship between teachers and head teachers as well as on a head teacher’s ability to give feedback.

The head teacher shared this view. The impact of lesson observation and the subsequent interview with a teacher will be determined by that teacher’s attitude to changes. The head teacher claimed to aim at the most constructive feedback possible. He also pointed to the importance of dealing with data regarding student performance.

4.8. Conclusions

Teachers and the head teacher see various ways in which head teachers can support learning. It has to be done systematically (like setting targets for lesson observation every year and analysing them) and it requires a broad head teacher’s view on how teachers can learn. Seminars for individual teachers are just one way of supporting teachers’ learning, head teachers should, therefore, look for different opportunities within and outside the school.

Head teachers are loaded with routine tasks but if they understand the potentials of teachers’ learning they can find ways of supporting it. When problems are to be dealt with, they appreciate individual support while teachers see a strong potential for subject group meetings.

Other stakeholders do not seem to have any major influence on learning. By being given a more active role, parents should be involved more intensely.

When self-evaluation is introduced as a national strategy to improve quality in education, it should be carefully introduced and strongly related to learning as neither teachers nor the head teacher interpret evaluation as a driving force of professional development.

5. CASE STUDY 2: A NATIONAL PROGRAMME

In-service programmes are widespread in various countries and there is a great variety in type of provision, support and delivery. In Australia, Austria, Chile, Britain, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Slovenia and Sweden there are systematic in-service training programmes for school leaders. Governments have recognised the need to help their head teachers adapt to expanded and intensified leadership responsibilities.

In Slovenia we have one programme regarding effective learning with special regard to the improvement of the quality of teacher activity with focus on leadership/management development, which is the programme of NSLE – National School for Leadership in Education (Šola za ravnatelje). Slovenia was an early developer of leadership training and now offers initial, induction and in-service training through National School for Leadership in Education.

The National School for Leadership in Education was established in 1955 by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the training and professional development of head teachers and candidates for the position of head teacher. NSLE activities include professional development, training and other education programmes, publishing of books, journals, research-related work and also experimental development in education. The NSLE is a public service the implementation of which is in the interest of the public.

Slovenia views school leadership as a professional endeavour and provides opportunities at all stages in a consistent way, given the availability of initial pre-service training requirements and a one-year induction programme.
Various in-service training opportunities are available, these are:

- Implementation of Headship licence programme,
- Mentoring for newly appointed head teachers of schools,
- In-service training and conferences for school leaders,
- Networks of learning schools (programme based on the concept of school effectiveness and school improvement),
- Development of new approaches to education for leadership in schools: leading for learning, action research for head teachers,
- A journal by the name of “Leadership in Education”
- Research in the field of education, educational policy and leadership,
- Development of co-operation and implementation of professional development programmes with entire staffs in schools and pre-schools institutions,
- Development of approaches to education for leadership in schools,
- International activities (projects, conferences, institutional co-operation, training, consultancy,
- Organization of international conferences.

The core programme of NSLE is the implementation of the Headship licence programme. The purpose of the NSLE programme of initial head teacher training School for Leadership in Education is to implement the Headship licence. Slovenian legislation stipulates that all school directors/head teachers/principals should participate in the programme within one year of their appointment. The programme consists of 6 compulsory modules that cover leadership and organisational theory, teambuilding, learning styles, professional development, planning and decision-making, head teachers skills, human resources and legislation.

The aim of the programme is to provide the participants with knowledge and instruments to help them implement the objectives of their headship role both as pedagogical leaders and as managers in schools. Therefore the main objectives of the programme are: optimal implementation of the curriculum, pedagogical leadership of teachers, cooperation with parents and the environment, implementation of the main goal in schools, identification of the advantages and disadvantages of schools and ways to make schools successful.

Initially, the programme was oriented towards head teachers but more recently attention has been refocused from leaders on all practitioners in schools and on the effectiveness of schools.

Several years of experience in the training of school leaders and a thorough needs analysis conducted in 2002 indicated that newly appointed head teachers in Slovenia needed mentoring. The system of mentoring was subsequently developed in 2003. The purpose of the programme is to establish systematic support and assistance for new school leaders during their first year of headship.

The programme combines the theoretical principles of leadership in education that have not been so broadly covered in the Headship licence programme. Evaluation shows that participants appreciate the programme, its content and the method used, emphasizing at the same time its value in terms of personal and professional development. It enables the creation of the networks of expert groups of head teachers that contribute to more effective and successful school work.

The programme of the network of learning schools is very important in serving the purpose of activities related to the title mentioned above. Education and training of teacher’s and other school workers is of great importance for the quality of the schools performance. In the framework of specialized programmes teachers improve their knowledge of a specific field, which is often not adequate for them to acquire professionalism in the broadest sense of the word. It has been recognised that beside teachers’ knowledge of their subject area acquisition of knowledge in general content areas such as communication, introduction of changes, work with parents and evaluation is also very important.

Research shows that education in the general content areas is far more effective if the all of the teachers’ assembly participates in the education programme. Such education also includes professional debates, sharing of knowledge and problem solving in teams. This programme is oriented towards reflection upon the fundamental mission of schools. Recognising their advantages and disadvantages, schools realize that all problems that really matter are related to learning and teaching. Education is intertwined with learning and by introducing improvements to schools. By means of mutual cooperation between teachers stimulated extraneously, schools build a culture of cooperation.

This programme offers new opportunities for learning, cooperation and development both at an individual and at school level to include the entire school staff. It stimulates systematic exchange of good practice between school teachers and institutions.

There are approximately 400 schools and pre-school organisations in Slovenia that are already engaged in the so-called cooperation network. This programme is also established as an equal form of in-service training. These networks are also tools for helping schools to plan improvement and raise quality in the important fields of their
operation as the NSLE assures them help and consulting through guided, process-oriented education for the period of one school year and they can also continue that programme for several more years.
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1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of school leadership and the question of how to improve it have become key policy issues in most developed countries. This is due partly to the new regulatory and accountability environment in which schools operate today: in most countries they are more autonomous, they have a larger responsibility and they are more accountable today than they were in the past. This makes it necessary for schools to have better leaders who are capable of setting relevant strategic goals, translating these goals into daily practice and of providing high-quality operational management. This is also related to the fact, based on an increasing body of research evidence, that the quality of learning is strongly determined by the quality of the environment in which it takes place, i.e. by the schools as organisational entities. Also, another factor with the largest impact on the quality of an organisation is leadership.

Recent research has confirmed the strong role of institutional leaders in improving the outcome of learning. According to a recent OECD publication on school leadership “there is increasing evidence that within each individual school, school leaders can contribute to improved student learning by shaping the conditions and climate in which teaching and learning occur. A large body of research on school effectiveness and improvement from a wide range of countries and school contexts has consistently highlighted the pivotal role of school leadership in making schools more effective” (Pont, 2008). Research regarding the impact of school leadership on the quality of learning has highlighted that the impact in question is typically indirect: school leaders have a direct influence on the motivation of teachers, their professional capacities (through the development of human resources in schools) and on the way teaching is organised; these are factors that all have a direct, demonstrable impact on the quality of the learning experience of students (Hallinger and Heck, 1998).

There are a number of easily identifiable leadership activities that have a well demonstrated impact on the quality of learning and teaching in schools. A recent analysis of 26 studies, published between 1978 and 2006, of the impact of leadership on various student outcomes has, for example, identified five leadership dimensions which have a measurable and significant impact on the effectiveness of learning (Robinson, 2007):

- Establishing goals and expectations (the setting, communicating and monitoring of learning goals, standards and expectations, and the involvement of staff and others in the process in that there is clarity and consensus about goals to be achieved)
- Strategic resourcing (aligning of resource selection and allocation to priority teaching goals, including appropriate expertise through staff recruitment)
- Planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum (direct involvement in the support and evaluation of teaching through regular classroom visits and availability of formative and summative feedback to teachers. Direct curricular oversight through school-wide coordination across classes and year levels and alignment to school goals)
- Promoting and participating in teachers’ learning activity and their development (leadership that not only promotes, but is directly involved in participating with teachers in formal or informal professional learning)
- Ensuring an orderly and supportive environment (providing time for teaching and learning by reducing external pressures and interruptions and establishing an orderly and supportive environment both inside and outside classrooms)

The demonstrable impact on the quality of learning of school leadership has induced policy-makers in a number of countries that aim at improving learning to define the development of leadership as a key strategic priority for education policy. Improving learning through the development of leadership seems to be a particularly effective and efficient policy not only because of the impact on the quality of learning of leadership but also because this is a relatively easily accessible target for policy interventions, and improvement in this area can be achieved at a relatively low cost. In countries which have recognised this, various leadership development programmes have been started, new standards have been set, or in some cases new specialized development centres have been created, and school leaders have been receiving more intense professional and political support. A few years ago, a publication on this issue of the International Institute for Educational Planning of UNESCO highlighted that effective recruitment, retention, and development of school principals have become a major global education policy concern (see box).

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1. The studies have been conducted in Australia, Canada, England, Hong Kong, Israel, the Netherlands, the United States, New Zealand and Singapore.

2. For example in 2002 a National College of School Leadership was established in England as a government-funded non-departmental public body; in 2003 a National College for Education Management was created in France as an organisation attached to the national Ministry of Education.
"Educational leadership and questions concerning the optimum approaches for effective recruitment, retention, and development of principals have become matters to which increasing concern has been devoted in education systems internationally. In some countries national inquiries have been set up to analyse the dimensions of what is seen as a problem in the provision of educational leadership. National leadership institutes have been established to identify new initiatives in educational leadership and to provide overall coherence and direction in the provision of quality leadership for schools and effective lifelong professional learning for school leaders. Resources have been allocated to support new leadership programmes. National approaches to setting standards, determining certification requirements and evaluating impacts have come under consideration and review. Individual professionals are increasingly recognising that the need to ensure lifelong professional learning, career planning, and the provision of quality schooling is a responsibility that has to be accepted by them, as well as being shared with and between all educational institutions and agencies" (Chapman, 2005).

It is the recognition of the strategic role of school leadership development that induced the five central European countries of the Central European Cooperation in Education (CECE)⁶ to start a common project in this area. The project was initiated in May 2006 in Vienna at the meeting of the delegates of the ministries of education of the five countries of the CECE program (Austria, the Check Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia). The project plan – entitled „The Role of School Leadership in Creating a Learning Environment that is Conducive to Effective Learning with Special Regard to the Improvement of the Quality of Teacher Activity“ – was elaborated after this first meeting by the Hungarian Ministry of Education and Culture, and was adopted by the delegates of the five countries in May 2007 in Budapest together with a methodology agreed upon (see Annex) which was used as a guideline by all the five countries in preparing a national report on the basis of a common outline (also adopted in May 2007).

That common outline is the same as the one that we follow in this synthesis report (see the subtitles and the "Related questions" in the next chapters).

The national reports have also included two case studies. Ideally, one of the cases presented was a school with outstanding leadership capacities and with leadership having a demonstrable impact on the quality of learning. The second case was a national action or programme alternative aiming at school leadership development.

The first version of the national reports was presented and discussed in October 2008 in Budapest by experts from the five countries involved. On the basis of this discussion the common policy outline was slightly amended and the national reports were finalised by the end of January 2009. The synthesis report was written by Gábor Halász mostly on the basis of the national reports submitted by experts from the five CECE countries (for the list of the authors of the national reports see the references and Annex 2) and equally on the basis of the presentation and discussions of the two expert meetings in 2008, but additional external data sources were also used when the need arose.⁷

3. The participating countries were Australia, Austria, Belgium (Flanders and French Community), Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Korea, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland and Scotland).

4. The Commission’s communication has made reference to the OECD review stressing that “school leadership should re-focus on tasks that are most effective in improving student learning, [...] distributing school leadership tasks can improve school effectiveness, [...] those involved in leadership require adequate training and preparation throughout their careers, and [...] school leader recruitment and retention should be professionalised” (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). This has echoed the opinion of the Council of the European Union declaring in its conclusions on teacher education (adopted in 2007) the need that “teachers with leadership functions, in addition to possessing teaching skills and experience, have access to high-quality training in school management and leadership”.⁵

5. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 15 November 2007, on improving the quality of teacher education (1) (2007/C 300/07)

6. The Central European Cooperation in Education is an institutionalised form of cooperation between the Ministries of Education of Austria, the Check Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia since 1997. The main form of this cooperation is the implementation of common projects, which aim at sharing experience in areas that the five members see as being of strategic importance. The cooperation was last renewed by the ministers of the five countries in April 2007.

7. The texts of the national reports were used in a direct manner in this paper when describing in individual sections of the three substantial chapters the situation in the five countries.
2. CONTEXT AND KEY ISSUES OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

The development of Central and Eastern European countries participating in this study – the CECE group – shows a number of common characteristics while throwing light on a few substantial differences. Today, these countries are all member states of the European Union, i.e. they are exposed to very similar challenges and they work alongside the other 22 member states on ways to address these issues. They have a common past, which is unique to them: they all established their respective systems of compulsory mass education in the nineteenth century as members of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and they also share traditions going back to that period. After the Second World War, when they created their systems of universal lower secondary education and school-based vocational training, these countries belonged to three different political camps: Austria was part of what used to be referred to as “the Western World”, The Czech Republic, Slovakia (then Czechoslovakia) and Hungary were part of the Soviet Bloc and Slovenia was part of Yugoslavia, which introduced a third type of political system (socialism based on the idea of self-governance). The traces of their common past in the 19th century and their divergent developments in the 20th century are still tangible when making comparison between these countries.

This comparative report focuses on one topical issue, that of school leadership. The chapter below identifies certain key characteristics of the context of school leadership and some related key issues in the CECE group.

2.1. Terminologies and practices

When speaking about school leadership, our best bet is to start by defining what we mean by the term itself. The word ‘leadership’ is not easily translatable into any of the languages of the Central European Countries. It is symptomatic that the Austrians have created a national programme with an English name: “Leadership Academy”. The participants of the CECE program have all stressed that they increasingly use the English term “leadership” when speaking about this subject in their mother tongue in their home country.

A well-known terminological uncertainty surrounding the subject of management and leadership has appeared in all five countries. Making a distinction between administration, management and leadership is a relatively recent development in all these countries, and not everybody is familiar with this distinction. In professional circles there is a strong sense of distinction expressed, among others, by an increasingly popular use of the English term “leadership” rather than the corresponding national term. Although most national languages allow for a distinction between management and leadership, these terms are too often used as synonyms, carrying the same meaning (for the relevant national terms see Table 1).

Table 1

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<th>MANAGEMENT</th>
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Source: members of the project team

Behind the terminological uncertainties one often finds diverging approaches, concepts and paradigms. Traditionally, in each of the five countries people entrusted with the task of leading, managing or directing schools (“head teachers”, “principals” or “directors”) have been seen as people playing a kind of double role: that of an administrator and that of a pedagogue. These two roles have often come into conflict. As administrators, head teachers had to ensure that the school operated in synch with legal norms and they also were responsible for national policies to be implemented. As pedagogues, they confirmed their position as representatives of the profession even if this entailed having to do administrative tasks for some time. The “head teacher” continued to function as a teacher; the director did not lose his/her place in the teaching profession. In fact, directing or managing a school was not seen as a profession in itself, instead, it was seen as a specific task performed, often temporally, by a professional teacher.

While using the English word “leadership” in the contextual environment of their mother tongue, it still sounds odd in all the five countries in most contexts (except, perhaps, in Austria), and the word “management” has become a recognised term in all the five national languages. However, the term “management” is very often associated with the word “business”. Most teachers would think that while companies have managers, schools must have directors, principals, head teachers or school leaders. They may perform management tasks but they are not seen as professional managers.
They are teachers who do management tasks. When we hear sentences like “our principal is a manager-type person” we know what the speaker means: the person who is in the position of the principal or head teacher is acting similarly to the professional manager of a business company, that is, he/she is probably particularly effective in his/her management tasks (especially in resources management, including that of raising funds).

Those who do research, development work or training in the area of educational management or school leadership, are now making a distinction more intensely not only between management and leadership but also between leadership as a role or function and leadership as a position. Leadership is often seen now by them as a function which must be present and operate in every organisation where people are working together and where their activities have to be coordinated. But this function is not necessarily linked with one particular position. However, there is always one single person who has the formal responsibility for the correct and effective operation of the organisation: this person is the head or the leader of the organisation. However, the formal leader – the person who has been appointed by the owner or the supervising authority of the organisation – may lack the leadership capacities: for example he/she may not be good in motivating people or setting strategic goals. In this case we sometimes say: the organisation has an appointed head but it does not have a real leader. Someone is doing the job of the director, the principal or the head teacher but there is no real leadership in the organisation.

Although the distinction between management and leadership and the distinction between leadership as a role/function and leadership as a formal position is not frequent in the world of education in the CECE countries, most people understand these distinctions, which are made only if they are relevant in an everyday context. However, this context is changing in all five countries, perhaps the most rapidly in Austria. This is the country where the leaders of national education policy seem to have recognised, most noticeably, the importance of leadership in achieving national developmental goals. As will be demonstrated, this recognition has been made in each of the other four countries as well, albeit rather unevenly. The development of leadership has become an important education development goal in all CECE countries but the efforts made in order to accelerate the move towards this goal are still uneven.

In this study we prefer to use the term “school leader”, putting the stress on role rather than position, but occasionally we also recur to the term “head” of “head teacher” and, sporadically, to that of “director” or “principal” when the emphasis is to be laid on the notion of position. We try to make a clear distinction between leadership and management: using the former term when the stress is on goal-setting and the task of dealing with people, while using the second when the emphasis is on implementation and practical, organisational problem-solving (management in the narrowest sense of the word). However, we assume that no sharp distinction can be made between management and leadership: the meaning of these two terms overlaps. In this we follow the logic of one of the figures presented at the meeting in May of the expert group of this project (see Figure 1).

![Figure 1](image_url)

The notions of management and leadership and their relationship

In the common tradition of the five CECE countries, going back to the 19th century, school leaders (principles of schools) had to fulfil a role defined with precision and regulated by law. The legal or administrative dimension traditionally prevailed over other dimensions of leadership, and this tradition is still visible. This was not seriously challenged until as late as the second half of the 20th century when the development of the five education systems in question followed very different patterns. The emergence of heads of schools as managers and leaders is something of a recent development in all five countries, and many people still have some feeling of discomfort by using these terms when referring to the role of head teachers and their daily activity.
2.2. The national context of educational leadership and management development – main challenges to face currently

Related question:
What is the national context of educational leadership and management development in your country (at both national and local/school level)? What are the main current challenges school leaders and those involved in leadership/management development are facing in your country?

Four of the five countries involved (The Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia) underwent a period of radical transformation of both society and politics in the last two decades, accompanied by deep economic and financial crises as well as a fundamental transformation of their public institutions. These changes have transformed the relationship between the public authorities (the state) and the institutions (the schools). Schools have become more independent of the state, they have gained more responsibility and they have become more accountable for their clients. Four countries that belonged to what used to be the East Block were particularly receptive of policy reform trends characterising the Western World in the late eighties and the early nineties. In spite of their similarities; however, they do not form a homogeneous group. Hungary has gone further than the other countries in subordinating its schools to politically autonomous and powerful local governments and in giving extended jurisdiction to individual schools. Until recently, Slovenia has maintained more of its strong national institutions that provide guidance and support to schools than the three other transformation countries, while demonstrating less willingness act quickly and enlarge the autonomy of its schools. In this group of five countries Austria remained an island of stability till the late nineties when – probably as a result of the country’s accession to the European Union – striving for reforms became more tangible.

Mention should be made of another crucial difference in this group of countries, which puts Austria and Slovenia into one subgroup and the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia into another. The first two countries, due to their higher economic output, are in a position to spend significantly more on education than the rest. While Austria and Slovenia spend more than €10,000 per pupil, the three other countries spend less than €7,000. Austria and Slovenia also spend a higher percentage of GDP on education than the three other countries, although this figure is relatively high in Hungary, too (see Figure 2).8

These differences have certainly made a strong impact on the dominant way of thinking about school leaders in the five countries and also on the way the role of head teachers or principals is seen in these countries. However, by the early 2000s the legacy of a previous era manifesting itself in some visible differences was on its way out. The school systems in all five countries are now facing very similar challenges, and these challenges affect school leadership similarly in all of them. Quality and efficiency concerns across the public sector have, for example, strengthened in all these countries. Independently of their past characteristics, they all seem now to move towards a public management model that can be characterised by two key features: (1) the rethinking of the respective roles of national authorities and local institutions, so that the former will shift from “micro-management” towards a more strategic steering while the latter will become more autonomous and more accountable, (2) a more visible emphasis on performance, quality and measurable achievements. This, naturally, means that school leaders are to be assigned to a role that is different from what they used to play earlier.

Leadership is strongly affected by the way responsibilities are shared between various levels of administration. In this context the five countries do not form a homogeneous group. Austria has the most centralised system of all with the federal and the provincial level having a significant role in certain areas of administration, especially in that of resources and personnel where schools do not have too many jurisdictions to rely on. According to data from the 2007 OECD survey on decision

8. The specificity of Hungary is the combination of relatively high GDP and relatively low per pupil spending. This might be a sign of efficiency problems.
making in education systems (see Figure 3; Figure 4 and Figure 5). Schools in Austria only have an insignificant role in personnel management and a rather limited role in resource management. In these areas the central (national) level in Slovenia is also perceived to be playing a role of some significance which; however, is more evenly shared with the school level.

Figure 3
Percentage of decisions taken at different levels of government in public lower secondary education in the field of personnel management (2007)\(^9\)

![Graph showing percentage of decisions taken at different levels of government in personnel management](image)

Source: Education at a Glance

The difference between Austria and the four other countries has, perhaps, been highlighted to a larger extent by the Eurydice survey on school autonomy, which examined seven areas of personnel management. According to this survey the jurisdiction of schools in personnel management was the most limited in Austria where in five of the seven areas schools do not enjoy any autonomy (see Table 1.).

Table 2
The level of autonomy of schools with respect to teaching staff (ISCED 1 and 2, 2006/07)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Limited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurydice, 2007

The Check Republic Hungary and Slovakia\(^10\) seem to form a more homogeneous group. In these countries the national level is of less importance than the local (municipal) and school levels in the field of resource and personnel management. In these countries head teachers not only have fairly strong resource and personnel management duties and responsibilities but their duties include having to negotiate things in these areas with their local (municipal) superiors.

Figure 4
Percentage of decisions taken at different levels of government in public lower secondary education in the field of resources (2007)\(^11\)

![Graph showing percentage of decisions taken at different levels of government in resource management](image)

Source: Education at a Glance

9. Hiring and dismissal of staff, duties and conditions of service of staff, fixing of staff salary

10. Slovakia did not participate in the 2007 OECD survey on decision making

11. Allocation of resources, use of resources
As for instruction management; however, the OECD data shows less marked differences (data seems to underscore that schools have very strong responsibilities) but this data may well hide certain features as the management of instruction in this survey covers only areas such as decision on school careers, instruction time, textbook and software/selection and that of teaching materials, the screening and grouping of students, assistance provided to students and the use of specific teaching methods including the assessment of students’ regular work. The decision regarding the curriculum itself was outside this problem area. Schools have been fully responsible for their own institutional curriculum for more than a decade in Hungary and, recently, they have been assigned this responsibility in the Czech Republic as well. Only in these two countries is there an entire system of multi-level curriculum regulation, placing very strong curricular responsibility on the school head. Slovakia seems to be moving in the same direction due to new legislation on education, aiming at the establishment of multi-level curricular rules having been adopted in 2008.

Figure 5
Percentage of decisions taken at different levels of government in public lower secondary education in the field of organisation of instruction (2007)

Source: Education at a Glance

Figure 6
The proportion of children between 0 and 14 years old in the entire population in the time frame of 1996 to 2007

Source: Eurostat

Today schools function in a moving, turbulent environment in all five countries. Among the factors that make this environment turbulent changing demographic conditions need to be mentioned first. The proportion of the 0-14 year old age group is now significantly lower than it was one decade ago (see Figure 2.). This figure is now below 16 per cent in all five countries (the EU 27 average is at 15.8 per cent; this figure being the highest in the EU in Ireland, at 15.8 per cent while the Turkey figure is at 27.9 per cent). Fertility rate is below 1.4 per cent in all five countries (2.1 per cent is considered to be the replacement level). All the five countries are facing a lasting demographic decline, which makes some degree of reorganisation and the redeployment of certain resources inevitable within the school network.

A second major challenge affecting the work of schools and their leaders is the growing heterogeneity of the student body and the problem of integrating pupils with social and educational disadvantages. This situation is particularly serious in those areas in Austria which are densely inhabited by immigrants and in four other countries, especially Hungary and Slovakia, where there is a significant number of residents belonging to the Roma minority. The increasing heterogeneity of the student population and the need to adapt the pedagogical approaches of schools to this new reality has become a major task for school leaders in many countries including the CECE group.

In all the five countries national governments are committed to introducing reforms that re-shape both day-to-day operation and pedagogical work in schools. Principals and head teachers are expected to become change agents capable of convincing their staff...
to do their professional work in a manner that is different from the way it was carried out in the past. They are expected to help schools transform themselves into creative learning organisations capable of identifying and solving problems autonomously. If national reform agendas are to be taken seriously, school leaders will no longer be able to carry on with their work on the basis of old routines alone. School leadership has become a particularly demanding task, which does to an even greater extent require sophisticated skills.

Frequent changes have made the legal environment of schools rather volatile, something that is perceived by school leaders as being a major challenge, particularly in Hungary and the Czech Republic. The need to adapt to a climate of constantly changing legal regulations makes the life of heads particularly stressful. Politicians, it appears, tend to overestimate the role of laws in the induction of changes by using them in cases when other policy instruments would, perhaps, prove more effective. Changing the legal environment is certainly less expensive for national governments than launching programs that enhance capacity building or mutual learning; moreover, it gives the illusion of changes being accelerated. However, compliance by schools with an ever-changing set of rules often remains formal and, at institutional level, this can result in the emergence of a kind of cynicism towards changes: schools and heads who do not take reforms quite seriously because they assume that those reforms will be short-lived and will probably be replaced shortly by the next wave of reforms, may prove more successful than those who do take them seriously.

All countries in the CECE group make efforts to improve the quality of the management of their schools and also to integrate modern leadership approaches into the definition of managerial tasks. In doing this they do; however, face serious challenges. One of the most important challenges seems to be linked with the difficulties of reconciling approaches of modern leadership with the bureaucratic traditions of public services. In some cases school leaders fail to control those factors that they are supposed to improve (for example, their jurisdictions in human resource management are often much too restricted). A growing level of expectation for them to act as promoters of change and innovations and also the need to share leadership tasks with other members of their staff while having their formal legal and financial responsibilities left unchanged means that many of them are overloaded with administrative duties and their activities are often fragmented. “They are pulled into different directions” was a remark voiced by one member of the project group. In many cases school leaders have to work with a teaching staff whose motivation level is low and whose attitude towards innovation is often rather negative.

2.3. The role of leadership/management development in national education development strategies

Related question:
What role does leadership/management development play in your country’s education development strategy? Does leadership/management development appear in your national educational strategies as a strategic goal or as an instrument to reach strategic goals? If yes, please specify!

One of the first questions the authors of national reports were invited to answer was on the role of leadership or management development in their national development strategies. What we were interested in was whether the importance of improving the quality of leadership and management has been recognised by national policy-makers, and we thought that a good sign of this could be if this appeared in those national educational development strategies which are guiding the development process in the countries in question. Our assumption was that if the quality of leadership and management was seen as a key factor in educational development, this had to be reflected in the formulation of national strategies.

Countries have various national strategy documents. In some cases these are explicit sectoral strategies adopted by ministries of education or by higher level decision making bodies (governments, parliaments). In other cases sectoral strategies appear as chapters in overall national development strategies. This is the case, for example, when national development plans based on the use of European structural funds contain an overall human resource development strategy and, as part of this, there are separate chapters on the development of the school sector. In some cases specific strategies focusing only on one particular area (e.g. quality or equity) have been adopted and the development of leadership may also appear in such documents.

Leadership development was visible in various national strategies in all five countries of the CECE group. In the case of Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia national reports provided clear and unambiguous evidence on this, while additional evidence indicated that this might also be the case in Slovenia. In the case of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia the relevant operational programmes of the national development plans, based on the European Social Fund (ESF), contain explicit references to leadership development.

In Austria the strategic goal of leadership development initially appeared within the framework of a broader quality development strategy at the end of the last decade. In 1999 the Federal Ministry of Education launched a major programme for quality development (“Quality-In-Schools” – QIS) with the aim of “encouraging schools to
assess and further develop their own educational quality by way of a systematic approach” and by making “quality development (...) an integral feature of school culture.” A key element of this strategy was the intention that schools are to develop their own „school programme”, which was seen as a “focal point of quality development.” The idea was that this document would “lay down the objectives and measures in different quality areas in a binding form” and that it would serve as a kind of „agreement” between the school and its environment. The school programme had the function of guidance as regards the educational actions of the school, informing “the public at large” and becoming a “yardstick for measuring the manner in which a school develops.” It is within this framework that the need for reinforcing and developing school leadership appeared. As it was put forward by a document on the issue “even though the school partners share decision-making powers and responsibility for quality development, it is the school head who has to assume a leadership function at the critical junctions of the process, adopt positions without shirking to take the necessary decisions. Seen from this angle, it is ‘more’ rather than ‘less’ school management that quality development is in need of”.

In the Czech Republic the program on the modernisation of initial education (which is part of the national program for the use of ESF) defines three specific objectives and one of them is the “improvement of competencies of teaching and non-teaching staff in schools and school facilities”.

In this country, similarly to the Czech Republic, the development of management capacities materialized years before the formulation of ESF-related strategic and planning documents in sectoral strategies. Out of the seven priority areas of the mid-term education development strategy of the Hungarian Ministry of Education published in 2004, for example, one was targeted at the improvement of efficiency and administration and, under this heading, the development of institutional management was defined as a target for intervention (see box).

15. See European Commission: ESF priorities in members states:
   http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/esf_projects_117/project.cfm?id=186&project_lang=en

17. See European Commission: ESF priorities in members states:
   http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/esf_projects_117/project.cfm?id=245&project_lang=en

« THE GOAL OF DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP CAPACITIES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC »

“The National Programme for the Development of Education (‘The White Paper’) was adopted by the Czech Government on February 7th, 2001 (Governmental Decree no. 113).14 This document promotes training for managerial staff as the way forward. ‘Managerial staff at schools must have clear idea of what they want to achieve, and how they’re going to do it, given the particular circumstances of a particular school. They must be aware of the fact that no fundamental change can be effected unless committed teachers are invited to join the decision-making process. They must be prepared for situations where their colleagues will not understand their intentions, or will even oppose them, and it is vital for them to know what procedure to follow. Therefore, the training of managerial staff in the educational sector should become a priority within the system of teacher training organized by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports’ (Křižková, 2008).”

In Hungary the programme based on ESF funding, targeted at the level of schools (“Providing quality education and ensuring access for all”), falls short of mentioning management development as an explicit goal that has a value in itself. It does, however, support this activity as an instrument for other development-related goals. Management development is, for example, seen as an instrument to enhance the dissemination of competence-based education; therefore the availability of “accredited, additional training courses in the fields of educational administration and management” is supported. Management development is also seen as an instrument to enhance the development of the formal education system “interfacing with non-formal and informal forms of learning.”17 In this country, similarly to the Czech Republic, the development of management capacities materialized years before the formulation of ESF-related strategic and planning documents in sectoral strategies. Out of the seven priority areas of the mid-term education development strategy of the Hungarian Ministry of Education published in 2004, for example, one was targeted at the improvement of efficiency and administration and, under this heading, the development of institutional management was defined as a target for intervention (see box).
In order to develop the quality of school management, cooperation between local and institutional levels of administration and their effectiveness needs to be reinforced. It is important that competencies that are needed for effective school leadership should be defined and, on the basis of this, the methods used in the selection of school leaders as well as the content and the methods used in their training and further training need also to be improved. In the framework of quality development and institutional evaluation the methods used in the assessment and qualification of school leaders need to be elaborated and implemented.\(^8\)

In Slovakia The National Programme of Training and Education in the Slovak Republic for the Forthcoming 15-20 years (the so-called Programme Millennium, adopted by the Government of the Slovak Republic in December 2001) sees school leadership/management as a key element of the further development of the Slovak educational system. This strategy document has proposed compulsory training for school leaders/managers in order to increase the effectiveness of school management and, by doing so, the quality of learning through pedagogical processes, control and evaluation activities. In this context, relevant measures of the operational programme of the National plan for the use of the ESF have defined four specific objectives, one of them being aimed at the improvement of administration and management of schools.

In connection with this objective, among other things, the following specific activities related to leadership and management development are mentioned:

- support for the development of administration, management and marketing of schools
- promotion of school quality management systems
- support for career growth and improvement of the competence profile of school management and marketing
- promotion of the educational activities of the management and administrators of schools in the field of the open school system, carried out in the interest of local communities\(^9\)

In Slovenia the priority axis “Improvement of quality and effectiveness of education and training systems” (which is part of the ESF objective known as “human resources development for work and life in a knowledge-based society by modernizing the system of education and training and by stimulating lifelong learning”) specifies seven activities to be supported and one of them is “to improve the competencies of principals and of management in educational establishments for an autonomous role of those establishments to be had and cooperation with the environment.”\(^20\)

One possible sign of the recognition of the importance of management and leadership development could be the existence of specialized national institutions or major programmes providing training for school leaders. As we shall see later, this is a phenomenon to be seen in all five countries, although Slovenia is the only case where training is provided by a separate specialized national centre. It needs to be emphasized that the existence of a centre like this does not necessary indicate the recognition of the importance of leadership development in the interest of the improvement of quality in education. In Slovenia, however, the status of this centre – which is a government-affiliated agency, not a ministry – might be a sign of high priority. In the case of Austria the existence of a massive and expensive programme seems to show strong commitment by educational leaders at a national level not only to leadership development in general but also to the most up-to-date approaches to the issue of leadership.

The analysis illustrates that the importance of management and leadership has been recognised in all the five countries of the CECE group and, in most cases, this also appears in their national strategic documents. However, the appearance of management development in national strategic documents does not necessarily reflect recognition of the leadership dimension of management or its relationship with the improvement of learning.


\(^9\) See European Commission: ESF priorities in members states (http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/esf_projects_117/project.cfm?id=649&project_lang=en)

\(^20\) See European Commission: ESF priorities in members states: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/esf_projects_117/project.cfm?id=350&project_lang=en
2.4. National educational development programmes aiming at leadership/management development

Related question: Are there major overall national educational development programmes in your country which have components of leadership/management development? If yes please present them.

The emergence of the goal of management or leadership development in those national strategic documents that set overall strategic priorities might be a positive sign of the recognition of the importance of this area by policy-makers but a real indication of commitment towards this goal would be its appearance in well-resourced development programmes or projects. This is why authors of the national reports have been asked to look at major national educational development programmes to see whether those programmes contained any components of leadership/management development.

As we saw in the previous section, strategies are in some cases strongly linked with specific development programmes: this is obviously the case when we look at national development plans aiming at programming the use of the European structural funds. In this case strategies are directly used to orientate resource allocations and the appearance of a developmental goal in the strategy means almost automatically that concrete, well-resourced developmental interventions are linked to this goal. The previous section has already mentioned a number of programmes where the goals of developing school leadership have been translated into concrete developmental interventions or measures (Table 2 shows relevant examples in a comprehensive way)

Table 3
The role of leadership/management development in national education development strategies and programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Austria        | The Quality in Schools (QIS) national programme.  
The VET quality initiative (QIBB) program  
The Leadership Academy programme                                                                                                               |
| Czech Republic | Management development is stressed in national sectoral strategy documents  
The ESF Project "Successful Headmaster"  
The development of the competencies of managerial staff at schools in the area of management and human resource policy in the framework of the ESF funded educational modernisation programme |
| Hungary        | Management development stressed in the strategy documents of the education sector and in the lifelong learning strategy of the government  
Quality development programs (e.g. the Comenius 2000 programme between 1999 and 2002)  
Management and organisational development components in the ESF funded development programs aiming at competence-development and inclusive education |
| Slovakia       | ESF support for the development of administration, management, marketing and promotion of quality management systems in schools  
Development of competence profile of school leaders (professional standards created at national level)  
Development of a new training programme for school leaders and its national accreditation in 2009 |
| Slovenia       | There is a well-established national institution responsible for this area which shows the strategic commitment of sectoral policy  
Some management training programmes linked with school development projects are developed and delivered in the framework of a programme funded by the ESF with the aim of educational development |

In Austria the Leadership Academy itself is a major national educational development programme which aims directly at the development of leadership and management. This programme was launched in 2004 when the Austrian Ministry of Education decided upon an initiative to enhance the innovative capacities of the personnel in educational management positions at all levels of the school system. As we have seen, management and organisational development have both been major components of the national quality development programme QIS started in 1999. A similar programme (called QIBB) was started in the vocational training sector in 2004.21 Quality development programmes in general such as these have important components of organisational and leadership development and not only have they contributed significantly to the development of quality awareness among school heads but they have also enhanced the organisational and leadership motivation and competencies of school heads. As these quality programmes are composed of elements aimed at the development of standards for assessing learning performance, there is growing pressure on school heads to make additional efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their schools.

As we have seen in the previous section in the case of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia, all national development programmes funded by the European Social Fund contain significant elements of leadership/management development. In some cases (Hungary) leadership development components are included in development intervention schemes focusing on other goals such as curriculum/competence development or the development of inclusive education. In other cases (e.g. the Czech Republic) leadership/management development appears as a component of programmes intended for the professional development (in-service or further training) of teachers.

2.5. The development of learning as a strategic goal in national education strategy documents

Related question:
Does the development of learning appear in your national education strategy documents as a strategic goal? If yes, please specify how!

The introduction above contains reference to growing evidence on the quality of leadership having a major (albeit indirect) impact on the quality of learning and to the fact that many countries start investing in the development of leadership because they see this as an effective way to improve the quality of learning. This means that the development of leadership may become a strategic priority and important component of development programmes if the development of learning itself is to become a key strategic priority. This is why the authors of the background reports have been asked to make sure that the development of learning appears as a strategic goal in their national education strategy documents. The goal of making learning an objective targeted more effectively at competence development and that of improving it seems to come through most tangibly in the Austrian and the Hungarian national reports.

In the case of Austria the introduction of new educational standards based on a competence model putting the student into the focus is a good sign. Another sign is the “25 plus initiative”, which was meant to enhance learning through a reduced number of students in classrooms and via improvement of support programmes. The introduction of the new middle school where the stress is on learning in heterogeneous groups has also gone into this direction. This is well reflected in the Leadership Academy, the key leadership development programme in Austria, where “Leadership for Learning” is a curricular core element and participants are expected to place strategic elements connected with learning in their portfolios.

The development of learning and, in particular, the need to transform the school environment so that it could enhance learning more effectively, stressed through strong emphasis on this issue equally contained in Czech strategic documents. The National Programme for the Development of Education (White Paper), referred to earlier on, published in 2001, underscores that “new requirements [are put] on schools and teachers, not only in terms of new professional and personal qualities such as creativity, initiative, personal responsibility and professionalism, but also [in terms of] strengthening of teamwork in schools, the development and implementation of a long-term vision, a common vision of their development, (...) the capacity for joint self-reflection, a realistic assessment of their own strengths and the assertion of their own goals.” This document relates the realisation of this set of objectives directly to the capacities of school leaders in order for this process to be enhanced.

In the case of Hungary the development of key student competences and the changing of the learning environment in schools aimed at an elevated level of efficiency in the field of competence-development, has been a strategic priority of the National Ministry of Education since the early 2000s. This is well reflected in the fact that the development of key student competences have become an important strategic goal of the school-related component of the human resource development programme contained in the national development plan between 2004 and 2006 and the dissemination of pertinent results remained a key element in the follow-up of this programme between 2007 and 2013. The recognition of competence-development is also reflected in the fact that European key competences have been included in the national core curriculum of the country.

In Slovakia, similarly to Austria, the development of learning has been strongly linked to the development of quality management in schools. As the national report for this study stated “quality management issues closely relating to educational and managerial processes are also considered to involve new, compulsory development training programmes for school leaders/managers. Key elements of this school quality system are based on the improvement of administrative and managerial processes and on the evaluation of schools, including auto-evaluation processes” (Laššák & Hašková, 2009). In this perspective, quality management at school level has a significant impact on the quality of learning, and school-level quality management can be improved significantly through the improvement of the quality of leadership and management, which in turn can be achieved through leadership and management training.

The goal of putting learning into the focus of educational development has also appeared in Slovenia, in documents such as the White Book on Education of the Ministry of Education, published in the mid 1990s. As the White Book puts it “We do not need any unnecessary alternative in dealing with everything that results in universal ignorance and superficiality, nor do we need to tackle any method-related tasks in the field of teaching and in the form of learning without any in-depth addressing of the knowledge issue which is the fruit of the efforts of our forebears and of our generation” (Krek, 1996). The country report prepared for the OECD programme entitled “Improving School Leadership” (ISL) also stressed that “new curricula pay less attention to content and place greater emphasis on the process of learning and knowledge-acquisition” (Koren, 2007). However, according to the national report on

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22. Source: the Czech national report for this study
this study the “development of learning is also the rhetoric of educational reforms while in practice one might sometimes be led to believe that students’ results are emphasised to a larger extent than learning itself” (Erčulj & Peček, 2008). Here the questions of learning seem to be particularly strongly connected to the well institutionalised procedures that are part of the national curriculum and assessment.

The process in which attention is being shifted from teaching to learning and from the providers of education to the learners seems to be slower in the CECE group than in a number of other European countries that are seen making more progress, a phenomenon probably attributable to the common traditions of bureaucratic regulation of education and to “Herbartian pedagogy”. However, as it has been well reflected in the national reports on the implementation of the Education & Training 2010 work programme this shift is now enhanced significantly by the adoption of the European policy of lifelong learning.

2.6. Leadership/management development as an instrument to enhance the development of learning

Related question:
Is leadership/management development seen as an important factor in improving the development of learning? Does organisational development and/or leadership/management development appear in concrete curriculum development programmes or in programmes aiming at improving the quality of learning? If yes, please present some examples! Is the role of leadership in improving the quality of learning an issue of discussion in your country?

Even if the development of learning becomes a strategic goal in national policies, it is still not self-evident that policy-makers will recognise the potentials of school leadership. We have asked, therefore, the authors of national reports to see whether leadership and management development are seen in their countries as important factors in improving the development of learning. Our main concern was whether the organisational or leadership dimension has appeared in programmes aiming at the improvement of the quality of learning and, if this was the case, what was the role that curriculum developers thought school leadership should play in this area.

We found that those countries which were more advanced in putting the development of learning into the focus of their educational development strategy were equally more advanced in recognising the potential of school leadership in this context. It seems that in these countries there is a higher probability that school leadership might be thought about as an activity with a shift towards focus on learning.

In Austria, for example, several initiatives have been introduced by the national authorities to support learning-centred leadership and learning-centred organisational developments. These initiatives have not been restricted to the role and the tasks of the head teacher. Instead, they involved school organisation as a whole. One example is the introduction of the so-called “early warning system” (Frühwarnsystem) which demanded that teachers contact parents immediately if they noticed a decline in the achievement or behaviour of students and that a solution to the problem be found. Another example is the so-called “school specific re-mediation” (standortbezogenes Förderkonzept). In this case each school has to develop a school specific programme specifying what support services individual pupils should receive for their learning. Austria also took part in some relevant international programmes. The question of how leadership affects people, planning, culture and structure and how, through interaction, it produces action and results related to the school’s goals, is also high on the agenda of the Austrian Leadership Academy.

The Hungarian National Report has stressed that, following the decentralisation of education, the influence of the conduct of school principals on improving of school quality became particularly strong. School leaders are responsible for defining educational content and for organisational issues regarding teaching and learning; the ability of the leader to shape organisational conditions conducive to learning improvement does, therefore, have a determining impact. Although official policies meant to develop educational quality do not directly aim to improve school leadership, there seems to be an increasing recognition of school principals having a major impact on the quality of education. Out of a series of national conferences on educational management and management development one event was devoted fully to the theme of “school leadership and modern learning environment” in 2003. One of the main conclusions emerging from this conference was that the behaviour of school leaders has a significant impact on the realization of the new ideas associated with learning in classroom activities. Participants highlighted that the topic of learning and instructional management should become important elements of effective school management, therefore they need to appear in the training of school leaders. In fact, the

23. See the 2007 national reports of all the five countries here: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/nationalreport_en.html

24. Like, for example, the program called “Carpe Vitam: Leadership for Learning”; see: http://hercules.kee.gr/attachments/file/Announcement.htm
management of curriculum and instruction is a compulsory element in all educational management programmes. A number of curriculum development programmes have put organisational and leadership development into the centre of their activities (such as the so-called MAG program).  

Leadership is seen as an important factor in improving the development of learning in Slovenia as well, at least among those who deal with leadership development and training. As the national report for this study has stressed “the role of leadership in improving the quality of learning has recently become a more frequent issue of discussion (...) provoked mainly by the Slovenian National School for Leadership in Education (NSLE)”, which has been raised at various conferences and seminars and also in professional journals. In the mission statement of NSLE the role of the head teacher is defined as that of manager and of pedagogical leader. Although the development of learning is not explicitly mentioned, various head teacher’s tasks defined in the relevant legal documents are related to this problem area (such as leading teachers, supporting staff development, cooperation with students). In the current programmes for school leader development the relationship between leadership and learning is emphasised time and time again, especially in two programme segments: (1) in the module of initial training entitled “Head teacher as a pedagogical leader”, which focuses on learning-centred leadership and on the role of the head teacher in developing teachers’ professionalism; and (2) in another module entitled “Leadership for learning”, which is provided for practicing school leaders.

It is worth mentioning here that the Slovenian background report to the OECD evoked a piece of research which showed that “head teachers rarely associated effective head teacher’s leadership with the improvement of learning and teaching” although the same research has also produced case studies proving the existence of positive practices. Researchers came up with six instances in which “head teachers focussed their attention on teaching and learning. In that context they were considered problem-solvers and they had visions for their schools as well as concrete goals to achieve. They were seen forging social alliances, especially with pupils, and were also recognized as having strong motives for the improvement of teaching and learning. Pedagogical leadership was, to a great extent, characterised in all case studies through head teachers. Their pedagogical leadership could not be reduced to lesson observation or support given to teachers to develop their teaching competence on. It might, instead, manifest itself in the promotion of learning for all as a general principle within the school. Head teachers were also perceived as being a role model of good teaching” (Koren, 2007).

The recognition of the connection between the development of learning and school leadership seems to be somewhat weaker in the Czech Republic and Slovakia but a closer look at the relevant training programmes reveals that at least those who are involved in the development of leadership skills are well aware of this. For example, in the case of the Czech Republic the “management of the educational process” is an important element in the training programmes offered today, and the skills related to the “management of the teaching processes” have been found surfacing in the current definition of the competencies of school leaders in Slovakia.

2.7. Research on leadership/management development

Related question:
Is there any relevant research available in the area of educational leadership/management or management development in your country? If yes, please specify. If any relevant English text is available please attach it or indicate its internet address.

A better understanding of the role of school leadership in improving education requires the generation of new knowledge. As the development of leadership becomes a strategic policy goal in education, there seems to be a growing need for evidence in this context. We need to know more about the composition of school leaders, about the manner in which they are selected, recruited and assessed, about how they go about their daily work and about their development-related needs. This makes it necessary for research into the questions of leadership to become an important issue to which sufficient support is assigned in the framework of national research support schemes. The need for the enrichment of knowledge along with all the evidence, generated by research on school leadership, seems to be recognised, albeit unevenly, in countries belonging to the CECE group.

In the case of Austria most relevant research is associated with the Leadership Academy where several research projects and master theses/dissertations have been commissioned concentrating on leadership development. Some universities, such as the University of Innsbruck, are rather active in this problem area. The Ministry of Education has also commissioned some related research. For example, according to the country study prepared for the OECD, the Ministry of Education completed an evaluation study in 2004 in which school leaders participating in 17 various school management programmes were asked „to describe their own competencies, and the degree of improvement in these competencies through the training programmes“
A summary of these surveys can be found in Balázs (2004.)

The source of this information is a document presented at one of the expert meetings of this project and also about their needs for training, but the survey also provided data on various personal characteristics of respondents. This survey demonstrated a shift in the needs of managerial competencies: more experienced head teachers shifted in their preferences from legal and legislative knowledge towards leadership skills and professional competencies in managing pedagogical and innovation in teaching. It also showed that about one fourth of practicing principals thought that management training was an important condition for obtaining their post.

In Hungary there have been, since the mid 1990s, many research initiatives surveying the work of principals in the new, decentralised environment. Four empirical studies – one of them an international comparative study – were conducted on various samples in the field of educational management research. School management has been a strong thematic dimension in various empirical studies on representative school samples, and the results of these surveys have been regularly published. Some of most valuable empirical research has focussed on the relationship between the characteristics of school management and the measurable performance of schools (this reinforced the international evidence mentioned earlier on that the measurable characteristics of school management – such as qualification, language proficiency or gender – influence the performance of pupils indirectly, through the activity of teachers). This research has confirmed that the schools of principals who have consistent goals, invest energy in their school work and are able to form some kind of inner coherence with the staff are more effective than the rest. Participation in the OECD’s ISL project proved to be a good learning opportunity for researchers to better understand the significance of leadership vis-a-vis the improvement of learning.

In Slovakia the Ministry of Education included school management in its priorities of educational research but so far only a few institutions have oriented their research towards school management problems. One of the surveys on the largest scale was carried out between 2005 and 2007 when almost 2400 leaders from primary and secondary schools were asked about the competencies school leaders may need for effective management and leadership practice. A general conclusion of this research was that although leadership is seen by leaders as an important factor for the development of learning and teaching processes, in reality the focus of the activities of leaders still tends to be on financial and administrative aspects of this problem area (see more about the results in the section below on leadership competencies).

The national report of Slovenia has stressed that research has been a rather weak point of leadership development in Slovenia (limited mainly to individual, unpublished doctoral theses). However, the website of NSLE informs its visitors about the institute having established a “research group called the Institute of Leadership in Education (ILE) as an organizational unit for science, research and development activities.” Improvement of education for head teachers and for headship effectiveness to be enhanced” is mentioned as the main goal of research. A number of possible research topics are also mentioned here such as “identifying and assuring quality in Slovene higher education, organizations and organizability of schools, planning work in schools, school policies through the perspective of management, professionalism, motivation, monitoring of teachers and development of employees in schools, mentoring of newly appointed head teachers, leadership in educational organizations as well as marketing in education in general.” The country background report of Slovenia for the OECD review (Koren, 2007) also made reference to the fact that in the framework of certain international cooperation programmes some relevant research had been conducted: NSLE was, for example, the coordinator of the Socrates programme known as ESIST (Evaluation Strategies for Improving School Leaders’ Training Programmes). Research mentioned in the previous section (entitled the “Perceptions on effective head teacher’s leadership of Slovene schools”) should also be taken note of here.

All these examples show that research on school leadership does exist in the countries of the CECE group, and it is often used when decisions are taken about school leadership development. However, the quantity of this research – especially if we compare it to some other European countries more advanced in this area – is still

27. The source of this information is a document presented at one of the expert meetings of this project („Research 2002 – Educational Management Centre“)
28. A summary of these surveys can be found in Balázs (2004.)
small, and results are known only in a limited circle. International networks – such as the European Network for Improving Research and Development in Educational Leadership and Management (ENIRDELM), whose mission is "to improve the quality of educational leadership and management, development and research across the whole of Europe" – are important in connecting the experts of CECE countries to the international community of researchers and developers in the disciplinary context of school leadership.

2.8. Professional organizations/associations for school leaders

Related question:
Are there any professional organizations/associations for school leaders? If yes, please specify. What role do they play in educational and particularly school leadership development?

The level of professionalization as indicated by the existence of professional organisations seems to be rather weak in Austria where no specialised professional organisations for head teachers seem to exist. However, head teachers are organised strongly enough within unions. There are several teachers' unions in Austria, which are part of the national trade union system. Within the unions there is a differentiation between school types (compulsory schools, academic secondary schools, secondary vocational schools and colleges etc.). As the national report for this study puts it "more recently, alternative groups of teachers and school leaders have started their own union representation with the purpose of not being part of ÖGB", i.e. the national trade union (Schratz, 2008).

A growing interest for professionalization in the Czech Republic is illustrated by the fact that the heads of basic schools established a new professional organisation in 2005. Both individuals and corporate bodies from the area of basic education can become members of the new Association of Headmasters of Basic Schools. The main objective of this association is to be a negotiating partner of the Ministry of Education and other government agencies on issues related to basic education and to represent the interests of its members in this area. It is also a partner for teacher training institutions and agencies responsible for the further education of teachers and head teachers. Although this organisation is the professional association of heads, it seems to be connected to a specific type of institution (basic schools) rather than to its management.

A similar situation can be observed in Hungary where there are several professional organisations affiliated with specific school types (e.g. the National Association of Basic School Head Teachers, the National Association of Gymnasiums or the Hungarian Vocational Training Association). In these organisations, even if their name does not make reference to heads and they are supposed to represent the specific interests of a particular level or type of education, school leaders are typically overrepresented. People in leadership positions play a key role in many other professional organisations, such as, for example, the Association of Foundation and Private Schools, the Association for Pre-school Education or the Association of Educational Experts. During the nineties there was a professional association established by people committed to leadership development (mainly head teachers but also researchers and developers) and for almost ten years regular national conferences dealing with school leadership where organised but these initiatives have died down. Due to the existence of the various specialized professional organisations, school leaders, unlike in Austria, do not play a strong role in the two teacher unions currently in existence.

In Slovakia there are two major professional organisations/associations for school leaders: the Association of Teachers of Academic High Schools and the Association of Vocational Schools. Both have sections for school leaders who meet regularly to discuss current issues related with school management. These associations are expected to support school leaders in the creation of school-level educational programmes and they also provide feedback to teacher training institutions in the school sector to improve their training programmes, including school management. Apart from these associations head teachers from private and public schools are organised in various formal and informal bodies, both at national and regional levels to solve specific problems.

Professional organisations dealing with leadership issues seem to be particularly strong in Slovenia. There are associations of head teachers specialized for various sub-

30. See the website of the organisation here: http://www.enirdelm.org/
sectors of education (kindergartens, basic schools and upper secondary schools) and – according to the national report prepared by Slovenia for the OECD review on school leadership – head teachers are also active in the teacher unions. The OECD report gives a detailed presentation of the views of these organizations on the challenges school leadership is currently facing and on the needs of leadership development. This illustrates well that they have very coherent and systematic views on this issue, They have stressed, for example, the need for “systematic education and training in this area” and have specified a number of priorities such as “learning-centred leadership” (Koren, 2007).

Out of the CECE group Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia are members of the European School Heads Association (ESHA).31 Given the fact that only national head teacher associations can, normally, be members of this organisation, membership in ESHA requires the existence of such national associations. ESHA membership is a signal of national associations trying to place themselves into a broader European context. Beyond ESHA there are other relevant international or European networks as well. For example, all five CECE group countries are participating in the activities of ENIRDELM mentioned in the previous section.32

3. THE CHANGING ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERS

Expectations towards and the actual role of school leaders – due to development schemes presented in the previous chapter and due also to various past and current reforms not tackled in this report – are perceived to be changing in all five countries of the CECE group. This is reflected in the way their duties and responsibilities are defined by legislation, in the way the competencies they need is formulated in the documents regulating their training and their qualifications, and also in the way both the organisation and the operation of schools are regulated. The focus of this chapter is on these aspects of the problem on our hands.

3.1. The legal frameworks

Related question:
How does the legal framework specify the roles and responsibilities of school leaders?

The potential impact of leadership on the quality of teaching and learning is strongly influenced by the way leadership roles are legally regulated in different countries. The duties and responsibilities of head teachers (principals, directors) are regulated by laws in all five CECE group countries. The laws define three major types of duties: (1) legal-administrative duties (tasks related to the responsibility of the head to assure the conformity of the operation of schools with legal norms), (2) managerial duties (organisational and co-ordination tasks related to the efficient and effective running of an organisation), and (3) pedagogical duties (those related to the core professional goals of an organisation, i.e. learning and socialisation). Naturally, these three types of duties cannot be sharply separated, therefore they inevitably overlap. Pedagogical duties may, for example, also appear as legal/administrative duties (see Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4</th>
<th>Legally defined tasks of school leaders 33</th>
</tr>
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</table>

| Austria | - arranging all matters, regarding the federal law – except concerns belonging under the jurisdiction of other elements in the schooling system or of the supervisory school authorities  
- responsibility to run the school and to maintain relationship between the school, the students, legal guardians, and (at secondary vocational schools) other staff with teaching duties to perform  
- advising teachers in connection with their teaching and their contribution to the education of children, periodically monitoring both the quality of teaching and the performance of students  
- ensuring that all statutory provisions and the instructions of supervisory school authorities are complied with  
- taking care of official documents and maintaining order in school  
- arranging a staff roster aimed at the supervision of students  
- reporting deficiencies identified to the provider of the school  
- other duties, incumbent upon the school head from other, particularly relevant instructions from public service law, remain unaffected |
| Czech Republic | - responsibility for the pedagogical and professional quality of education and other school services  
- deciding in all matters concerning education and other school services,  
- issuing the School Educational Programme  
- issuing the annual report  
- responsibility for the self-evaluation of schools  
- issuing school rules |

31. This information comes from the website of ESHA (see: http://www.esha.org/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=21 )
32. See the website of the organisation here: http://www.enirdelm.org/
33. This table has been prepared on the basis of the information in the national reports.
A deeper, more substantial and more detailed analysis of the formal duties and responsibilities of head teachers may lead to a distinction of more specific task categories. Some of these categories are strictly regulated by law, but the content in many cases depends very much on the administrative traditions of the country and on how people actually interpret them. A closer analysis of these tasks may also allow for the verification of how much the leadership dimension is seen as important in various countries: if certain specific tasks are defined as having a strategic dimension, there is a higher probability of finding heads who define their role as "leaders", not just administrative managers or directors.

(1) Planning and the creation of school-level internal regulatory documents (This category of tasks can be interpreted, at least partially, as strategic management although these tasks have traditionally been seen more like those with relevance for administrative and legal issues. Planning or creating school level documents are still not conceived by many head teachers as strategic management tasks)

(2) Various administrative tasks (These are the classical bureaucratic tasks, very often meaning paperwork while retaining the ability to assume a strategic function. Reporting, for example, may be a formal administrative duty, but when it serves the goal of informing the external world about what goes on in the school, it may become part of strategic communication or marketing)

(3) Quality management (In its primitive form this cannot be distinguished from the previous category, but when takes the form of real, complex quality management, it has to be performed in the school and may equally have a strategic function. This is what happens when quality management includes complex self-evaluation processes, or when it includes attention being paid to the quality of the whole pedagogical process)

(4) Resource planning and financial administration (In many schools these are delegated to specialized staff, but the head retains the main responsibility. If the school has some degree of financial autonomy and free resources to dispose of, this can be transformed into a strategic type of activity. Sometimes it includes the task of fund-raising and is rarely regulated by law)

(5) Human resource management (This may be not more than the traditional task of simple personnel administration, such as personnel bookkeeping or administrating disciplinary affairs, but this may obviously reach proportions that are of a strategic nature. This is what happens, for example, when heads are planning the professional development of teachers in accordance with a strategy at institutional level)

(6) Responsibilities related with pupils (This can also be conceived as a simple administrative task, but when it is broadly conceived it may include many aspects of improving learning and socialization)

(7) Tasks related with the co-operation with external partners (External partners may range from the parents, through the entire local community, to institutions responsible for child welfare. The intensity and the nature of these tasks may be extremely diverse: ranging, for example, from exercising the formal duty of informing parents to involving them actively in the pedagogical process)

Generally speaking, legal frameworks seem to allow for a broader, more strategic interpretation of duties in all five countries, i.e. they do not actively prevent head teachers from improving themselves from administrators into managers and/or leaders. There are, perhaps, slight differences (the administrative framework seems to be a little more rigid in Austria and Slovenia than in three other countries, and it seems to be more flexible in Hungary than in four others) but the most important difference is probably not that of legal frameworks.
The legal definitions of the tasks of heads seem to support most strongly their strategic role in the Czech Republic and Hungary but in some cases this only reflects the fact that policymakers try to achieve things through legal regulations even if they could be realized more efficiently through, say, development interventions or other support measures. For example, quality management in Hungary has become a formal, legal duty of every school director, but for many of them this is no more than a simple formal, administrative duty consisting mainly of (unpopular) paperwork. Even stricter formal, legal regulations cannot prevent school leaders from interpreting their definition of tasks quite freely.34 The Austrian country report, for example, stresses that “school-leaders have – within a narrow scope of autonomous decision-making options available – great freedom in leading their schools according to leadership expectations of their own. Since there is little external control on the work of individual schools, school leaders have the opportunity to run their school along their leadership capabilities” (Schratz, 2008)

Duties and responsibilities related to the leading of people and the management of human resources are particularly important in the perspective of this study. As it was stressed earlier on, research evidence shows that the impact of school leaders on the quality of learning is indirect: it materializes through the quality of the work of teachers. School leaders have a direct impact on the motivation, professional capacities and professional development of teachers and particularly on the organisational climate in which they do their pedagogical work individually and collectively. They have a strong impact on those formal and informal quality standards and expectations against which the work of teachers can be assessed, and the organisational climate they create determines directly the willingness of teachers to innovate, cooperate with and learn from each other and address day-to-day professional challenges together. The formal definition of the duties and responsibilities of school heads in legal texts seems in all the five countries to allow for the effective leading of people but this potential can only be exploited if heads possess the necessary skills.

34. The “narrowness of autonomous decision making options” should not be overemphasised. Leaders can develop very different leadership styles and shape the culture of their organisational unit even in highly regulated organisations where they have extremely limited autonomy.

### 3.2. The competencies of school leaders

**Related question:**

What are the key competencies school leaders are expected to have in your country? Are there any national standards concerning the competencies of school leaders? If not, are there any plans for developing such standards? If there are such standards what are they used for (e.g. appraising principals, orientating training programs etc.)

The legal definition of the duties and tasks of school leaders do not say much about the competencies leaders need in order to become successful in driving their schools towards better quality and higher performance. There is also a need for reflection on these competencies and for setting standards for them, otherwise no good decisions can be taken when head teachers are to be selected and appointed or when the content and the form of developing their skills is to be determined. Competency standards may also be needed when the work of school leaders is assessed by national or local authorities. The definition of the competencies needed by head teachers or other people in leadership positions may be very different in various countries or in the different sub-sectors of the education system, depending on specific expectations and value choices. The way competencies are defined is a realistic reflection of the way counties view the desirable role of school leaders. We were interested to know; therefore, whether there were any current practices or any intention to define competency standards for school leaders in the group of CECE countries.

Some kind of reflection about defining national competency standards for school leaders can be observed in four out of five countries, but so far this has been done only for existing training programmes (see Table 5). When these training programmes are compulsory – which is the case for appointed school leaders in four out of five countries, as shown in the section below, illustrating the qualification of school leaders – the definition of standard requirements for training programmes is, in fact, an indirect one setting competency standards for every school leader.
Table 5
The definition of national school leader competency standards

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<th>ARE THERE ANY NATIONAL COMPETENCY STANDARDS?</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Standards defined only for training programmes (including compulsory programmes). There is a public debate on the need for national standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>There are some debates on defining national standards but so far standards have been defined only for training programmes (including compulsory programmes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No plan to set national standard, these are defined only for training programmes which are not compulsory. There are some local initiatives to set standards for school evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>There is a clear intention to define national professional standards of school leaders: some proposals are already available and a public debate on this is going on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>There is a slight move towards defining national standards but so far standards are defined only for training programmes (including compulsory programmes). There is also a discussion on using competency standards in the process of the self-evaluation of school leaders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the case of Austria the idea of defining national competency standards has been an idea present in national debates but no official initiatives have yet been taken in this direction. However, competencies to be developed have been specified nationally for the training programmes which are compulsory for newly appointed school heads (offered by the University Colleges of Teacher Education) which, indirectly, may play the role of national competency standards.

The situation is similar in the Czech Republic where legal documents specify the competencies to be developed by the relevant training programmes. In the case of the compulsory training programme designed for recently appointed head teachers, only the required fields of study are defined (e.g. labour law, school legislation and financial rules). The priority here is to transmit relevant, basic legal knowledge. As for advanced (voluntary) training designed for school leaders already in position – where the aim is to deepen management knowledge and to develop leadership skills in order to foster innovative attitudes and change management capacities – the emphasis is on developing competencies needed to create a school strategy, to enhance the continual improvement of the educational process, to ensure equal opportunities for everybody, to use resources effectively and efficiently and to manage public relations and communication with the partners of the school.

In Hungary there are no official plans to adopt national competency standards but a government decree regulating the content requirements of nationally recognised school leadership training conducive to a qualification describes certain elements that can be related to specific competencies. In this case; however, as these training programmes are not compulsory, this type of regulation cannot even indirectly play the role of general national competency standards. Some major school maintainer cities have developed standards for the assessment of school leaders in the framework of overall school evaluation and such local standards may contain elements that refer to specific competencies.

Slovakia is the only country where – at the time of this project – there was an ongoing formal process aiming at the definition of national, professional standards of leadership competencies (see box). Research related to this process started in 2005 (Obdržálek, 2008). As part of the research a questionnaire-based survey with the participation of 1024 head teachers was carried out. Respondents were asked about what competencies they thought school leaders should possess. The analysis of the views of the respondents led to the formulation of the following list of leadership competencies (figures in brackets show the score of importance on a 1 to 10 scale):

1. Communication with staff (8,4)
2. Decision-making ability (8,4)
3. Staff motivation (8,2)
4. Staff assessment (7,8)
5. Delegation of powers (7,7)
6. Conflict solving (7,7)
7. Application and utilization of legal competencies (7,6)
8. Application of stimulation system (7,5)
9. Change management (7,5)
10. Negotiation with representatives of the employees (6,7)
There is an initiative in Slovakia to create a system of professional standards for school leaders, supported by the Ministry of Education. The professional standards for school leaders represent a subsystem of a more complex system of standards covering all categories of pedagogical employees and school specialists. Standards should be developed for all formal positions of school management defined by law: head teachers, deputies, heads of subject committees and chairs of governing bodies.

The standards for school leaders include 11 key competencies and 42 specific capabilities divided into expectations regarding knowledge, skills and attitudes; and indicators to measure and accomplish standards to be reached.

These standards were published in the teacher’s magazine „Pedagogické Rozhlady“ in 2007 in order to initiate a public discussion within the community of school leaders and teachers. National standards are expected to take an important role in development, enhancing the assessment of the effectiveness of school leaders and also supporting the development of new training programmes for school leaders (Laššák & Hašková, 2009).

Slovenia shows similar characteristics: although no national competency standards are established, the compulsory pre-service programme has to follow certain standards that specify the knowledge to be transmitted and the skills to be developed. Similarly to Slovakia, there is a national project supervised by the National Educational Institute aiming at the development of a list of competencies but there is no guarantee that this will become formally recognised at national level.

The picture emerging from national reports illustrates that, except for Slovakia, there is no strong national commitment to setting national competency standards for school leaders. In most cases there are only standards guiding the training programmes and the related qualification process. This might have an indirect impact on areas such as the selection of school leaders or the assessment of their work, although when training programmes and the related qualifications become a formal requirement either for final appointment or for prolongation of a position, this indirect impact might be perceived to be quite strong.

3.3. Appointment/nomination of school leaders

Related question:
Please describe the main characteristics of the appointment/nomination of principals. For example are principals nominated for a fixed or an unlimited term (If they are nominated for a fixed term, please indicate the length of this (in years)? Is there any appraisal when principals are re-appointed? If yes, who is responsible for this?

The way school leaders are selected and appointed (nominated, elected) does necessarily have a major impact on the quality of school leadership in any country. There may be significant differences in several dimensions, such as professional vs. political or local vs. central control of the selection and appointment process. Some procedures may be more favourable for the attraction to the head’s position of the best prepared and the best committed than others, and different procedures may enhance different school leadership approaches. There is ongoing discussion about whether a permanent or a fixed-time appointment is better for the development of quality leadership in schools. It should be emphasized that the selection and appointment/nomination process is very strongly interlinked with the way school leaders are qualified (see next section for details). In fact, the system of appointment/nomination and system of qualification cannot be separated from each other: they together constitute the filter through which the leaders of schools obtain and keep their position.

In the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia local (municipal) authorities play a key role in the selection/nomination process which is strongly linked with the key features of the system of general public administration in these countries (as it has been shown in Figure 3, Figure 4 and Figure 5 in the section on national context above). However, in Slovakia and Hungary, similarly to Slovenia, the school itself (its governing/consultation body and the teaching staff) also plays an important role. In Hungary the teaching staff has particularly strong consultation rights as it is specified in a very detailed national regulation of the whole selection/appointment process: candidates here have to present their leader’s programme to the staff, which will typically express its opinion through voting. There are several municipalities which follow the rule of accepting, almost automatically, the results of these ballots.

Slovenia is a unique case in this respect: this is the only country in a group of five where the decision on the selection of the head is delegated almost fully to the level of the institution in question. It is the school council (the governing body of the school) that appoints the head, but the opinion of the teaching staff also has a strong influence here: the school council usually selects the candidate who has gained support from the teaching staff (Ronholt & Agaoglu, 2008). The municipal level in this country is not an important player; it is the national ministry, instead, which creates a kind of counterbalance to decisions at school level.

35. For a full picture about the role of the school in the various areas of decision-making concerning heads see Figure 2.3. in Eurydice (2007).
36. The procedure is regulated by the government decree (No. 138/1992) which provides about the application of the legislation on public employment. It is worth mentioning that in Hungary there was a period, between 1986 and 2001, when teaching staff had a formal veto right on the nomination of heads.
Austria is the only country in a group of five where the national (provincial) authorities have full control over appointment, although – in accordance with the particularly strong consultation traditions of this country – social partners are actively involved. In the case of this country the school and the local (municipal) level has no significant role in the selection/appointment process. The main characteristics of appointing/nominating school leaders in the five CECE countries are shown in Table 6.

### Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO APPOINTS THE HEAD AND WHO PARTICIPATES IN THE PROCESS?</th>
<th>THE DURATION OF MANDATE (PERMANENT VS. FIXED TIME)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>The national/provincial authorities appoint the head with the involvement of an appointment committee (with different stakeholders like trade unions and inspectorate) making recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>The municipality that owns the school appoints the head with the involvement of an appointment committee which makes a recommendation. In the case of schools run by regional governments the procedure is similar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>The local municipality which is the owner of the school appoints the head following rules set nationally (e.g. public tender)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>The establisher of the school (local or regional government) appoints the head on the basis of a recommendation given by a school-level consultative body (school council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>The school level consultative body (tripartite school council) decides following the collection of opinions from parents, teachers etc. The minister also gives an opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of five countries three appoint school leaders for a fixed term (Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia) but this option is also under consideration in the Czech Republic. Appointing school leaders for a fixed-time period diminishes the risks of keeping low-performing leaders in position, but such risk-lowering mechanisms also exist in countries where heads have an unlimited mandate: in the case of Austria this is a four-year long provisional appointment and in the case of the Czech Republic regular assessment of heads is performed via a system of national inspection. The training system itself also has such a risk-lowering function in countries where the appointed school leaders are obliged to obtain a formal qualification as those who fail to do so will not be allowed to keep their position.

As it has already been stressed, in all five countries there are various consultation processes which allow for the involvement of different partners in the process of selection and appointment. As we have already seen, trade unions are, for example, particularly active partners in this process in Austria, where the appointment is the responsibility of the national (provincial) authorities. The local community (through its elected municipal council) plays a particularly important role in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, and the school community (through the teaching staff or through a school-level consultative/governing body) in Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia.

When teachers have strong consultation rights and by exercising it they can, in some cases, impede the nomination of certain candidates, the power relations between the head and the staff are shifted towards the pole of the staff. This may favour the emergence of effective democratic leadership approaches but it may also lead to the weakening of the leader’s position and to the spreading of less effective, opportunist leadership styles. The risk of this latter alternative is probably lower in countries where school-level consultative or governing bodies with members representing parents and the local community have a stronger consultation mechanism (as is the case in Slovenia or Slovakia).

Although this section focuses on the selection and the appointment/nomination of school leaders it is important to stress that policies should take into account the career span of leaders. This is particularly important when it comes to devising policies of support for school leaders. There is a risk, for example, of concentrating development resources too much on the training of newly appointed school leaders and of neglecting the continuous support for heads of school who have been in office for a longer time.

### 3.4. Qualification of school leaders

Related question:  

**Do school leaders have to acquire a specific qualification (certificate, diploma etc) in order to be nominated or to continue in their position? Is the attendance of leadership-training programmes compulsory (if yes, since when)?**

If school leadership is seen as a profession, there must be a formal way to assess the knowledge and skills of those who exercise this profession and, on the basis of this, to qualify them. Qualification is the mechanism through which countries can judge whether people to be appointed or nominated as school leaders, possess the knowledge...
and the skills needed for the successful pursuit of this profession. The qualification of school leaders is a powerful instrument to control the selection of the appropriate individuals for leadership positions and, in this way, this is also one of the most important instruments to ensure leadership quality. Collecting information about how school leaders are qualified and understanding the manner in which qualifications are awarded in these five countries has been one of the most important, substantial goals of this project.

Qualification is, typically, linked with some kind of training. In most cases only those who participate in some kind of training can obtain a qualification and this training may be offered by different providers (such as higher education institutions, national training or pedagogical support centres controlled by the national education authorities or other agencies). Not all forms of training are conducive to formal qualifications: people may acquire skills through different forms of learning or training without obtaining a formal certification in what they have studied. Countries may prescribe compulsory training without prescribing qualifications. We shall come back to the different forms of training in the section on “the content of educational leadership/management training” which is part of the next chapter on various existing approaches to leadership development.

In principle, qualification may be required as a legally defined condition of appointment or as a legal condition for renewing appointment. It may, however, also function as a simple “advantage”, which might either be taken into consideration or be neglected by the appointing authorities when it comes to decision-making in respect of appointments. We have found that having a qualification is not a compulsory formal condition for people to be appointed as head teachers or principals in any of the five countries in the CECE group, but in four – with Hungary as an exception where this is expected to be the rule after 2015 – it is a formal compulsory condition for them to be able to stay in their position (see Table 7). Typically, only a qualification for teaching in the given type of school is required for a first appointment (together with the requirement of a certain length of teaching practice).

### Table 7
Qualification of school leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>To be appointed</th>
<th>To continue in the position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes. A management qualification has to be acquired before the end of a 4 year provisional period of mandate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes. A management qualification has to be acquired after nomination within 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No (but from 2015 on a management qualification will be required for the renewal of mandate after five years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes. A management qualification needs to be acquired not later than 3 years following appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes. The appointed leader has to get “licensed” within a year following nomination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Austria newly appointed school leaders are, initially, installed provisionally for a period of four years, during which they have to attend an obligatory management training course. This provisional appointment can be extended only if the candidate completes the compulsory course with success, that is, if he/she is obtains qualification in this manner. A special school management qualification is not required for a first appointment in the Czech Republic either, but the successful candidate, who wins the recruitment process and becomes a head, has to acquire a specific qualification provided by a government agency (the National Institute for Further Education). The conditions for first appointment are similar in Hungary, where, up to now, the appointed leader has not been obliged to acquire any special qualification even after the appointment took place. This, however, is a phenomenon probably on the change as, according to the Law on School Education, the mandate of head teachers will, as of 2015, not be renewable if the leader in question does not acquire a qualification in school management. After this, Hungary will follow a practice similar to that followed in the four other countries.

A special school management qualification is not required in Slovakia, either, for the first appointment. In this country, head teachers – and also deputies – appointed have to start their training for qualification in school management not later than one year after taking their post, and they have to finish it successfully in two years, i.e. at the end of their third year in position. The situation is similar in Slovenia, where heads have to acquire the so called “headship licence” one year after their nomination. They can obtain this qualification without attending a training programme, having to take only the relevant exam. After obtaining the qualification they are not obliged to take any further training (although they often do).
It seems that the countries of the CECE group seem to be satisfied by the system that does not require a formal qualification before the first appointment but makes this a formal precondition for prolongation or for a second appointment in case of fixed-term mandates. This certainly has the advantage of leaving the door open for teachers interested in the job, who can apply for a leadership position without any previous preparation (which is a particularly important aspect when there is a shortage of candidates). This approach seems to be quite effective, especially when it is combined with the practice of leaving various training programmes open for teachers who are not in a leadership position but have related ambitions or interests. This may easily happen if – beyond government agencies – universities also offer management and leadership courses leading to approved qualifications.

The question of qualifications cannot be separated from the question of competency standards (discussed above in the section about the competencies of school leaders). The content of the training programmes leading to school leader qualifications is regulated in all five countries but the level of this regulation and the range of contents it covers are different. For example while in Hungary the content of the (non compulsory, university level) programmes is regulated via a government decree, in Slovenia it is determined by the institution (NSLE) that provides the training, although the programmes, similarly to any other training programmes, are approved by a body called the "National Council for General Education". In most cases the definition of content is focusing on subject areas to be taught rather than on competencies to be developed. However, the importance of focusing on competencies has been recognised, as we saw earlier on, in each country. Slovakia seems to be the most advanced in this area as the new competency standards this country has developed are, in the future, intended to orientate not only the planner of the training programmes but also the assessment processes for qualifications.

As a conclusion, it is important to stress again that (1) selection and first appointment, (2) length (or renewal) of the mandate and (3) qualification requirements together constitute what we can call a system of selecting and appointing school leaders. Countries are characterised by a specific combination of these three elements, in other words they may combine them in different ways. Their behaviour in this area is also determined by external constraints such as a shortage of candidates in certain categories of school, a lack of training capacities or of resources to cover training costs (these are, in many cases, behind the phenomenon of failing to require a qualification before a first appointment and also behind the phenomenon of failing to make pre-service training compulsory).

3.5. Sharing and distributing leadership functions

Related question:
How frequent is the sharing of leadership functions in schools in your country? What proportion of schools could be described as following a distributed leadership model?

Leadership is not necessarily linked with one specific post: that of the principal. Effective leaders tend to share leadership functions with other colleagues. There is a growing consensus among those involved in school leadership research and development that we should not identify leadership with one person or with one position (the head teacher, the principal or the director) but we should rather consider it as a key function of the organisation, a role that may be present not only at the top of organisational hierarchy but everywhere where the activities of people have to be coordinated and people need to be motivated. Leadership must remain or emerge in the school even if the formal leader is absent and, in fact, every teacher could be seen as playing some kind of leadership role.

As the OECD report on improving school leadership puts it by quoting a comprehensive review of the literature compiled by the English National College for School Leadership, distributed leadership is "a way of thinking about leadership”. This is an emerging new paradigm "due to the intensification of the role of leadership, organisational change with management structures that are more of a flat type in different sectors and the view that distributed leadership can be a more effective way of coping with a complex, information-rich society" (Pont, 2008). The notion of distributed leadership is rather new although it receives a growing attention in several countries (see box). We have been interested to know whether this notion, and particularly its practice, has appeared in the CECE countries and whether this was seen as an important dimension of regulating, developing and thinking about leadership.37

37. See Bennett, 2003
"The expansion and intensification of the role of school leadership means that school leaders have responsibilities for a wide range of decisions in curricular matters, assessment and evaluation, resources and, increasingly, collaboration with external partners. In response, education systems need to adopt a broader notion of school leadership (...). Countries are now experimenting with different ways to better allocate and distribute tasks across leadership teams. A body of research literature is emerging to support the idea that distributed leadership, when formally or informally organised, can improve school outcomes. A variety of approaches with more formalised or ad hoc leadership teams have been adopted successfully in various countries. However, the assignment of responsibility seems important for high quality leadership to develop throughout schools and this requires recognition through incentives and rewards as well as appropriate support structures" (Pont, 2008).

The trend of sharing leadership appears in all five countries examined, sometimes formally (in accordance with legal requirements) but also informally on the basis of actual school level decisions. From among the five CECE countries, sharing seems to be less of an option followed in Austria where school leaders – as the national background report puts it – are still “lonely fighters” at their workplaces (Schratz, 2008). Leadership in this country is rarely distributed with the exception of large, mostly professionally oriented upper secondary schools. The system seems to rely too much on individuals: leaders often feel that “they have to do everything” so they need particularly high level competencies at all levels and a high level overall problem-solving capacity. This may lead to administrative excellence and it may also be strong motivation for some individual leaders but it also raises the risk of engaged leaders to end up burning out and it functions as an obstacle to the possibilities of collective systemic thinking.

The practice of sharing management tasks seems to be much more widespread in the four other countries, which is also enhanced by formal regulations. The question whether or not the formal sharing of management tasks results in a genuine distribution of leadership is, however, a question yet to be answered. In many cases, the formal allocation of some managerial tasks to positions other than that of the head results in a more complex internal organisational structure but it does not necessarily generate the culture of distributed leadership. This type of task sharing is particularly frequent in larger schools, but it can often be found in smaller ones, too.

In the Czech Republic, for example, in smaller schools principals have typically one deputy but leading larger schools have two deputies specialised in operational and financial management, curriculum, human resources, strategic planning and data management. Management functions are typically distributed also through various consultative bodies what allows teachers to take an active part in leadership. For example teachers are members of the school-level Pedagogical Council which advises the head in the field of curriculum and strategic development. This is being reinforced by the introduction of the School Educational Programme (see next section) which has made it necessary to appoint a special coordinator for this task. Typically, teachers appointed have a formal responsibility for areas such as curricular issues, student support, special education, environmental education or social prevention and, in these functions, they can coordinate the activities of other teachers. School councils, together with representatives of the partners (parents, local community) allow for the distribution of some leadership functions that go beyond organisational boundaries.

The situation is very similar in Hungary where the teaching staff has particularly strong jurisdictions (described by some observers as having too many). The teaching staff has decision-making rights in a number of key areas, such as the acceptance of strategic documents (like the school educational programme, the organizational and operational statutes, school rules and the quality management programme). This often forces leaders to be involved in constant deliberations and negotiations with the staff not only while creating the strategic documents but also while implementing them. Head teachers who lack the capacity for constant negotiation stand little chance of becoming successful leaders in Hungary. The professional teams of teachers teaching the same subjects have a strong, statutory role in coordinating the professional work in schools. Empirical research in this area provides evidence on heads increasingly relying on their deputies: in many schools heads delegate strategic functions to them. The national report quotes a survey showing that head teachers shift the responsibility for curricular issues to their deputies and to members of the teaching staff in approximately half of the schools surveyed (Révész & Szabó, 2008). The introduction of the quality assurance mechanisms in schools, since the late nineties, has remarkably increased the occurrence of shared leadership functions (see box).
Formal procedures of quality management were first introduced in schools on pilot basis in 1999 and they were made compulsory by law in 2002. “Thanks to this ‘in most institutes a professional group has developed with new competencies which, as supporting group, is situated between leadership, teaching staff and the traditional professional teams of teachers and in one certain area has direct control over the activities within the institutes. In reality a new inner level of guiding was introduced. It influenced the leadership functions as well: he/she can delegate the preparation of decision-making to this new organizational level, to which a deputy principal is mostly related. The new organizational unit, developed to supervise the quality control system, makes leadership more professional and in some way offers a new inner career possibility to pedagogues.’ Quality management groups function as project teams, which is a new and innovative way of organising tasks and solving problems in schools.” (Révész & Szabó, 2008).

In Slovakia, there are two deputies in a typical middle-size school (each having different specific responsibility portfolios), there is a coordinator for the School Educational Programme, another coordinator for ESF projects, there are heads of methodological groups and/or subject committees for each subject areas and various other coordinators (for traffic programmes, environment initiatives, drug prevention, the Global Educational Programme etc.). Furthermore, it is the decision of head teacher to create and establish additional alternatives of formal and informal schemes of power sharing and the sharing of responsibilities between various management positions and bodies. Recently the appearance of school level projects has been enhancing the distribution of leadership and also the emergence of new, cooperative leaders (see box). According to the national report, though, many teachers believe that schools in Slovakia are still applying relatively autocratic models of leadership based on the concentration of power in the hands of the head teacher and with a strong emphasis on operational decision-making. However, as the national report has also demonstrated, experience highlights relatively strong relations between the application of distributed leadership models on the one hand and the school climate, organisational culture and the outcomes of learning on the other (Laššák & Hašková, 2009).
existence of strategy-making and of documents showing the quality of strategy in an organisation is one of the best indicators of the presence of leadership. Schools without their own strategy on how to achieve good quality education and how to become better may have directors or principals, but they probably do not have leaders.

Education systems where schools are expected to establish formal strategies and the successful implementation of this strategy becomes an important criterion for their assessment tend to require leaders, while those where this does not seem to materialize are, preferably, in need of administrators or managers in a narrower sense. This is why we wished to know how far schools, in the group of the CECE countries, are expected to establish their own strategy. Our interest was also directed towards what place learning and the development of learning have in school-level strategies.

We found that schools have to draft a document setting goals and with a role in managing daily educational activities of the school in all the five countries. In some cases the creation of such documents is closer to traditional administrative planning than to a process of collective strategy-making, but elements of strategic planning appear in all countries (for a comprehensive overview see Table 8).

Table 8
School level strategy-making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Is there a school-level document with a strategic dimension?</th>
<th>The name and nature of the school-level strategy document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Schools are expected to develop their strategic document called School Development Plan (Schulprogramm) in the framework of the „Quality in Schools” programme. This document has a strong pedagogical focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Schools need to create their own School Educational programme, and, as part of this, a School Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Schools are obliged to prepare a Pedagogical Programme (since 1993) and, as part of it, their (school level) Local Curriculum. They also are made to elaborate an Institutional Quality Management Programme, which contains the quality policy of the school, and also its quality assurance system for the implementation of this policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Schools have had to prepare a School Educational Programme since 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Partly</td>
<td>Every school has to prepare and annual plan where strategic goals may also be defined. School heads have a formal responsibility for strategic management but the form of this is not specified. The preparation of a development plan is recommended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Austria, similarly to other countries, school level strategic planning and management has become parallel with the extension of the autonomy of schools. The core element of this planning is the creation of the School Development Plan (Schulprogramm) which appeared at the end of the 1990s as an element of the above mentioned QIS programme. The School Development Plan contains both an evaluation of the current situation, the setting of objectives and the planning of specific measures in various problem areas. This plan is seen as a kind of “temporary agreement” between the various actors within and outside the school. It serves as a guideline for organising the education process but it also serves as a communication tool directed towards the public. As a planning tool it specifies specific yardsticks to be reached through the development of the school. The evaluation of its implementation is also an integral feature of the school development plan: it has to be performed at certain intervals in compliance with specific, fixed rules. The school head has a major responsibility for the quality of the development plan, which demands specific leadership skills.

In the Czech Republic the institutionalisation of school-level strategic management was a key objective of the 2001 White Paper on Education (Ministry of Education, 2001). According to this, schools were given the task of preparing their own curricular document (the “School Educational Programme”) which is defined as the main school strategy document. As part of this document, schools also have to create their “School Development Plan” and, in addition, plans for their self-evaluation (which is the basis of their regular public reporting). Elements of learning improvement must be included in these strategic documents and the assessment of whether this has been achieved is an important evaluation criterion for the Czech School Inspectorate. To lead this process successfully, heads have to possess leadership competencies as well as managerial ones. The creation of a school-level strategic documents is conceived as a strategic leadership function in the broad sense. As the 2001 White Paper quoted above puts it “the head of a school is responsible for drawing up the school programme, but this is a collective task. Educational staff and school partners take part in drawing it up and this in itself acts as education for change, in which self-reflection by the school has a central part to play.”

In Hungary schools have been responsible for the establishment of their internal rules of operation and organisation since the mid-1980s, which, in some institutions, has been conceived as a strategy-making process. The 1993 Law on School Education made it compulsory for every school to prepare a document entitled “Pedagogical programme”, generally interpreted as a strategic document, a manifestation of a kind of agreement between key educational players at local and school level. Heads of schools have the main responsibility for preparing the Pedagogical Programme (and
the local curriculum, which is part of it) but they, typically, rely strongly on their teaching staff. The document is first adopted by the teaching staff and then approved by the owner of the school (in most cases the municipal self-government) and it is made public (typically on the homepage of the institution itself). It is on the basis of this document that an annual operative work plan is prepared. The content of the Pedagogical programme is regulated in detail by the law. It must, for example, present the educational principles and goals of the school, the pedagogical tasks connected with the development of individual pupils and students’ communities, the tasks connected with behavioural and integration-related disorders, the activities designed to reduce social disadvantages, the mechanisms of evaluating quality, policies for the professional development of the teaching staff and specific forms of cooperation with parents. The school level quality management programme, another document the preparation of which is legally binding on every school, is typically seen as something closely related – and ideally also harmonised – with the Pedagogical programme.

In Slovakia, it is the 2008 Education Act that has made it compulsory for each school to create its own “School Educational Programme”. The creation of this school-level document, a process still in its nascent stage, is now seen as one of the major challenges school leaders are going to face in the near future. The document can be seen as a kind of school level strategy, although its content is more of an operational nature (it is mostly about the organisational frameworks of teaching). The document has to be issued by the school leader after discussions in his/her leadership team and in the school level consultative body, and it may be subject to approval by the maintainer of the school. The national inspection mechanism ensures that the document is in agreement with national regulations. The formal policy of encouraging schools to perform substantial strategic planning is new in Slovakia, but – similarly to the four other countries – there are many examples of this practice already being implemented by a number of school leaders (see box)

The conceptual intent of school leadership development constitutes an integral part of the school development plan for each academic year (usually prepared for the period of 2 successive academic years). The priorities of the school leadership for the current academic year can be summarized in the following points:

• reach full qualification of the academic staff (current state is that 97 per cent of the teaching process is guaranteed by qualified teachers and governesses);
• ensure qualification promotion of teachers and governesses;
• create conditions for employees’ further education (both request and support their further studies);
• utilize co-operation with universities in Nitra to improve the quality of the teaching process at school level and to intensify initiative by teachers, governesses and technical employees to improve school environment and school climate;
• successive steps to admit young, perspective teachers;
• create conditions for further education within the partial methodical groups and subject committees;
• ensure in-service training for teachers and governesses related to selected topics from pedagogy and psychology, offering stress resistance, effective pedagogical communication, student assessment;
• introduce new pedagogical tools (especially ICT) into the teaching process in particular subjects and implement new ways of teaching (to ensure further teacher training linked with this);
• more attention to be paid to the welfare of employees;
• improve the working place of employees;
• increase the quality of the co-operation with municipal authorities (the founder of the school);
• support and broaden co-operation between the school and students’ parents;
• enable access to internet to students’ parents (both current students and school leavers);
• monitor the pursuit of main tasks and strategic goals of the school;
• ensure a rational, consistent and systematic control and assessment of both each school member and the school as a whole;
• ensure involvement of the school and staff in projects related to environmental education, parenthood education and drug abuse prevention;
• revaluate internal rules for granting wages and benefits (rules of remuneration to motivate staff).

Source: Slovakian national report case study (Laššák & Hašková, 2009)
who have been engaged in self-evaluation projects) – the annual school work plan is not prepared as a result of ongoing and comprehensive self-evaluation. The school head has the primary impact on how this is carried out and he/she can move it towards very formal annual planning” (Krek, 2004). According to the Law on Organisation and Financing of Education, heads of schools are responsible for the development and implementation of a school-level strategy. However, as the national report for this study stressed, although „it is strongly recommended that schools should also have a development plan – the current practice varies from school to school” (Erčulj & Peček, 2008). Some schools also include elements of learning improvement in these documents. Planning is typically done in co-operation with the teaching staff, and – this is unique to Slovenia – the key documents are formally adopted at institutional level by the governing board of the school.

The growing importance of school-level strategic planning and the increasing complexity of management tasks due to the related implementation processes seem to push all five countries towards attributing a greater importance to this problem area in their leadership development programmes. There seems to emerge a kind of spiral of mutual reinforcement in this context. The more school leaders are using the creation of school-level documents for setting and implementing strategic goals, the more the nature of these documents is changing from being administrative towards becoming strategic. This, in turn, has a retroactive impact: the more the nature of school level documents becomes strategic, the greater the need for leaders grows to replace administrators and managers.

4. APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

National-level decision-makers seem to have recognised the importance of the quality of school leadership in all five countries, as it is reflected in the weight of this element in various national development programmes. As we have already seen, national authorities in all five countries make concrete efforts to develop the quality of school leadership, although the level of commitment, political support and the size of resources allocated for the purpose might be quite different. In this chapter we look at what characterises the approaches of the five CECE countries in their efforts to develop school leadership.

4.1. The institutional context: responsibility for leadership development and training

Related question:
Who is responsible for leadership development and educational management training? (e.g. a national agency, universities, private providers, other organizations).

The most important, albeit by no means unique, form of management/leadership development is training. The overall responsibility for the professional development and training of school leaders might be in the hands of various actors and training might, technically, be provided by different organisations. The role of various agencies and organisations may also be different according to the character of training: responsibilities, for example, typically differ in the case of compulsory and non-compulsory programmes as well as in the case of qualification programmes or when they do not deliver formal qualifications.

In those systems, where the national/regional state authorities are directly responsible for maintaining schools and for assuring the quality of teaching in them, these authorities, logically, also play a key role in assuring that every school leader is appropriately prepared and, often, they themselves run training programmes or contract institutions to provide training. In those countries, where local municipalities have a key role in running the schools and they also have a key responsibility for the quality of teaching in them, they may equally play a role in preparing heads for their tasks. In the first group the providers of training are, typically, national or regional institutions directly subordinated to national/regional state authorities but they may also be external agencies (universities or project organisations) directly contracted by the national/regional state authorities. In the second group there is a higher probability of finding universities or private training providers that offer training programmes.

The costs of training may be covered by national/regional state authorities (sometimes from the budget of overall national development programmes) but they are often met by the owners of schools (for example municipalities) or by individual trainees (the latter, however, often receive some compensation). Austria and Slovenia seem to belong to the first group, where national/regional state authorities have a key role, while Hungary, where universities and private providers play a key role, gives the impression of being in the second group, while Slovakia and the Czech Republic seem, in this respect, to be somewhere in the middle (see Table 9).
In the four other countries organisations providing professional development or training operate as units of organisations with a broader remit (universities, teacher training institutions, centres for in-service teacher training, pedagogical support institutions, and the like). Austria is a special case where the most significant, professional development programme for school leaders has been organised as a large, nationwide project in the form of a kind of project organisation (this is the “Leadership Academy”-LEA)\(^{40}\) which has already been described, one that operates as a joint venture of the Ministry of Education, the University of Innsbruck and a private consultancy firm.

The reason behind this unusual and interesting institutional arrangement is the strong commitment of the government to achieve, in a very short time, a massive change in the manner Austrian schools are led. This task could, probably, not be achieved by regular institutions in the Austrian system, which has been described by the case study of the OECD ISL report on the Leadership Academy as “compliance oriented, bureaucratic, and cumbersome by tradition”. (Stoll et al., 2008). As the same study puts it, by launching the ”Leadership Academy” project in 2004 the goal of the government was to solve the contradiction that “school heads have a newly acquired autonomy but little experience in operating outside a hierarchical, bureaucratic structure.” Therefore “the original intent of the LEA was to develop in heads the capacity to act more independently, to take stronger initiative, and to manage their schools through the changes entailed by a stream of government reforms.” It is important to stress that it is not the function of the Leadership Academy to provide regular training for newly appointed heads in Austria for the qualification they are obliged to acquire for keeping their post after their probationary period. This is the task of the University College of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschule) which runs a nationally standardised training programme.

The distinction between compulsory initial training and non-compulsory further education programmes is important also in the Czech Republic. The basic compulsory training is provided by the National Pedagogical Institute (NIFE) established in 2004 by the Ministry of Education (also operating fourteen regional units).\(^{41}\) NIFE has been running the most significant development programme in the field of school leadership development, ”The Successful School Leader” funded by the European Social Fund.\(^{42}\) Non-compulsory programmes are typically provided by universities

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Table 9
Responsibility for leadership development and educational management training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL LEADERS</th>
<th>WHO IS PROVIDING TRAINING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>National or provincial state authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>National Ministry of Education (National Institute for Further Education) and universities (especially Charles University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>The Ministry of Education through its national agency (the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>The government-run National School for Leadership in Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slovenia is the only country where there is a well-established national centre for training school leaders: it is the National School for Leadership in Education (NSLE), mentioned earlier on, which was established by the Slovenian Government in 1995 in order to provide training for heads of schools and to award them with the licence they need to exercise their profession.\(^{39}\) NSLE is also responsible for the regular, professional improvement of heads and, as we have already seen, it conducts research and development in the area of school leadership, promoting the overall development of this disciplinary field. It is also a major organiser of professional communication through its publications and conferences. The NSLE seems to be a particularly progressive model that offers excellent opportunities for a national policy that aims at using leadership development as a major instrument to develop the quality of teaching and learning and to make the operation of the whole education system more efficient at micro level. It needs to be stressed that the existence of NSLE does not exclude the operation of other agencies or organisations in the area of school leadership development, and that cooperation between NSLE and such organisations is, in some cases, unavoidable. This happens, for example, when the further professionalization of school leadership is enhanced by offering a possibility for school leaders to acquire master level qualifications from universities.

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39. See the website of the centre here: [http://www.solazaravnavatelje.si/eng/](http://www.solazaravnavatelje.si/eng/)
40. See the website of the project here: [http://www.leadershipacademy.at/index.en.php](http://www.leadershipacademy.at/index.en.php)
but, in the case of those – often shorter – programmes, which do not make it possible to obtain qualifications, various professional associations and private agencies may also be providers.

In Slovakia the preparation of head teachers for their job is a state responsibility belonging to the Ministry of Education, which has delegated this responsibility to its national agency, the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre (MPC), which runs regional branch offices. MPC has a broader responsibility, including the further education of teachers, and it offers management training programmes as part of this broader responsibility.

A common element in the Czech and the Slovakian model is that in both cases there is a national centre run by national authorities (like in Slovenia), but (1) this centre has a broad in-service teacher training and pedagogical support remit, while school leadership training is only a smaller part of their portfolio and (2) universities are also important players besides the national centre (especially in the Czech Republic). In this model there seems to be a rational distribution of work between the two sectors, that is, government agencies and universities: the former takes responsibility for the compulsory training related with appointment and the second takes responsibility for voluntary (but often recommended) further professional development, which may also offer the opportunity for school leaders to obtain a master-level university qualification (which can have a role in making headship more attractive).

Unlike in the four other countries, in Hungary, where there has been no compulsory training programme, national authorities do not run a specialised national training centre and they do not provide training directly. In this country universities are the most important players as they offer two-year long programmes conducive to a qualification (which can be described as master level). Apart from this there has been an extremely rich supply of various shorter programmes offered in the framework of the demand-led in-service teacher training system. Although only a few of these short programmes are targeted specifically to school leaders, many of them – i.e. those that support school-level organisational development or quality management – also attract heads of schools. The demand-led in-service teacher training system in Hungary allows private providers to enter the market without difficulty. These private providers, after accreditation, may have access to public resources through the trainees they attract. Since the ESF funded programmes have started, most short-term training programmes are delivered within the framework of the ESF funded development projects.

It is important to stress that formal training is not the only possible form of professional development. The section below on “further forms of supporting leaders” provides information on professional development initiatives that cannot be categorised via the conventional term “training”. Some alternative forms of professional development are often seen as being more effective in the development of the knowledge and skills of school leaders than classic formal training. Mentoring and coaching or the active participation of heads in school development processes are examples of such alternative forms.

4.2. Leadership/management training programmes

Related question:
Which are the most important types of leadership/management training programmes in your country? Please indicate their total length in hours (including both contact hours, time for self study and else)!
What is the role/weight of the following contents in a typical educational leadership/management training programme? Please indicate their role/weight on a five point scale.

The various types of leadership/management training programmes may be divided into three major categories: (1) pre-service, (2) induction and (3) in-service programmes. As we have seen, none of the CECE group countries make it compulsory for candidates for a headship post to obtain a school management qualification or complete any special training before appointment. As a consequence, pre-service training, in the strict sense of the word, either does not exist in these countries, or it exists only in a very limited circle. However, as we shall see, in principle most existing programmes can be used by people as a way to prepare for a future leadership role.

Those programmes that newly appointed school leaders are formally obliged to complete in Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovenia or Slovakia can better be described as induction programmes. However, both induction and in-service programmes can be used as a pre-service preparation and an increasing number of teachers do in fact seem to use these programmes in this manner. For example, when a teacher who is not in leadership position participates in a training programme targeted to school leaders, and obtains a qualification in school management, he/she uses the programme as a pre-service preparation. Finally, those – typically non-compulsory – programmes that offer higher level qualifications or make possible a further development of management or leadership skills and enrol school leaders already holding down a job can be described as in-service programmes.

The nature and the thematic orientation of induction and in-service training programmes are typically different: while the former often focus on those administrative
The induction programme, such programmes are offered by some provinces on a voluntary basis, no such programme but even advanced university programmes are often used, no such programme and feedback and are capable of inspiring their teachers (see also box). As for the in-service components of the Austrian system, the most important element of this level today is the Leadership Academy (LEA), which – as it has already been mentioned – is a large-scale national developmental project aiming at a rapid and radical development of capacities of leaders for change at all levels. The LEA concept is based on the assumption that (1) school climate and school quality are largely influenced by school leadership, (2) in the current socio-political environment schools have to face unprecedented challenges, and (3) school heads are among the most important change agents at schools. The LEA intends to raise the awareness of school heads regarding their strategic role in improving the learning processes and also aims to generate a new notion of leadership based on appreciation, dialogue and shared leadership. Its ultimate goal is to empower leaders so that they can act autonomously to bring about change without relying on detailed regulations, using communication and feedback and are capable of inspiring their teachers (see also box).

In Austria some provincial authorities offer pre-service programmes for those who wish to apply for a headship position but these are rare and participation is entirely voluntary. The most stable element of the Austrian system is the induction programme offered for newly appointed head teachers. Participation in the induction programmes – which is provided by the University Colleges of Teacher Education – is compulsory for every newly appointed head. They consist of a six-week (24 working days) training course, organized in a part-time arrangement so that newly appointed heads can start working in their new position while attending the course. The programme consists of two phases. The first one is the so-called "social phase" which has two parts: a “basic module” and some compulsory, optional modules. The second phase is the "individual" (self-study) phase which contains reading of literature, project work and further training. This may be offered in the form of professional learning communities or collegial team coaching. The aim of this compulsory programme is to offer a basic preparation for the new school leaders so that they can start their new job not only by being familiar with the most important legal and administrative requirements but also by acquiring the basic competencies needed for effective management and leadership. This is well reflected in the content of both the “basic modules” (communication and leadership; conflict management; lesson supervision; school development and educational rights) and the compulsory optional modules (educational rights, administration and school administration; personal development and collegial discussions; meeting techniques – effective discussions; time management and self-management; project management; new curriculum and the role of the head of school; topics of current interest).

As we have mentioned, the same programme can be used by different trainees for different purposes: those who teach these programmes often experience that they have in their class students who have been heads for many years and students who just wish to apply for a leadership position. However, this classification makes it possible for us to form a relatively clear picture about the various types of training programmes in the CECE group countries (for a comprehensive picture of the existing programmes see Table 10).

Table 10
Types of leadership/management training programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Pre-service programmes</th>
<th>Induction</th>
<th>In-service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>such programmes are offered by some provinces on a voluntary basis</td>
<td>six-week training course (organized in a part-time arrangement) provided by teacher training universities (Pädagogische Hochschulen) after appointment</td>
<td>the Leadership Academy as a project organised in an original way (forums, project work, self-organised learning) 4*3 day forum other programmes offered by various providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>the induction programme is also used as pre-service programme</td>
<td>compulsory 100-hour introduction programme (“survival programme”) of which 46-60 hours are face-to-face sessions</td>
<td>advanced (350 hours) university programmes + short courses offered by various providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>no such programme but even advanced university programmes are often used</td>
<td>no such programme at national level but some local governments may organise programmes</td>
<td>advanced (2 year long) university programmes + short courses offered by various providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>no such programme (but other programmes can be often used)</td>
<td>240-hour compulsory training programme provided by a national agency</td>
<td>some accredited university programmes and short courses offered by various NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>no such programme (but other programmes can often be used)</td>
<td>the Headship Licence programme (144 hours, 6 modules in one or two academic years)</td>
<td>various follow-up programmes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most stable element of the Austrian system is the induction programme offered for newly appointed head teachers. Participation in the induction programmes – which is provided by the University Colleges of Teacher Education – is compulsory for every newly appointed head. They consist of a six-week (24 working days) training course, organized in a part-time arrangement so that newly appointed heads can start working in their new position while attending the course. The programme consists of two phases. The first one is the so-called "social phase" which has two parts: a “basic module” and some compulsory, optional modules. The second phase is the "individual" (self-study) phase which contains reading of literature, project work and further training. This may be offered in the form of professional learning communities or collegial team coaching. The aim of this compulsory programme is to offer a basic preparation for the new school leaders so that they can start their new job not only by being familiar with the most important legal and administrative requirements but also by acquiring the basic competencies needed for effective management and leadership. This is well reflected in the content of both the “basic modules” (communication and leadership; conflict management; lesson supervision; school development and educational rights) and the compulsory optional modules (educational rights, administration and school administration; personal development and collegial discussions; meeting techniques – effective discussions; time management and self-management; project management; new curriculum and the role of the head of school; topics of current interest).
This programme, offered by universities and conducive to a master-level qualification, intends to provide the participants with an advanced theoretical background and related practical skills, which are seen as being necessary for the effective management and development of schools. The expectation is that after completing this course participants should be able to create a school strategy, guarantee high educational standards, contribute effectively to the continuous improvement of the educational process and be able to use efficiently the resources of the school. This is a two-year programme consisting of 364 hours of combined learning. The curriculum is structured into six modules: (1) school management; (2) law, (3) financial management; (4) organisation of school and educational processes; (5) leadership and (6) managerial practice.

In Hungary the dominant form of training of school leaders is a two-year programme offered by higher education institutions and leading to a (master level) qualification. This programme is used both as pre-service and in-service training by people already in a headship position and also by people who think of applying for such a position in the future (interestingly, although many students do not have leadership ambitions, they are interested in the subject). This is a four-semester course with a minimum of 360 hour learning, the content of which is regulated by a ministerial decree. The ratio of theoretical and practical elements in this case is 60 per cent versus 40 per cent with four 3-day practices to be had in a school.

This programme has two major forms. One is based on distance education. In this form students learn individually but are assisted by a consultant who is assigned to the group for a period of 2 years and assist the students in every subject area to be tackled. This course consists of (1) consultations, (2) training and (3) professional practices. Students form groups that consist of 16-26 persons. Each of these groups has a consultant teacher whom they meet five times during each semester. Students in this type of the programme have to take part, once a year, at a training led by an external expert. This training focuses on themes such as quality management, performance assessment and expert counselling. Another form of this programme is based on intensive face-to-face teaching. In accordance with this option students need to attend 360 contact lessons during the four semesters. They participate, in this case, at practice-oriented theoretical lessons, personal skills development trainings and professional practices in schools and local government offices. In this type of programme face-to-face teaching and frequent, direct group discussions are seen as key factors in the successful development of the competencies needed for effective management and leadership.

In Slovakia the most important training programme is offered by the national
The most important school management/leadership programme in Slovenia is the “Headship licence programme” offered by the National School for Leadership in Education, which can be described clearly as an induction programme. The length of this programme (compulsory for newly appointed heads) is 144 contact lesson hours and it has to be accomplished during one or two academic years. The aim of the headship licence programme is to provide the participants with the knowledge and skills that enable them to implement the objectives of their headship role as specified in the legal norms and the skills needed for effective management and leadership. It consists of 6 compulsory modules: (1) the introductory module: the head teacher as manager and as leader, team building, learning styles, and management of change; (2) organisational theory and leadership: organisational theory, models of school organisations, school leadership; (3) planning and decision-making: vision, planning, approaches to decision-making; (4) head teachers’ skills: managing conflicts, running meetings, observing lessons; (5) human resources: climate and culture, motivation, staff development and (6) legislation. The programme is expected to enable the participants to enhance the optimal implementation of the curriculum, to provide pedagogical leadership to teachers, the create effective cooperation with parents and the local community and to enhance the development of a strategy in the school, including the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and effective ways of making the school successful.

It is important to stress that the above description covers only the most significant, “representative” training programmes of each country. In all of these countries we can find a number of providers offering training, many of them private, for-profit companies, which offer various short programmes for school leaders. Some of these programmes are addressed directly to head-teachers but many of them address a broader audience. Some of these programmes focus directly on school leadership but many of them offer knowledge and skills development in related areas that are relevant not only for those who are in a headship position (like, for example, organisational development, quality improvement, project management etc.).

In order to gain a better comparative view on the thematic focus of the typical training programmes in the CECE countries, we have asked the authors of the national reports to make an estimate on the weight of eight specific content areas. On an average, the “legal” elements and “organisational development” were two thematic areas with the highest scores. The “legal” category was higher in the Czech Republic and Slovenia than in the three other countries and the “organisational development” category was higher in Austria and Slovenia than in the three other countries. As for “instructional leadership”, a particularly important area from the perspective of this report, it has received the highest score in the Czech Republic, and the lowest in Slovakia and Slovenia. From a leadership perspective, it is also worth looking at “strategic leadership” and “change management” which are thematic categories. As for “strategic leadership”, the highest score for this category was recorded in Hungary and the lowest in Slovakia and Austria (in this respect, there is a huge difference in Austria between the compulsory programme and that of the Leadership Academy: in the latter “strategic leadership” had maximum score). In “change management” the representative programme of the Czech Republic had the highest score, while the Hungarian programme had the lowest (see Table 11).

43. In Slovakia, for example, the analysis of various university teacher training programmes revealed that many programme-elements that can be, directly or indirectly, connected with management and leadership (Laššák & Hašková, 2009)
### Table 11
The thematic focus of national educational management/leadership training programmes (the weight of various content areas on a five-point scale)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Austria</th>
<th>Cz R.</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
<th>Slovakia</th>
<th>Slovenia</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resource</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic leadership</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change management</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects of lifelong</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: This table contains information about the most important programmes in the countries. It offers a subjective evaluation given by the authors of the national reports.

Beyond the weight of the various thematic areas it is important to look also at the dominant teaching methods applied within different programmes. In general, management or leadership training is an area where the use of learner-centred and activating methods is more frequent than in other areas. An ENIRDELM survey published in 2002 has already revealed the frequent use of activating methods in the countries that participated in this survey, that is, the Czech Republic and Slovenia (Verbiest, 2002). In this respect the Austrian Leadership Academy seems to be the most progressive programme in the CECE region (see box), but progressive teaching methods enhancing more effective learning strategies are present in the programmes of all the five countries. In fact, most of the competencies that are needed for effective leadership cannot be developed through the use of traditional teaching methods (see more about this in the following section).

44. In the case of Austria the information refers to the induction programme; the relevant figures for the Leadership Academy are 0,1,5,5,4,5,5).

**The Learning and Teaching Model of the Austrian Leadership Academy**

The LEA programme approaches leadership learning as a complex task that takes place over time and as a result of several interactions. Presentations draw on general and adult learning theory by, for example, integrating elements of new knowledge into participants’ current knowledge and combining academic and experiential processes to construct new knowledge. New material and exercises are sequenced logically and coherently to establish the emotional and intellectual conditions necessary for effective learning. The key theoretical construction is that training and experience pursued according to the principles embedded in the programme design will produce learning that can be effectively applied in participants’ home organisation. Core elements of the learning model are:

- sequenced introduction of new ideas (usually in familiar contexts);
- engagement of participants’ own base of knowledge and experience;
- demonstration and modelling;
- frequent opportunity for discussion and development of applications;
- basing learning around problems and projects in participants’ own organisation;
- using diverse approaches to fit diverse learning styles;
- providing emotional and intellectual support, feedback and correction in a safe, trusting atmosphere;
- establishing a comprehensive professional learning community practice to sustain application of learning and change (Stoll at al., 2008).

4.3. Further forms of supporting leaders

**Related question:**
What forms of leadership/management support exist in your country beyond training (e.g. coaching mentoring, consultant support). If there are such forms of support please describe them.

As it has been mentioned earlier, the development of school leadership cannot be limited to training in the narrow sense of the term. School leaders may and should be supported in other ways as well. According to the research conducted by John West-Burnham, one of the most recognised specialists in this area, traditional training is a much less effective way of developing leadership knowledge and skills than, for example, action-learning or individual coaching and mentoring. Various learning or teaching strategies have very different demonstrable levels of impact on the quality of the work of heads: some of these strategies may be and are applied within core traditional forms of training some of them, however, go beyond the confines of these forms (see Table 12).
Table 12
The impact of various learning/teaching strategies on the job performance of school leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAINING COMPONENTS AND COMBINATIONS</th>
<th>IMPACT ON JOB PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>SKILL</th>
<th>TRANSFER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory and demonstration</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory, demonstration and Practice</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory, demonstration, practice and feedback</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory, demonstration, Practice, feedback and Coaching</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the case of Austria, the Leadership Academy, which reaches a very high number of school leaders (together with other people in various leadership and management positions in education), is, in fact, a kind of support programme that is much broader than what we traditionally mean by training. One important outcome of this programme is the emergence of communication networks of school leaders that allow them to share good practices and assist each other in professional problem-solving. As the national report puts it: “The best-case scenario will be for LEA alumni to utilise new cross-links within a traditionally segmented educational system and to arrive at a new concept of the system that will considerably broaden the context of their day-to-day work” (Schratz, 2008) The working form of LEA is strongly supporting this as the participants (every year a cohort of 250-270 persons) attend four “forums” (three-day programmes consisting of presentations and subsequent intensive group work in collegial teams). The participants, who are implementing personal projects in their own institutions, can also meet in their collegial teams between the forums and can also come together with other participants in regional networks (see box).

The LEA offers learning opportunities for school leaders by building learning partnerships and networks of learning leaders. The learning partnerships and the CTCs function as discussion groups in which members develop an understanding of new learning and link new to existing knowledge. They also serve friends using criticism in supporting participants in their learning from project experience and in looking at the situation from a different perspective. As one primary head commented “The diversity of participants is very important to help me look beyond the four walls of my school.” CTCs follow well-defined rules for coaching that include giving and receiving feedback and helping participants take responsibility for their learning. (…)

CTCs are grouped into regional networks that meet periodically to explore substantive and administrative topics related to the LEA programme and to link graduates to the alumni network. The networks support leaders in many ways. Trust and cooperation among professional colleagues can activate innovative resources. In a safe environment, leaders can test out and receive feedback on their ideas and school practice. The networks foster school leaders’ capacity for systemic thinking – establishing a connection between individuals and system structures. Transformation of the educational system needs a multi level approach. Helping leaders to reflect on their own attitudes, recognise interrelationships between different levels of the educational system, and discerning critical system variables that make system change possible are all crucial elements in the change process. (…)

LEA alumni have an important role to play in the personal development of leaders and in supporting the networking of groups. Alumni serve as mentors of subsequent candidates. They lead regional meetings and give advice to collegial teams. The network coordinators establish contact between LEA generations (generation I-IV) and foster open communication in the system (Stoll at al., 2008).

As for the Czech Republic, no evidence was available on this area to the author of this report. It is probable, however, that in this country support given to school leaders is not limited to training. For example networking and professional communication aimed at supporting school leaders in sharing experiences of good practice are supported by the ESF funded development programmes in the other countries as well, together with various workshops, conferences and other capacity development programmes.

Leadership development is not limited to formal training in Hungary, either. There are many, often profit-oriented consulting agencies which offer different kinds of support for schools, including the school leaders. The costs of this type of support are often planned in the budget of various development-related interventions. A typical example of this support was given, in the late nineties, to schools and their leaders when they had to elaborate their first educational programme, based on self-analysis (a network of “self-developing schools” which emerged from this)45. Another similar

45. See their homepage here (in Hungarian): http://www.onfejlesztoiskolak.hu/
example was a quality assurance programme called “Comenius 2000” between 1999 and 2002 which made it possible for schools to pay for consulting services. This model is applied today in the ESF funded development programmes. This allows schools to pay for services that enhance, for example, their conflict-management and team building capacities, the creation of internal assessment and quality assurance mechanisms (including the assessment of teachers), their capacities to conduct organisational diagnosis and organisational development, to write successful applications and to plan and manage projects.

In Slovakia, as the national report states that “advanced forms of managerial improvement like coaching and mentoring (…) professional advisory and consultancy (…) have not been established yet” (Laššák & Hašková, 2009). However, school leaders often ask universities, ministerial institutions and NGOs to assist them in various problem areas (such as, for example, the elaboration of a school strategy, the preparation of an ESF application or the development of the teacher appraisal system). The typical form of this support is consultancy and advisory services performed on the basis of short-term contracts.

Good institutional conditions for school development in Slovenia – the existence of a well established, specialised national centre – also create good opportunities for supporting school leaders in different ways beyond the framework of traditional training. There are a number of instruments that are used in this country to help school leaders to continuously improve the quality of their professional work. A key element of this is what the country report refers to as a “system of mentoring” developed in 2003. The purpose of the system is to provide support and assistance for new school leaders during their first years of headship. The evaluation of this programme has shown that participants emphasize its value particularly in terms of personal and professional development and they appreciate it for creating networks that contribute to the development of their skills. The Slovenian national report for this study listed the following elements that complete various forms of training.

• the regular organisation of conferences for school leaders,
• the operation of a network of learning schools (a programme based on the concept of school effectiveness and school improvement),
• the development of new approaches to education for leadership in schools (e.g. leading for learning, action research for head teachers),
• the publication of a periodical entitled “Leadership in Education”,
• research conducted in the field of educational policy and leadership,
• support given to the development of co-operation and implementation of professional development programmes with entire staffs in schools and pre-schools institutions,
• development of approaches to education for leadership in schools,
• involving school leaders in international cooperation activities (projects, international conferences, institutional co-operation, international training and consultancy).

The examples of various leadership development activities in the CECE countries seem to prove that the role of alternative forms of learning that go beyond the traditional forms of training has been recognised. Specialists in leadership development encourage the use of various alternative forms, although some of these might appear more expensive than traditional forms. Many of them, however, such as networking or combining learning and work in various activities are, in fact, less expensive and, at the same time, more effective than traditional training. Some of these alternative forms of learning can also be integrated into the traditional forms of training and many of them have already been integrated.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations have emerged from expert meetings and from the five reports. These recommendations are addressed mostly to national decision-makers, although they can also be used by others playing an active role in the thematic area of this report (e.g. advisors, inspectors, developers of training programmes, representatives of professional and civil organisations etc.). One of the recommendations is about further international cooperation within the CECE group.

• Strengthen the position of school leaders in their function as persons responsible for the improvement of teaching and learning in schools
• Put more stress on the responsibility of school leaders for human resource development in schools and enhance their capabilities to do this effectively
• Put more emphasis on school leadership and leadership development within national educational development strategies and use better development interventions in this area
• Use incentives for the development of quality leadership development programmes
and make efforts to improve the quality of training programmes (by putting the stress on enriching the methods of training, including professional development forms that go beyond training such as action-research, coaching and mentoring)

- Support the continuous professional development of school leaders – including deputy principals – throughout their lifelong career
- Support the operation of middle level management in schools so that part of the burden of administrative work on school leaders might be reduced, and enhance the distribution of leadership within the school
- Develop national standards for school leadership and management competencies
  Use these national standards when appointing school leaders and when assessing their performance and also when accrediting training programmes
- Allow leadership development to take place on all levels of the system by bringing together all types of school and all levels by building networks, creating a mindset for sustainable change
- Leave more space for school leaders in order to allow them to act as creative “system thinkers in action” to find solutions that fit in with their particular school context and do not make them problem-solvers for faults of the overall system
- Support more research on school leadership in order to better understand the role of leaders in raising quality and standards, to offer a sound basis for political decision-making, to help school leaders understand better their role and to enhance the professionalization
- Enhance further international cooperation in the following areas:
  . Ways to shift from a “management development” towards “leadership development” and options to establish a better balance between them
  . Better understanding of the nature and the impact of good leadership
  . Finding the appropriate alternative to develop the quality of leadership
  . Enhancing the process of developing schools into learning organisation
  . Sharing experience on effective school-level human resource management and on the manner in which leaders create effective learning environments

6. REFERENCES


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Křižková, Eliška, Slavíková, Lenka & Krecliaková, Eva (2008): The Role of School Leadership in Creating a Learning Environment that is Conducive to Effective Learning with Special Regard to the Improvement of the Quality of Teacher Activity. Country Report. Czech Republic


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7. ANNEXES: PROJECT PLAN AND PARTICIPANTS

7.1. Project outline

The Role of School Leadership in Creating a Learning Environment that is Conducive to Effective Learning with Special Regard to the Improvement of the Quality of Teacher Activity.

Aims of the project

Elaboration of country reports and their synthesis report on the existence and the state of school leadership that supports the improvement of learning effectiveness (‘leadership for learning’), dissemination (through workshops in which the reports are discussed, reflected on, and disseminated to the countries), and preparation of an international project (ex.: Comenius, Comenius Networks, International Visegrad Fund, etc.) to foster multilateral cooperation.

A few examples of the issues to be analysed in the country reports:

- Do research, professional discussions and education policy in countries involved really address the issue of school leadership for learning?
- Do the leadership training programmes in the participating countries contain an element that promotes the development of learning?
- Are there any development programmes that serve the improvement of the quality of learning in schools and are they extended into organisational and managerial development?
- Are there any research initiatives also focusing on the relationship between organisational and leadership characteristics and the effectiveness of learning?
- Presentation of good practices

Development of a leadership-training module under the umbrella of an international project to prepare school leaders for
- creating an effective learning environment (organisational environment, in particular)
- the efficient support of teachers with a view to focusing their activity on the improvement of the effectiveness of learning.

**Expected project results**
Promoting educational reforms that seek to enhance the quality and effectiveness of learning, becoming familiar with the best practices of participant countries, supporting the development programmes undertaken in the participating countries, and drawing up a common leadership training programme module.

**The project is related to the following international programmes**

*In the European Union:*
- Schools for the 21st Century
- National Development Plans (Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia)
- E&T 2010: teacher competencies, key competencies

*In the OECD:*
- ISL (Improving School Leadership)
- Thematic review on teachers
- TALIS
- Alternative modes of learning

**Profile of experts participating in the project**
Each country is invited to nominate two experts: one who would, preferably, represent the university research sector, and another who should be a professional either familiar with schools or one experienced in education management (education administration). They should have a thorough knowledge of their country’s educational policy, the most crucial development and innovation programmes undertaken in their country; they should have extensive contacts and should also be able to prepare an analytical country report.

**Schedule and content of the project**

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1. **May 2008: First expert meeting**
Discussion of the relevant chapters and documents of the OECD ISL (goal: shared professional background, conditioning). Documents sent in advance: chapters of the ISL volume on synthesis, an Austrian case study and Austrian, Hungarian, and Slovenian country reports. Option: invitation of an OECD representative to attend this event.
Defining the scope of prospective country reports, outlining the synopsis, agreement on deadlines, size and format.

2. **May – September 2008**
Preparation of country reports

3. **October 2008: Second expert meeting**
Discussion of the first version of country reports, defining the detailed synopsis of the synthesis report, mapping the funding opportunities for the implementation of the development of a leadership training module and outlining the content of an international project and looking into other options for the eventual use of international funds.

Finalising country reports, drafting the first version of the synthesis report, planning the international project by country and via e-mail.

5. **March 2009: Third expert meeting**
Discussion and finalisation of the synthesis material, preparation of the dissemination conference.

6. **May 2009: Dissemination conference**
Presentation and discussion of the synthesis report and the country reports for dissemination of project results on international level.
7.2. Project participants

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